

Global Standard Storage and Distribution, Issue 4

SD402: Audit Duration Calculator

Document Scope: This document is applicable to all audits associated with Issue 4 of the Global Standard Storage and Distribution. Audits starting on or after 1 May 2021 shall be completed in accordance with the calculator.

Version no.	Date	Description
1	12/11/2020	New for Issue 4.
2	15/11/2022	Update to audit day from 8 hours to 8 hours but not more than 10 hours. Formatting changes made to the document.
3	21/08/2024	Update to calculation of audit duration where S&D is added as a bolt-on to another BRCGS Standard.

1. Background

In accordance with current practice the typical audit duration shall be 1 day of which approximately 3-4 hours (i.e. approximately 40% of the audit) shall be spent auditing premises and vehicles including site environment, facilities, interviewing staff and observing processes. A 'typical' operation is considered to be where the scope of the operation is simple storage (storage area <25000m²) and distribution (<25 vehicles); product types are chilled, frozen and/or ambient; with ≤50 staff on site.

2. Calculation of audit duration

The audit duration calculator is based on:

- Number of employees – as full-time equivalent employees per main shift including seasonal workers and drivers. This should be based on the maximum number expected in a shift.
- Size of the facility (in square metres). The conversion from square feet to metres is 10.76 (e.g. 86,000 square feet equals 8,000 square meters).
- Complexity of operation and associated risk - the interface/interaction between the site and other operations/departments; product flows and volumes at SKU; increased product types and product lines; complexity of stock and inventory management processes e.g. case picking, pallet picking, inbound product profiles and handling requirements; cross docking completed at the main certificated site, trans-shipping. Where required this should be discussed and agreed between the site and CB.

When using the following tables, it should be noted that a typical audit day is 8 hours (not including lunch breaks) but shall not exceed the maximum of 10 hours per day. Please note an audit duration cannot be less than 1 day.

No. of Employees	Size of facility- warehouses, loading/unloading area and offices combined		
	<10,000 sq. m	10,000-25000 sq. m	>25000 sq. m
<50	1 day	1 day	1- 1.5 days
51 – 500	1 day	1 – 1.5 day	1.5 - 2 days
500– 1500	1- 1.5 day	1.5 - 2 day	2 – 2.5 days
>1500	1.5 - 2 day	2- 2.5 days	2 - 3 days

2.1 Head Office

A separate head office audit completed before the satellite site audit may reduce the duration to take account of systems already audited at the head office. This can be completed using the blended audit protocol, where appropriate. Where required this should be discussed and agreed between the site and certification body (CB).

2.2 Additional time allocation

There are several situations which require time to be added to the audit duration tabulated below. These are where a site has:

- More than one location (consider size and distance to any additional locations)
- Addition of Section 9 of the Standard
- Addition of additional voluntary modules
- Remote cross dock facilities to be included – AM 11
- ETRS risk assessment

Additional considerations	Additional time (This time to be split between document review and the site environment)
More than one location (consider size and distance of any location)	Minimum 2 hours depending on size of site and operation + travel time

Additional section of the Standard		Additional time (This time to be split between document review and the site environment)
Section 9 (Open Product Handling)		1- 2 hours
Section 10 Wholesale Module	10.2 only	1-2 hours
	10.3 only	3-4 hours
	Combined	4-5 hours

Additional module number	Module title	Typical additional time required
11	Cross Docking (Remote Offsite Location)	Minimum 1 hour + travel time per additional site
12, 14 to19	Ecommerce & Contracted Services Modules	1- 2 hours per additional activity

Additional activity	Typical additional time required
Ethical Trade & Responsible Sourcing (ETRS) Risk Assessment	4 hours

2.3 Other factors that may influence the audit duration:

There are other factors identified in the Standard which may influence the calculation. But, these are considered to be less significant and shall not influence the audit duration by more than 30% from the total calculated audit duration.

Factors which may influence the duration of the audit are:

- initial audit (i.e. the site's first ever audit) – it is likely that the auditor will require additional time, for example, during opening and closing meetings
- more than 25 vehicles managed by the site, based on the size and type of vehicles.
- communication difficulties, e.g. language
- the number of non-conformities recorded in the previous audit – clause 1.1.12 requires the site to complete root cause analysis and preventive recurrence of non-conformities identified at the previous audit. Therefore, a large number of non-conformities at the last audit are likely to require increased time for the auditor to assess
- difficulties experienced during the audit requiring further investigation

- the quality of company preparation, e.g. documentation, HARA or HACCP, QMS
- if there are a large number of non-conformities with corrective actions to review following the remote audit for blended audit option, the onsite audit duration may need to be adjusted.

2.4 Additional audit duration when the Standard is acting as a bolt-on

Where a combination of audits has been undertaken with:

- other BRCGS standards, a calculation for the total time taken for the Standard audit shall be stated. The reduction can be to a maximum of 0.5 days (4 hours) for the BRCGS Storage and Distribution audit, as there are similar requirements with other BRCGS Standards.
- standards that are not BRCGS Standards, then a calculation for the total time taken for the Standard audit should be stated. The certification body shall guarantee that the minimum audit duration for BRCGS Storage and Distribution is aligned with the requirements of the audit duration tool.

Details of combined audits shall be specified in the audit report. The total number of hours shall not include any calculation for writing of the final audit report away from site. This additional time is typically 4 – 8 hours. The calculation for audit duration shall be determined from the amount of time the audit is expected to take at the site.

3 Time spent within the site facilities

The audit of a site will involve time spent both within the product handling environment and reviewing documentation within an office. To support with this process, the requirements of the Standard are colour-coded to identify clauses that could be audited through documentation review (either onsite or remotely in case of a blended audit) and ones that could be audited during the on-site visit. Where clauses are dual coloured, the clauses must be audited during both documentation review and onsite visit.

For a majority of sites, approximately 30% of the audit will be spent auditing site facilities, interviewing staff, observing processes and reviewing documentation with the relevant staff.

Wherever practicable, evidence should be gathered within the product handling environment through interviewing staff, observing working practices and reviewing process controls and records.

Good practice is for the auditor to make multiple visits into the product handling areas to view different activities, processes, areas of the facility or shifts.

4. Blended Audit Option

Where a site opts into this option, the time spent remotely and on site is dependent upon the risk assessment completed by the certification body. The total audit duration at the site should be divided evenly between the review of documentation and the on-site operating practices. If additional storage facilities, locations or head office assessments are included within the audit process, then additional time shall be allocated for this.

It is also important to note that, although the colour-coding may indicate that the clauses could be audited remotely, the certification body may decide to include them within the on-

site assessment, even though they relate to documents or records. Additionally, the time allocated for the on-site audit may be adjusted based on the findings from the remote audit.

The total duration is the sum of the time spent onsite auditing and remote auditing. But does not include time spent on audit planning, the risk assessment or report writing. The remote audit duration shall not exceed 50% of the total audit duration in any case. It should be noted that 50% represents the maximum proportion of the audit that may be completed remotely. For further information on blended audits, kindly refer to BRCGS080.

5. Total time calculation

A typical audit day shall be 8-10 hours (not including lunch breaks).

For the onsite audit, the duration should be stated in total working hours giving the time at the site conducting the audit (including time spent within site facilities).

The start and finish times each day shall be clearly stated on the audit report and reflect the actual times at the site. These should be agreed as correct between the auditor and the authorised site representative i.e. the site should sign a record of the start and finish times, for each day of the audit, a copy of which must be retained by the certification body. (This may be combined with other audit documentation, for example, by adding the information to the non-conformity record sheet).

Allowance should be made (to deduct time) where audit teams are used and both auditors are present e.g. at the opening and closing meetings. Those personnel not 'auditing independently' should not be included within the total time calculation e.g.:

- Witness auditor
- Trainee auditor
- Technical expert

The total hours shall not include any calculation for writing of the final audit report away from site. This is additional time and is typically 4 – 8 hours.

6. Deviation from audit duration

Any deviation from the calculated audit duration either for total audit duration or for the time spent in site facilities or blended audit option needs a valid justification which is recorded on the audit report.