

BRC/RILA Global Standard for Consumer Product Manufacturing Frequently Asked Questions

1. In general, what is the purpose or intent of the BRC/RILA Standard?

The BRC/RILA Standard seeks to harmonize the numerous and variant retail requirements into one standard as a way to assess factory processes to ensure they have the capability to produce safe products.

2. Is the Standard focused on product? Process?

The Standard is focused on the *manufacturing process* and *quality assurance processes* of consumer products.

3. What are the differences between the BRC/RILA Standard, ISO 9001, and the current retail audit standard?

The BRC/RILA Standard is exclusively intended for the production of consumer products.

When implemented properly, ISO 9000 is a good standard. However, retailers have found that there are often gaps in how ISO 9000 is implemented at individual factories, including verification of legitimate certification. The BRC/RILA Standard has many of the same or similar substantive requirements as ISO 9000, and seeks to institute measures to avoid gaps.

The BRC/RILA Standard also includes provisions related to technical product requirements covering safety and legality. Additionally, the Standard is supported by sector specific technical guidelines to assist in compliance and allows for several levels of certification of the production process.

Finally, robust, scored, factory audits can be verified by a secure and searchable database of certified manufacturing sites.

4. What are the key benefits for a supplier or factory?

The BRC/RILA Standard will reduce redundant audits that are currently required by multiple retailers. Factories that are certified to the Standard can also expect to have fewer failures by implementing systems that promote more consistent production.

For factories who are already implementing high-level quality management systems, they should expect the BRC/RILA Standard to be consistent with their existing programs, and certification should not be a burden.

5. How does this relate to other certification programs? Does this program replace other programs (i.e., UL, TIA TSCP, etc.)?

This Standard seeks to harmonize various retail requirements currently in use. Those requirements by and large already specify, for example, a UL certification on appropriate consumer products. This will NOT change and the BRC/RILA Standard seeks to complement already existing standards and certification requirements.

6. What is the timing of the release of the Standard? General and Sector Guidelines?

Currently, the Standard and accompanying General Guideline are scheduled for publication in March 2010. Sector Guidelines will be published incrementally following the March 2010 Standard publication date. The first two guidelines identified for publication will be for the toy and electrical (including electronics) consumer product sectors.

7. Is there a global interest in the BRC/RILA Standard? What is the level of retail support/endorsement? Government support/endorsement?

RILA TAC members support the content of the BRC/RILA Standard and are committed to developing guidelines and an effective audit instrument for factory sites to be successfully certified. Part of this agenda includes the development of a U.S. retail pilot program for the Standard.

RILA and the BRC continue their dialogue about the concept and burgeoning Standard with the U.S. Congress, the U.S. CPSC, U.S. Department of Commerce, as well as the EU Commission.

8. How will confidentiality in the supply chain be maintained? For example, the relationships between a factory and a vendor/agent, and between a vendor and a retailer?

There are several levels of password protected security on the BRC database. Part of this protection includes the company or site having exclusive control over 'who has access to what'. The audit owner (i.e. who pays for the audit - this may be an agent for example) is confirmed by, and set up on the database by the certification body. This audit owner determines and controls which customers can view their audit reports on the BRC database.

9. Will this Standard have a "mark" on products?

There will be no identifying BRC/RILA mark or logo on consumer products.

10. How will "approved" or "certified" factories be identified as such?

Certified factories will be issued a certificate or plaque to display following certification to the BRC/RILA Standard. Additionally, sites certified by BRC registered companies will be listed on the BRC managed and password controlled database *immediately* following certification. If a factory should lose certification, they will be *immediately* delisted.

11. Does the scope of the BRC/RILA Standard include social compliance?

No. This Standard focuses exclusively on the process for the safe and legal manufacture of consumer products.

12. Does the Standard satisfy components of a reasonable testing program?

The BRC/RILA Standard process includes an audit of factories that serves as part of, and a complement to, other measures and requirements as part of an overall reasonable testing program.