

## **COSMOS-standard AISBL (COSMOS)**

### **INTERNAL DOCUMENT: AUDITING DURING Corona virus SARS-CoV-2**

Circulation                      INTERNAL: Authorised Certification Bodies, IOAS, KAS  
First circulation                6<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
Latest update                    3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

### **AUDITING DURING CORONA VIRUS SARS-COV-2**

During the current Corona virus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak, all auditors and staff at Certification Bodies must follow the recommendations of the World Health Organization, other UN agencies or their national governments. COSMOS also recognizes that some auditors may face additional restrictions such as quarantines or the need to limit external contacts.

COSMOS recognizes that disruptions to auditing timelines and schedules are unavoidable. Regular auditing may be affected due to closure of offices, travel restrictions, entry restrictions by operators or governments, or because staff or auditors are under quarantine.

### **COSMOS PROCEDURE FOR AUDITING DURING CORONA VIRUS SARS-COV-2**

When regular auditing is not possible due to restrictions associated with the Corona virus SARS-CoV-2 outbreak the Certification Body may select one or both of the following options A and B below.

In all cases a list of all clients where either or both options are used must be kept by the Certification Body. The list must also state the reason why a regular audit was not possible, e.g. organization closed, restrictions on travel to region OR auditor subject to quarantine.

#### **A. Extension of certificate validity**

COSMOS will allow extension of validity by no more than three months.

#### **B. Completion of a remote audit**

1. Remote audits can be conducted when the Certification Body determines the audit to be low risk, i.e. for existing or new clients:
  - with manufacturing sites that had a preceding onsite audit provided that the Certification Body determines the audit to be low risk. Low risk is determined by the CB's own risk assessment but as a minimum it means no major non-compliance affecting the integrity of the product or ingredients;
  - who only perform brand owner or distributor activities at their sites;
  - who only perform handling activities at their sites.
2. In respect of clients classified as high risk (i.e. anyone not referred to in paragraph 1) remote audits are also acceptable. However, an additional onsite audit within 8 weeks is required as soon as activities can be resumed in the countries concerned (place of site to be inspected, place of auditor's residence).

Remote audits should follow the same protocol as an onsite audit. The Certification Body needs to establish a standard procedure for remote audits. As a minimum this should include the risk analysis, how the audits should be conducted, the specific requirements for auditors' qualifications and training and what additional information is requested of clients. Remote audits can only be undertaken if the remote tools secure a performance equivalent to an onsite audit.

Contact:

Katrin Hochberg, General Manager COSMOS-standard AISBL, [khochberg@cosmos-standard.org](mailto:khochberg@cosmos-standard.org)