



**ISSUE 2.1**  
**ETHICAL TRADE**  
**AND RESPONSIBLE**  
**SOURCING**  
QUICK GUIDE



## Quick Guide for BRCGS Ethical certification

The BRCGS Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing Global Standard provides a formal framework for an independent evaluation of the management system of an organisation and its capability and capacity to deliver against the principles of ethical trade and responsible sourcing.

It enables suppliers to identify risks within their organisation and their supply chain, and to demonstrate that the goods and services they sell are produced ethically and raw materials are sourced responsibly.

## Benefits

Allows you to demonstrate your commitment to true social compliance to customers, specifiers and regulators.

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Enables compliance with emerging regulation and reporting requirements on modern slavery, supply chain due diligence and sustainability.

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Prepares businesses to meet SGD targets, in particular SDG 8.7 to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, and SDG 1.4 for equal rights.

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First to be benchmarked and recognised by The Consumer Goods Forum's (CGF) Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI), the benchmark of choice for the consumer goods industry.

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Enables cost and operational efficiencies by combining audits with any other BRCGS Global Standard.

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Opens new market opportunities as your demonstrable commitment to ethical practices provides product and brand differentiation.

## Steps to certification

- 1 | LEARN** Visit the BRCGS Store, or Participate if you are eligible for access, to download a free copy of the Standard. It is also recommended to get a copy of the Interpretation Guideline. Read these publications thoroughly to learn and understand the Standard and its requirements.
- 2 | REVIEW** Perform a self-assessment gap analysis to find out what is missing or inadequate, a gap-analysis tool is available on the BRCGS website. Assemble and train a team for implementation. Obtain consultancy if needed.
- 3 | PREPARE** Use the outputs of the self-assessment to develop an action plan to implement the Standard requirements in your operation. Carry out risk assessments where needed and establish necessary control points. Prepare your procedures and undertake internal audits.
- 4 | PLAN AUDIT** Select and contact a suitable certification body. If you already hold BRCGS certification, this may be your current provider. Alternatively, all BRCGS-approved certification bodies are listed in the BRCGS Directory at [www.brcgs.com](http://www.brcgs.com). Arrange an audit visit. This can be combined with the audit for any other BRCGS Global Standard. Make sure you plan ahead so that staff are available and preparations are made.
- 5 | ON-SITE AUDIT** The audit process emphasises the practical implementation of the Standard requirements. Observation of procedures and processes, reviewing documentation, and conducting staff interviews will all take place.
- 6 | NON-CONFORMITIES AND CORRECTIVE ACTION** If any nonconformities are identified, you will need to carry out any corrective action, root cause analysis and plan preventive action. These will be closed out within 28 days following the audit. The certification body will review your evidence, finalize the audit report, and issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.
- 7 | CERTIFICATION** The certification will review the non-conformities and finalise the audit report to determine whether certification be awarded. If certification is achieved, the certification body will issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.
- 8 | STAY AUDIT READY** The certification will review the non-conformities and finalise the audit report to determine whether certification be awarded. If certification is achieved, the certification body will issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.
- 9 | MARKET** Contact BRCGS to obtain a copy of the ETRS logo and review the associated guidance to design your marketing materials. Proudly promote your achievement to your market by displaying the logo as a symbol that your business operates ethically and responsibly.



# Why choose the BRCGS Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing Global Standard?

## Achievable

It takes a common sense, risk-based approach, providing companies with a clear path towards achieving certification. Over 33,000 sites in more than 135 countries have risen to the challenge and achieved certification to a BRCGS Standard.

## Appropriate

It is intended to assist manufacturers, secondary processing/packaging sites, as well as service providers (such as labour providers or cleaning services) and their customers to comply with legislative requirements for ethical trade and responsible sourcing whilst at the same time safeguarding the rights and protecting the freedoms of people in the workplace.

## Provides assurance to customers

It has been developed to enable suppliers to demonstrate that the goods and/or services that they sell are produced ethically and that raw materials are sourced responsibly.

## Cost effective

Widely accepted certification reduces the need and expense of duplicate audits. Audits are completed by local BRCGS trained and approved auditors to enable an internationally accepted Standard to be audited at local rates. It can be combined with the audit for any other BRCGS Global Standard, which will reduce audit time and costs.

## Auditing

The site audits are carried out by independent companies known as certification bodies. These companies must meet stringent requirements to be approved by BRCGS and a full list can be found on the BRCGS Directory.

Every auditor carrying out BRCGS audits also must demonstrate competence in terms of education, training and practical experience. BRCGS operates an ongoing monitoring and calibration process for auditors and certification bodies and publishes performance ratings every 6 months. This drives consistency and confidence in the audit and certification process.

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## Requirements

**SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT** The resources needed for the demonstration of commitment to the requirements of the Standard.

**ETHICAL TRADE AND RESPONSIBLE SOURCING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM** Details of the organisational and management policies and procedures that provide a framework by which a site will achieve the requirements in this Standard.

**ROBUST AND CONSISTENT HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES** Detailed policies, procedures and practices that manage the sites responsibility for its workers, including recruitment, terms and conditions of employment and wages.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK PROGRAM** Detailed policies, procedures, practices and risk assessments that manage the site's responsibility for providing a safe, healthy and hygienic environment for its workers, including risk assessments, worker training and the provision of personal protective equipment for workers, where required.

**HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT** A detailed review of direct or indirect adverse human rights impacts on the site and within the operations of its suppliers, or the potential for them to occur, together with appropriate actions to show that the site has responded to mitigate and/or minimise these impacts.

**RISK ASSESSMENTS RELATED TO ANTI-BRIBERY, ANTI-CORRUPTION, FRAUD AND INFORMATION SECURITY** A detailed understanding of local and national legal responsibilities, together with risk assessments to identify areas where the site may be vulnerable to incidents, and procedures to manage and minimise them.

## Support

Access the ETRS Standard, supporting publications and additional resources quickly and easily via the BRCGS Store available at [www.brcgs.com](http://www.brcgs.com). The Standard can be downloaded free of charge. This content is also available via Participate for sites that are already certificated to another BRCGS Global Standard and are eligible for access.

## Training

The BRCGS Academy provides a range of learning options to assist sites with the application of the Standard. This includes classroom training for sites specifically looking to implement this standard, as well as courses designed for those interested in gaining an understanding of specific core skills such as internal audit and root cause analysis. Find out more at [www.brcgs.com/training/overview/](http://www.brcgs.com/training/overview/)

## Contact us

For more information, you can call the BRCGS technical services helpline on +44 (0)20 3931 8150 or email [brcgs.enquiries@lgcgroup.com](mailto:brcgs.enquiries@lgcgroup.com).

To learn more about the BRCGS ethical certification, please visit [www.brcgs.com/our-standards/ethical-trade-and-responsible-sourcing/](http://www.brcgs.com/our-standards/ethical-trade-and-responsible-sourcing/).