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OUR SERVICES

Where can I find out more about your services?

Please see the section [FOOD SAFETY SERVICES](#) for more information. This section contains FAQ's about our services but may not answer all of your questions - if so please call or e-mail for more information.

If you have a problem but not sure what to do next..... [Call or e-mail](#) now

What is your background?

The business is owned and managed by Ken Driver, a professional member of the Institute of Food Science and Technology (MIFST), Registered Scientist, approved HACCP and Food Safety Trainer for HABC and Lead Tutor on ISO 22000 & ISO 9001 Lead Auditor courses.

A small consultancy business which provides a personal service as a Food Technologist and Food Safety Advisor - the client only works with one consultant. Access to an extensive network of other food safety professionals is available including Food Care Solutions in Northamptonshire who deliver some of these services in the south of the UK.

A full range of services are available to food manufacturers, wholesalers or other non-manufacturing companies, including those who market a range of products under their own label. For smaller companies, particularly those in the UK, there is often a requirement to supplement existing resources.

Projects have been completed for small, medium and large food manufacturers, banking & investment groups, business support organisations, food wholesalers & buying groups, storage & distribution companies, supermarket retailers, universities, solicitors, industrial catering / foodservice and other food safety consultancies.

Projects have been completed for clients based throughout the UK and also in the USA, Canada, Poland, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Belgium and Germany - work has been completed in a number of other countries including Azerbaijan, Angola, South Korea, Lithuania, Moldova, Singapore,

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France, Spain and Italy.

Market sector experience includes a wide range of food groups including frozen & chilled meat, fish and vegetable based products, ready meals, raw meat and poultry products, bakery products, primary fish and vegetable processing. Also experience of other food processing industries including crisps and extruded snacks, chocolate & sugar confectionary, fruit juices, animal feeding stuffs, bottled water and non food products.

A wide range of food safety and quality related projects have been completed. These have included focused one off projects to address a specific problem within the clients business to ongoing technical support over a number of years. Projects include BRC technical support to enable companies to achieve and maintain BRC standards, Haccp consultancy & training and food safety audits.

Whilst work has been completed for larger companies, there are also many smaller often privately owned companies who have not yet developed a level of business that is sufficient to sustain the full time services of a qualified and experienced Technical Manager or have some but limited technical resources. These smaller companies often require simple, practical and inexpensive solutions to their problems.

One of our main strengths is practical hands on experience in the food industry combined with consultancy experience which provides an understanding of the problems in running a food business rather than looking at these technical aspects in isolation of the rest of the business.

Professional Member of the Institute of Food Science and Technology (MIFST), Registered Scientist, approved Haccp and Food Safety Trainer for HABC and IRCA approved Lead Tutor for ISO 22000 & ISO 9001.

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Where do you work?

Work can be completed in most countries around the world unless there is specific advice against travel issued by the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office relevant to the area where the work is planned to take place.

Projects have been completed for clients based throughout the UK and also in the USA, Canada, Poland, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Belgium and Germany - work has been completed in a number of other countries including Azerbaijan, Angola, Algeria, Nigeria, Iraq, South Korea, Egypt, Nigeria, UAE, India, Pakistan, Lithuania, Moldova, Singapore, France, Spain and Italy.

Technical Support Services operate from the North East of England with easy access to the motorway network, trains and regular flights from Newcastle into international hubs in London, Amsterdam and Dubai.

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What type of projects have you completed?

- Development of quality systems to meet the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety
- Development of quality systems to meet the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution
- HACCP food safety training and implementation of food safety programs in various food manufacturing and industrial catering operations.
- Development of an IRCA registered 5 day Lead Auditor course based on ISO 22000
- Commercial & technical due diligence on behalf of an international investment bank
- Design and layout of food factories including the production of high risk chilled foods and frozen & chilled ready meals.

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- Design and layout of catering facilities
- Food Safety audits of food manufacturing, retailing and catering operations.
- Development of food safety standards and audit programs for the water cooler industry
- Development of quality systems for food manufacturers and catering operations to meet the requirements of EU food safety legislation.
- Food labelling and specifications.
- Investigations following food safety incidents,

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What type of companies have you worked for?

We are a small consultancy providing a wide range of technical, and consultancy services and have worked on behalf of food manufacturers, ingredient and packaging suppliers, food wholesalers, buying groups, retailers, industrial catering / foodservice companies, business support organisations, banks, investment groups, and other food consultancies and training organisations.

The smallest food industry client has only 3 employees and the largest has several thousand employees. Clients are based in a number countries around the world and many overseas assignments have been completed, some for major international companies.

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Food Safety Technical Support - What services do you provide?

A full package of technical support services is available to food manufacturers, wholesalers and other non-manufacturing companies, particularly those who market a range of products under their own label. For larger companies, we are often required to supplement existing resources. A technical function which includes support for the following is available:

- Ongoing support with BRC certification
- HACCP consultancy
- Technical support to help you devise and document a HACCP plan
- Technical support to help you devise a HACCP implementation plan
- Follow up assessment of a HACCP implementation plan
- Development of HACCP documentation
- Verification and validation of existing HACCP plans
- Investigation of food processing / quality / micro / GMP problems
- Preparation for audits by customers
- Audits of suppliers / supplier questionnaires and screening
- Product specifications
- Technical liaison with customers & suppliers
- Dealing with EHO (food safety) issues.
- Systems for the control of suppliers
- Supplier 'Due Diligence' questionnaires
- Internal audits of food safety & quality management system

The level of support and on-site visits, are tailored to the clients specific requirements - a limited number of visits can be arranged to help a client resolve a particular problem. This is not an exhaustive list - if your requirements are not listed or if your business needs a technical person but can only justify this for a few days per month then please contact us. Other services may be added as appropriate to the clients needs.

Clients often go on to employ their own technical staff and either use these services to supplement their in-house expertise as and when required. Assistance in the transition from external support to the clients own staff can be provided.

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Supplier Food Safety Audits - Can you complete these for us?

Whilst BRC Certification is becoming increasingly common in the food manufacturing there are many specialised areas in the food industry where a client feels that BRC Global Standard for Food Safety is not appropriate for their business needs.

Such instances may include food safety audits of retailing / industrial catering / foodservice operations or food manufacturing where the systems relating to the manufacture of a specific product requires a more process led approach to ensure that a supplier's quality system has been applied to a specific product supplied over a period time.e.g as part of a food safety or quality investigation

Audits are also initiated by a customer experiencing supplier quality, compositional or food safety problems whereby a specific issue needs to be investigated and resolved. We carry out full technical audits of food manufacturers, ingredient and packaging suppliers.

A cost effective programme of food safety audits which includes the assessment of potential suppliers and a planned monitoring programme for existing suppliers or a clients own operations e.g. retail or restaurant chains.

Overseas suppliers for UK based companies and European based suppliers for companies in the USA can be audited where an initial screening is required as part of a product development system.

Deficiencies and weaknesses are identified on site, discussed and documented. A realistic appraisal of suppliers or a clients own operations which is based on industrial experience.

We can also provide a local presence for consultancy companies who have a national contract but require someone to complete audits in the northern England / Scotland

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Commercial Due Diligence - Can you provide a technical evaluation on a food company we propose to buy?

Yes - We can provide technical support working on behalf of investment companies / banks in technical, market and commercial assessments in conjunction with financial & commercial experts / local consultants to assess investment projects and enable the investment company to assess the risks and opportunities presented by their proposed investment. Also to identify the areas which require further exploration during the due diligence process.

The food technologist provides the technical knowledge and experience specific to food manufacturing to complement the financial analysis. This stage where a technologist gets involved is normally when the vendor has been successfully approached / the desktop research has been completed. The areas examined are agreed with the client but investigations could include the following:

- Technical Barriers
- Adherence to Food Production Standards
- Adherence to Quality Standards
- Assessment of Plant Management
- Management Investment Plans
- Key Success Drivers for the Company / Project
- Risks Associated with the Project

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- Further Due Diligence

A number of assignments have been completed in Eastern Europe.

If you:

- are a bank or investment company
- are financial consultants
- considering investing in a food business or advising a client on a proposed investment
- need food technology expertise / advice on an acquisition
- need a food technologist on a multi disciplinary team

If you have a problem but not sure what to do next..... [Call](#) or [e-mail](#) now

BRC Storage & Distribution Standard- Can you help us to meet or maintain the standard?

Yes - we work with both large and small companies on the development of food safety systems to the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution. We can help companies to select the most appropriate inspection / certification company, assess where you are against the standard, develop the systems and documentation to meet the standard, and provide support up to the day of the audit. Once approved we can provide ongoing support to maintain the system, or for example, undertake the internal audits which are an essential part of these standards.

We are independent of the organisations auditing to this standard which allows us to assist companies to obtain and maintain this standard without having to concern ourselves with potential conflicts of interest.

We have 2 main support services:

- A review of where a company is against the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution with some practical advice. The company then takes this information and works on their own towards the standard or with minimal external support.
- Full support for a company making their first steps to meet the requirements of one of the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution right through to providing help on the day of the audit.

We also provide ongoing technical support after certification – we can provide more details of this.

A review consists of the following:

1. Identifying changes required to meet the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution Standard. This includes changes to food safety and quality systems plus advice on structure / layout / fabrication of any premises where relevant. A full report is provided.
2. Providing guidance and practical advice on the changes needed to meet the standard

Full support consists of the following:

1. Identifying changes required to meet the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution Standard. This includes changes to food safety and quality systems plus advice on structure / layout / fabrication of any premises where relevant. A full report is provided.
 2. Providing guidance and practical advice on the changes needed to meet the standard
 3. Providing guidance and practical help on the documentation of the quality manual, procedures and records needed to meet the standard. Existing procedures and documents are used where this is feasible.
1. Monitoring the implementation of the changes needed to meet the certification standards.
 1. Preparation on the day before the audit.
 2. Technical support on the day of the audit.
 3. One day follow up after the audit.

FAQ's

Clients tend to have an initial review and, depending on their current standards, will either work on their own or will then ask us to provide a quotation for full support. There is no obligation to complete further work with us after the initial review.

Do you have any of the following problems?

- Developing a quality system which meets the BRC Global Standard - Storage & Distribution ?
- Maintaining your BRC system?
- Need help preparing for your next audit?
- Need help on the day of your audit?
- Had problems with your last audit?

If you have a problem but not sure what to do next..... [Call or e-mail](#) now

Subcontracting - Will you work for other consultancy and training organisations?

Yes - we accept projects and other work from other organisations and individual consultants who need to supplement their own resources to implement or complete a specific food safety or quality contract / project.

Over the last 15 years, a number of other organisations have been helped to deliver a variety of projects including:

- Lead Tutor delivering ISO 22000 / 9001 lead auditor and internal audit training.
- Subject matter expert for the development of on line training
- Development, training, implementation and monitoring of food safety across multiple industrial catering sites and subcontractors.
- Advice on the use and practical application of alternative technologies to cook-chill for use in a new in-flight airline catering facility.
- Providing technical support for the design and layout of a high risk chilled foods factory.
- Technical support on behalf of investment companies / banks to carry out technical, market and commercial assessments in conjunction with financial experts / local consultants to assess investment projects and enable the investment company to assess the risks and opportunities presented by their proposed investment. Also to identify the areas which needed further exploration during the due diligence process.
- Completing a survey on behalf of the Food Standards Agency
- Undertaking food safety audits of supermarkets, foodservice & catering operations, food manufacturers, breweries and non food suppliers.
- Providing a local / regional resource for companies holding a national auditing contract
- Working for a national UK retailer to enable a new supplier specialising in high quality cuisine to comply with the retailers technical requirements

If you:

- need a food technologist or food safety advisor on a multi disciplinary project team
- are a bank or investment company needing food technology expertise on an acquisition
- are involved in EU or UN funded projects
- are a business link or other support organisation looking for a food technologist
- are a consultancy organisation needing to supplement your own resources
- have a national auditing contract but don't have national coverage
- are a recruitment company looking for a food safety advisor or food technologist for a project

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ISO 22000 Lead Auditor Training - Can you organise open and in house training?

Yes - ISO 22000: 2005 Food Safety Management System Lead Auditor Course is organised by our partners, IQ Management Systems. (Registration Number IRCA A17362). Open courses are available in the UK and in courses can be run for companies anywhere in the world.

ISO 22000:2005 is the internationally recognised standard that defines the parameters for an effective food safety management system based on Haccp. More and more organisations in the food sector are encouraging their suppliers to demonstrate compliance to this standard, and this is creating a demand for trained and competent ISO 22000:2005 auditors.

This intensive, challenging and highly interactive ISO 22000:2005 training program organised by our partners IQ Management Systems is for those people who require an in-depth understanding of the International Food Safety Management System Standard ISO 22000:2005, and the range of auditing techniques and protocols associated with the lead auditor role in the food sector.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Food safety professionals with a responsibility to design, implement, audit and manage a food safety management system that meets the requirements of ISO 22000: 2005.

Food safety auditors who have been looking to enhance their auditing knowledge and skills or looking to achieve formal recognition for the audit skills and audit knowledge that they possess.

Auditors, from any organisation in the food chain, who need to lead food safety management system audits and audit teams, both in their own organisation and in others, such as suppliers, where there is a requirement to audit food safety management systems against ISO 22000: 2005

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Those wishing to attend this course should have:

Experience of working in the food chain

An understanding of relevant key food safety legislation, prerequisite programmes, Good Manufacturing Practices and HACCP principles as defined in Codex Alimentarius.

IN HOUSE COURSES

Offering better value for money, they can be designed to closely match your specific requirements. IQMS can hold courses for other training companies or food companies throughout the food chain at a location or country of your choice.

For more information see [ISO 22000 Lead Auditor Training](#) or

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BRC STANDARD

BRC Global Standard for Food Safety - What is it?

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) Technical Standard for Companies Supplying Retailer Branded Food Products was developed in 1998 to provide a common standard for companies supplying retailer branded food products. The BRC Technical Standard was developed by UK supermarket retailers to assist them in their fulfilment of legal obligations and protection of the consumer. In March 2003 the standard was renamed the BRC Global Standard - Food although it is still commonly referred to as 'BRC Accreditation'.

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What does the standard require?

- The adoption and implementation of HACCP
- A documented and effective quality management system
- Control of factory environment standards, product, process and personnel.

The standard contains a number of 'fundamental, requirements which must be well established, continuously maintained and monitored by the company.

The standard is recognised by the majority of UK supermarket retailers, and is being increasingly used by food service companies to approve suppliers. The BRC standard was originally designed for manufacturers supplying own label products. It has also been used as a basis of supplier approval even when a company is supplying branded products only and in many instances it can be a pre-condition to supply certain companies. Food manufacturers are also using this standard as a basis of supplier approval.

There are BRC certificated companies in many countries in the EU and as far away from the UK as Canada, Brazil and Thailand. The latest version is issue 7.

One of its initial advantages was that it could reduce the number of food safety audits by each retailer and allow technologists to concentrate on other areas, such as product development, or specific quality issues. In practice, supermarkets may also insist on their own audits, particularly for high risk suppliers, or they may apply other codes of best practice in addition to the BRC standard. There is also a separate technical standard for companies manufacturing and supplying food packaging materials for retailer branded products.

There is also a BRC Standard for Companies Manufacturing and Supplying Food Packaging Materials for Retailer Branded Food Products which was developed to provide a common standard for companies supplying packaging for food products.

The German equivalent of the BRC have developed their own standard called the IFS Standard. This has also been adopted by the French retailers and is expected to be adopted by other countries.

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BRC Global Standards - Who Inspects against them ?

A number of companies are assessed by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) and similar companies worldwide to inspect and issue certificates against the BRC standard food and packaging standards. Whilst each company is accredited by UKAS to the same standard, the choice of inspection / certification body needs careful consideration as for example, some retailers will only recognise a limited number of these inspection companies. It is therefore possible to be approved against the BRC Standard only to find that the company who carried out the inspection is not one of the preferred certification companies for the company you are planning to supply.

The BRC Standards were revised in 2002 to a product certification schemes under EN 45011. In order to carry out evaluations against the revised BRC standards, the BRC required that all Inspection Bodies convert into Certification Bodies which are independently assessed by UKAS. Some of the standards were renamed e.g. the standard for food should now be referred as the 'BRC Global Standard - Food' although it is often still referred to as BRC Accreditation.

A fundamental difference between "inspection" and "certification" is a requirement for continuous improvement under the latter process. As a result, a site will only be eligible for certification against the revised standard when ALL non-conformance's – Critical, Major and Minor have been satisfactorily rectified (and verified by the Certification Body). Submission of an "action plan" by itself is not deemed satisfactory in order to attain a certificate.

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A limited number of companies can audit against both the BRC and IFS standards. The services of the larger certification companies have expanded to include ISO 22000 based standards as well.

A list of approved certification bodies is maintained on the BRC website.

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BRC Global Food Safety Standard - Can you help us to meet or maintain the standard?

Yes - we work with both large and small food manufacturers providing consultancy and technical support for the development of food safety systems to the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety (often referred to as BRC accreditation). Once certificated to the standard, ongoing support can be provided to maintain the system or for example undertake the internal audits which are an essential part of the BRC Global Food Safety Standard.

Independent of the organisations auditing to this standard allowing technical support to assist companies to obtain and maintain the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety with no potential conflicts of interest. CERTIFICATION SERVICES ARE NOT PROVIDED

2 main support services are available:

- A review where a company is against the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety with some practical advice. The company then takes this information and works on their own towards the standard or with minimal external support. This is relevant for a company taking their first steps towards the BRC standard or requires technical support to upgrade their quality system to meet the requirements of the current Issue.
- Full support for a company making their first steps to meet the requirements of the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety right through to providing help on the day of the audit.

A review consists of the following:

- Identifying changes required to meet the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety. This includes changes to food safety and quality systems plus advice on structure / layout / fabrication of any premises where relevant. A full report is provided. Where the company is already certificated to the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety, the report concentrates on the changes required to update the quality system to meet the requirements of the current standard.
- Providing guidance and practical advice on the changes needed to meet the requirements.

Full support consists of the following:

- Identifying changes required to meet the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety. This includes changes to food safety and quality systems plus advice on structure / layout / fabrication of the factory with a full report.
- Providing guidance and practical advice on the changes needed to meet the standard
- Providing guidance and practical help on the documentation of the quality manual, procedures and records needed to meet the standard.
- Identify where existing procedures and documents can be used.
- Monitoring the implementation of the changes needed to meet the latest certification standards.
- Preparation on the day before the audit.
- Technical support on the day of the audit.
- One day follow up after the audit.

Clients tend to have an initial review and, depending on their current standards, will either work on their own or will then ask for a quotation for full support. There is no obligation to complete further work after the initial review. Support services work the same for other standards.

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Assistance is also available to companies who have difficulty maintaining the standard and require help to prepare them for a second audit.

Do you have any of the following problems?

- Developing a quality system which meets the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety?
- Maintaining your BRC system?
- Updating your BRC system to the new Issue / version 5?
- Need help preparing for your next audit?
- Need help on the day of your audit?
- Had problems with your last audit?

If you have a problem but not sure what to do next..... [Call](#) or [e-mail](#) now

HACCP & FOOD SAFETY

Food Safety Haccp Training - What courses are available?

We specialise in providing training on the clients premises or nominated training facility.

Training can be completed in most countries around the world and courses can be adapted for your company. We can also deliver these courses on behalf of other organisations. The food safety training and HACCP training is certificated by HABC.

Courses incorporate a variety of teaching methods including formal presentations, tutor led discussions, DVD's, individual & group exercises, quizzes and card games. Delegates are provided with handouts and a course-book. To ensure an effective learning environment, course numbers are limited to 12 per course. All courses are delivered on the customers premises.

We have approval from the HABC to run the following courses:

- HABC Level 2 Award in Food Safety for Manufacturing
- HABC Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering
- HABC Level 2 Award in Food Safety for Retail

- HABC Level 3 Award in Food Safety Supervision in Manufacturing
- HABC Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering
- HABC Level 3 Award in Food Safety Supervision for Retail

- HABC Level 4 Award in Food Safety Management for Manufacturing
- HABC Level 4 Award in Managing Food Safety in Catering

- HABC Level 2 Award in Haccp for Manufacturing
- HABC Level 2 Award in Haccp for Catering

- HABC Level 3 Award in HACCP for Food Manufacturing
- HABC Level 3 Award in Supervising HACCP for Catering

- HABC Level 4 Award in HACCP for Food Manufacturing
- HABC Level 4 International Award in Managing HACCP for Catering

These courses will be in house training for a specific company or we can deliver these courses on behalf of other training organisations.

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