

TQCSI POLICIES FOR AUDITING & CERTIFICATION OF HACCP

In addition to the General Policy which applies to all Standards, this policy document describes policies determined by TQCSI's Certification Approval Panel in the interpretation of HACCP for the auditing and certification of HACCP management systems. It complements TQCSI Work Instruction 34 (HACCP) which should also be referred to by auditors when auditing clients' HACCP management systems.

Nonconformances are to be dealt with as described at WI 32 (QMS Certification). When a major nonconformance is raised, the Lead Auditor or General Manager is to consider the risk when deciding on the time frame for the client to satisfactorily address the nonconformance. The time frame is not to be greater than three months but is to be much shorter if there is a risk to public safety. As a guide:

- *major NCR related to document control, management review, training etc - 3 months*
- *major NCR related to CCP monitoring - 2 months*
- *major NCR related to public safety - 1 month*
- *major NCR posing an immediate and serious threat to public safety – 1 week.*

Minor nonconformances are to be raised where:

- a discrepancy which has the potential to have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the HACCP system has not been addressed since being raised at a previous audit
- a serious discrepancy or a number of like discrepancies indicate there is a breakdown in part of the HACCP system or the safety of food is potentially jeopardised
- the monitoring of critical limits for critical control points does not provide sufficient confidence in the safety of food or the integrity of the HACCP system
- there is a significant breach of legislation or a regulatory requirement
- microbiological testing or environmental swabbing has not been undertaken in accordance with the HACCP Verification Schedule.

Major nonconformances are to be raised where:

- the agreed action plan to address a minor nonconformance has not been implemented
- a serious discrepancy or a number of like discrepancies indicate there is a total breakdown in the HACCP system or there is direct evidence of food safety being jeopardised
- monitoring of critical limits for critical control points seriously contravenes the established HACCP Plan
- there is a very significant breach of legislation.

General Policies:

- HACCP verification should include microbiological testing of:
 - shelf life if the client determines the shelf life
 - end product at least six monthly for all pathogens that could be reasonably be expected
 - the environment (swabbing of preparation areas, equipment, etc for Total Plate Count).
- Records of CCP monitoring must be retained on file for a reasonable period.
- Thermometers/thermostats that are used to monitor CCPs are to be checked/calibrated in a manner that is traceable to national standards. This would normally require a certificate of compliance (traceable to national standards) to be held for each temperature unit or a certificate of compliance (traceable to national standards) to be held for a reference thermometer which is then used to check other temperature units against (verification of this checking must be retained). Ice and boiling point checks may be used to supplement the checking but not be used in lieu. The period of check/calibration is normally 12 monthly but this can be varied with reasonable verification or if indicated otherwise on the respective certificate of compliance.

Approved: *original signed*

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