IFS Logistics
Multi-site Guideline

This document is an additional document to the IFS Logistics 2.3 Standard and fully belongs to IFS Logistics 2.3 requirements.

Types of certification for multi-site companies with central management, for IFS Logistics certified companies

If defined processes are organized centrally in a company with several sites (e.g. purchasing, personnel management), the IFS Logistics certification can be covered by a single-certification or multi-site certification process.

In each case, the headquarter shall also be audited and relevant audited requirements outcome shall be considered in the audit reports of each site. **added** **The report shall detail which processes are managed centrally and which at the site.**

Depending on the fulfillment of pre-requisites and on company choice, the company can choose between two possibilities of auditing:

- single-certification of each site (without sampling program, see section 1.)

- multi-site certification of all sites (with sampling program, only possible in one same country, see section 2.)

added **If not defined otherwise in this document, all requirements from the current IFS Logistics Standard shall apply.**

1   Single-certification

This certification process can apply to all companies, irrespective if they have more or less than 20 sites per country.

Every site shall be audited separately, shall be mentioned in the relevant contract and shall be subject to its own report, corrective action plan and certificate. The certificate validity is 12 months. After this period, a full new audit shall be repeated.

If the central managing site does not have any logistical activities, this site cannot be IFS certified as an independent company. The time for auditing the central managing site shall be described in the company profile of the report.

The audit of the managing site shall always take place before the audit of each site, in order to have a preliminary overview.

Note: Each individual site is subject to scoring and conditions which are defined in IFS Logistics Standard, Part 1, 5.8, Chart N° 6.

2   Multi-site certification

To get the approval for multi-site certification and, as a result, for the sampling program, the company has to fulfill following pre-requisites (in accordance with ISO IEC 17065 norm):

1. All sites shall be operated under the same product and/or food safety management system and under the control of a central organization, which has a legal or contractual link to the sites.

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2. **Competences and responsibilities, including delegation of management responsibilities, internal auditors, and other members of the organization shall be clearly laid down.**

    Note: Here the related compulsory information shall be provided by the IFS Auditor within the IFS report under the requirement KO N° 1: 1.2.7.

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3. The central organization shall be **clearly committed** to the authoritative control of the product and/or food safety management system of all sites and shall issue, maintain and retain all relevant documents relating to the sites within the sampling program. **The central organization shall be separate and independent from the sites.**

4. The central organization shall be subject to management review in accordance with IFS Logistics requirements and shall be itself subject to internal audit in accordance with IFS Logistics requirements.

5. All sites within a multi-site sampling program shall have the same risk profile (e.g. kind of logistical activity such as ambient stable, refrigerated, frozen or combinations of these, size of site, shift patterns, management structure and staff numbers). Therefore, it is recognized that an organization could have several multi-site sampling programs based on different risk profile, but these programs shall be clearly defined and documented.

6. There must be an internal audit program for all sites undertaken by the central organization which is based on conditions of logistical activities as well as risk profile. Within the internal audit sampling program, all sites shall be audited annually. The internal audit program shall have documented procedures and be both practical and feasible in operative terms.

7. The central organization shall have in place sufficient management and technical capacity to implement and maintain the internal audit program. **This shall acknowledge the competence needed for auditors and technical reviewers to achieve the objectives of the audit and the requirements for impartiality.**

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    To meet the above, clear requirements expected on internal auditors and technical reviewers shall be defined and documented.

    The requirements for internal auditors are as follows:

    –   **Internal auditors shall be competent and shall have the full commitment of the senior management.**

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– **Internal auditors conducting audits for the whole organization shall meet adequate requirements. A minimum of the following shall be defined:**

Education
A food or logistics related education or a food-related or bioscience education course or equivalent and 1 year professional experience in the logistical sector.

Audit experience:
4 internal audits as a trainee lead auditor & and 1 witness audit having an experienced internal auditor for the organization as witness auditor.

Required training:

· HACCP training (min. 1 day) (for Food industry)

· Training in audit techniques e.g. training for internal auditors (3 days)

Internal auditors shall be regularly evaluated, calibrated and monitored.

Note: Compulsory information on the sample checked during the IFS Logistics Audit regarding the auditor competence and the last calibration shall be provided by the IFS Auditor under requirement 5.1.3 of the IFS report.

8. The sampling is possible for renewal audits, as of 20, for tier 2 (T2) and tier 3 (T3) locations. The minimum sample size is result of one third (rounded up) of the total amount of locations which are included in the multi-site program. Examples of sample size are described in following Table N° 1.

**Table N° 1:** Examples of the number of sites to audit per year when multi-site sampling is used

added

Number of sites (excluding the central organization)	Minimum sample size (T2 and T3 sites only)
20	7
30	10
50	17
100	34
Over 100	Calculated

The differing tiers within the logistics sector represent the size and function of the sites and are defined as follows:

Tier 1 (T1) facility: Main/national/regional distribution centers (storage and transport, no sales activity) or central warehouses: food, feed and/or product distribution or storage facilities at a single site or location and operating under one product and/or food safety management system. T1 facilities can have T2 facilities and/or sites (T3) managed by the organization seeking the certification. For these facilities, each site must have a certificate, no multi-site sampling option is available.

Tier 2 (T2) or Tier 3 (T3) site: Satellite warehouse or distribution hub, cross docking site: food, feed and/or product distribution or storage location at a single site or location and operating under one product and/or food safety management system. These sites are always linked to a larger T1 distribution center, storage warehouse or organization with multiple T1 facilities or in the case of a T3 site via a T2 site. T2 sites and T3 sites are always managed and under the direct control of a T1 facility or an organization with multiple T1 facilities seeking certification. For these sites, multi-site sampling option is available.

Table N° 2: Differences between the different tier locations
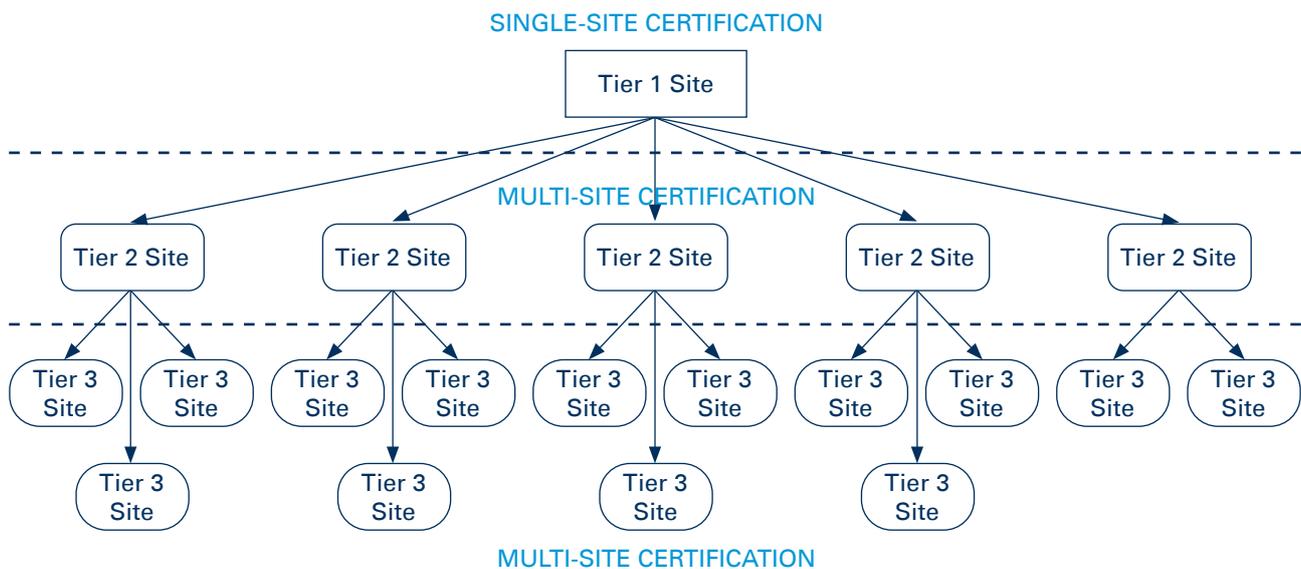
2.1   Certification body selection

This program is only applicable if only one certification body conducts all audits of the central organization and the associated sites during a whole cycle (see Table N° 3).

– The organization shall request multi-site sampling in their application to the certification body.

– The contract shall be defined between the certification body and the central controlling organization but not with individual sites. The central controlling organization or central function shall be part of the organization's certification program.

2.2   Rules for the initial audit

The first year, every organization's central control or central function of each country **as well as all sites shall be audited.** The company and the certification body agree upon all audit dates in advance (announced audits).

2.3   Renewal audit/sampling rule

In general:

– The central organization shall be audited by the certification body before the certification body undertakes the auditing of sampled sites.

– The **central organization** shall be audited **every 12 months** against the IFS Logistics Standard. If the company is located in several countries with different sites, each central organization in each country where the company is engaged in a business shall be audited every 12 months.

– Every new site, which will be integrated in this process, has to be audited in the first year of multi-site certification. It shall be audited in the first year in every case, and afterwards, depending on its kind of activity, audited under sampling plan frequency.

– Every site audit within the sampling program shall be performed announced or unannounced by the certification body.

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– **The certified organization shall be subject to an unannounced audit at least once every three (3) years. This includes an unannounced audit of the related sites sampled for the relevant year.**

– The certification body gets the right to expand the number of sites to be audited (within the sampling program) in one year if necessary (e.g. too many deviations of the organization).

In addition to the above requirements, the sampling shall comply with the following rules:

The sampling shall also be based on a risk analysis.

– 25 % of the sample shall be selected at random (non-selective). These 25 % are to be chosen from the sites which were not audited in the same year.

– 75 % of the sample shall partly be selected by following factors:

· Results of internal site audits and management reviews or previous certification audits

· Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of corrective and preventive actions

· Significant variation of the size of the sites

· Variations in shift patterns and work procedures

· Complexity of the management system and processes conducted at the sites

· Modifications since the last certification audit

· Maturity of the management system and knowledge of the organization.

added |

Note: The above sampling program is compliant with IAF MD1:2018 document, but any requirements from IAF MD1:2018 document which may go above these requirements shall also be fulfilled, **if not defined otherwise in the relevant IFS normative documents.**

Note: The certification body audit sampling program shall be reviewed and undertaken annually against defined sample size.

The following rules are applicable for the multi-site certification.

Table N° 3: Cycle of multi-site certification for IFS Logistics (example)

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Initial process	First cycle	First cycle	First cycle	Second cycle
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Central organization + all (T1, T2 and T3) associated locations	Central organization + all associated locations	Central organization + all associated locations	Central organization + all associated locations	Central organization + all associated locations
	Sampling rule (applying, for T2 and T3 sites, if the number **of sites** is above 20) Number of sites like shown in Table N° 1

Sampling: 75 % sample chosen by 25 % random sample from all assigned sites that are not part of the sample audited in this year. + newly opened sites (if applicable) | Sampling rule (applying, for T2 and T3 sites, if the number is above 20) Number of sites like shown in Table N° 1 (different from those audited during year 2)

Sampling: 75 % sample chosen by 25 % random sample from all assigned sites that are not part of the sample audited in this year. + newly opened sites (if applicable) | Sampling rule (applying, for T2 or T3 sites, if the number is above 20) Number of sites like shown in Table N° 1 (different from those audited during year 2 and 3)

Sampling: 75 % sample chosen by 25 % random sample from all assigned sites that are not part of the sample audited in this year. + newly opened sites (if applicable) | Sampling rule (applying, for T2 and T3 sites, if the number **of sites** is above 20) Number of sites like shown in Table N° 1

Sampling: 75 % sample chosen by 25 % random sample from all assigned sites that are not part of the sample audited in this year. + newly opened sites (if applicable) |

2.4   Scoring, conditions of issuing audit report and IFS group certificate for IFS Logistics multi-site certification

The multi-site certification is only possible if all the audited sites individually pass the audit.

In case of failure of one site:

a) If one site fails the audit because of a KO evaluated with a D, several Major non-conformities or one Major non-conformity and total score <75 %, the multi-site certification shall not be issued. The site which fails the audit shall be audited completely at a new time within 6 months and shall pass the audit in order to allow the multi-site certification.

b) If one site fails the audit because of one Major and total score ≥75%, a follow up audit shall be performed within 6 months, in order to solve the non-conformity and then allow the multi-site certification.

c) If one site fails the audit because of a total score <75% (but no non-conformities in the meaning of IFS):

– if the certification body considers that the identified deviations are only linked to the site but not linked to the general management system:

· a follow up audit shall be scheduled on the site, to check the implementation of corrective actions. If the new assessment of the site provides a score which is up to 75%, then the multi-site certification is possible. If the total score is still under 75%, the multi-site certification is not possible.

– if the certification body considers that the identified deviations are linked to the site as well as to the general management system:

· a follow up audit shall be scheduled on the site and at the head-quarter, to check the implementation of corrective actions. If the new assessment provides a score which is up to 75%, then the multi-site certification is possible. If the total score is still under 75%, the multi-site certification is not possible.

Note: If there are no internal audits conducted at all sites, this will be seen as a breach of requirement 5.1.1. Therefore it will be evaluated as a KO.

Note: Non-conformities shall be assessed by the certification body to ascertain if these indicate an overall product safety system deficiency and therefore may be applicable to all or other sites.

If non-conformities relate to all or other sites, corrective actions shall be undertaken and verified both by the central controlling organization or central function and by the certification body.

Note: If the central controlling organization, central function or any site fails to meet the certification scheme requirements, then the whole multi-site organization will fail to gain certification. Where certification has previously been in place, this shall initiate the certification body's process to suspend or withdraw its certification.

2.5   Awarding the certificate

In case of a multi-site certification, the certification body shall award a group certificate (see Annex 1), with a period of validity of 12 months. In the annex of the certificate, all sites which are in the scope of the certification shall be listed. **This Annex shall be updated at least with the issue of the certificate or in case of changes.** To determine the level, the certification body has to calculate the average scoring of all sites and write the corresponding level on the certificate.

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Note: In case all sites in the scope of the audit where audited unannounced, the status "unannounced audit" shall be stated on the head of the certificate.

2.6   Limitation of the certificate on selected sites

It is the decision of the company to certify only a part of all existing sites. Only the sites which are part of the certified ones shall be listed in the annex of the certificate. These excluded sites are not countable for pre-requisites of multi-site certification.

2.7   Inclusion of new sites

If the company opens a new site after the multi-site certificate was awarded and the new site should be included in the valid certificate, the new site shall be audited during this period. If the site passes the initial audit, the certification body can award a new certificate which includes the new site.

Normative references:

– IAF MD 1:2018 – Mandatory Document for the Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling

– GFSI Guidance Document 2020.1.

ANNEX 1

Certificate

Unannounced audit (if applicable)

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Herewith the certification body

Name of the certification body

being an ISO/IEC 17065 accredited certification body for IFS certification and having signed
an agreement with IFS Management GmbH, confirms that the logistical activities of

Name of the audited company
Address
COID
GS1 GLN(s) if available
(Headquarter)

for the audit scope:

Type of activities/Products scope(s)/Condition of handling

additional information:

description of exclusions, if applicable
if the company performs additional broker activities, provide the certification status by writing the sentence:
"The company has own broker activities which are/are not IFS Broker/other GFSI recognised standard certified".

meet the requirements set out in the

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at Foundation level/Higher Level
and other associated normative documents

with a score of XX%

Certificate-Register number:
Date of the last unannounced audit (last day of audit)
**If no unannounced IFS Logistics audit has been conducted for the respective COID yet,
the certificate shall indicate the following:
"Last audit conducted unannounced: N/A"**

Audit date (if relevant: plus date of the follow-up audit):

Certificate issue date:

Date of expiration of the certificate (the certificate validity shall remain
the same each year as described in the IFS Food Certification protocol, Part 1):

Next audit to be performed within the time period:
**(Renewal audit between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of announced audit
and between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of unannounced audit)**

Date and place:

Name and signature of the responsible person
at the certification body

Address of the certification body:

Logo of the accreditation body
or its name and
registration number

Annex according to certification document register number: xxxxx

added

Location	Location
Sample Company One COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 1 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Twelve COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 12 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Two COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 2 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Thirteen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 13 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Three COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 3 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Fourteen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 14 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Four COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 4 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Fivetine COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 15 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
COID: xxxxx Sample Company Five Samplestreet 5 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Sixteen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 16 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Six COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 6 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Seventeen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 17 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Seven COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 7 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Eighteen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 18 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Eight COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 8 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Nineteen COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 19 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Nine COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 9 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Twenty COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 20 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Ten COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 10 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Twenty-one COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 21 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**
Sample Company Eleven COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 11 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**	Sample Company Twenty-two COID: xxxxx Samplestreet 22 12345 Sampletown **Last IFS Audit date**

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Logo of the accreditation body
or its name and registration number