

FSSC 22000

Certification scheme for food safety systems
in compliance with
ISO 22000: 2005 and technical specifications for
sector PRPs

Part IV

REGULATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF STAKEHOLDERS

Foundation for Food Safety Certification

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1. INTRODUCTION

This part of the scheme contains the regulations for the Board of Stakeholders. The Board has been established to function as an advisory body – with discretionary powers – to the certification bodies (CBs) that have been authorized to offer certification against the criteria of the scheme FSSC 22000. This Board deals with the requirements and regulations of the scheme. The Board does not review the actual impartiality of the CBs which remains the task of Committee of safeguarding impartiality of the CBs. (Ref. ISO/TS 22003, clause 6.2).

The Board offers parties which have an interest in international food safety system certification the possibility to participate in the development of the certification scheme FSSC 22000 as well as in the functioning of the scheme. The Board meets three times a year to discuss all relevant subjects concerning the scheme. The decisions of the Board may affect the associated CBs as well as the certificate holders. The Board is legally represented by the Foundation.

A list of the members of the Board of Stakeholders is published on www.fssc22000.com.

2. REGULATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF STAKEHOLDERS

Composition

The Board consists of representatives of the food categories covered by the FSSC 22000 scope including relevant stakeholders like, trade, retail, CBs, authorities as well as of independent experts. The Board invites the relevant organizations to make binding nominations. The Board appoints its members and ensures that the composition is balanced and manageable in size. The Board may only reject a nominee if this is in the interest of the Board or the functioning of the scheme and in such a case the reasons shall be explained. If the nominee is rejected, the organization involved is given the opportunity to make a new nomination. Members are appointed in consultation with the Foundation. The Foundation may reject a nominee if the rejection is based on interests which the Foundation looks after. Membership is terminated if the member relinquishes the capacity for which he or she was nominated and if the organization concerned indicates a wish to terminate this membership. The Board can appoint independent experts as members, as advisers or as temporary advisers. In doing so, the Board can determine to what extent the adviser has voting powers.

The chairperson is appointed by the Board in his or her capacity and is not an individual appointed from the ranks of the organizations which are represented in the Board. In the absence of the chairperson the Board shall appoint a deputy chairperson. The (re) appointment of the boardmembers, chairperson and the independent experts takes place every five years. In the event of prolonged absences of a member, the organization concerned shall be asked to make a new appointment.

The Board is composed of representatives of the food categories covered by the FSSC 22000 scope

Tasks and responsibilities

The Board is responsible for the content and functioning of the certification scheme FSSC 22000 within the scope of the scheme. The Board organises co-ordination activities in the field of certification on the basis of the scheme and evaluates these in view of developments desired by interested parties, as well as with respect to other relevant (e.g. technical) developments. The Board has the possibility to provide recommendations – on request or otherwise – to the associated CBs with respect to the FSSC 22000 certification scheme.

In any event, the Board is required to provide advice and to take decisions in the following areas:

- The nature, content and functioning of the FSSC 22000 scheme;
- The establishment and implementation of a procedure to vet and approve personnel employed by the scheme to ensure their professional integrity, competence and impartiality;
- Arrangements to cover any liabilities which may arise from the activities of the scheme owner;
- Establishment and oversight of an internal audit programme to assure continuing compliance of the scheme with GFSI requirements. The review of scheme operation carried out at the Board meeting 3 times per year shall be included in the audit;
- The scope of certification;
- The establishment of requirements and the methods of investigation, which underpin the certification scheme, and establishment of the period of validity for the certification scheme;
- Reviewing cases where CBs have failed to comply with scheme requirements, and determining appropriate measures to address identified noncompliance;
- The establishment of the frequency of surveillance assessments in order to ensure that stipulated requirements are continuously met;
- Overseeing the effective operation of the complaints procedure described in the scheme documents;
- The FSSC 22000 certificate template;
- The competence of auditors; including maintaining a register of approved auditors based upon information provided by the relevant CBs;
- The approval of accreditation bodies in accordance with the Regulations for Accreditation Bodies in section 3 of Part III of this scheme;
- Overseeing the scheme conformity assessment programme “FSSC Integrity Program” described in the scheme documents;
- The full review of the FSSC 22000 certification scheme every 3 years.

Additionally, the Board is authorized to provide recommendations – on request or otherwise – with regards to any aspect related to the management of the FSSC 22000 certification scheme and the co-ordination activities in the field of certification.

With respect to all the aforementioned items, the associated CBs can accept or reject the recommendations of the Board only in their entirety. In the event that (one or more of) the CBs do not accept the recommendations of the Board, this needs to be notified to the Board in writing, stating the reasons for this. The Board shall

reconvene and reach a decision on possible changes of the appealed recommendation. If the CB in question continues to reject the decision with respect to the recommendations, no further appeal procedure is possible and the CB shall be excluded from further use of the services of the Board. The services of the Board can be called upon in the event of disagreements regarding the interpretation of the certification scheme, on the understanding that the Board does not rule on individual differences. The appeal board of the CB is available for this purpose.

Working order

- In order to effectuate the responsibilities specified in section 2, the Board convenes at least three times a year, and whenever the chairperson or three members of the board make a request to do so.
- The secretarial work for the Board is carried out by an agency or company or individual, which is nominated by the CBs and approved by the Board. The secretary or his or her deputy attends the meetings. He or she has an advisory vote in the meeting. The secretary provides the Board with all the information (if required in coded form) which the Board seems necessary for the effectuation of its responsibilities.
- The chairperson can impose confidentiality on the Board if the board receives confidential information necessary for carrying out its responsibilities.
- To accomplish the tasks specified in section 2, the secretary's office (possibly by outsourcing) is responsible for formulating drafts after consultation with the involved parties. Any opinions on the part of the involved parties that differ from the draft shall be submitted to the Board.

Decision making

The Board aims to make decisions on the basis of consensus, including all participants, also those with no voting rights. In any event, two-thirds of the number of those members entitled to vote is required to be present or to have been balloted. Those entitled to vote are the members, with the exception of the representatives of the CBs. Decisions can either be made in the meeting or by written consultation. Written consultation can be carried out by means of correspondence, i.e. by letter, fax or e-mail.

In the case of written consultation, those votes are counted which are received by the secretary's office within two weeks following a request to do so. In the event of the written procedure, all participants in the Board can request verbal consultation in a meeting.

In the event of written consultation, decisions are made by consent: those opposing a motion can indicate whether to accept the majority position or remain opposed in principle. In case half or less vote for the motion, or if at least one person votes against the motion on principle, the proposal is required to be dealt with in a meeting or an amended motion is required to be submitted.

When decisions are made in a meeting, recommendations are accepted by a simple majority of votes. In the event of a tie, the issue is dealt with again and a vote taken. If a new vote is required, the final motion shall be sent to the members entitled to vote within two weeks following the tie, to which a reply must be submitted within two weeks in writing. Split recommendations can be made in the event that the associated CBs are not required to integrally accept or reject the recommendations.

The Board shall validate changes in the scheme preceding the implementation with regards to the following aspects:

- Feasibility,
- Effectiveness (with regards to the intended effect),
- Compliance with the relevant standards which apply to the scheme.

Harmonization process

Once every year the CBs shall participate in a harmonization meeting. Expertise requirements can be stipulated for these representatives. In the harmonization meetings the following topics are addressed:

- co-ordination and harmonization with respect to the delivery process of the audits and the certification of the scheme FSSC 22000;
- proposals for items on the agenda for meetings of the Board;
- preparing recommendations for the Board;
- evaluation of practical cases with respect to FSSC 22000 certification;
- organization of harmonization workshops for auditors.

The minutes of the meetings of the harmonization committee(s) are discussed in the meeting of the Board.

Recording of meetings and resolutions

The secretary is responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Board. The draft minutes, including a list of draft resolutions, is sent to the members of the Board within three weeks following the meeting. If applicable, members are required to submit their comments with respect to the minutes and the list of resolutions to the secretary in writing within 14 days. If no comments are received, the chairperson authorizes the minutes and list of resolutions to be finalised. The list of resolutions

is sent to the associated CBs. The list is also published on the website. If recommendations or decisions imply alterations of one of the relevant documents of the scheme, the list shall state the alteration and be valid as long as the alteration has not been processed and published. All associated CBs shall be informed of the publication. For the subsequent meeting, the list of resolutions is sent out again as a “document received”. In case the secretary receives comments, the draft report shall be dealt with and finalised at the subsequent meeting.

Exchange of Information

The secretary shall draw up reports of the activities of the Board. These reports are made available to the participants and the advisers on the Board and to the associated CBs which are not represented on the Board. In addition, the assigned ABs are entitled to have access to the reports. The Board shall notify all associated CBs with regards to all binding recommendations that have been issued and shall provide the necessary documents. The certification bodies are required to respond to the recommendations issued within two months.

In order to fulfil its responsibilities, the Board is required to receive information at least once a year from the secretary and the associated CBs. This information must relate to the nature, content and functioning of the scheme and shall include at least the following;

- the frequency and the results of the audits (if necessary, in code) conducted by the associated CBs;
- complaints with respect to the FSSC 22000 certification;
- the number and nature of appeal procedures with respect to FSSC 22000 certification with the ABs and the CBs;
- reports on the periodic assessments by the ABs with relevance to those sections which are important for the functioning of the FSSC 22000 scheme;
- applications and agreements for FSSC 22000 certification as well as certificates granted, suspended or withdrawn.

The mentioned information may provide a source of discussion for the Board in respect of possible changes to the FSSC 22000 scheme.

All information made available shall be treated in confidentiality by the Board. The secretary, in order to ascertain that the duties of the Board are conducted correctly, shall be responsible to ensure that the documents and information provided to the Board do not contain any commercially sensitive information.

Ratification and amendments

The Board is entitled to ratify and amend these regulations. This requires the approval of all the members of the Board. Ratification and amendments also require the approval of the associated CBs.

Concluding provision

In cases not covered by these regulations, the Board of Stakeholders shall make the final decision.

The Board of Stakeholders approved these requirements in April 2013.