

The background of the cover is a composite image. On the left, there is a bar chart with several vertical bars of varying heights, rendered in a glowing orange-red color. On the right, there is a globe showing the continents of Africa and Europe, with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The globe is also glowing with a similar orange-red light. In the foreground, there is a blurred image of a circuit board or a similar electronic component, with green and orange lines visible. The overall color scheme is dominated by orange, red, and green, with a dark background.

BRCGS

Annual Report **2024-25**

brcgs.com

BRCGS

#weareBRCGS

Contents

Director's welcome	4
Introducing our new International Advisory Board Chair	5
A message from LGC Executive Vice President	6
2024-25 at a glance	7
BRCGS global standards	8
BRCGS digital solutions	9
Achieve excellence with the BRCGS Service Package	10
BRCGS Programmes update	11
Top five non-conformities of 2024-25	14
Celebrating success	16
BRCGS Academy update	18
Meet our Quality Manager	20
Certification Integrity update	21
Working with certification body partners	27
Strengthening global collaboration with our certification bodies	30
Meet our Head of Certification Integrity	31
Product recalls	32
Strategic overview for 2025-26	34
Looking ahead	36

Director's welcome

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the BRCGS Annual Report 2024-25. BRCGS is a globally recognised leader in consumer protection, dedicated to building confidence in the food and beverage supply chain. For nearly 30 years, BRCGS has been supporting manufacturers within the global food industry, helping them deliver safe and reliable products to consumers. With over 36,000 certificated suppliers spanning more than 130 countries, BRCGS global standards have become the industry benchmark for good manufacturing practices and play a significant role in the production of safe and high-quality products.

BRCGS is renowned for its technical expertise, consistently striving to enhance performance to meet the expectations of stakeholders, the needs of users, and, most importantly, ensure consumer safety. At the core of our work lies the development of comprehensive certification programmes. For a standard to be truly effective, it takes more than just defining a list of requirements. It demands a robust framework that includes protocols, reporting mechanisms, guidance for classifying non-conformities, auditor competency rules, training resources, and interpretation support. Together, these elements ensure our certification programmes deliver real value and impact.

A great example of this is the recent publication of BRCGS Global Standard Packaging Materials, Issue 7, launched in October 2024. As our second most widely adopted standard after food safety, packaging materials certification is utilised by over 6,000 sites across 91 countries. With an annual growth rate of nearly 8%, it was crucial that the standard

was revised to reflect the latest best practices and address emerging industry trends such as the updates to Codex, allergen management, and single use disposable products.

Significant effort went into this revision to ensure that Issue 7 delivers value to all industry players. At the core of the revision process was the Technical Working Group, comprised of nearly 40 experts from 13 countries, representing all regions and a wide range of industry sectors, including retailers, certification bodies, and manufacturers. Issue 7 audits commenced on 28 April 2025, and I wish our certificated sites the best of luck with their upcoming transition audit.

Since our last annual report, we have had the pleasure of welcoming several new team members to BRCGS from various regions across the globe. Their diverse backgrounds bring invaluable perspectives, additional language capabilities, and stronger local representation to our workforce. As certification is a global industry, BRCGS prides itself on being a truly global organisation. This enables us to better serve our customers and ensure access to BRCGS, no matter the language, location or time zone.

Looking to other areas of the business, the BRCGS Academy has continued to grow and evolve, introducing a variety of new courses in the past year. A key achievement was the launch of START instructor-led classroom training courses to complement our existing e-learning module, an initiative driven by valuable feedback from the industry. We have also recently celebrated a significant milestone in our BRCGS Professional programme, reaching 1,000 graduates! This is a remarkable



Amanda McCarthy
Business Director

accomplishment for our industry as it builds capacity, expertise, and shapes the next generation of leaders.

Much like last year, geopolitical uncertainty and the growing threats of climate change continue to create significant challenges for global food trade and security. These complexities call for a proactive and agile approach to certification to ensure food and product safety and to reduce risks to consumers. In our ever-changing industry, challenges are inevitable. Yet, our commitment to our mission of enhancing brand confidence through rigorous supply chain assurance remains a priority.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to our industry colleagues and delivery partners. Their expertise, dedication, and collaboration are crucial to our success, and none of this would be possible without their invaluable support.

Introducing our new International Advisory Board Chair

In January 2025, I was honoured to be appointed Chair of the BRCGS International Advisory Board (IAB). With a career spanning over four decades in the food industry, I bring a wealth of experience gained across diverse sectors, including manufacturing, food service, retail, and distribution. Originally from Ireland, my professional journey has taken me across Ireland, the UK, France, and the US, allowing me to develop a truly global perspective on the industry. I am also very engaged with consumer advocacy and co-chair the board of directors for Stop Foodborne Illness.

My relationship with BRCGS goes back a long way. I served on the North America IAB for several years, spoke at the BRCGS annual conference, and even hosted a study tour during my time with US-based retail chain, Wegmans Food Markets. I am thrilled to be working with BRCGS again in the role of IAB Chair.

BRCGS is dedicated to building and maintaining confidence in the global food and drink supply chain and the IAB plays a vital role in

this. By providing valuable insights into industry needs, it shapes the future of food and product safety and drives continuous improvement across all BRCGS standards. BRCGS is known for its technical excellence, and it is a privilege to lead this dedicated group of experts from both Europe and North America.

I follow in the footsteps of my predecessor, Alec Kyriakides, whose outstanding contributions have significantly impacted both regions, particularly around governance. I extend my sincere gratitude to Alec for his impressive work as IAB Chair.

On behalf of BRCGS, I want to extend my thanks to all our IAB members for their invaluable contributions and unwavering commitment to advancing food and product safety in our industry. I am excited to meet with the IAB members in person later this year at BRCGS Connect Americas.

I look forward to contributing to the ongoing success of the IAB as we continue to address the evolving needs of brands and retailers worldwide.



Gillian Kelleher
International Advisory
Board Chair

On behalf of BRCGS, I want to extend my thanks to all our IAB members for their invaluable contributions and unwavering commitment to advancing food and product safety in our industry.

A message from LGC Executive Vice President

It is my privilege to be introducing my first BRCGS Annual Report. Over the past six years at LGC, and most recently in my role as Executive Vice President, I have had the opportunity to witness the incredible impact of BRCGS, and I am proud of what we have achieved.

The synergy between LGC and BRCGS is powerfully reflected in LGC's mission of *Science for a Safer World*. BRCGS certification programmes provide a science-based framework designed to ensure the safety and integrity of food products, helping industry to uphold its commitment to food safety whilst protecting consumers, brands and reputations. This mission is perfectly complemented by the work of other parts of the LGC Group, such as the Food Authenticity Network's efforts to combat food fraud, AXIO's robust food proficiency testing schemes, and the pioneering advancements of our Diagnostics and Genomics business, which support more sustainable food production worldwide. Across our businesses, we all share a deep-rooted commitment to safety and quality, forming the foundation of our success.

This past year has been exceptional for BRCGS, marked by strong business performance and meaningful contributions to the broader industry. The number of BRCGS certificated sites continues its steady growth and now exceeds 36,000 - a testament to the trust and value placed in our certification programmes. We have also seen excellent outcomes from our Certification Integrity Programme, trained over 13,000 delegates through the BRCGS Academy, and seen our BRCGS Professional programme grow to over 15,000 participants.

When I stepped into this role in early 2024, I began by immersing myself in BRCGS and its teams. What stood out immediately was the incredible passion and technical expertise of our colleagues driving BRCGS forward. Their commitment to progress has not only strengthened our organisation but also increased the confidence of the consumers and industries we serve, helping to maintain our position as the global leader in certification.

Over the past year, and as we look ahead, we focus on strategic alignment and investment to future-proof our business. Developing our certification programmes is critical to staying ahead of changing manufacturing and supply chain practices while continuing to deliver the value our stakeholders expect. This is particularly important as we navigate modern disruptors such as digitalisation and artificial intelligence.

Certification is a truly global business, and a robust forward-looking strategy is vital to meeting the diverse needs and expectations of markets around the world. Collaboration and partnerships remain central to driving improvements in food and product safety globally. Internally, we are committed to delivering outstanding service and value to the industry, and we recognise the need to continuously evolve to better serve our stakeholders. A key priority for the year ahead is making BRCGS certification more accessible across all markets, and our strategic initiatives reflect this commitment.

As we look to the future, I am confident that BRCGS will continue to lead with integrity and an unwavering commitment to improve supply chain confidence for the



Sanjeev Rana
LGC Executive Vice President

protection of consumers. Thank you to you, our valued stakeholders, for your continued support on this journey.

The synergy between LGC and BRCGS is powerfully reflected in LGC's mission of *Science for a Safer World*.

2024-25 at a glance

38,000+

audits completed
against BRCGS
Standards.

Certificated sites in
139 countries.

14,000+

unannounced
audits.

240,000+

corrective actions
raised.

1,700+

product incidents
followed up by
certification bodies.

2,600

auditors delivering
BRCGS audits
globally.

13,378

delegates attended
BRCGS training
courses around the
world.

15,135

enrolled in the
BRCGS Professional
programme.

1,093

BRCGS Professional
graduates.



BRCGS Standards

“The BRCGS Standard was our preferred choice as it addresses not only food safety but also food quality, legality and authenticity. **Mawarid Food Company Ltd**”

AT THE FOREFRONT OF STANDARDS FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS

Through the world’s most rigorous supply chain assurance programme, BRCGS Standards cover core areas vital to the success of modern business and to drive quality. Underpinned by robust compliance processes and internationally recognised accreditation, the rigorous grading system is designed to help companies deliver meaningful improvements over time.

Food Safety

Developed by experts to ensure it is rigorous and detailed, yet easy to understand, the latest issue provides a framework for managing product safety, integrity, legality and quality in the food and food ingredient manufacturing, processing and packing industry.

Agents and Brokers

This Standard provides a framework for managing product safety, quality and legality for non-manufacturing businesses in the food and packaging industries, and covers issues as diverse as senior management commitment, continual improvement, and hazard and risk assessment.

Storage and Distribution

The essential certification link between manufacturing and end-users such as retailers or food service companies, this ensures that product integrity is maintained during storage and distribution, and that customer

confidence is maximised through audit and certification.

Consumer Products

This covers two distinct areas: General Merchandise, and Personal Care and Household, and provides a clear framework that helps manufacturers to produce safe, quality and legal products that meet customer requirements.

Packaging Materials

A robust framework for packaging manufacturers to assist the production of safe and high-quality packaging materials that meet industry and legal requirements. It is applicable to any manufacturer producing packaging materials for all types of products at all levels.

Retail

This Standard provides essential certification for retailers of food products and hard lines and covers the activity of retailing, as well as commissary, sourcing and in-store production. It promotes best practice in product safety, quality and consumer protection.

START

START is a food safety development programme built specifically for emerging and developing food producers. It enables aspirational businesses to build the structure, confidence, and credibility to move toward recognised certification. With the full support of leading global brands and

retailers, it provides suppliers with assurance of food safety.

Gluten-Free

This Standard takes a preventative, science-based approach for managing the safe manufacture and production of gluten-free products. Through partnerships with leading celiac organisations, it allows brand owners to connect with the global gluten-free consumer market.

Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing

This social compliance standard empowers businesses to align with ethical and socially responsible principles, and helps them to meet UN Sustainable Development Goals. By effectively managing organisational and supply chain risks, it provides assurance of ethical practices and responsible sourcing of materials.

Plant-Based

A comprehensive management system approach to plant-based food production providing strong protection from failure and rapid identification and management of risks. The on-pack trademark is a powerful differentiator for brands that allows consumers to make informed choices.



**BRCGS**

Digital Solutions

Responding to greater customer assurance and growing regulatory requirements, BRCGS has developed a series of digital tools to support sites to maintain compliance, mitigate risk and continuously improve.

BRCGS Horizon

BRCGS certification programmes generate a wealth of data that can be used to inform performance and trends and provide actionable insights to improve performance and risk management. With over 45 million data points, Horizon provides essential supply chain insights, analysed and reviewed through a range of commercial and technical dashboards, and visual displays.

Confidential Reporting

BRCGS, in partnership with EQS, provides a confidential whistleblowing system that allows employees and third parties

to anonymously report issues and concerns for investigation. Digitalising and simplifying your processes with our technically advanced, secure and cost-effective confidential reporting and case management solution ensures easy compliance with regulation and BRCGS Standards.

Food Safety Culture Excellence (FSCE) Assessment Tool

FSCE supports food safety culture improvements, regardless of the type or size of operation. It helps to determine strengths and weaknesses in food safety capability, provides insight into staff opinion, and visibility of what is happening outside of audits. It makes measuring and improving culture simpler, ensuring compliance with the culture requirements in BRCGS Standards and with emerging global regulation.

“We highly recommend conducting an FSCE assessment... the results can significantly strengthen the company. You may uncover insights you never expected.”

The McDonalds Salad Plant

Achieve excellence with the BRCGS Service Package

BRCGS certification goes beyond the audit. With the Service Package, certificated sites gain access to a variety of tools designed to support compliance between audits and drive continuous improvement. As the only GFSI-recognised scheme to provide this level of support, BRCGS can help you to raise the bar, set new standards, and achieve even greater success.

Participate

Access to an extensive online library of all BRCGS publications and guidance totally free. From the latest best practice guidelines and guidance documents, through to tools and templates, certificated sites can access it all to ensure they remain audit-ready.

Ethical Appraisal Tool

The Ethical Appraisal Tool provides a simple framework to evaluate and enhance a business's social compliance to meet the growing needs of customers, stakeholders and regulators.

BRCGS Horizon

Certificated sites gain access to a taster version of the BRCGS

Horizon tool that uses BRCGS audit data to provide insight into audit performance. Presented as a simple user-friendly dashboard, it helps to avoid repeat non-conformities and identify patterns/trends in site audit performance.

BRCGS Professional

Having trained staff is crucial to maintaining compliance. All employees that work in a certificated site can take advantage of exclusive free enrolment in the BRCGS Professional programme, a purpose-built holistic learning and development programme. It provides a clear pathway to upskill and build capacity within your teams with world-renowned expert-led training straight from source.

FSCE Basic

The benefits of a positive culture on product safety are well evidenced. This taster version of the culture assessment module will help certificated sites to start measuring and analysing cultural data. Certificated sites can see how the tool works and the potential benefits for their business to drive positive impactful culture change.

ONLY AVAILABLE FOR SITES CERTIFICATED TO:

BRCGS | Food Safety
BRCGS | Packaging Materials
BRCGS | Storage and Distribution
BRCGS | Agents and Brokers

All certificated sites feature in the BRCGS Directory, the 'shop window' for certificated suppliers. Accessed by more than 70k users annually, it is the best way to be seen by those looking for a new supplier.



BRCGS Programmes update

The BRCGS Programmes team has had another incredibly busy year! The commitment and hard work of the team delivered revisions to standards, new tools and publications for all stakeholder groups, making me extremely proud of how the new team has formed to become an effective and efficient unit.

The team has a breadth of knowledge and expertise from manufacturing, consultancy, certification bodies and auditing, with experience covering all BRCGS Standards. As a result, we have been able to respond effectively to industry challenges, emerging issues and enquiries whilst developing standards and increasing their profile within the industry.

It has been an exciting year for us with the launch of Global Standard Packaging Materials, Issue 7, our second-largest standard after Food Safety. Published in October, we followed its release with approximately 40 webinars, engaging over 7,500 participants and addressing hundreds of questions. Issue 7 audits commenced on 28 April 2025 and we look forward to supporting our certificated sites through this transition phase.

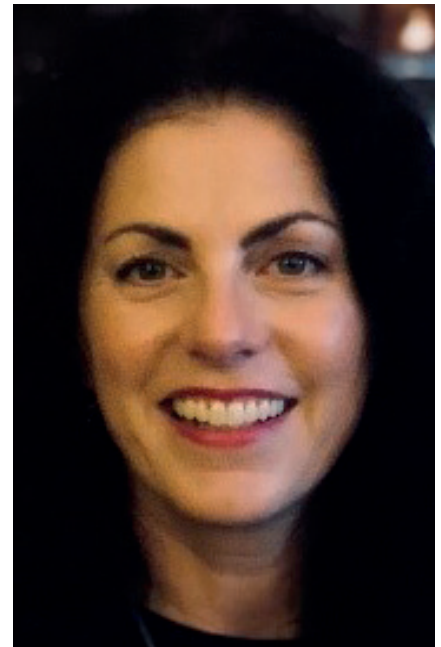
The last year also saw the rollout of Global Standard Gluten-Free Issue 4 audits, and Global Standard Food Safety, Issue 9 achieved

GFSI recognition. Additionally, in July, our Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing earned recognition under the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). This accreditation ensures that certifications issued by IAF MLA signatories are widely accepted across numerous markets, adhering to the principle of 'one accreditation, one certification'.

Beyond all these achievements, the team has accomplished even more throughout the year. Other activities include:

- Attending key stakeholder events across the world to work with organisations keen to develop BRCGS certification.
- Collaborating with key stakeholders on training, events and webinars, answering questions on our standards and raising awareness of BRCGS.
- Seeking the voice of the customer directly by visiting certificated sites.
- Presenting at conferences and events on topics including future food technology.

During 2024, there was significant engagement with all stakeholders as we reviewed our standards, technical advisory committees and technical working groups. Members of the team have been involved in several projects to ensure our Standards



Angela O'Donovan
Head of Programmes

continue to deliver value and meet the ongoing needs of all audiences.

I am proud to share that BRCGS has continued to actively contribute to global technical working groups and committees, including the IAF and GFSI. Through these efforts, we stay at the forefront of emerging initiatives and industry advancements ensuring that BRCGS certification remains both relevant and impactful and drives continuous improvement in product safety management across the supply chain.

During 2024, there was significant engagement with all stakeholders as we reviewed our standards, technical advisory committees and technical working groups.

Technical updates

Packaging Materials

In 2024, Global Standard Packaging Materials underwent a comprehensive review and update. The process required extensive effort, and BRCGS extends its gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who contributed countless hours to ensure diverse representation from all stakeholders and regions. The public consultation phase received over 400 comments, helping to ensure the standard aligns with the evolving needs and expectations of the sector.

Issue 7 was officially published in October and made available in English, Chinese, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Its release was marked by a global webinar, followed by approximately 40 additional webinars in multiple languages including Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Polish, Italian, Turkish, and Portuguese. To support its implementation, the updated standard was supplemented with detailed guidance, additional modules, and tailored training courses for both sites and auditors.

Gluten-Free

Audits for the Global Standard Gluten-Free, Issue 4 began on 5 August 2024, marking an important evolution in gluten-free certification. The Standard continues to be endorsed by leading coeliac associations ACELMEX (Mexico), Beyond Celiac (USA), Celiac Canada and the Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS). A key update in Issue 4 was the introduction of a voluntary section with additional requirements for using the AOECS Crossed Grain Trademark, which has already been adopted by some sites during the initial transition audit phase. Another significant enhancement was the introduction of

non-conformity grading, providing coeliac associations and stakeholders with greater confidence in the safety and quality of gluten-free products produced at certificated sites.

Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing

The Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing (ETRS) continues to be recognised by the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) after successfully completing our 2024 benchmarking audit. As the industry focuses on building sustainable, globally responsible supply chains, this recognition gives customers confidence and trust in our social compliance programme.

In June 2024, BRCGS launched the Ethical Appraisal Tool, an innovative resource designed to help sites evaluate their readiness for certification and streamline their path towards achieving it.

In the last year, BRCGS also signed the Appellando Declaration, a commitment to safeguarding human rights and protecting the environment across the supply chain. We are excited to join this partnership and to showcase our ETRS Standard as the leading programme in ethical and sustainable practices.

Consumer Products

The number of certificated sites for consumer products continues to rise, demonstrating the enduring value of this standard in the marketplace. In 2024, the BRCGS Technical Advisory Committee conducted a review of Issue 4 and recommended a rewrite to maintain its relevance and applicability. Consequently, a project to revise the standard has commenced and will run throughout 2025. The goal is to ensure it

remains the leading benchmark for product safety assurance, trusted by manufacturers worldwide.

START

START is a food safety development programme specifically for emerging and developing food producers that are building their food safety management system. The Standard has seen an impressive 32% annual growth rate, with its strongest adoption seen in the LATAM region.

In 2024, we introduced resources to support sites transitioning from SALSA and other food safety systems to START, including comprehensive checklists available in key languages. Additionally, work began on translating the interpretation guidelines to better support an expanding range of markets.

Plant-Based

In March 2025, a Technical Advisory Committee was formed to support this standard. Comprising industry experts, retailers and certificated sites, the committee will meet later in 2025 to evaluate the need for updates to the standard, assess auditor competency requirements, and refine training materials. Additionally, they will review and enhance the supplementary technical documents that support the standard.

Other updates

Other standards have been updated throughout the year to address various topics, including audit protocol and certification scope. Each update was published as a position statement on the BRCGS website, Participate and communicated through various channels.

New BRCGS publications

In 2024, BRCGS published 17 titles, plus translations. Aside from standards, interpretation guidelines and guides to key changes, updated titles and modules include:



All BRCGS publications are available on the BRCGS Store or Participate.

Top five non-conformities of 2024-25



Clause	Description	NCs raised
1.1.2	Defining and maintaining a product safety and quality culture within the company.	113
2.6	Identifying hazards associated with each step of the product flow.	99
3.5.1	There shall be a schedule of internal audits.	98
3.2.1	Having a procedure for managing documents in the quality system.	91
2.5	Having a process flow diagram to cover each step in the process from purchase of the product to acceptance by the customer.	81

Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.4.1	Walls, floors, ceilings and pipe work shall be maintained in good condition and shall be capable of being kept clean.	212
4.6.1	Equipment, production and storage areas shall be maintained in a state of cleanliness appropriate to the operations undertaken.	193
6.3.4.2	Potential risks to product involving glass, ceramic, wood and brittle-plastic items in production areas shall be included in the risk assessment and listed in a register.	176
4.9.2	Storage shall be maintained in good condition and securely protected from contamination, deterioration and damage.	165
4.8.1	Responsibility for identifying and controlling the risk of pest infestation and operating pest control procedures.	147



Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.11.1	The premises and equipment shall be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.	4,715
4.6.2	The design and construction of equipment shall be based on risk, to prevent product contamination.	3,322
4.9.1.1	Processes shall be in place to manage the use, storage and handling of chemicals to prevent chemical contamination.	3,284
4.4.8	Doors (both internal and external) shall be maintained in good condition.	3,007
4.4.1	Walls shall be finished and maintained to prevent the accumulation of dirt, minimise condensation and mould growth, and facilitate cleaning.	2,933



Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.8.1	A good standard of housekeeping shall be maintained, including a condition-based cleaning or 'clean as you go' policy.	1,089
4.7.6	Only permitting temporary repairs/modifications using tape, cardboard, etc. in emergencies and where product contamination is not at risk.	955
4.9.3.1	Processes shall be in place to manage the use, storage and handling of chemicals to prevent chemical contamination.	928
4.11.5	Responsibility for identifying and controlling the risk of pest infestation and operating pest control procedures.	860
4.2.1	Walls, floors, ceilings and pipe work shall be maintained in good condition and shall be capable of being kept clean.	773

Clause	Description	NCs raised
4.4.9	Buildings shall be suitably proofed against the entry of all pests.	341
6.4.1	The premises and equipment shall be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.	333
4.4.1	Walls, floors, ceilings and pipe work shall be maintained in good condition and shall be capable of being kept clean.	243
7.4.1	Glass or other brittle materials in product-handling areas shall be excluded or protected against breakage or the product shall be adequately protected.	207
3.2.1	A system shall be in place for identifying whether customers have specific requirements.	187



Celebrating success

At BRCGS Connect Europe in February 2025, we had the pleasure of hosting the BRCGS Awards. These awards celebrate the exceptional dedication, support, and achievements of individuals and organisations that contribute to advancing BRCGS certification and promoting excellence in the wider food safety industry.

BRCGS Approved Training Partner of the year and BRCGS Consultant of the year

Oskar Zaborowski

"I am incredibly grateful to have received not one but TWO awards! A sincere thank you to everyone who nominated me, your support and kind words mean so much.

These awards reflect the hard work and passion of the teams at Q Technical Consultancy and Sirius Training & Certification, whose dedication to helping businesses achieve the highest food safety and compliance standards inspires me every day.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my past and present employers who have played a role in shaping my journey and supporting my growth.

And finally, a big thank you to BRCGS for recognising my work and for creating such a supportive community. These awards motivate me to continue learning, growing, and supporting others in the industry."



Oskar Zaborowski, accepting his ATP of the year award



Joanne Everest accepting the Certificated site of the year award on behalf of Jude's Ice Cream

Certificated site of the year Jude's Ice Cream

"Thank you so much for this incredible honour. On behalf of the entire team at Jude's, I'm thrilled to accept this BRCGS Certificated Site of the Year award. It has been a pleasure working alongside a standard that has constantly challenged us to be the best and has evolved with the needs of our industry.

At Jude's, we don't just make ice cream – we aim to make a real impact. Our purpose is to bring life to people and the planet, and this award reflects the hard work, dedication, and values that drive everything we do.

Product safety has always been at the very core of our business. From our first SALSA certification to our recent BRCGS achievements, we've continuously strived to improve and exceed industry standards. This award is a testament to the passion of our technical team, our entire workforce, and our partners across the supply chain who share our commitment to safety, ethics, and sustainability.

True food safety means caring for people and the planet. Whether through sustainability efforts, supporting meaningful causes, or ensuring product safety at every step, we're focused on creating a better future for everyone.

We also owe a huge thank you to our customers, suppliers and communities whose trust and support motivate us to keep raising the bar. We'll continue pushing boundaries and striving for a more sustainable, impactful future.

Thank you again for this honour – we're excited for what's ahead!"



CEO of the year Lindsay Hay, PepsiCo



Rehab Youssef receives her third BRCGS Professional of the year award

BRCGS Professional of the year

Rehab Youssef

"It's truly an honor to be awarded BRCGS Professional of the Year. I am incredibly grateful for the recognition. Winning this three times in a row reflects the extent of the effort I contribute every year. Each award reminds me of the passion, dedication, and teamwork that goes into advancing quality and safety in our industry.

I'd like to extend my deepest thanks to the BRCGS team for this. I am also grateful to my team at ALWAFAA food industries, ALMERA foods and ALMERA Academy, and everyone who has supported me throughout this journey. This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the collaboration of so many talented and dedicated professionals.

The work we do in advancing BRCGS standards in different industries has a profound impact on industry culture worldwide. Being part of the journey to shape global standards for safety, quality, legality, authenticity and sustainability is something I'm incredibly proud of.

I'm fortunate to be part of a community of passionate professionals who continually inspire me to push the boundaries of what's possible.

As we continue to evolve and improve, I look forward to the opportunities ahead. There's still much to be done, and I'm excited to keep working together to drive positive change in the industry. Now we start a new year of achievements and innovation to achieve this award again next year - let's make a record!"

Certification body of the year USB certification

"Winning the BRCGS Certification Body of the Year award is a testament to our commitment to excellence, continuous improvement, and industry leadership. This recognition reinforces our dedication to supporting businesses in achieving the highest quality and food safety standards. We are incredibly proud of our team, whose hard work and expertise have made this achievement possible. Together with our valued clients and partners, we will continue to enhance food safety, integrity, and quality across the industry."



Some of the team at USB Certification accepting their award for Certification body of the year.



BRCGS Academy update

This year has been defined by remarkable achievements, including the launch of new training products, enhancements to our BRCGS Professional programme, and the continued growth of the scheme. We have broadened the scope and capabilities of our trainers while expanding our network of delivery partners, ensuring greater reach and impact.

The BRCGS Academy recognises that delivering value goes beyond what we offer; it is also about how we deliver it. These improvements have been carefully implemented to ensure the BRCGS Academy continues to provide meaningful support and value to our learners in today's fast-paced industry.

BRCGS classroom training

13,378

delegates
trained

2,123

courses
delivered

75%

of courses
delivered virtually.

Top five training courses of 2024/25:

Global Standard Food Safety, Issue 9: Sites Training

Internal Auditor

Global Standard Food Safety, Issue 9: Lead Auditor

Global Standard Packaging Materials, Issue 6 to 7 Conversion for Sites

Global Standard Packaging Materials, Issue 7: Sites Training

Top five countries with the most training activity in 2024-25:

1. United Kingdom
2. Mexico
3. China
4. Canada
5. Italy

381 Approved Training Partners across **47** countries.

BRCGS Academy update (continued)

BRCGS training courses have been conducted in 58 countries worldwide.

The BRCGS Academy launched a number of new training courses in 2024-25 to support the launch of new standard issues.

BRCGS | Packaging Materials

Issue 7 instructor-led training courses were launched:

- Train the Trainer
- Train the Trainer conversion
- Auditor
- Auditor conversion
- Sites
- Sites conversion

BRCGS | Gluten-Free

Issue 4 training was launched in e-learning format:

- Train the Trainer
- Auditor
- Sites

BRCGS | START!

Previously only available as an e-learning module, Issue 2 training was made available as instructor-led classroom training:

- Auditor
- Sites

BRCGS PROFESSIONAL

"The BRCGS Professional programme has been excellent... These courses are designed to improve decision-making and ensure quality and safety at all times." **Olega**

Total number of BRCGS Professional graduates: **1,093**

Total number of enrolled participants: **15,135**

During the last year, the BRCGS Professional programme achieved a significant milestone, celebrating over 1,000 graduates. This accomplishment highlights the unwavering commitment and dedication within our industry to advancing food and product safety standards.

To further support the professional development of our graduates, we have recently implemented new functionality in our Learning Management System that automates and centralises the monitoring of Professional Progress Points (PPP). This simplifies the process and makes it even more convenient for

professionals to stay up to date with their learning progress.

In addition, a new filter has been added to the BRCGS Professional Directory, allowing users to search by country. This will make it easier for employers or potential clients to find BRCGS Professionals in their desired location.

The continued growth of the BRCGS Professional programme is inspiring. It is now one of the largest global product safety communities and we look forward to celebrating more of the remarkable achievements of its members.



BRCGS has proudly established a partnership with the Ontario Food Protection Association (OFPA). All BRCGS Professional graduates can now enjoy a discount of 20% on OFPA membership and take advantage of discounts on BRCGS e-learning modules.

"The training enriched our skills and knowledge in learning and executing the standard effectively. By investing our time in comprehensive and structured training and workshops, we were able to successfully overcome these challenges and ensure compliance."

Regal Kitchen Foods

Meet our Quality Manager

In April 2024, Sam Clegg joined BRCGS in the new role of Quality Manager. Here Sam speaks about what brought him to BRCGS, achievements in the last 12 months, and plans for the next year.



What is your background?

My professional background is rooted in the aquaculture industry, where I have held various roles in food production, primarily focusing on fish farming and seafood. I have also held the role of Compliance Manager for a certification body, overseeing all BRCGS programmes. With my experience, I have a well-rounded understanding of BRCGS certification from various industry perspectives. Currently, I specialise in system and process-driven problem solving, using my expertise to develop efficient, impactful solutions.

How has your first year been in the role?

In the last year, we have worked hard to build expertise in the team. I am supported by Monica Pretlove as Quality Assistant, who has been with the company for a number of years. She was previously in a certification integrity role and has a wealth of experience in BRCGS processes and our quality management system.



We have also worked hard to bring processes under control and improve our functions to lay the right foundations to build on in the

future. My experience in building and managing systems and processes has been very useful since joining BRCGS.

What has been your focus for the last year?

The focus has been on rebuilding and modernising our processes to better support the business. For example, we have reformed the brand integrity process to better protect our business and ensure a more robust approach in combating fraudulent use of our branding and certificates. We have also modernised our enquiry handling system to remove manual administration and improve transparency - we expect to receive upwards of 1,000 enquiries in 2025 which will be handled through the new system.

In addition, we have successfully navigated a challenging year of robust compliance activity by our externally recognised bodies such as GFSI and SSCI. I am pleased to report that we have maintained recognition for our four main standards and Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing.

Not forgetting that we facilitated and delivered an impactful and valuable management review meeting, and subsequent report, that brought the company together to reflect on our performance and achievements. It was a great session!

What have you enjoyed the most so far?

It has been busy, but I have enjoyed learning about the business and building working relationships with my colleagues. I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity to deliver on crucial objectives and look forward to a challenging year ahead.

What has been most challenging?

Our external compliance activities this year have been extremely challenging. The approach was very detail focused, whilst at the same time casting a wide net across our standards and certificated sites. As a new team, we tackled the challenge head on and successfully delivered in all areas, despite the difficult circumstances. We delivered a full annual auditing cycle within a much-shortened time frame and greatly appreciated the support of the wider company, who also deserve credit for the success.

What are your plans for the coming year?

In 2025-26 we will be focusing on the newly released GFSI benchmarking requirements and the associated re-benchmarking activity required for our four recognised standards. This will be a massive undertaking for the whole business and everyone plays a role. These important updates will occupy most of the year for us.

That said, as a team we have strengthened existing systems in the last year, and I don't want to lose momentum. We have more plans this year to extend and build across the business. We are working towards a stronger and more robust quality management system that encompasses all business units and interacts efficiently with the wider LGC Group functions. This is essential to driving progress and mitigating risks, ensuring our business remains resilient and prepared for the future.

Certification Integrity update

Integrity is the foundation of certification, which is why BRCGS pioneered its Certification Integrity programme (then known as the Compliance programme) 17 years ago. Since its inception, the programme has evolved significantly and is now widely recognised throughout the industry - recognition we take great pride in.

At BRCGS we're committed to preserving our reputation as the leading global brand protection organisation, because we implement rigorous practices that aim to make sure an audit is carried out in exactly the same way, regardless of the product, country of production, certification body or auditor. This ensures the integrity and consistency of the BRCGS certification scheme, no matter where in the world your supplier is located.

Integrity is the bedrock of BRCGS certification. It is our unique selling point that differentiates us from other schemes and is fundamental in delivering results that brand owners can trust. As supply chains globalise more and more, integrity is key to ensuring BRCGS certification continues to play a vital role in consumer protection.

We do this through an integrity programme comprised of five layers:

- TellBRCGS - a global confidential reporting system.
- Horizon - a digital analytical tool for site benchmarking and management of performance.
- Certification integrity audits - a global programme of auditing the auditors.
- Delivery partner performance - defined KPIs used to decide star rating of certification bodies.
- Auditor compliance - based on qualifications, training, experience, and exams.

Integrity visits – factors considered in risk assessment

Certification bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of partners • Geography • Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity issues and complaints • Trends outside the norm
Auditors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of non-conformities • Non-conformity trends outside the norm • Complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with report writing • Volume of audits • Movement around certification bodies
Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit type • Geography • Repeated product recalls • Complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing certification bodies • Consecutive audits by same auditor



TellBRCGS

BRCGS encourages feedback and complaints related to site, auditor and certification body performance. In fact, we believe success is partly achieved through the knowledge that complaints provide valuable insight for the organisation to investigate further. To ensure integrity, all complaints are entirely confidential. The information provided is used to strengthen the activities of our global integrity programme.

TellBRCGS is the BRCGS confidential reporting system. It can be used by anyone and in complete confidence to report any instances where:

- you witness wrongdoing in a BRCGS certificated site
- you are unhappy with auditor or certification body performance
- you have concerns about BRCGS training or an approved training provider.

- You see a misleading use of the BRCGS name or logo.
- You have any grievance against BRCGS.



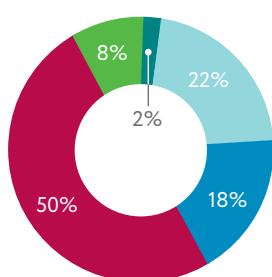
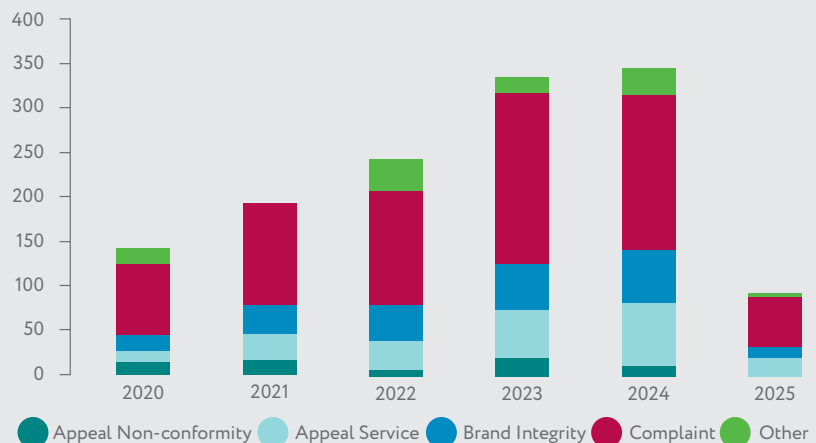
This QR Code and/or the TellBRCGS web address is included on every BRCGS certificate. It can also be accessed through the 'Contact us' page on the BRCGS website.

TellBRCGS operates in ten different languages. It provides a space for the user to outline their concerns, include site details, and give additional information or evidence by attaching files and pictures. The more information we receive about the issue, the better, as it gives us better chance to target the right area during our investigation. You can choose to stay anonymous with the option to use a secure PostBox or provide us with your email address if you are comfortable doing so. We strongly encourage opening a secure PostBox to keep the dialogue open. In 2024, more than 46% of contacts used this feature which allowed BRCGS to communicate the outcome of the investigation.

Since the launch of the platform in 2020, we have received more than 1,300 cases related to site, auditor and certification body performance.

TellBRCGS case submissions per year

During the last 12 months, we received feedback in many different languages and from 45 countries including Turkey, USA, India, China, Colombia and Malaysia.



TellBRCGS cases by type in 2024-25

- Appeal against non-conformities = 8 cases
- Appeal against certification body service = 76 cases
- Brand integrity = 62 cases
- Complaints = 177 cases
- Other = 28 cases

10 languages available

Secure inbox for complete anonymity

BRCGS thoroughly investigates all feedback submitted through the TellBRCGS platform. Examples of an investigation outcome include:

- A site visit by BRCGS and follow-up of any identified non-conformities by the certification body.
- Notification to the certification body of an investigation, potentially followed by a

site visit by the certification body or by BRCGS.

- BRCGS contact with the site for further information.
- A witness audit of the auditor by BRCGS.

Around 43% of the complaints submitted to BRCGS in 2024-25 were followed by a BRCGS or certification body site visit. The

sole purpose of these visits were to verify the feedback, confirm the site continues to operate to BRCGS requirements and can remain certificated. The 'upheld' rate is around 25%.

The origin of the complaint is never divulged to sites or the certification body.

TellBRCGS online,
by mobile or in writing.
**Let us investigate and
put it right.**



Certification integrity audits

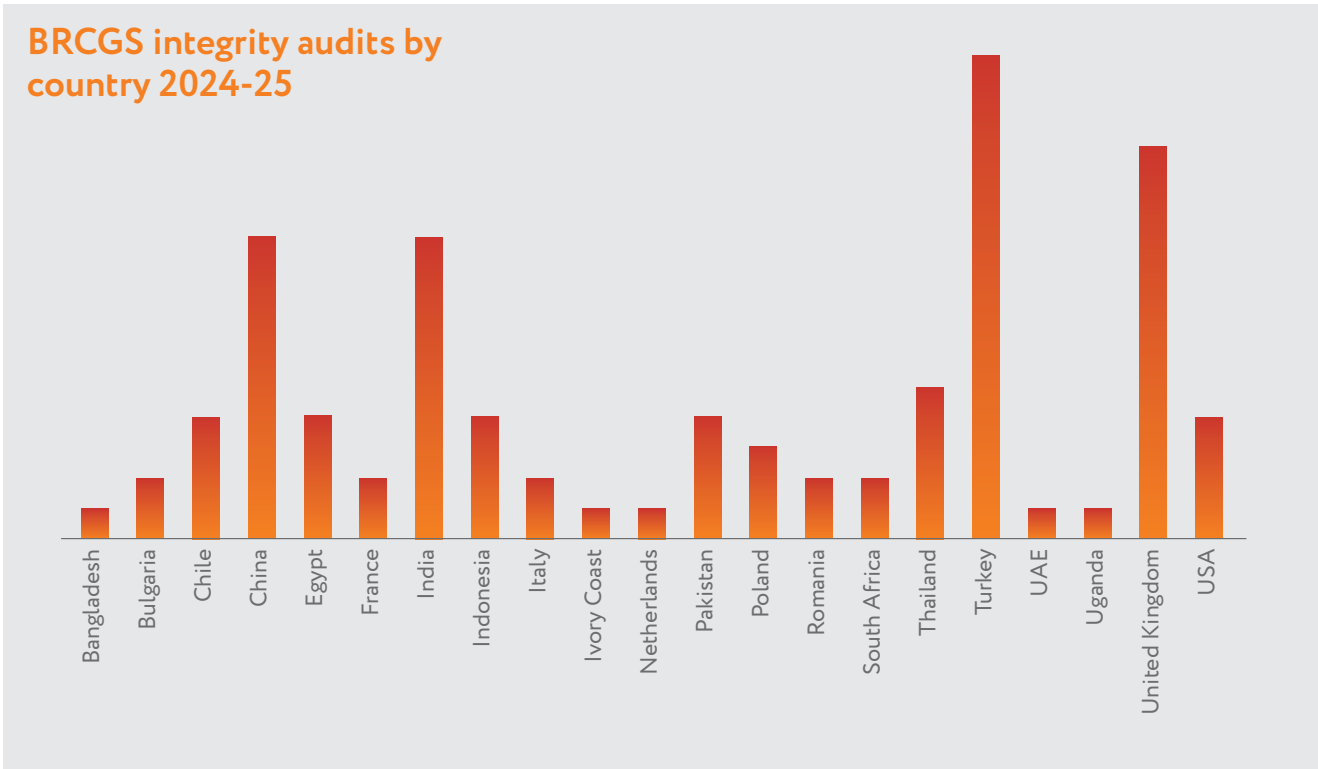
To gain insight into how well BRCGS certification is operating in the global marketplace, BRCGS invests a significant amount each year into integrity audits as part of the Certification Integrity programme.

BRCGS employs a team of independent auditors, who are experts in their fields, to conduct integrity audits on behalf of BRCGS. These audits involve a one-day review of previously audited sites. The aim of the visit is to verify that the site is maintaining BRCGS

requirements and importantly, to confirm that the certification audit itself was robust and delivered in accordance with BRCGS protocol. In the last year, BRCGS applied a new and upgraded risk assessment to determine the annual integrity audits schedule. This allows us a more targeted approach to focus resource where the risk is highest. It is used to determine the number of visits to be completed during the year and to select the individual sites or auditors to be covered by our activities. In 2024-25, most of

the activity was delivered as on-site visits, with the remote option used where it is approved e.g. BRCGS Global Standard Agents and Brokers, or to follow up on complaints or feedback submitted to BRCGS.

Given the importance of unannounced audits, our integrity audit programme is designed in a way that allows integrity audits to be carried out unannounced, whenever possible.



BRCGS is always looking for independent auditors with BRCGS audit experience to help us deliver integrity audits globally on a contractual basis. If you would like to join our team, please send your CV/resume to BRCGS.integrity@lgcgroup.com.

Mandatory unannounced audits

In the last year, BRCGS has focused on site and certification body compliance with the mandatory unannounced audit requirements introduced by GFSI Benchmark Version 2020. This was to ensure that all sites certificated to one of three standards where the requirement applies - Food Safety, Packaging Materials and Storage and Distribution - had at least one unannounced audit before the end of 2024. It then moves to every three years at a minimum.

More than 98% of sites where the requirement is applicable were already complying.

BRCGS introduced unannounced audits in 2007 when Global Standard Food Safety, Issue 5 was published. It was recognised that unannounced audits provide companies with an opportunity to:

- demonstrate confidence in their systems and procedures, to the extent that they can be subjected to unannounced scrutiny
- adopt an audit-ready food safety culture
- improve customer confidence with an independent unannounced review that demonstrates they are maintaining systems in good order.

Due to the added confidence provided by unannounced audits, retailers increasingly specified this audit programme as mandatory for their suppliers.

A survey by BRCGS revealed that many sites were initially apprehensive about joining an unannounced audit programme. Concerns included potential impacts on their business, such as grades, non-conformities, and the absence of key staff during audits. Additionally, there were worries about increased costs, the need for more staff to

be trained in food safety systems, missed audits, and scheduling issues. However, after completing at least one round of unannounced audits, these concerns largely diminished.

Sites that see certification as a tool for driving food and product safety develop a culture that is far more beneficial than that at sites where certification is seen as the endpoint. Sites that invest in their staff alongside robust systems see an increased sense of ownership in the programme across the organisation and develop a culture of food safety.

To gain the most benefit from an unannounced audit, sites should consider the following recommendations:

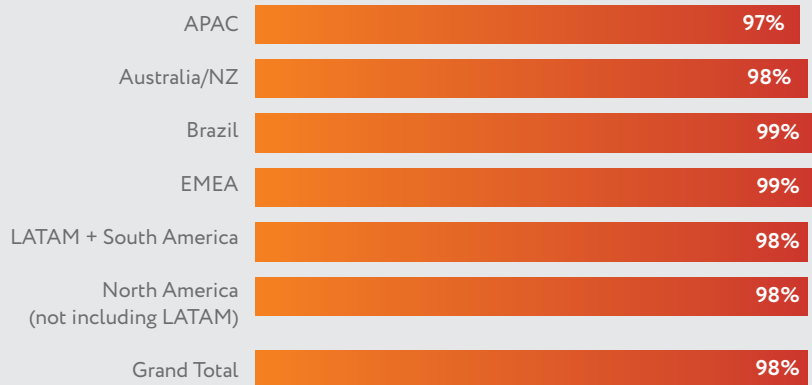
- Establish food safety as part of the roles and responsibilities of each department, with ownership made clear through senior management.
- Internal audits are a key success factor. They should be used as a tool for improvement and to develop a strong food and product safety culture throughout the business. Investing in training and development for internal auditing skills provides a valuable

resource throughout the business that goes beyond food and product safety.

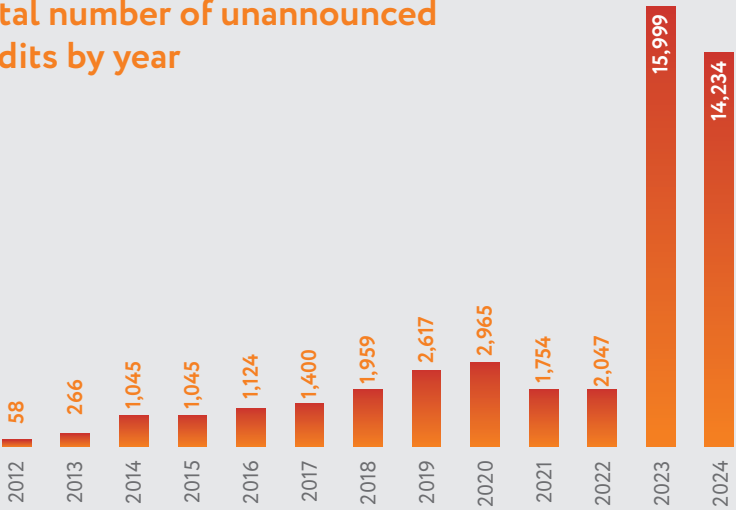
- Develop backup and deputies throughout the business. Knowledge and expertise can be managed and disseminated regardless of the size of the organisation.

Sites that see certification as a tool for driving food and product safety develop a culture that is far more beneficial than that at sites where certification is seen as the endpoint.

Percentage of sites complying with mandatory unannounced audit requirement per region



Total number of unannounced audits by year



BRCGS published position statements for the applicable standards communicating the responsibilities of certification bodies and sites, as well as providing guidance on arranging unannounced audits in unique situations. The position statements can be found on our website, MyBRCGS and Participate.



Working with certification body partners

Welcoming new certification bodies

BRCGS works with the best partners to deliver the best results across the globe.

Most of our delivery partners have been working with us for over 10 years. However, as BRCGS certification grows and adapts to the evolving demographics and distribution of certificated sites, along with the introduction of new issues, we proudly welcome new certification bodies to the BRCGS delivery partner network each year.

BRCGS is looking for partners who can help us to grow the adoption of BRCGS certification in new emerging regions, and to attract new experts into an auditing career in these locations.

BRCGS requires all staff of each new certification body to be fully trained in BRCGS procedures and systems and be subject to monitoring to ensure requirements are being met and high-quality audits are being delivered. As part of the approval process, BRCGS will assess all internal processes through a head office audit and evaluate new auditor performance through witness audits and audit reports review.

BRCGS oversight checks are supplemented by those of accreditation bodies to ensure certification bodies meet the requirements of ISO 17065, which they must achieve within 12 months of application to BRCGS.

Certification body approval procedure

Applicant certification body sends completed BRCGS008 registration form and business plan to BRCGS.enquiries@lgcgroup.com
(15 working days)

Once application is approved, BRCGS sends the following documents: BRCGS004 Requirements Document, BRCGS009 KPI requirements and Framework Agreement alongside a request for certification process, auditor sign-off process, insurance cover and a copy of the accreditation application.
(5 working days)

Certification body to send requested documents to BRCGS. Documents will be reviewed by BRCGS.
(15 working days)

Once approved, BRCGS will issue the registration fee invoice to the certification body.

After payment is confirmed, provisional registration is granted and access provided to BRCGS Directory and MyBRCGS. BRCGS informs relevant accreditation body of provisional registration.

Certification body to submit details of any fully qualified auditors to be reviewed and validated by BRCGS.
(10 working days)

Once auditor registration is approved, the certification body details will be added to the BRCGS Directory. The certification body can begin to audit against the BRCGS Standard(s) for which they have registered.

BRCGS approval activities carried out. To include report reviews, witness assessment(s) and certification body head office audit.

The certification body must have met all criteria specified in BRCGS016 within 12 months of application.

Certification body key performance indicators

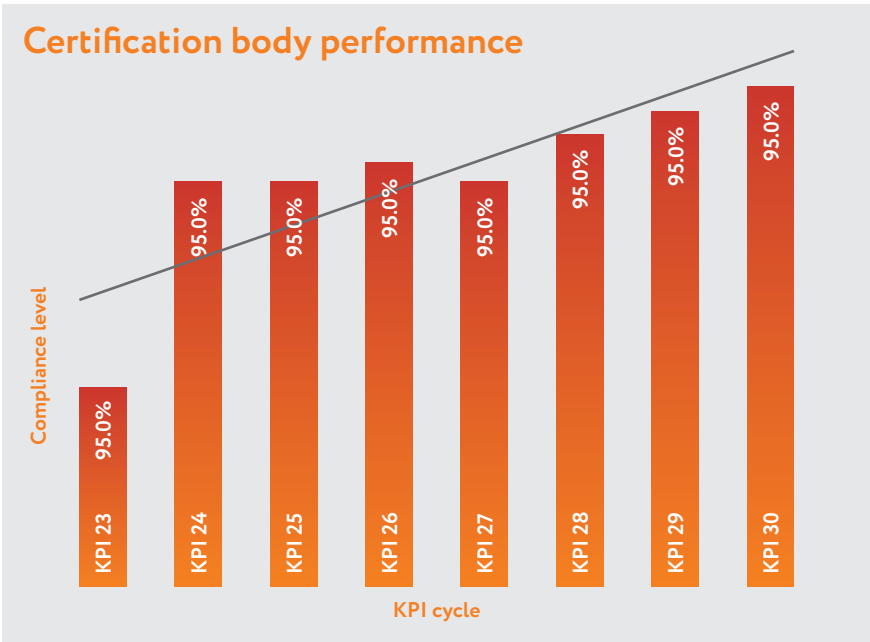
BRCGS is committed to ensuring that certificated sites receive the best service possible from its approved certification bodies. To uphold this standard, we monitor certification body performance through established key performance indicators that assess their adherence with BRCGS requirements and protocols. This rigorous evaluation system ensures that we only work with the highest-performing, most compliance-oriented partners.

Areas of focus when assessing certification body performance:

- Outcome of complaint investigations.
- Auditor competence.
- Audit report quality.
- Robustness of audits delivered.
- Follow-up on product safety incidents.
- Timeliness of certification decisions.
- Management of information on the BRCGS Directory.

BRCGS uses advanced techniques to analyse the assessment data to be able to share the outcome of the assessment with certification bodies monthly. The timeliness of this process allows us to act quickly to under-performance, identify the root cause of any non-conformities, and discuss the action required with the certification body to prevent a re-occurrence.

Throughout the assessment, certification bodies are awarded assessment points to determine their current performance level. During the last KPI cycle covering activities completed between July and December 2024, more than 140,000 points were allocated, with over 95% of the checks confirmed as compliant.



Over the last two years, there has been a 38% reduction in the number of Level 1 non-conformities (10 penalty points) and a 44% reduction in Level 2 non-conformities (5 penalty points). Level 1 and Level 2 are usually related to the areas that have the biggest impact on the service provided to the certificated sites.

Our rigorous evaluation system ensures that we only work with the highest-performing, most compliance-oriented partners.

Overview of KPI assessments between July and December 2024

18.5K audit records reviewed.	140K assessment points allocated.	95% of assessment checks found 'compliant'.
6.3K non-conformities raised.	Highest number of certification bodies with 5* rating.	>80% of BRCGS audits delivered by 5* rated certification bodies.

Certification body star ratings

Every six months, the BRCGS Certification Integrity team review each certification body’s KPI performance and awards a rating of one to five stars. The results are posted on the BRCGS Directory.

>96% of sites were satisfied with the performance of their certification body and would use the same certification body again for their BRCGS audit.

The star rating is based on the performance of the certification body’s head office management of BRCGS certification, rather than individual auditors or audits.

Sanctions

When a certification body’s performance drops below expectations, BRCGS quickly responds with additional management oversight such as office audits and increased integrity activities to ensure certification audits remain robust and there is no risk to consumers.

BRCGS supports the certification body to review their systems with a view to improving their performance and rating.

In this situation, it is of utmost importance that certification integrity is maintained, and the brand reputation of all stakeholders is safeguarded. If necessary, sanctions imposed can include suspension or withdrawal of BRCGS approval, preventing the certification body from offering BRCGS certification on either a temporary or permanent basis.

BRCGS site survey results – auditor performance in 2024



Feedback from sites about their audit experience

All sites are invited to complete our short survey to feedback on their audit experience. The survey results for audits completed in 2024 showed extremely high levels of satisfaction in the quality of BRCGS certification and the performance of our certification bodies.

>94% of sites rated the overall performance of the auditor between 8/10 and above i.e. ‘Very Good’ to ‘Excellent’.



Strengthening global collaboration with our certification bodies



Jessica Burke
Delivery Partner Program Manager
and Americas Regional Lead

This past year has been a remarkable journey of collaboration and growth with our certification bodies around

the world. We have strengthened our commercial engagement and deepened our partnerships through in-person visits across LATAM, the USA, Canada, India, China, Australia, and more.

We have provided valuable data and insights to help certification bodies to understand their activity and market share, empowering them to refine their strategies and increase their commercial opportunities. Every region and certification body faces unique challenges, and BRCGS is committed to listening, adapting, and offering tailored support.

Together, we have taken steps to make certification more accessible

in developing markets by breaking down language barriers and offering resources that are relevant, localised, and impactful. From co-hosted webinars in local languages and joint marketing initiatives, to strategic customer visits and collaborative events, we have worked side by side to address specific needs. BRCGS has also provided tools and guidance to help certification bodies to grow their auditor resources and strengthen their capabilities.

We want our certification bodies to thrive, and BRCGS remains committed to supporting their success. As we look ahead, we are excited for even more opportunities to grow together in the coming year.



LATAM Food Safety Conference, Bogotá, October 2024.
Jessica Burke pictured alongside Merce Sanchez, BRCGS Programme Manager Global Food Standards, Liz Salinas, Director of Sales - North America, QIMA/WQS, and Ana Ishida, Global Sales Director, QIMA/WQS.



Anna Malek-Woznica
Head of Certification Integrity

In November 2024, Anna Malek-Woznica stepped into the position of Head of Certification Integrity at BRCGS. Discover more about Anna, her vision for the role, and her plans for 2025-26.

Tell us about your background and what brought you to BRCGS?

I joined BRCGS in 2021 as the Certification Integrity Technical Manager, bringing over 13 years of experience in the food industry. During my career, I've held managerial roles overseeing quality systems, supplier and raw material management, as well as regulatory compliance. With a PhD in Food Engineering, I'm deeply passionate about driving improvement, fostering innovation, and enhancing efficiency within systems.

Having worked for food manufacturing companies with global supply chains, I understand first-hand the critical role third-party audits play and the importance of being able to trust the results. At

Meet our Head of Certification Integrity

the same time, my experience as an auditee has given me valuable insight into the expectations and challenges faced by BRCGS certificated sites. I know how important it is for certification bodies to deliver the high-quality service these sites rely on, and the serious impact when things don't go as planned. This dual perspective drives my commitment to maintaining the integrity and excellence that BRCGS certification represents.

What do you enjoy most about your role as Head of Certification Integrity?

What I enjoy most is working with passionate people - within our team, across the company, and with specifiers and delivery partners. The strong sense of collaboration makes the work incredibly rewarding. Above all, I love being part of a company dedicated to improving global food safety and building confidence in the supply chain. I take great pride in contributing to such a meaningful cause.

What are the biggest challenges you face in your role?

One of the key roles of the BRCGS Certification Integrity team is maintaining trust in the quality of BRCGS audits delivered globally. We work across diverse regions, cultures and regulatory environments, so ensuring alignment in audit quality and interpretation of standard requirements can be challenging. There is also the constant need to stay ahead of emerging risks - whether it is evolving food safety

threats, fraud, or a shift in customers' expectations. Balancing the need for thorough oversight while supporting the business and our partners is a continuous challenge - but it is also what makes the work meaningful.

What does a typical day look like for you?

Each day is rarely the same, so there isn't really a typical day for me. Each day brings something new, which keeps things dynamic and interesting, but requires being able to react quickly. A big part of my day involves collaboration with my colleagues and external meetings with our certification bodies. Whether it is discussing complex cases, reviewing audit outcomes, or aligning our requirements, there is a strong focus on communication and teamwork throughout the day.

What plans do you have for certification integrity in the next year?

The new GFSI benchmarking requirements were published in December 2024, so naturally, 2025 will be a year of aligning our internal procedures and requirements for certification bodies and auditors with the new requirements. Apart from that, we have some exciting projects in progress to improve of the efficiency and effectiveness of our integrity programme activities. We are exploring the new technologies - it is a fascinating area, and we are keen to see how we can leverage them to enhance our processes.



Monitoring product recalls

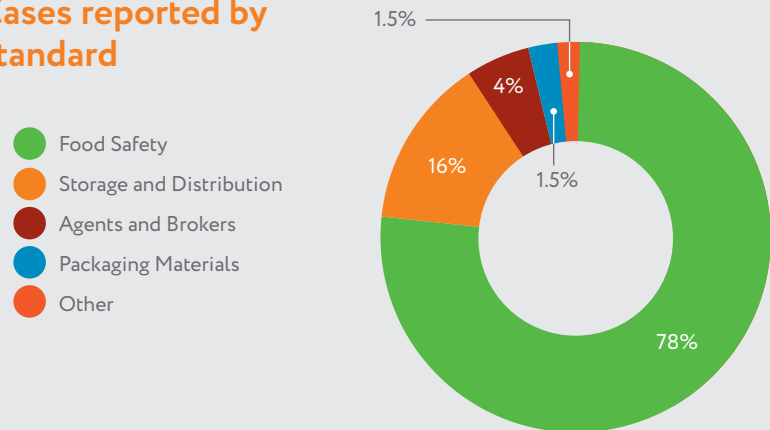
Product recalls are serious incidents. They represent the significant failure of a product safety system and when a product needs to be recalled from the market, it often means it could cause harm to the consumer.

BRCGS Standards require a certificated site to report any recalls to the certification body responsible for their most recent certification audit in a timely manner. The introduction of BRCGS Global Standard Food Safety, Issue 9 extended the requirements to include food safety-related withdrawals and specifies that the site is responsible for providing sufficient information to enable the certification body to confirm that the site can remain certificated. At a minimum, this should include the corrective action, a root cause analysis and a preventive action with a deadline set at 21 days from the recall date.

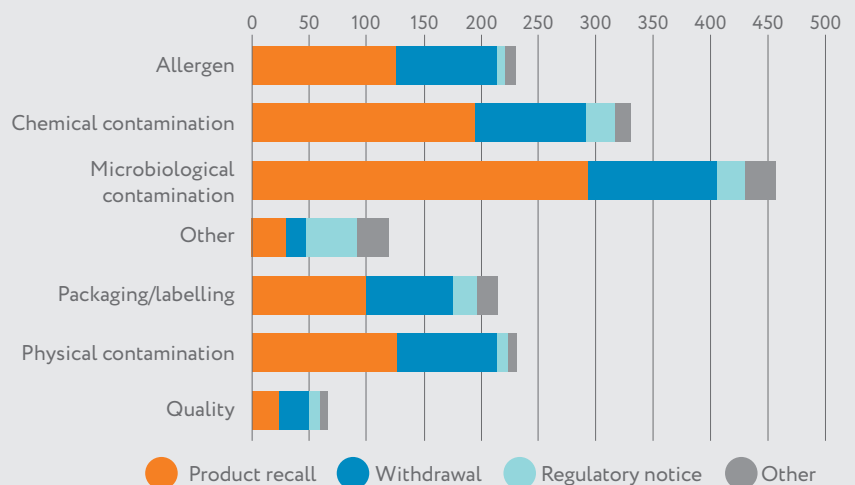
Over the last 12 months, BRCGS-approved certification bodies followed up on more than 1,600 product incidents, which can be grouped into four categories: product recalls, food safety withdrawal, regulatory notice and other incidents. Most of the cases were reported by sites certificated against one of our four GFSI-recognised standards.

BRCGS collaborates with certification bodies to ensure all incidents are thoroughly addressed, including adequate corrective action and robust root cause analysis. This approach helps to prevent future product recalls. Additionally, product recalls at a site are a factor considered in the BRCGS risk rating, which determines the need for routine integrity follow-up visits.

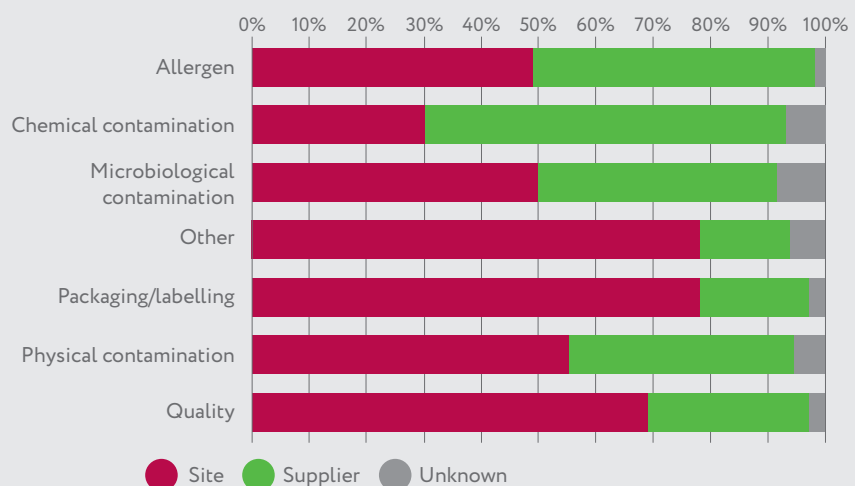
Cases reported by standard



Product incidents by category



Source of incident by category



Collaboration for a safer industry



“I am delighted that BRCGS is a partner of the Food Authenticity Network (FAN). In these continually challenging times, ongoing vigilance and sharing best practice is essential to help secure global food supply chains and protect consumers and legitimate food businesses. Having the support of one of the world’s most rigorous third-party certification programme providers is of enormous benefit to FAN, our members, and the wider stakeholder community.”

Selvarani Elahi

MBE, UK Deputy Government Chemist and Executive Director of FAN

FAN provides a centralised platform for resources related to food authenticity testing and food fraud prevention. By curating and consolidating this information in one open access location (www.foodauthenticity.global), FAN helps improve food safety standards and promotes good practices globally helping ensure that consumers can have greater trust in the foods they buy.

2025-26 strategic overview

Our approach, how we will succeed

- Stay aligned to the needs of our stakeholders.
- Prioritise certification integrity throughout the delivery of our programmes.
- Be open to collaboration with industry partners for the wider benefit of food and product safety for the consumer.
- Develop smart tools and services to facilitate audit delivery and overcome audit challenges.
- Encourage transparency to enhance risk mitigation and identification of potential vulnerabilities in the supply chain, whilst ensuring confidential data is protected.
- Contribute to global initiatives in supply chain management, within the scope of our expertise.
- Be a supportive source of advice and innovation, known for our technical excellence.

Our strategic pillars, our focus to achieve our vision

Stakeholder Engagement

To develop strong relationships with industry stakeholders to understand their needs.

Customer Led

To be a customer-led, but service driven business delivering customer value to meet supply chain challenges.

Innovation

'To be thought leaders and in the food and consumer products industry, through creative and structured innovation

Brand

To transform from a standards maker, to a strategic partner with a wider connected series of assurance solutions to protect consumers and brands alike.

Future of Assurance

To align the BRCGS offer with changing industry risks and needs such as supply chain complexities, regulatory developments, climate change, and declining auditor pool.

The BRCGS strategy outlined in last year's annual report remains current and continues to guide our efforts. We are steadily making progress in its implementation. Here is an outline of our strategic initiatives planned for the next year:

- **Technical insights driving innovation** - Over the past year, we have significantly increased our engagement with stakeholders on a technical level to better understand industry needs and drive innovation to meet them. Our active participation in industry technical groups has been invaluable, and we remain committed to deepening these collaborations moving forward.
- **Uniting the industry to share best practice** - Following the success of BRCGS Connect in Milan, the event is set to make its return to the USA in autumn 2025. BRCGS Connect brings together all industry players to share best practices, discuss current challenges and explore emerging trends in food and product safety. It serves as a unique platform to connect with peers, learn from experts, and engage in meaningful discussions on important topics that impact the future of the industry.
- **Meeting the dynamic needs of an ever-evolving industry** - Fit-for-purpose training and certification programmes are essential in today's industry landscape. Through continuous review, we are always looking at ways to enhance BRCGS offerings to ensure they meet industry demands, provide real value, and align with the latest advancements in technology, science, and regulations. In 2025, we plan to review the Meat Supply Chain Module and introduce new training courses on topics such as incident management.

The BRCGS strategy outlined in last year's annual report remains current and continues to guide our efforts.

- **Transforming feedback into meaningful action** - We have taken onboard valuable feedback from customers and the industry about START certification. We have been working to enhance its accessibility and ensure it better aligns with the diverse needs of global markets.
- **Facilitating a smooth transition to new benchmarking requirements** - GFSI benchmarking plays a vital role in the industry. Following the release of the updated requirements, BRCGS is currently prioritising updates to our four GFSI-benchmarked certification programmes. Our goal is to ensure a successful transition with minimal disruption for certificated sites.
- **Pioneering product integrity in consumer products** - Consumer products form a significant part of any retailer's portfolio and drives a 10% annual growth rate in consumer product certification. Our non-food programmes team is leading the comprehensive revision of our consumer products standard. Encompassing four distinct standards, this ambitious project will be a major focus for 2025 and into 2026.
- **Modernising processes for greater transparency** - Last year, we launched a project to simplify processes for delivery partners. We have already delivered improvements on how we present KPI data to them and our goal for 2025 is to enhance this further by enabling certification bodies to independently access their KPI performance data whenever needed, ensuring greater efficiency and transparency.
- **Unlocking insights for technical excellence** - We have recently relaunched our highly successful 'Ask the Experts' webinar series, providing a unique opportunity to explore the latest trends and topics shaping our industry. Driven by audience questions, each focused session provides valuable insights and practical solutions to tackle today's most pressing challenges.
- **Elevating our digital experience to transform the customer journey** - In 2024, we introduced BRCGS microsites featuring content translated into Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish - a big step toward improving access to essential information and publications for these audiences. Looking ahead, 2025-26 will mark the launch of an exciting new website project that aims to transform the BRCGS online experience for all audiences.



Looking ahead to 2025-26

As we step into another exciting and busy year, we are ready to tackle the opportunities ahead.

An important task for 2025 is the alignment of our four GFSI-recognised standards with the newly launched GFSI benchmarking requirements. This will involve significant collaboration across the organisation to update our standards, processes and audit protocols. We are confident in our ability to meet the challenge.

2025 will bring significant updates and new functionality to the BRCGS Directory. Recognising its importance to the global community, we are committed to ensuring the platform evolves as technology advances, remaining a dynamic and indispensable tool for leveraging BRCGS audit data.

The accessibility of certification across the globe remains a core focus. By collaborating closely with our delivery partners worldwide, we can respond to industry feedback and ensure BRCGS remains the preferred choice for certification. As an example, in 2025 we plan to better support developing businesses by making START certification more accessible. This will include translating key publications into more languages and developing new practical tools to help businesses achieve certification. Additionally, engagement with brands and retailers enables us to explore how START can drive industry-wide benefits while streamlining and improving supplier management processes. Enhancing our certification programmes is key to ensuring product integrity and global supply chain assurance and we look forward to sharing updates soon.

The revision of BRCGS Global Standard Consumer Products has already commenced. With two standards - General Merchandise and Personal Care and Household - and two certification levels, this will be a complex task. As with all standard revisions, a dedicated Technical Working Group representing a broad range of industry stakeholders will lead the way, and we look forward to bringing Issue 5 to fruition.

We are excited about the year to come and look forward to driving positive progress in collaboration with our customers, partners and stakeholders.

BRCGS

#weareBRCGS

Let's keep in touch

Keep up to date with the latest news and information

BRCGS
LGC - Floor 2
80 Victoria Street
London SW1E 5JL

T: +44 (0)20 3931 8150
E: brcgs.enquiries@lgcgroup.com

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER



brcgs.com

BRCGS