

October 22, 2021

Contract Accreditation Bodies
Contract Certification Bodies
(Registered Certified Organizations)

Transition Process to JFS-C Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and JFS-C Standard Document Ver. 3.0 Supplementary Requirements

Japan Food Safety Management Association

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in the activities of the Japan Food Safety Management Association (hereinafter referred to as JFSM).

In order to ensure strict compliance with the GFSI benchmarking requirements during the GFSI re-benchmarking process, JFSM has published the JFS-C certification program Ver. 3.1 (hereinafter referred to as Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1) and JFS-C Standard Document [Requirements for Organizations] Ver. 3.0 Supplementary Requirements (hereinafter referred to as Supplementary Requirements) Ver. For 3.0 on August 23rd 2021 as a replacement of JFS-C certification program document Ver. 3.0 and JFS-C Standard Document [Organization Requirements] Ver. 3.0.

We would like to notify you of the transition process for these updates.

Descriptions

1. Transition policy in the revision

- Since January 1st, 2022, accreditation body shall conduct the regular surveillance audit, re-audit, or exceptional-audit for certification bodies based on the certification bodies' certification operations-related documents in order to assess the conformities of the Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and the Supplementary Requirements. If certification body has a track record of certification audit, in accordance with the certification program document Ver. 3.1, at the time of the regular surveillance audit or re-audit, accreditation body may combine the assessment by reviewing the implementation status by certification body and the certification body whose accreditation audit preceded the track record shall evaluate the track record at the timing of the next accreditation audit. The deadline for accreditation transition shall be by December 31st, 2022.
- When certification body assess the organization's compliance with the Supplementary Requirements, the assessment is not really dependent on the certification program based on neither ver. 3.0 nor ver. 3.1. Certification body can start conducting assessment versus the Supplementary Requirements thereafter January 1st, 2022 regardless if the certification body has completed the accreditation transition to the Certification Program Document ver. 3.1 or not.
- Certification body shall be ready for the accreditation transition to Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and to start conducting assessment versus the Supplementary Requirement by December 31st, 2021. Certification body shall also notify certified organizations of the Supplement Requirements and make audit

planning for each certified organizations to assess the conformity with the Supplementary Requirement.

- Certification body shall conduct the assessment versus the Supplementary Requirements at the timing of regular surveillance audit, re-audit, or exceptional-audit after January 1st, 2022 as planned above. Certification body can conduct an audit of Supplementary Requirements and take an operation based on Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 if any certification body completes which is ready for the transition to Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and assessment versus the Supplementary Requirement.
- The notification document (JFSM_2020_C01N05) in 2020 shall stay valid and certification body and certified organization shall make sure that all audits after January 1st, 2022 incorporate the Supplementary Requirements. In case the transition audit from Ver. 2.3 to Ver. 3.0 has already been planned after January 1st, 2022, the transition audit shall be delivered to cover the Supplementary Requirements as well. In addition, the conformity versus the Supplementary Requirements are not required to be claimed in the certification, but this claim could be acceptable if requested by the organization.
- In principle, the above transition audit shall be conducted with advance notice, but an unannounced audit can be acceptable only if the certified organization requests to do so.
- Certification body and registered certified organization shall complete the above transition audit with the Supplementary Requirements by December 31st, 2022.

2. Required processed for the transition

1) Processed by contracted accreditation body

The notification document (JFSM_2020_C01N05) in 2020 shall stay valid. (See Table 1, No. 1)

Based on this document, contracted accreditation body shall promptly notify certification body of the implementation guidelines for the accreditation transition and shall also complete the accreditation preparation by updating accreditation related documents in line with JFS-C certification program document Ver. 3.1 and by providing training for personnel involved in accreditation activities (based on the documentation used in Harmonization Meeting on September 10th, 2021) by December 31st, 2021.

Contracted accreditation body shall conduct the regular surveillance audit, re-audit, or exceptional-audit for certification bodies by reviewing the certification bodies' certification operations-related documents and where possible, implementation status and shall complete the accreditation transition to Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 by December 31st, 2022.

On the other hand, since the relevance between the certification program revision and Supplementary Requirements is low, JFSM accepts that contracted certification body can conduct an audit of Supplementary Requirements under the accredited status by the certification program document Ver. 3.0 after January 1st, 2022 prior to the accreditation transition audit 2022.

Table 1 Transition schedule in the accreditation upgrading

No	Transition in Accreditation	year month	2021				2022												
			8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Accreditation certificate issued for certification program document Ver. 3.0			Completion due: 9/30															
2	Preparation for transition to certification program document Ver. 3.1		Public release: 8/23					Ready for audit: 1/31											
3	Transition from certification program document Ver. 3.1								Start auditing: 1/1										Accreditation Audit done by 12/31

2) Processes by contracted certification body

Contracted certification body shall notify certified organizations of Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1, Supplementary Requirements, and transition process. Contracted certification body shall complete the preparations for the accreditation transition by December 31st, 2021 by referring to below documents, providing training for personnel involved in certification activities, and updating certification operations-related documents. (See Table 1, No. 2 and Table 2, No. 6)

- (1) Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1
- (2) Supplementary Requirements
- (3) Guidelines Ed. 1.1 (JFSM _ 2021 _ C01N03) based on Supplementary Requirements
- (4) Documents used in Harmonization meeting (held on September 10th, 2021) with the explanations of above (1) - (3)

Contracted Certification Body shall complete the accreditation transition by December 31st, 2022 in accordance with the accreditation transition procedure issued by accreditation body.

Contracted certification body shall notify certified organization of Supplementary Requirements and shall make a plan by clarifying the timing when certification audit will be done with Supplementary Requirements. By following that plan, contracted certification body shall audit the organization’s compliance of Supplementary Requirements at the timing of regular surveillance audit, re-audit, and exceptional audit after January 1st, 2022. Contracted certification body can conduct an audit of Supplementary Requirements and take an operation based on Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 as soon as contracted certification body completes the program preparation for the transition to Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and audit preparation for the transition to Supplementary Requirement.

The notification document (JFSM_2020_C01N05) in 2020 shall stay valid and certification body and certification organization shall ensure that all audits after January 1st, 2022 are based on Supplementary Requirements. In case the transition audit from Ver. 2.3 to Ver. 3.0 has already been planned, the transition audit to Ver.3.0 Supplementary Requirements should be regarded. (see Table 2, number 5, wavy arrow, number 7). In principle, the above transition audit shall be conducted by announced audit, and unannounced audit can be acceptable only if certified organization desires. On the other hand, since the relevance between the certification program revision and Supplementary Requirements is low, JFSM accepts that contracted certification body can conduct an audit of Supplementary Requirements under the accredited status by the certification program document Ver. 3.0 after January 1st, 2022 prior to the accreditation transition audit. In addition, supplementary requirements are not required to be claimed in the certification at this audit, but this claim could be acceptable

if requested by the organization.

Table 2 Transition schedule in the certification upgrading

No	Transition in Certification	year month	2021					2022											
			8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
4	Preparation to standard document Ver. 3.0 by certified organization			Completion due: 9/30															
5	Transition from standard document Ver. 2.3 to Ver. 3.0				Audit only Ver. 3.0 since 10/1												Audit due: 9/30		Completion due: 12/31
6	Preparation to standard document Ver. 3.0 supplementary requirements by certification body and certified organization		Release of SR*: 8/23	preparation					Ready for audit: 12/31										
7	Conformity Assessments Standard Version 3.0 supplementary requirements (including scheduled transition from Ver. 2.3)							Starting 1/1											Audit Done by: 12/31

*SR : standard document Ver. 3.0 Supplementary Requirements

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3) Processed by registered certified organization

The notification document (JFSM_2020_C01N05) in 2020 shall stay valid. (Table 2 Numbers 4 and 5). Given that regular surveillance audit, re-audit, or exceptional-audit between January 1st, 2022 and December 31st, 2023 will include the compliance with Supplementary Requirements, registered certified organization can start the preparation by referring to Supplementary Requirements and Guideline Ed. 1.1 (JFSM_2021_C01N03) if necessary. In case the transition audit from Ver. 2.3 to Ver. 3.0 has already been planned, the transition audit to Ver.3.0 Supplementary Requirements should be regarded.

In principle, the above transition audit shall be conducted by announced audit, and unannounced audit can be acceptable only if certified organization desires.

Since the relevance between the certification program revision and Supplementary Requirements is low, JFSM accepts that contracted certification body can conduct an audit of Supplementary Requirements after January 1st, 2022 prior to the accreditation transition audit.

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