

International Featured Standards

IFS Food Certification Process Flow – V8

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Change history

Version	Author	Description
Current Issue – 1 dated 1 st OCT 2023	Gobinda Mitra	IFS Process Flow diagram as per IFS Food V8

1 International Featured Standards- IFS

1.1 Introduction

Food-borne illnesses pose a huge public safety hazard, and can damage a company's reputation and bottom line. Increased demand for safe food, as a result of globalisation and international trade, has made food safety management extremely important.

The International Featured Standard (IFS) is a common food safety standard with a uniform evaluation system used to qualify and select suppliers. It helps retailers to ensure the food safety of their products and monitors the quality level of producers of retailer branded food products.

Having a common standard and a uniform way to evaluate the quality level of suppliers reduces the need for second party audits. For the retailer, supply chain management becomes more consistent and efficient. It reduces the overall costs of the process and increases the level of safety for customers, suppliers and consumers.

IFS is the international standard for auditing retailer and wholesaler branded food products. It is also supported by the major Italian trade association.

The IFS standard applies to suppliers at all steps of food processing subsequent to the agricultural stage. The requirements are related to the quality management system and the HACCP system (Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points), supported by detailed prerequisite programmes, that is a set of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice), GLP (Good Laboratory Practice) and GHP (Good Hygiene Practice) requirements. IFS meets the criteria of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)

1.2 Benefits

1. Promotes Food Safety and Quality
2. By gaining certification, the organization will gain recognition for ongoing commitment towards food safety, prove integrity to the market and enhance consumer confidence of respective brands.
3. The most important European retailers require IFS certification from the suppliers that are included in their supply chain. But IFS is a globally recognised standard, including acceptance with the GFSI and can be applied to suppliers outside Europe as well.
4. Better meets food safety legal compliance.
5. Pro-actively improves processes saving valuable time and resources of Organisation.
6. Demonstration of diligence to food safety
7. Provides a tool for food safety performance improvement and the means to monitor & measure food safety performance effectively
8. Facilitates reductions in product waste, product rework and product recall

1.3 Why Cotecna

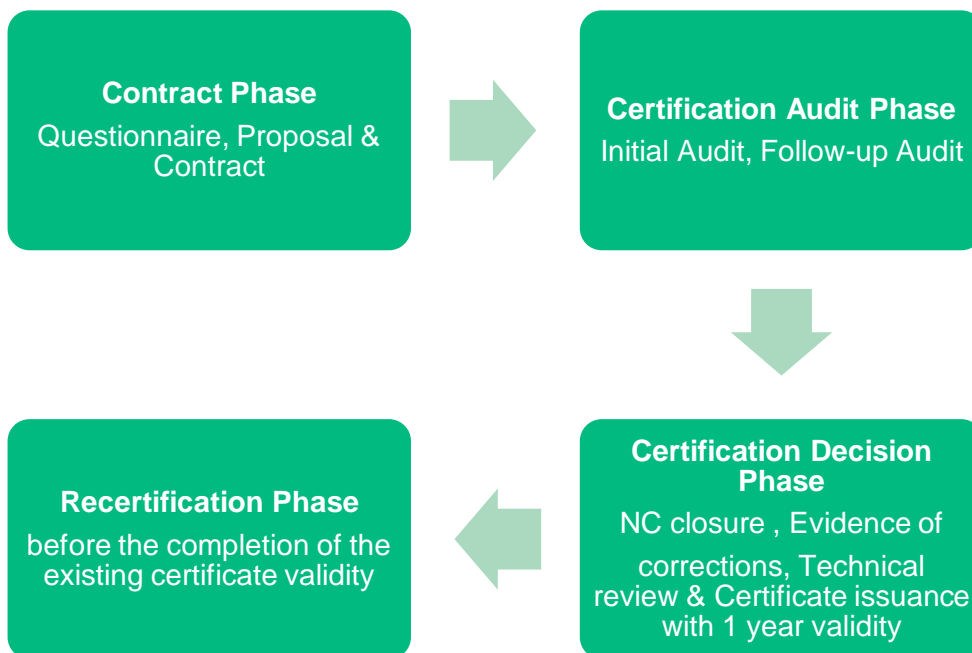
Swiss group founded in 1974. Extended network of over 100 offices & laboratories in 50 countries. The Group offers services to both governmental and commercial organizations. Cotecna is one of the world's leading testing, inspection and certification companies. Cotecna Inspection India Pvt Ltd has experienced experts on food safety aspects and experienced auditor with multiple competency to provide one umbrella solution. COTECNA India can help an organisation as below

- Provides comprehensive training on all aspects of IFS
- Performs pre-assessment which helps the Organisation to understand their best route to certification
- Conducts the entire certification process to ensure compliance with food safety standards

1.4 Important Links

<https://www.ifs-certification.com/index.php/en/>
<https://www.ifs-certification.com/index.php/en/standards>
<https://www.ifs-certification.com/index.php/en/standards/251-ifs-food-en>

1.5 Certification Process- IFS Food



1.6 Application Process

To get Application / Questionnaire please contact indiacertification@cotecna.co.in

1.7 Audit/Assessment

Opening meeting – Evaluation of the documentation – Site assessment and interviews of employees – Traceability Challenge, Creation of the audit conclusions, Closing meeting

Initial audit- is a company's first onsite audit to IFS Food

Follow up audit- is required in a specific situation when the results of the audit (an initial audit or a renewal audit) have been insufficient to allow awarding the certificate. Follow up audit is applicable when onsite audit outcome is Max 1 Major and total score $\geq 75\%$

Renewal audit (for recertification)- Renewal audits are those which are performed after the initial audit. A renewal audit involves a full and thorough audit of a company resulting in the issuance of a new certificate. During the audit, all criteria of the IFS requirements shall be assessed by the auditor. The date of the renewal audit shall be calculated from the date of the initial audit and not from the date of issue of the certificate. The renewal audit can be scheduled at earliest 8 weeks before and at the latest 2 weeks after the renewal audit due date.

1.8 Deviation

Noncompliance with a requirement but there is no impact on food safety related to products and processes. In the IFS, deviations are requirements scored with a B, C or D and KO requirements scored with a C. Scoring with B is not deviation but point of attention.

Scoring

Result	Explanation	Points
A	Full compliance	20 points
B (deviation)	Almost full compliance	15 points
C (deviation)	Part of the requirement is implemented	5 points
D (deviation)	Requirement has not been implemented	-20 points

1.9 Non-Conformity

Non-fulfilment of a specified requirements. Non-conformity can be given in non-respect of legislation, law, food safety, internal dysfunctions and customer issues. In the IFS, defined non-conformities are Majors and KO scored with a D

A major non-conformity can be given to any requirement which is not defined as a KO requirement. When there is a substantial failure to meet the requirements of the standard which includes food safety and or legal requirements of the production or destination countries. A Major can also be given when the identified non-conformity can lead to a serious health hazard.

A major will subtract 15% of the possible total amount of points

Knock out (KO)- In IFS, there are specified requirements which are designated as KO requirements. If during the audit, the auditor establishes that these requirements are not fulfilled by the company, this results in non-certification.

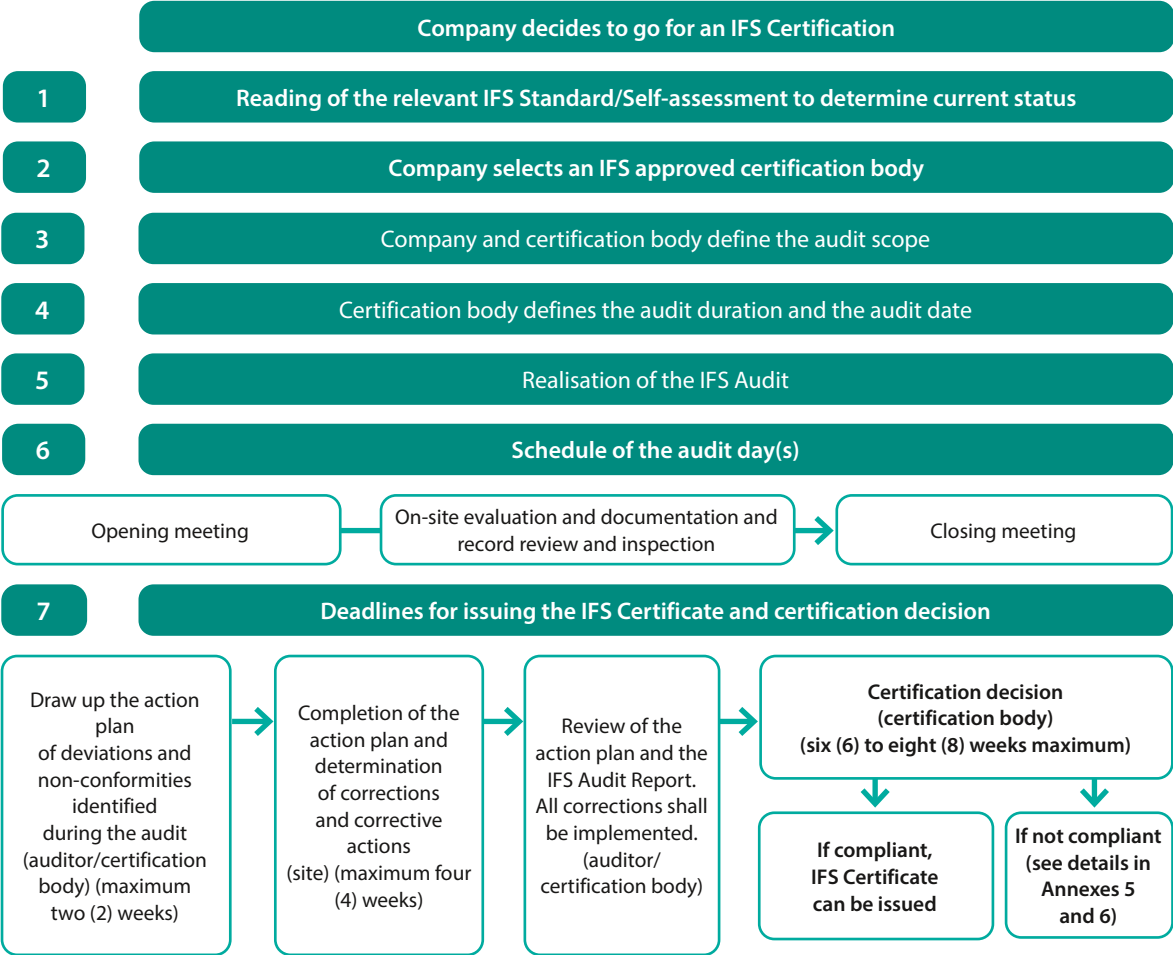
In IFS Food the below 10 requirements are defined as KO requirements

- Governance and commitment (1.2.1)
- Monitoring system of each CCP (2.3.9.1)
- Personnel hygiene (3.2.2)
- Customer agreement (4.1.3)
- Raw material specifications (4.2.1.3)
- Foreign material risk mitigation (4.12.1)
- Traceability system (4.18.1)
- Internal audits (5.1.1)
- Procedure of recalls, withdrawals, and incidents (5.9.1)
- Corrective actions (5.11.3)

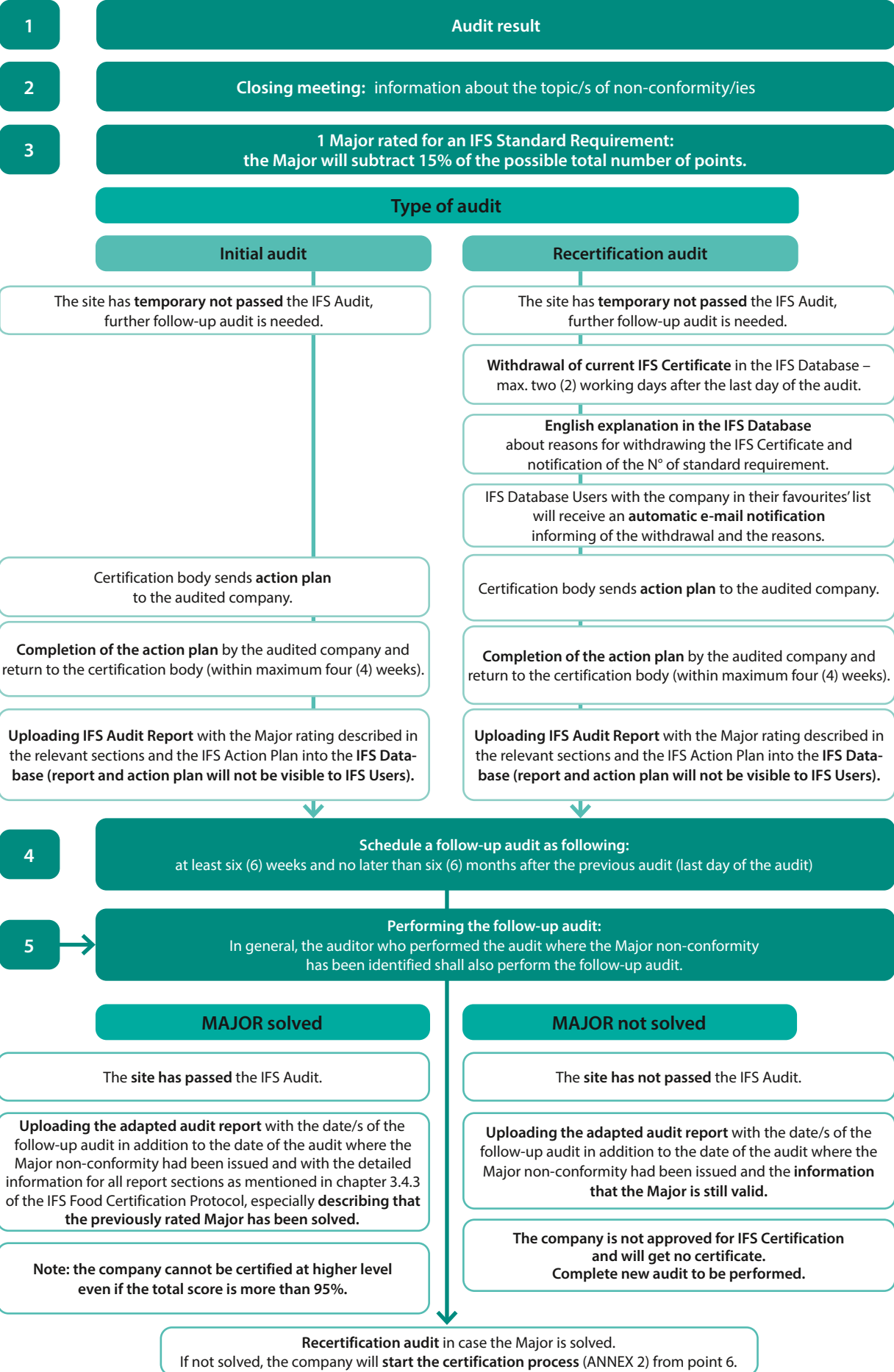
Scoring for KO requirement

Result	Explanation	Awarded scores
A	Full compliance	20 points
B (deviation)	Small part of the requirement is not implemented with no impact on food safety, legality, and customer requirements.	0 point
C (deviation)		No “C” scoring is possible
KO (= D)	The requirement is not implemented	50 % of the possible total amount of points is subtracted => No certificate awarding is possible

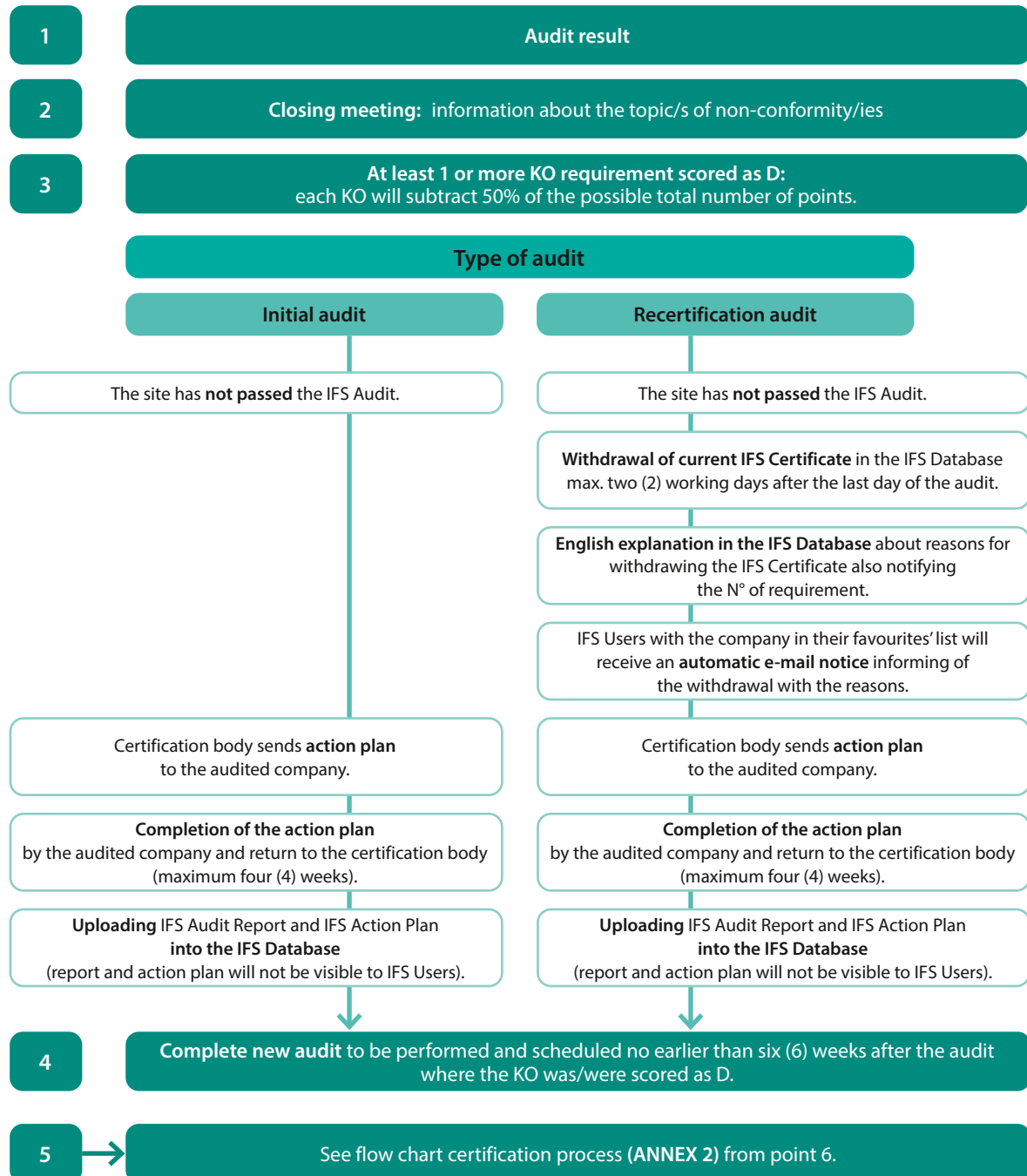
ANNEX 2: Certification process



ANNEX 5: Flow chart for management of one Major-non-conformity and total score $\geq 75\%$



ANNEX 6: Flow chart for management of KO requirement scored with “D”



ANNEX 8: Flow chart for management of one or several Major non-conformity/ies and/or total score < 75%

