

## Appendix 4: Requirements for SQF Foodservice Multi-site Certification

### 1 Scope

- 1.1 This appendix outlines the requirements for establishing and maintaining certification of a multi-site program that is managed by a designated central corporate site/entity..
- 1.2 The multi-site program involves a central corporate entity, kitchen or recipe meal manufacturer that manages the implementation and compliance of SQF systems and a number of sub-sites that shall be a minimum of twenty (20).

### 2 Definitions

- 2.1 A SQF multi-site program is comprised of a central site under which activities are planned to manage and control the food safety management systems of a network of sub-sites under a legal or contractual link (e.g. corporate ownership or franchisee).
- 2.2 For the purpose of this Code the definitions outlined in Appendix 2: Glossary and the following definitions apply.
- 2.3 The central-site can be any of the following:
  - 2.4 i. A corporate business entity that has a network of sub-sites that are eligible for certification;
  - 2.5 ii. A central kitchen certified to the SQF Food Safety Code for Foodservice that has a network of sub-sites; or
  - 2.6 iii. A commissary or recipe meal manufacturer certified to the SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing that has a network of sub-site.
- 2.7 All sub-site shall be certified to the SQF Food Safety Code for Foodservice, are involved in similar activities as per 3.7 below and are all located in the same country as the central site and/or operate under the same food safety legislation.
- 2.8

### 2.9 3 Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-site Organization

- 3.1 The central site is the entity responsible for the SQF multi-site program.
- 3.2 Sub-sites shall be linked to the central site by a legal or contractual arrangement (e.g. franchisee).
- 3.3 The central site and not any sub-site shall be contracted with the certification body. The central site and all sub-sites in the multi-site program shall be audited by one certification body.
- 3.4 Central sites shall implement an SQF System at all sub-sites that includes management of the sub-sites and internal audits of the sub-sites. The central site, in conjunction with the sub-sites shall be certified to a SQF Food Safety Code for Foodservice, except where the central site is defined by regulation as a manufacturer.
- 3.5 Sub-sites shall implement an SQF System which is subject to continuous surveillance by the central site.
- 3.6 The central site shall have authoritative control of the food safety management system of all subsites, including implementation of corrective actions when needed in any sub-site, and shall retain all relevant documentation associated with the sub-sites. These shall be included in the agreement between the central site and the sub-sites.
- 3.7 The product(s) or service(s) provided by each of the sub-sites shall be substantially of the same kind and produced according to the same fundamental methods and procedures. The size and/or complexity of each of the sub-sites shall be similar. Corporate ownership of different restaurant

brands shall define each brand as a separate multi-site if the brands are engaged in substantially different operations and products.

- 3.8 The central site shall establish and maintain SQF certification for the duration of the SQF multi-site program.
- 3.9 The central site's SQF management system shall be administered under a centrally controlled plan and be subject to central management review.
- 3.10 The central site shall demonstrate an ability to collect and analyze data from all sites, including the central site, and have the authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required.
- 3.11 The central administration function and the sub-sites shall be subject to the central site's internal audit program and shall be audited in accordance with that program. Internal audits shall be conducted at sub-sites, prior to the central site certification audit, in a quantity sufficient to allow the certification body to access whether the central site is in compliance and apply to sub-site sample selection (see 8.0 below). All sub-sites are required, within a calendar year or season, to have an internal audit as per 4.2 below.

#### **4. Internal Audits**

- 4.1 The central site shall document its internal audit procedure which shall include an internal audit schedule and outline the method of conducting audits of sub-sites and the central site administrative function.
- 4.2 An internal audit, which includes all relevant elements of the SQF Food Safety Code, and the Good Operational Practices (GOP) shall be conducted at least once per year, and during periods of peak activity, if applicable, at all sub-sites included in the multi-site certification.

#### **5. Internal Audit Personnel**

- 5.1 Personnel conducting internal audits shall:
  - i. Successfully complete the Implementing SQF Systems for Foodservice training course.
  - ii. Successfully complete internal auditor training.
  - iii. Have competence in foodservice food safety system management .
- 5.2 Personnel reviewing the internal audits of the multi-site organization and evaluating the results of those internal audits shall:
  - i. Be separate from personnel conducting the internal audits; and
  - ii. Complete Internal Auditing Training.
- 5.3 Where the internal audits are contracted out:
  - i. The contractor shall comply with the requirements stated in 5.1; ,
  - ii. The central site shall be accountable for the actions and effectiveness of the work completed by the contractor; and
  - iii. Contract arrangements shall comply with 2.3.2 of the SQF Food Safety Code for Foodservice.

#### **6. Auditing and Certifying the Multi-site Organization**

- 6.1 The Audits and certification of an SQF multi-site organization shall be completed by a SQF licensed and accredited certification body. The audit includes:
  - i. The certification audit (including initial desk audit of the central site only and sub-site audits);
  - ii. Surveillance audits; and
  - iii. Re-certification audits.
- 6.2 The initial certification audit and subsequent surveillance and re-certification audits of the multi-site organization shall be centered on the central site, its internal audit function and a sample of the sub-sites. Record reviews for sub-sites will be completed at the sub-site site audit.

#### **7. Audit Frequency**

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- 7.1 The certification audit of the central site and a sample (refer to 8.0) of sub-sites are conducted every twelve months.
- 7.2 Re-certification audits for the central site is conducted on the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit, plus or minus 30 calendar days. For seasonal operations timing for sub-sites should be guided by the operational dates, as well as time required for the central site to adequately complete the Internal Audit Program.
- 7.3 Within each certification and re-certification audit cycle, the central site shall be audited before the majority of the sample of sub-sites. It is recognized that for seasonal operations dates and having operations available to the central site may require some sub-sites audits being conducted prior to the central site audit.
- 7.4
- 7.5 Surveillance audits are conducted for any site in the multi-site program that receives a 'C-Complies' rating. Surveillance audits are conducted six (6) months from the last day of the last certification audit, plus or minus thirty (30) calendar days or as per Part A 4.3 for seasonal operations. Where a sub-site is subject to a surveillance audit due to a "C - Complies" rating, the internal audit of that sub-site by the central site shall also be reviewed. If the sub-site is not in operational within the six (6) month time frame for the surveillance audit then it shall be audited within the first two (2) weeks of of being operations for the season and automatically be included in the sub-site sampling calculation (refer to 9.0).
- 7.6
- 7.7 If the central site or any one of the sampled sub-sites is identified as having a critical non-conformity at an audit, or otherwise achieves only an "F - Fails to comply" rating, the certificates for the central site and ALL sub-sites shall be suspended until such time as a "C - Complies" rating or better is achieved at a further round of audits at the central site and a sample of sub-sites. The sub-site(s) that receives the "F - Fails to comply" rating shall be included in the sub-site selection process (refer to 8.0) for the next audit cycle.

## **8. Selecting the Sub-sites**

- 8.1 The selection of the sample is the responsibility of the certification body.
- 8.2 The sample is partly selective based on the factors set out below and partly non-selective, and shall result in a range of different sub-sites being selected, without excluding the random element of sampling. At least twenty-five (25) percent of the sub-sites selected shall be based on random selection.
- 8.3 The sample of sub-sites shall be selected so that the differences among the selected sub-sites, over the period of validity of the certificate, are as large as possible.
- 8.4 The sub-site selection criteria shall include among others the following aspects:
- i. Results of internal audits or previous certification assessments;
  - ii. Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of correction and corrective action;
  - iii. Significant variations in the size of the sub-sites;
  - iv. Variations in the work procedures;
  - v. Modifications since the last certification assessment;
  - vi. Geographical dispersion; and
  - vii. New suppliers added into the program (refer to 10.0).
- 8.5 The certification body shall inform the central site of the sub-sites that will comprise the sample in a timely manner that will allow the central site adequate time to prepare for the audits.
- 8.6 The central site shall ensure that all sub-sites listed as being included in the sub-site audit selection process are registered with SQF (Part A, 1.3). The central site shall also ensure that the SQF database is updated to reflect any sub-sites being removed from the previous year multi-site program.

## **9. Determining the Size of the Sub-sites Sample**

- 9.1 The certification body shall record the justification for applying a sample size outside that described in this clause.
- 9.2 The minimum number of sub-sites to be audited at a certification audit or re-certification audit is the square root of the number of sub-sites with 1.5 as a co-efficient ( $y=1.5\sqrt{x}$ ), rounded to the higher whole number. "y" is defined as the total number of sub-sites to be audited and "x" is the

total number of subsites registered to the Multi-site certification. As per 1.2 above a minimum of twenty (20) sub-sites are required.

- 9.3 The size of sample shall be increased where the certification body's risk analysis of the activity covered by the management system subject to certification indicates special circumstances in respect of factors like:
- i. Major variations in processes undertaken at each sub-site;
  - ii. Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of correction and corrective action;
  - iii. Indication of an overall breakdown of food safety controls; or
  - iv. Inadequate internal audits or action arising from internal audit findings.

#### **10. Additional Sub-sites**

- 10.1 On the application of a new sub-site or group of sub-sites to join an already certified SQF multi-site program, each new sub-site or group of sub-sites shall be included in the audit sample for the next re-certification audit. The new sub-sites shall be added to the existing sites for determining the sample size for future re-certification audits. Sub-sites transferring from another multi-site group or from a stand-alone certification are not classified as "new" and are not subject to being included in the sub-site audit sample unless part of the random selection process or due to auditor/Certification Body discretion.
- 10.2 New sub-sites shall not be added to the sub-site list once the list has been verified and agreed to by the central site and the certification body during the annual sample site selection process and the sub-site registration process is completed. These sites can have their SQF systems components (SQF Food Safety system elements) managed by the central site but will be certified as a stand-alone operation and subject to initial certification requirements, including desk and site audits. Following the stand-alone certification a new site can be included in subsequent multi-site certifications as per 10.1.

#### **11. Non-Conformities**

- 11.1 When non-conformities are found at any individual sub-site through the central site's internal auditing, investigation by the central site shall take place to determine whether the other sub-sites may be affected. The certification body shall require evidence that the central site has taken action to rectify all non-conformities found during internal audits and that all non-conformities are reviewed to determine whether they indicate an overall system deficiency applicable to all sub-sites or not. If they are found to do so, appropriate corrective action shall be taken both at the central site and at the individual sub-sites. The central site shall demonstrate to the certification body the justification for all follow-up action.
- 11.2 When non-conformities are found at the central site or at any individual sub-site through auditing by the certification body, action shall be taken by the certification body as outlined in Part A, 3.2.
- 11.3 When non-conformities for system elements are found at the central site, the certification body shall increase its sampling frequency until it is satisfied that control has been re-established by the central site.
- 11.4 At the time of the initial certification and subsequent re-certification a certificate shall not be issued to the central site and sub-sites until satisfactory corrective action is taken to close out all non-conformities.
- 11.5 It shall not be admissible that, in order to overcome the obstacle raised by the existence of non-conformity at a single sub-site, the central site seeks to exempt from the scope of certification the "problematic" sub-site during the certification, surveillance or re-certification audit.

#### **12. Certificate Issued for a Multi-site Organization**

- 12.1 A certificate shall be issued to the central site and all sub-sites within the SQF multi-site program.
- a. The central site's certificate shall include an appendix listing all sub-sites participating in the multi-site program and statements outlining the central site's role in the multi-site program SQFI and the designated CB shall agree on such statements.
  - b. The sub-site certification shall state within its scope of certification that it is part of a multi-site certification .

- 12.2 The certification date for the central site and sub-sites shall be the date of the last audit conducted in that certification cycle. The certificate expiry date shall be based on the certificate decision of the last date of the sub-site audit.
- 12.3 The certificate for all sites in the multi-site program will be withdrawn, if the central site or any of the sub-sites do not fulfill the necessary criteria for maintaining their certificate.
- 12.4 The list of sub-sites shall be kept updated by the central site. The central site shall inform the certification body about the closure of any of the sub-sites or the addition of new sub-sites. Failure to provide such information will be considered by the certification body as a misuse of the certificate, and the multi-site organization's certificate shall be suspended until the matter is corrected to the satisfaction of the certification body.