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Client Communication: 18 March 2020

Impact of COVID-19 on audits: FAQs

Dear Client,

Further to our recent communication regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) dated Thursday 27 February 2020, which is [available on our website](#), we have included responses below to some of the more frequently asked questions from our clients on the potential impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of onsite audits.

Q. What approach is BSI taking to deliver audits over the coming months?

A. BSI's approach will be based on both certification risk and personnel risk, in line with various government and regulator recommendations. In regions where auditor mobility is affected by international travel restrictions, such as the EMEA region, precautions may need to be stricter for a short period of time. Typically, resources will be focussed on maintaining existing certifications as a priority. In high risk regions, alternative methods of audit delivery will be offered to clients wherever practical. You will be contacted by your scheme manager or planning team if this will affect you. In moderately affected regions, you may be given a choice of options depending on the type of visit planned. In very low risk areas, we anticipate no changes will be made unless you contact BSI with suitable justification.

Q. Should I continue to plan for my upcoming audit?

A. Yes. Depending on the risk in your country or region, BSI will aim to deliver on site audits wherever it is safe to do so. BSI is reviewing local government recommendations and restrictions daily and will revise planned visits accordingly. Audits will generally be delivered by alternative means where local governments advise against travel and where regulatory requirements allow.

Q. I have not booked my audit for July 2020 yet; should I hold off until the situation is more certain?

A. No. BSI will have a number of audits that we will have no choice but to defer and these will need to be prioritized once the travel restrictions have been lifted. Failure to accept a visit or failure to plan in advance will mean you will be unlikely to secure your preferred date and may mean that it will be difficult to reschedule the audit within the acceptable timelines required. This could place your certification and market access at risk.

Q. Should I allow the auditor on site?

A. Yes. Where local government mandates permit and where you have not notified BSI of any restrictions, auditors should be permitted to access the site. BSI commits to not sending an auditor to

your site who has travelled to a high risk area within the last 14 days; our auditors are authorized to sign a declaration to this effect, should you require proof from them. We kindly request that any of your own staff who have been in a similar situation self-isolate to ensure the safety of our auditors.

Q. What happens if I turn the auditor away?

A. You are required to advise BSI of any emerging situation that could compromise the delivery of the audit and we will take this into account. Advance notice allows us to provide you with an alternative method of delivery to maintain regulatory requirements, although we acknowledge that the normally mandated 60 days' notice may not be possible under current circumstances. Unwarranted or uncommunicated refusals will be considered on a case by case basis.

Q. What happens if my site shuts down?

A. Complete shutdown will, by default, result in a visit being deferred. A site closure for a significant length of time may trigger certificate suspension until we can confirm that operating practices are back to normal. A large number of deferred visits will potentially delay BSI's ability to conduct such verifications in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely,



Gary Slack

Global Senior Vice President Notified Body

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