



The Benefits of Choosing an ISO/IEC 17065 Managed Scheme

BRC, IFS, and SQF schemes are all GFSI benchmarked schemes which follow ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation norms. Why is this important to you? There are many reasons – let's explore!

➤ Process and Product Certification

First and foremost, ISO/IEC 17065 schemes provide process and product certification versus only management systems certification. That means, when choosing BRC, IFS or SQF, your processes and product achieve certification – which includes the certification of the system designed to deliver product and process – a complete assessment of the operation. Choosing another scheme only provides certification to your management systems – something already covered by your certification to a process and product based scheme.

In simpler terms, ISO/IEC 17065 looks at the intent, the method and the result. Systems certification will focus on the intent only. Also, Good Auditing Practice will be focused on product specification and product sampling; whereas, ISO 17021 schemes focus much more on documentation.

➤ Quality and Regulatory Achievements

With BRC, IFS, and SQF, you have the ability to certify the quality components of your processes and products. Things that are important to you like meeting customer requirements, providing quality products, and delivering products that satisfy the ever-growing request of the consumer to provide higher quality products are all certified by choosing an ISO/IEC 17065 scheme.

Regardless of your business size, the quality components of BRC, IFS, and SQF prove to your customers that you have a system in place to provide them the level of product quality that they expect. When you achieve the quality components of any of the particular standards, you reach a certain level of product consistency and status that gives your company marketing benefits beyond those of other schemes.

Finally, ISO/IEC 17065 schemes mandate that regulatory requirements are met in the country of origin and the country of destination – something not managed by ISO 17021.

➤ Independence and Impartiality by Certification Bodies

One of the main components of schemes following ISO/IEC 17065 is the requirement for independence and impartiality by Certification Bodies. These are specifically related to the management of auditors, reporting, and evaluation. With ISO 17021 schemes, there is no centralized management or control of the certification bodies and their auditors. Working with BRC, IFS, or SQF schemes ensures that your certification bodies and auditors have the checks and balances in place to provide you with strong centralized management programs, and consistent reporting structures.

➤ **Production Scope Knowledge**

Although some may consider it a benefit that an auditor has no understanding of product or process scopes when doing an audit, ISO/IEC 17065 schemes require auditors to have an understanding of what a manufacturer produces and the technical knowledge to challenge the company in their processes and identify food safety risks. Knowing what you make, and how you make it is an important part of a good audit that is not managed by ISO 17021.

➤ **Continuous Improvement Processes**

Continuous improvement through the implementation and check of corrective actions is an important part of the BRC, IFS, and SQF schemes. These schemes require that corrective actions are developed and implemented as part of the process. In each of these schemes the corrective actions are checked so that the company makes improvements to its processes and products for long term preventative control.

ISO/IEC 17065 certification ensures you reach a certain level within your processes and make improvements from that level, ISO 17021 certification only requires that there is improvement – regardless of the minimum level. If you start with poor quality products or a high level of complaints, an ISO 17021 certification can still be achieved as long as “improvement” is shown.

To add simplicity again, a system audit is typically centered around the ISO mantra of “say what you do, do what you say.” ISO/IEC 17065 requires an additional requirement of “produce what your customer wants.

➤ **Summary**

Working with BRC, IFS, or SQF gives a supplier a real opportunity for a trusted certification with managed and controlled systems in place, quality and regulatory components, compliance requirements for certification bodies and continuous improvement to make them better.

With more than 40,000 combined global certifications, BRC, IFS, and SQF welcome you to certify your processes and products to the most comprehensive and challenging standards in the food supply chain.

ISO 17021

➤ Documentation and implementation of a management system

➤ Two-stage audit with broad scope selection process

➤ Reporting details set by each Certification Body independently

➤ 3-year certification cycle

ISO/IEC 17065

➤ Conformity of products and its manufacture
➤ Contractual conformity
➤ Effectiveness of systems especially in compliance with relative laws

➤ Systematic selection of scope with respect to product groups and processes

➤ Evaluation includes customer requirements

➤ Auditor qualification specific for product and process
➤ Surveillance of standardized rules by scheme owner
➤ Annual certification cycle – providing valuable assurance of consistency