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Policy on replacement of on-site audits by remote audits during the Coronavirus COVID 19 crisis

The coronavirus COVID 19 crisis is one of the biggest challenges of today and is developing fast and almost unpredictable. Health and even life of many people are at risk and scientists and politicians are calling for “social distancing” to control the spreading of the virus.

GFA Certification GmbH supports this approach and reacts to the crisis by turning its operations to home office and remote auditing, where possible. Many certification systems provided derogations to allow for remote auditing techniques and replacement of on-site audits by remote audits under certain conditions. GFA Certification GmbH established and implements procedures to evaluate the risk related to a replacement of an on-site audit by a remote audit and to conduct remote audits during the crisis.

To allow measures for the protection of health of people and maintaining the integrity of certification decisions at the same time, GFA Certification GmbH is applying a risk based approach for decisions to replace on-site audits by remote audits. Constant evaluations of national and international accepted public sources related to acute health risks and travel restrictions lead to either regional decisions or case by case evaluations. This approach shall support a regular implementation of the audit program, leading to an uninterrupted valid certification status for the certificate holders impacted by the crisis, which are in compliance with the certification requirements. Certain situations have to be rated as high risk situations which do not allow the replacement of on-site audits by remote audits. Examples for this are ongoing integrity issues against a certificate holder or complex certification scopes which cannot be evaluated remotely. As the situation concerning the spreading of the coronavirus COVID 19 is changing constantly, the conclusions drawn by the risk based approach may also vary over time.

Clients of GFA Certification GmbH should contact the headoffice or the responsible auditor to analyse and conclude if a remote audit is possible. The results of the risk assessments are published on this website under the link [Results_Risk_Analysis_Desk_Audits](#).

GFA Certification GmbH wishes all customers that this crisis will pass by with as little damage as possible and that everybody stays healthy.

Joern Ackermann, Managing Director

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