How and why were the Global Standards established?

The Global Standards now consist of a suite of 4 Standards covering different product types – food, consumer products, packaging manufacture and storage & distribution. The original BRC food Standard was designed in 1996 by a consortium of retailers to meet their needs of legal responsibility where they sub-contracted manufacturing of their own-brand goods. Originally developed by UK retailers, the Standards now have global recognition and input from a variety of stakeholders. BRC do not undertake BRC audits themselves but are the Standard owners and control and run the certification scheme.

Who needs BRC Certification?

Recognised worldwide certification to a BRC Standard demonstrates that products are manufactured and handled to a specified Standard to help ensure their safety and quality. The requirement for supplies to be certificated to BRC is not mandatory or a legal requirement but will be a customer requirement, so manufacturers should check with their customers whether they specify the requirement for certification to the BRC Standards as a condition of supply. You will find a list of BRC supporters published in the relevant BRC Standard.

How can I find someone to do my BRC audit?

BRC do not undertake BRC audits themselves but are the Standard owners and control and run the certification scheme by approving third party Certification Bodies to undertake audits. Please click here to find a list of all BRC worldwide approved Certification Bodies.

Where can I find out what I need to do to get BRC certification?

Click here to understand the process of certification. You need to select the correct Standard for your manufacturing process e.g. food or consumer products and purchase the Standard which lists a number of requirements which need to be successfully fulfilled to achieve certification. All Standards are available as PDF or print copies from our publishers TSO in a variety of languages. Click here for details of how to purchase a copy.

How much does it cost to achieve BRC Certification?

The cost depends on how large your site is and the systems you already have in place. You may require capital expenditure to upgrade your existing site or external expertise to put documented procedures in place for example. BRC have no influence on the cost of the audit charged by Certification Bodies but usually include a cost for the audit time and report write up and travel and subsistence costs of the auditor. There is a £75 cost that is included within your audit cost which goes directly to the BRC. There will be a recurring cost for re-audit in order to keep the certification valid.

How long does it take to achieve BRC certification?

It is not possible to put a fixed time as it depends on a number of factors including what systems you already have in place. A self assessment gap analysis or a pre-assessment by your chosen Certification Body is recommended. If the factory is brand new, it is recommended that the company waits at least 3 months in order to establish all its systems and have sufficient historical records for an auditor to look at.

How long does a BRC audit take?

The Certification Body needs to ensure that sufficient time is taken for the audit and will be influenced by a number of factors such as the size and complexity of the site, however, typically the average audit time is about one and a half days plus an additional one day for report writing.
How much time is given to correct non-conformances (take corrective action)?

Usually 28 Calendar Days, although up to 90 days maybe allowed in exceptional circumstances - this is in the protocol of each Standard.

How much time does it take following audit to receive my certificate?

BRC guidance is that you should receive your certificate and full audit report around 42 (or 104) calendar days after your audit which allows 28 (90) calendar days for you to have supplied evidence for the correction of the non-conformities to your Certification Body and 14 calendar days for the Certification Body to assess this information. Certain factors may necessitate extending this time.

I have had a BRC audit and am not happy with the non-conformities identified – what can I do?

The company has the right to appeal the certification decision made by the Certification Body which should be made in writing to the Certification Body within 7 days of the decision. The Certification Body shall give a full written response within 30 days following a full and thorough investigation. The company also has the option to contact the BRC if resolution cannot be attained by the two parties.

Can we use the BRC Logo if we are certificated?

- Yes, however you need to approve inclusion of your company details within the Global Standards Directory and abide by the logo use rules. Click here to download a copy.
- We do not allow any logo of any description to be put on retail products for sale

What is the frequency of re-audits after initial certification?

- This varies according to the Standard number and type of non-conformities and/or risk rating:
  - Food Standard grade A and B – 12 months, grade C – 6 months
  - Consumer Products Standard – 12, 24 or 36 months
  - Packaging Standard – 12 months
  - Storage and Distribution Standard – 6, 12, 18 or 24 months

Can the certificate be extended beyond the expiry date?

No – the certificate is valid for the period specified and cannot be extended. Customers of the company should be advised if a company goes out of certification, they may accept that the company is not certificated for a designated timeframe due to specified circumstances.

I have developed a new product – is this covered under my existing certificate?

Certification relates to the audit of the process of a product, if new product development designs a product which is basically produced in the same manner but uses different raw materials then this is not an extension to scope. If new processes, equipment or technology are used which are significantly different and would require a new HACCP plan for example, then this would require another audit visit from the Certification Body.

I have audited one of my suppliers who are BRC certificated and found procedures and practices not to be in line with the BRC audit report, what can I do?

The BRC would like to receive feedback on sites who do not continue to apply the principles and criteria of the Global Standard to which they are certificated. The BRC will require a documented report of the reasons for the complaint and will require a full investigation of the issues raised by the Certification Body.