REVIEW & COMPLIANCE

ANNUAL
REPORT
2023

› mygfsi.com

Quick links

Executive Summary

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) continues to play a critical role in ensuring the integrity and safety of food supply chains worldwide. This annual report provides key achievements, and strategic initiatives undertaken by various groups within GFSI's governance structure during the year 2023, providing stakeholders with a clear understanding of GFSI's commitment to acting transparently to maintain consumer trust. This executive summary highlights key developments and outcomes of GFSI's governance journey throughout the year.

This report underscores GFSI's ongoing commitment to raising industry standards and fostering stakeholder trust in food safety initiatives. Moving forward, GFSI remains dedicated to continuous improvement, positioning itself as a thought leader in global food safety excellence committed to delivering the 'what' of food safety not the 'how.

▶ **Enhanced governance mechanisms**
GFSI continued its commitment to strengthening the mechanisms that underpin trust in its brand. Progress was made in implementing new Governance Rules, marking a milestone in ensuring transparency and adherence to governance requirements throughout the GFSI ecosystem.

▶ **Transparency and reporting**
The publication of the first annual report provides transparency on GFSI operational activities. This report provides valuable insights into the implementation of the Governance Rules, bringing accountability and clarity.

▶ **Operational Transparency**
GFSI made considerable progress in improving transparency regarding its operational activities. Stakeholders gained a clearer understanding of how GFSI operates and the nature of the way it collaborates, promoting engagement and fostering relationships with multiple stakeholders globally.

▶ **Milestone in Race to the Top:**
The 2023 progress report represents an important milestone in GFSI's Race to the Top (RTTT). While acknowledging that more work lies ahead, this achievement is expected to enhance trust and confidence in GFSI's ability to deliver its ambitious agenda of transformational change across all areas of GFSI activities.

"Cultivating trust and transparency through strengthened governance is paramount in advancing food safety excellence. Our progress in implementing robust governance mechanisms underscores our commitment to accountability and industry leading standards within the Global Food Safety Initiative. This milestone reflects our ongoing dedication to the Race to the Top, enhancing trust and confidence across the GFSI ecosystem"
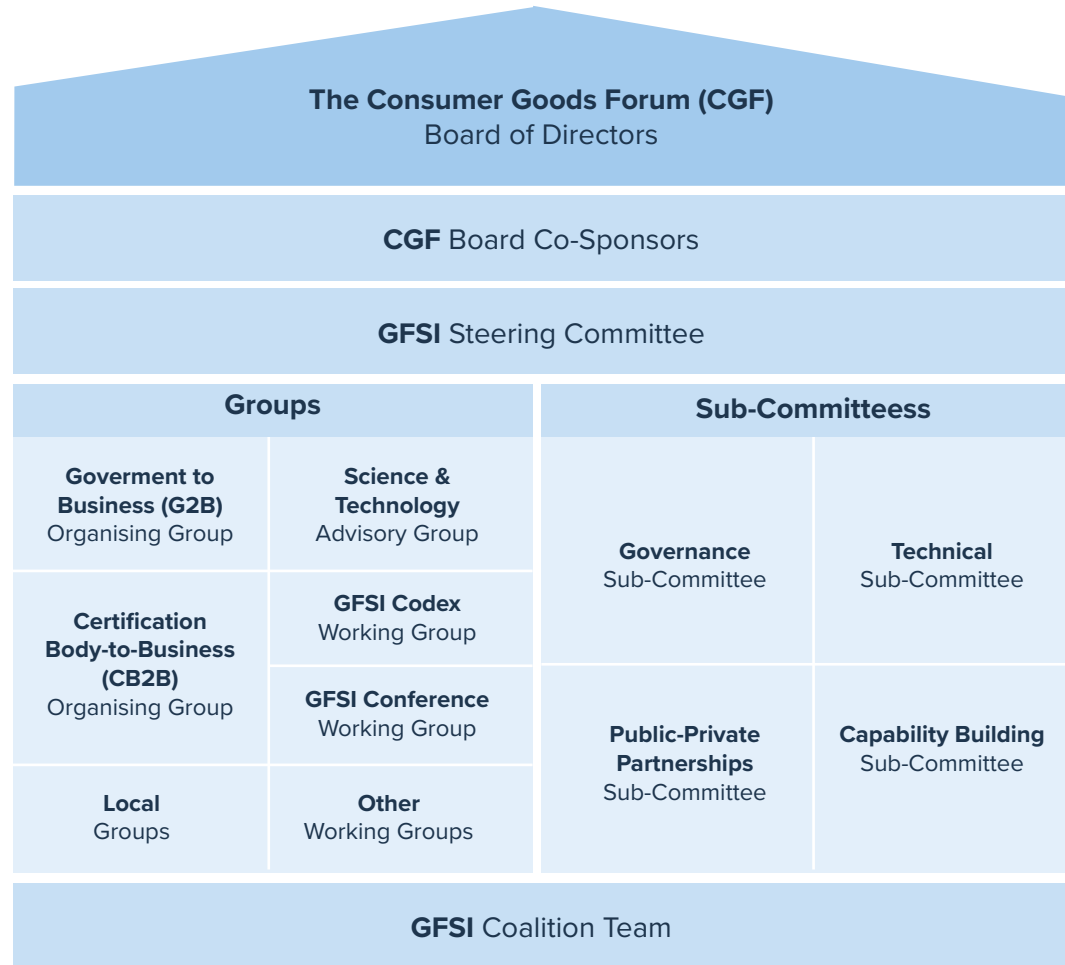
Erica SHEWARD
Director, GFSI

1
Governance Structure

This report provides a broad view on the activities completed by each level/group within the GFSI's Governance structure. The accompanying diagram illustrates the overall Governance Structure of GFSI; however, it does not delineate the specific reporting relationships within the organisation.

For further information kindly refer to Annex XII, **GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures.**

The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) Board of Directors			
CGF Board Co-Sponsors			
GFSI Steering Committee			
Groups		**Sub-Committeess**	
Goverment to Business (G2B) Organising Group	**Science & Technology** Advisory Group	**Governance** Sub-Committee	**Technical** Sub-Committee
Certification Body-to-Business (CB2B) Organising Group	**GFSI Codex** Working Group		
	GFSI Conference Working Group	**Public-Private Partnerships** Sub-Committee	**Capability Building** Sub-Committee
Local Groups	**Other** Working Groups		
GFSI Coalition Team			

2 Steering Committee

In 2023, the Steering Committee dedicated itself to tackling industry challenges head-on and fostering robust collaboration among a diverse array of stakeholders.

This unwavering commitment highlights GFSI's dedication to exemplary leadership, active stakeholder engagement, and unwavering transparency in driving forward food safety initiatives. The committee's balanced representation of both retailers and manufacturers ensures a rich tapestry of perspectives, paving the way for collective action and continuous improvement in food safety standards across the industry.

GFSI Steering Committee Member Changes:

> Several members **Roy Kirby,** Global Director Microbiology, Food safety and Toxicology, Mondelēz**; Cliona Murphy,** Vice President- Research & Development, PepsiCo; **Natalie Dyenson,** Chief Food Safety and Regulatory Officer, Dole Food Company; **Natasa Matsyasova,** Head of Technical and Production, Nestle; **Monique Pellegrino,** Vice President- Danone Food Safety Center, Danone; **and Barbara Masters,** Vice President of Regulatory Policy- Food and Agriculture, Tyson Foods, left the GFSI Steering Committee during 2023.

> **New members** of the GFSI Steering Committee were also nominated by their CEOs and elected to join: **Cindy Jenks,** General Manager, Pick n Pay; **Deann Akins-Lewenthal,** Sr. Director Global Food Safety at Mondelez International; and **Mary Weaver Gertz,** Chief Food Safety and Quality Assurance Officer, YUM! Brands.

> Additionally **Olivier Mignot** Head of Technical Operations at Nestlé Health Science was elected to replace Natasa Matyasova from Nestle, **Mark Beaumont** Vice President Quality and Food Safety Standards and Risk Management, Danone, was elected to replace Monique Pellegrino from Danone and **Mahir Bhagia,** Vice President- Global Food Safety, PepsiCo was elected to replace Cliona Murphy from PepsiCo..

> The election process for new members followed **GFSI's Governance Rules** to ensure the composition of the GFSI steering Committee remained in line with a split of retail and manufacturer members supported by their CEOs who represented senior leaders in food safety within their companies.

> All new members completed an induction process to familiarise themselves with their roles and responsibilities within the Steering Committee.

GFSI Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Mark FRYLING Vice President Global Food Safety and Quality General Mills represents the manufacturing sector and serves as one of the Co-Chairs.

Alongside **Howard Popoola Vice President - Corporate Food Safety, Quality and Regulatory Compliance, from Kroger Co,** who represents the retailers and serves as the other Co-Chair.

The GFSI Steering Committee Co-Chairs play a leadership role in guiding meetings, facilitating discussions, and ensuring effective collaboration among committee members.

The full composition of the Steering Committee is available on **www.mygfsi.com.**

GFSI Steering Committee Meetings & Membership

> Summaries of the meetings providing transparency and accountability regarding discussions and decisions made by the committee were published and are available on **www.mygfsi.com.**

6 📅 MEETINGS

2 IN PERSON

4 VIRTUAL

0 MEMBERS RELIEVED FROM DUTY

1 COMPLAINT PARTIALLY UPHELD

MEMBERS WITH A SIGNED STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT | CGF MEMBERS | TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS

19 👥

4 TOTAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

3 🍎 FOOD SERVICE
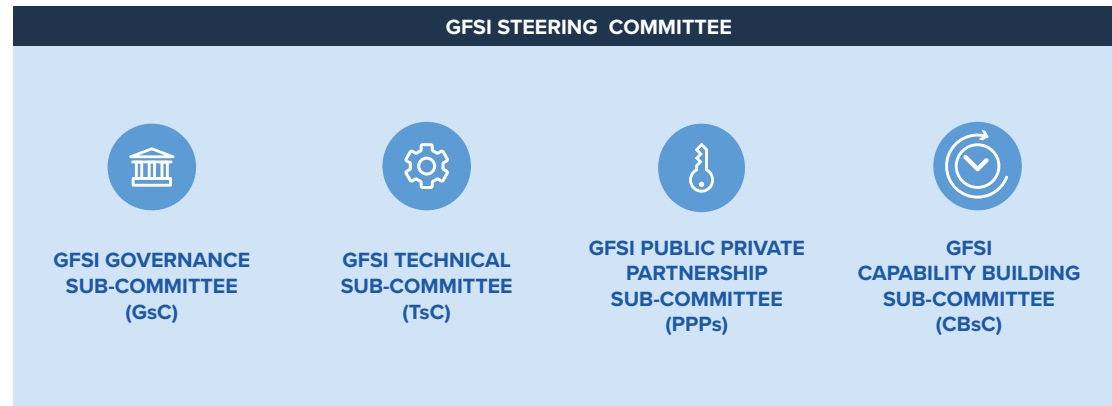
7 🛒 RETAIL

9 🏭 MANUFACTURING

3

Steering Committee: Sub-Committees

The Steering Committee is organised into four distinct subcommittees. This subcommittee structure significantly enhances the efficiency of the Steering Committee's work.

Each subcommittee focuses on a specific area of responsibility, allowing for more specialised attention and detailed consideration of relevant issues. This division of labour ensures that tasks are handled more effectively and decisions are made with greater expertise and precision, ultimately improving the overall performance and productivity of the Steering Committee.

GFSI STEERING COMMITTEE			
GFSI GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE (GsC)	GFSI TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE (TsC)	GFSI PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE (PPPs)	GFSI CAPABILITY BUILDING SUB-COMMITTEE (CBsC)

GFSI Governance Sub-Committee (GsC)

The Governance Sub-Committee (GsC), under the **leadership of Mark Fryling from General Mills,** plays a pivotal role in upholding the governance criteria as outlined in **Article VI of the GFSI Governance Model and Rules of Procedures**.

This subcommittee's diligent activities and comprehensive oversight reflect its commitment to transparency, compliance, and ethical governance within the food safety industry, aligning with GFSI's mission and objectives. Despite a slight imbalance in the committee's composition, with a 60:40 split against the target of 50:50, the subcommittee has maintained active and productive engagement through regular meetings. Over the past year, the committee convened six times, with each meeting achieving quorum, ensuring that all necessary members were present to facilitate meaningful and impactful discussions.

› Key Objectives & Activities

The GsC's primary focus is to address any deviations from governance rules and the Code of Ethics, as stipulated in **Article XIV of the GFSI Governance Model and Rules of Procedures**. This role involves close collaboration with the Technical Committee on high-profile sanctioning cases, detailed in **Article XV**, **to ensure that all standards and ethical guidelines are strictly adhered to.**

The GsC's responsibilities extend to the oversight of the preparation of the GFSI Annual Report, as specified in Annex V of the **GFSI Governance Model and Rules of Procedures**. This task underscores the subcommittee's broad scope of duties and its integral role in maintaining and enhancing governance practices within GFSI. **The preparation of the annual report is a significant undertaking, requiring meticulous attention to detail and a comprehensive understanding of the organisation's activities and achievements over the year.**

› Main Issues Addressed

In addition to its work on sanctioning cases, the subcommittee has addressed a variety of significant topics. These include **GFSI logo trademark infringement issues,** which are vital to protecting the brand's integrity and reputation. **Ethical concerns,** as outlined in **Article XIV**, have also been a key area of focus, ensuring that the highest standards of conduct are maintained throughout the organisation.

The subcommittee has played an instrumental role in overseeing **the Steering Committee elections, ensuring that the process is fair, transparent, and in line with governance rules.** Furthermore, managing the composition of the subcommittee itself has been a critical task, ensuring that it remains balanced and effective in fulfilling its duties.

5
MEMBERS WITH A SIGNED STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

3 🛒
RETAIL

2 〰
MANUFACTURING

6
MEETINGS HELD (REMOTELY)

☑

6
QUORATE MEETINGS

GsC's MEETINGS

GFSI Technical Sub-Committee (TsC)

The Technical Sub-Committee (TsC), chaired by **Howard Popoola from Kroger,** plays a crucial role in the governance model and procedures of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), particularly focusing on **Article VI. This committee is responsible for making important decisions related to governance, compliance, and operational aspects of benchmarking within GFSI.**

The current composition of the committee reveals a 66:33 split between retailers and manufacturers, differing from the target of a balanced 50:50 ratio. Despite this imbalance, the committee has demonstrated consistent engagement by meeting seven times over the year, with all sessions achieving quorum, indicating **active participation and decision-making.**

› Key Objectives & Activities

The TsC has several primary objectives. Firstly, it r**eviews and approves changes to the Stakeholder Advisory Forum Working Group (SAFWG) membership and work plans,** as outlined in **Article XIII of the GFSI Governance model.** It also **addresses compliance and enforcement matters related to benchmarking activities, including lifecycle approval and technical equivalence processes,** ensuring adherence to **Article XIII.**

Additionally, the committee supports organisational efforts related to **Certification Bodies to Business (CB2B) activities**. It actively cultivates partnerships with relevant technical bodies and organisations, as specified in **Article XIII.** Furthermore, it **manages and coordinates the Technical Working Groups and serves as the primary point of contact for the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG),** as detailed in **Article IX**. Ensuring alignment of benchmarks and auditing certificate reporting with GFSI benchmark requirement is another critical function, in line with **Article XIII**.
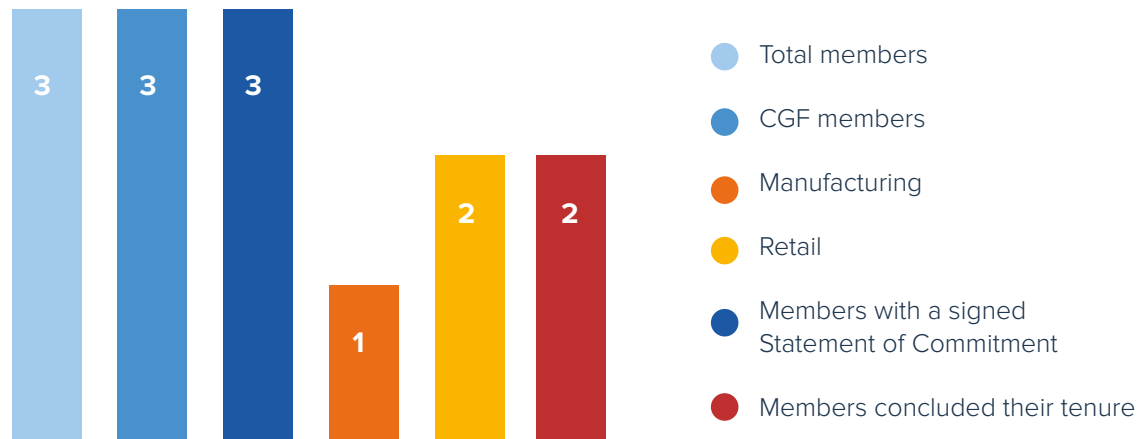
› Main issues addressed

Throughout the year, the committee has addressed several significant issues. These include the revision of the **SAFWG membership** and the approval of its work plans. They have also dealt with a sanctioning case involving a **GFSI Recognised Certification Program Owner (CPO).** The committee has reviewed assessments by benchmark leaders to ensure ongoing alignment with GFSI requirements and has gathered stakeholder feedback to support the proposed review of GFSI Benchmarking Requirements (BMRs).

Under the leadership of Howard Popoola, the TsC remains integral to maintaining the high standards of benchmarking and operational efficiency within the GFSI framework.

TsC MEETINGS

1
MEETINGS HELD (FACE TO FACE)

6
MEETINGS HELD (REMOTELY)

7
QUORATE MEETINGS
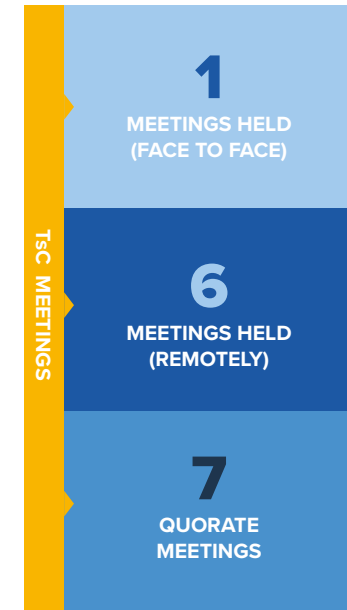
TECHNICAL SC MEMBERSHIP

- Total members — 3
- CGF members — 3
- Manufacturing — 1
- Retail — 2
- Members with a signed Statement of Commitment — 3
- Members concluded their tenure — 2

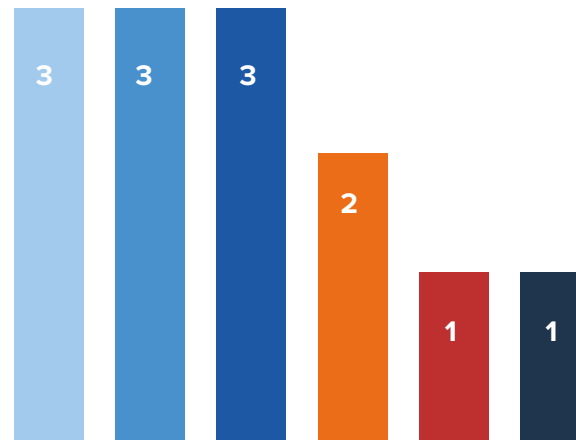## GFSI Public Private Partnership Sub-Committee (PPPs)

The departure of **Monique Pellegrino from Danone** the Steering Committee has left the chair of the PPPs Sub-Committee position vacant.

The committee aims for a balanced composition of 50% retailers and 50% manufacturers. Currently, the composition stands at 40% retailers and 60% manufacturers.

Furthermore, the committee has maintained a high level of activity, convening for 10 meetings throughout the year, all of which successfully achieved quorum.

PPP SC MEETINGS

2 MEETINGS HELD (FACE TO FACE)	**2** MEETINGS WITH REGULATORS
8 MEETINGS HELD (REMOTELY)	**2** MEETINGS WITH NGOs
10 QUORATE MEETINGS	

PPP SC MEMBERSHIP

- **3** Total members
- **3** CGF members
- **2** Manufacturing
- **1** Retail
- **3** Members with a signed Statement of Commitment
- **1** New members joining in the year

› Key Objectives and activities

The primary goal of the PPP **(Article X, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures)** is to enhance the credibility of third-party certification through GFSI's PPP outreach initiative. This involves engaging with public authorities responsible for food safety policy and delivery and overseeing activities related to GFSI's interaction with international standards setting bodies for example FAO, WHO and The Codex Alimentarius Commission. The GFSI Codex Committee responded to 2 stakeholder consultations from Codex in 2023.

› Main issues addressed

During the Government to Business (G2B) meeting in Atlanta, 42 public authorities and GFSI Steering Committee members participated in an intensive two-day workshop. The agenda included discussions on the role of regulators in developing GFSI Benchmarking requirements, consultations on the GFSI capability building framework, and strategies for effective data sharing. A significant outcome of the workshop was the consensus on a structured format for future meetings. This new framework is designed to enhance confidence in third-party audits by focusing on benchmarking and sharing best practices, promoting a more consistent and reliable auditing process that benefits both government and the business community.

There has been notable progress in strengthening relationships with key agency representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Food Programme (WFP). These strengthened collaborations are essential for fostering a cooperative environment and ensuring alignment on crucial food safety and agricultural issues.

The committee also acknowledged the successful launch of the **Codex Standard on Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and Use of Voluntary Third-Party Assurance Programmes** in 2022. This achievement marks a significant advancement in industry standards and practices. Additionally, the PPPs sub-committee has been tasked with formulating a **GFSI position paper on Voluntary Third-Party Assurance (VTPA)**, which is scheduled for publication in 2024, further solidifying the commitment to high-quality assurance in the food industry.

GFSI Capability Building Sub-Committee (CBsC)

› Key Objectives and activities

CBsC **(Article XI, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures)**, chaired by **Tom Weister Jr, Vice President-Global Food Safety, Science Affairs & Public Health, from Starbucks**, is actively pursuing its objectives with a clear mandate and strategic focus. By fostering collaboration, setting clear goals, and taking actionable steps like selecting a service provider and agreeing on the capability building framework, the committee is making tangible progress.
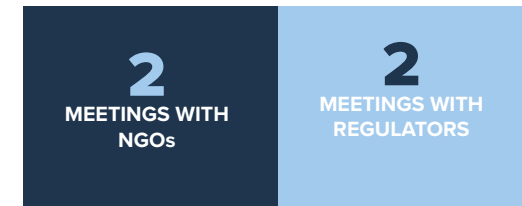
The committee aims for a balanced representation between retailers and manufacturers, with a target split of 50:50. Currently, the split stands at 60:40, slightly deviating from the goal but still representing a diverse mix of stakeholders. Holding 15 meetings throughout the year demonstrates a proactive approach to addressing the committee's objectives. Maintaining quorums for all meetings indicates strong engagement and commitment from committee members.

› Main issues addressed

The re-launch of the GFSI Global Markets programme following extensive consultation was a major milestone for the work of the sub-committee. Launched in November 2023 it ensures governance of the programme and its use, GFSI brand protection and repositioning as a self assessment tool as originally intended.

The committee's consensus on a Capability Building framework was a significant milestone. This framework outlines the strategic approach, goals, and methodologies for enhancing Food Safety Systems (FSS) among non-GFSI recognised food business owners (FBOs). Additionally, identifying a suitable service provider to advance the framework was a critical step towards implementing the Capability Building initiatives effectively.

2 MEETINGS WITH NGOs

2 MEETINGS WITH REGULATORS

CAPABILITY BUILDING SC MEMBERSHIP

	Value
Total members	6
CGF members	6
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	6
Retail	2
Food service	2
Manufacturing	2
New members joining in the year	1

- Total members
- CGF members
- Retail
- Manufacturing
- Food service
- Members with a signed Statement of Commitment
- New members joining in the year

4
Working Groups

Working groups within GFSI (Article VII, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures) foster collaboration, drive innovation, and strengthen food safety practices across the global food supply chain. They serve as essential forums for collective action and industry-wide advancement in key projects. Presented below are summaries outlining the four working groups.

Science and Technology Advisory Group (STAG)

The Science and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) **(Article IX, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures)**, chaired by **David Crean (Independent Consultant)** is a distinguished panel comprising experts from various regions and academic institutions.

The committee includes notable experts in the field of food safety and technology:

> **Francisco DIEZ-GONZALEZ**
> Professor and Director
> Centre for Food Safety
> University of Georgia, USA

> **Jeffery FARBER**
> Adjunct Professor
> Department of Food Science
> University of Guelph, Canada

> **Kaye BURGESS**
> Senior Research Officer
> TEAGASC, Ireland

> **Lise KORSTEN**
> Co-Director DSI/NRF University
> of Pretoria, South Africa

> **Robert SCHARFF**
> Professor and Chair,
> Consumer Sciences Graduate Studies,
> Ohio State University, USA

The primary aim of STAG is to provide GFSI with independent perspectives and insights on scientific and technological advancements that impact GFSI's food safety initiatives. The committee has published **four papers** and an **annual report**, highlighting their commitment to disseminating valuable information and recommendations based on scientific expertise.

Auditor Training and Professional Development (ATPD)

This group was suspended during 2023 to allow for an independent review of the purpose of the work to be undertaken led by Professor Julian Cox, Associate Dean International-Emerging Markets, UNSW Engineering. The independent group convened to advance a fundamental prerequisite for the ATPD work which is a professional development framework for food safety auditors.

The outputs from this work are expected to go out for consultation in 2024 before a call for participation for the implementation group is launched following publication of the framework post consultation.

Stakeholder Advisory Forum Working Group (SAFWG)

The Stakeholder Advisory Forum Working Group (SAFWG) **(Article XIII, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures)** chaired by **Andrew Clarke, Senior Director Quality Assurance, Loblaw Companies Limited,** has been actively engaged in promoting stakeholder involvement and evaluating proposed changes to benchmark requirements. This involves gathering input from industry stakeholders, evaluating the impact of proposed changes, and making recommendations to the Technical Committee regarding revisions or updates to benchmark requirements.

SAFWG consists of 13 members, with diverse representation from manufacturing, retail, and food service sectors including 4 members from manufacturing, 2 from retail, and 7 from food service, ensuring a broad range of perspectives and expertise. The committee has held 4 meetings during the year, with all meetings achieving quorum.

SAFWG conducted a survey to assess the impact of the 2020 version of benchmark requirements to gathering feedback and insights from stakeholders. Additionally, the committee reviewed process flows and stakeholder engagement plans to refine the development of benchmark requirements, ensuring transparency and inclusivity in the decision-making process.

GFSI Codex Committee

The GFSI Codex Committee **(Article XII, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures)** chaired by **Himanshu Gupta, Global Head Regulatory and Scientific Affairs - Dairy Business, Nestlé,** is actively involved in contributing to Codex matters, particularly focusing on the development of standards related to voluntary third-party assurance programmes and food hygiene. The objectives are to advise GFSI on relevant Codex activities, to liaise with Codex on the role of third-party Certification.

The main activities of the group have been related to the development of the **Codex Standard on Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and use of Voluntary Third-Party Assurance Programmes and Food Hygiene Standards**

The GFSI Codex Committee had a busy year with 6 meetings in 2023 and monitored and reviewed the work associated with the following:

CCFICS | Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems.

> **Food fraud**
> Proposed draft Guidance On The Prevention And Control Of Food Fraud

> **ICT**
> Proposed draft Principles and Guidelines on the Use of Remote Audit and Verification in Regulatory Frameworks

> **Traceability**
> Discussion paper on review and update of Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System

CCFH | Codex Committee on Food Hygiene

> **Informal Markets**
> Proposed draft Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food at Step 3.

CCFL | Codex Committee on Food Labelling

> **E-commerce**
> Guidance on the provision of food information for prepackaged foods to be offered via e-commerce

> **Allergens labelling**
> Food allergens labelling and Sustainability labelling claim

5
Local Groups

GFSI currently oversees 7 local groups (Article VIII, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures), which are organised based on geographical regions where GFSI has a presence.
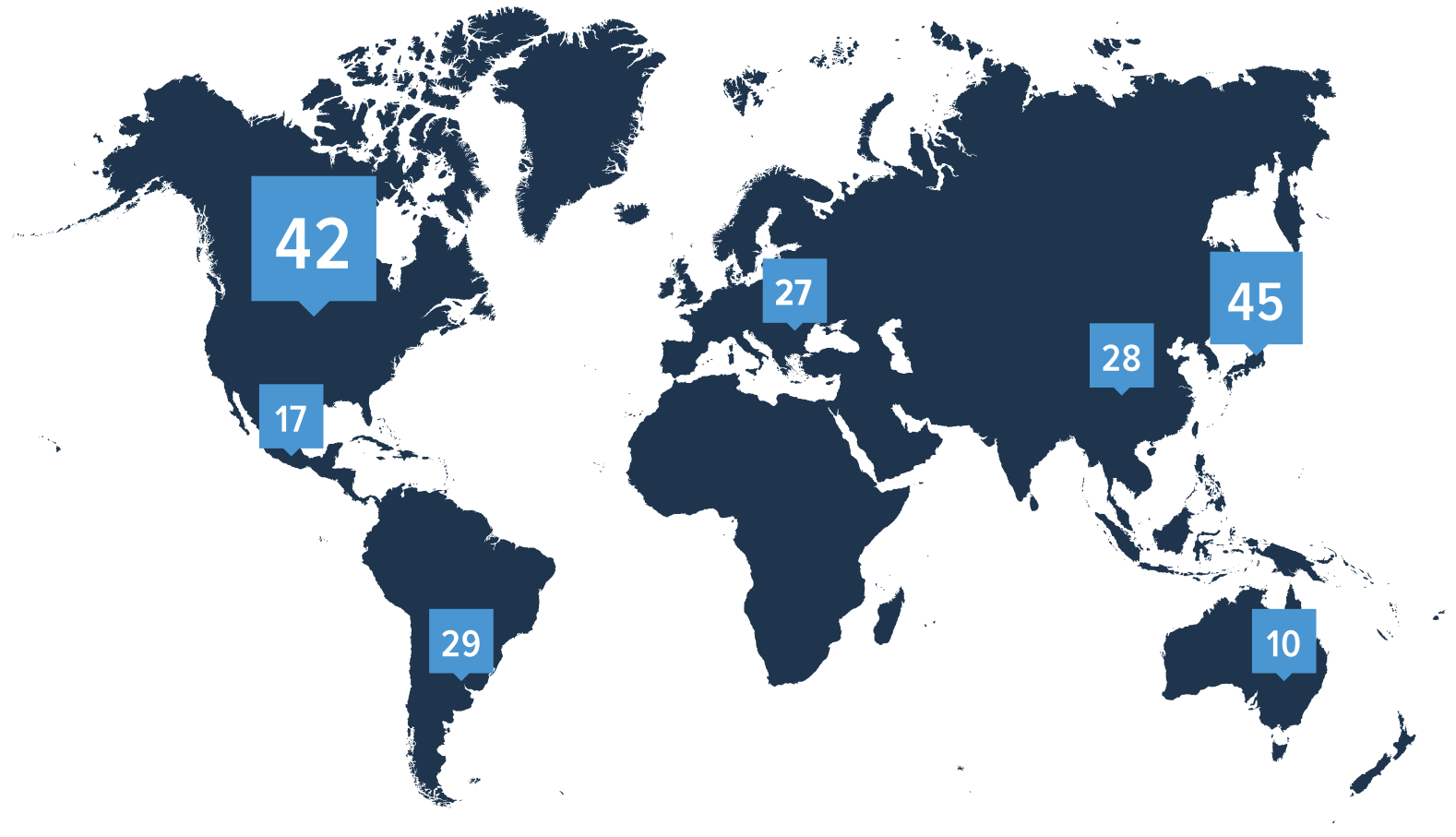
The existence of the local groups underscores GFSI's commitment to engaging with stakeholders at regional and sector-specific levels to advance its initiatives globally.

Each local group has a work programme (or work plan) that has been agreed upon with the GFSI Steering Committee (SteerCo). This work programme outlines specific goals, activities, and initiatives that the local group will undertake to support GFSI's mission and priorities.

Japan (est. 2012)

Japan Local Group is Co-Chaired by Toshihiko Nabe, Manager, Quality Management Group and Acting General Manager- Merchandising Strategy Department, AEON from AEON and Kazufumi Nagashima Senior Executive Officer from Kirin Holdings.

The Japan Local Group held an impressive 48 meetings throughout the year where all meetings were quorate, demonstrating a high level of commitment and engagement among its members.

The tangible achievements of the Japan Local Group in the areas of capability building and harmonisation, as well as their proactive approach towards addressing key topics has helped drive a positive change within the regional food industry.

Main Achievements

Capability Building

> Seminars on GFSI and certification mechanisms for new Quality Assurance (QA) team members were held and 209 people from 21 member companies participated.

> The survey was conducted to collect operational problems and examples of measures taken by member companies. The results were shared by member companies and exchanges started among them for the best practices for more secure implementation of food safety requirements.

Harmonisation

> Feedback for Benchmarking Requirements revision was gathered from member companies and Technical WG and several suggestions will be shared with the Coalition team.

> GFSI's position paper on the complementary role of 3rd party and 2nd party audits was shared, and the member companies started the discussion on how they can make the 2nd party audit more effective and efficient.

Other Activities

> The lecture on GFSI was given at the Young People's Forum of the Food Communication Project hosted by MAFF.

JAPAN LG OTHER MEETINGS

2
MEETINGS WITH
OTHER BODIES

13
MEETINGS WITH
REGULATORS

JAPAN LG MEMBERSHIP

Members relieved from duty	11
New members receiving an induction	2
New members joining in the year	17
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	45
Other	1
Food service	5
Retail	13
Manufacturing	26
CGF members	45
Total members	45
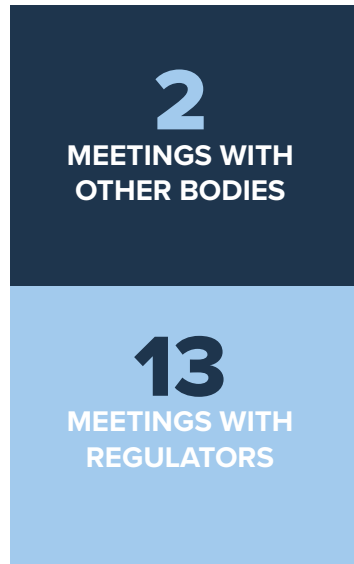
China (est. 2013)

China Local Group, Co-Chaired by Kelvin Chen Chao Head of QA, from Metro China and Zhigang Yang VP/Officer-In-Charge, Safety & Quality, Mengniu Dairy Group, focused primarily on certification programme-harmonisation, implementation, and capability building.

China Local Group has maintained a high level of engagement, with 10 quorate meetings held throughout the year.

Main Achievements

> Completed the general principles with GFSI HQ and held two workshops under the latest epidemic in May and GFSI-recognised certification in Aug 2022.

> Actively supported the technical equivalence between China HACCP and the latest GFSI requirements.

> Sent out GFSI-recognised certification survey, completed the summary report and the report will be shared in 2023 GFSI China Focus Day.

> Completed China Regulatory Authority information on Food Safety.

> Invited Global Codex leader to be involved in 2023 GFSI China focus day.

> Drafted bilingual version of the Gap Analysis Report of GFSI Benchmarking Requirements & China's E-commerce Food Safety Practice and submitted it to GFSI SteerCo.

> Drafted bilingual version of the GFSI China technology case study booklet that was shared on 2023 GFSI China Focus Day.

CHINA LG OTHER MEETINGS

2
MEETINGS WITH NGOs

4
MEETINGS WITH REGULATORS

CHINA LG MEMBERSHIP

Members relieved from duty	0
New members receiving an induction	0
New members joining in the year	0
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	27
Other	0
Food service	7
Retail	10
Manufacturing	17
CGF members	27
Total members	27

Mexico (est. 2013)

Mexico Local Group led by Jorge Rivas, Food Safety Assistant Director from Walmart Mexico and Itzel Castillo, R&D Sr Director, Food Safety & Quality Assurance LATAM, PepsiCo, has been quite active having met 14 times during the year, showing a commitment to regular engagement. Importantly, all meetings were quorate, indicating consistent attendance and participation.

The group has demonstrated productive engagement, and a commitment to addressing critical industry issues such as capability building and public-private partnerships.

Main Achievements

Capability Building

› The group has delved into the issue of the Global Markets Programme, addressing concerns around its dissemination, and clarifying that it is not a certifiable programme. By discussing the Global Markets programme, the group has enhanced awareness and understanding within the region, clarifying its nature and impact.

Private Public Partnerships

› The group has actively engaged with Mexican regulatory authorities through Hugo Fragoso, arranging a meeting with a food safety representative from SENASICA. This partnership is vital for addressing regulatory issues and fostering collaboration between public and private sectors.

4

MEETINGS HELD
(FACE TO FACE)

10

MEETINGS HELD
(REMOTELY)

14

QUORATE
MEETINGS

MEXICO LG MEMBERSHIP

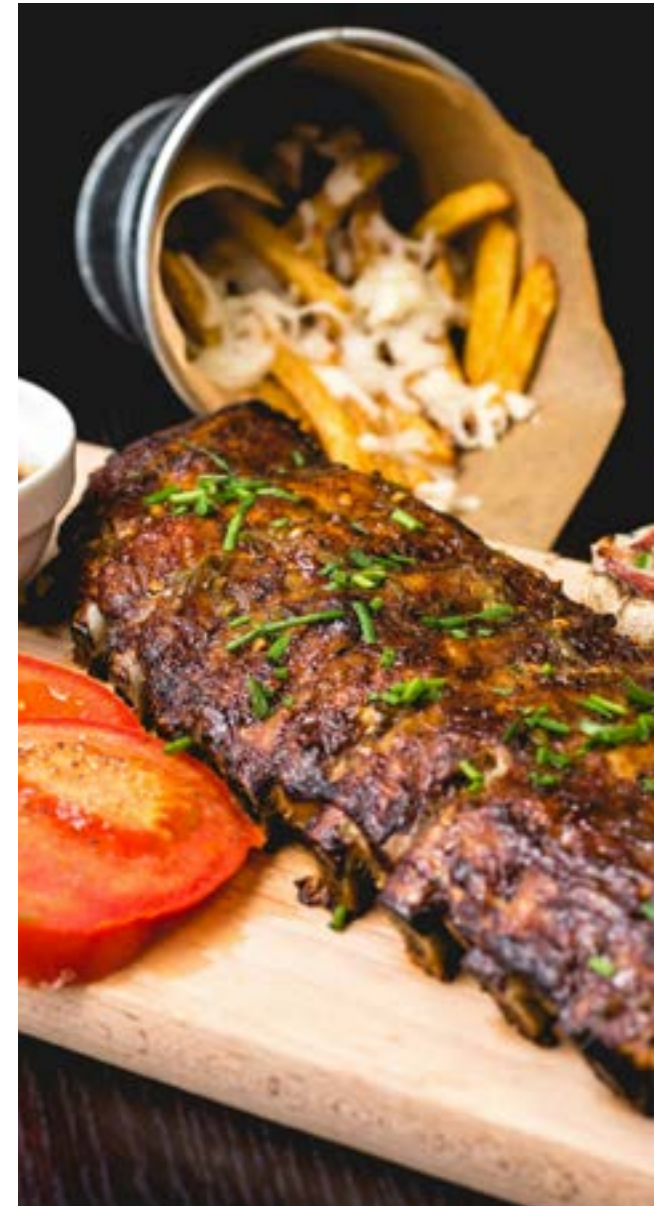| Category	Value
Members relieved from duty	1
New members receiving an induction	3
New members joining in the year	4
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	17
Other	2
Food service	0
Retail	2
Manufacturing	13
CGF members	9
Total members	17

US-Canada (est. 2013)

US-Canada Local Group, under the leadership of Samantha Shinbaum, Associate Director of Regulatory Compliance, Tyson and Kathryn Kadlec, Manager Food Safety & Quality from The Kroger Co, has prioritised key industry topics such as capability building and harmonisation.

Their efforts aim to strengthen the industry's foundation, enhance collaboration, and promote consistency and efficiency across borders. Meeting regularly and maintaining quorum underscores the commitment of members to advancing these important initiatives within the regional context. The group has met regularly, convening 12 times throughout the year. Importantly, all meetings have been quorate, indicating active participation and engagement among members.

Main Achievements

> The Capability Building Subgroup identified three areas where it will support GFSI's renewed approach to capability building: 1) using their market knowledge, supply chains and networks the subgroup will provide advice on who and how to reach businesses that would benefit from food safety capability building; 2) identifying the major challenges for food safety capability building in the US and Canada; and 3) working to identify potential service providers that would be interested in registering with GFSI.

> The Scope Review Subgroup reviewed the Retail Scope and made recommendations to GFSI team. On behalf of the LG, this subgroup led the response to the review of GFSI's Benchmarking Requirements. The subgroup also commenced a review of GFSI's Provision of Food Safety Services (Scope H).

> The LG has identified the importance of support to GFSI on Public-Private Partnerships. The Local Group issued a request for expressions of interest from its members, to determine the collective capacity of its members to engage with food safety regulators in the US and Canada.

US CANADA LG MEMBERSHIP

Category	Value
Members relieved from duty	0
New members receiving an induction	4
New members joining in the year	4
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	42
Other	9
Food service	1
Retail	11
Manufacturing	21
CGF members	12
Total members	42

South LATAM (est. 2015)

South LATAM Local Group under the leadership of Co-Chairs Ana Vera, Food Safety Manager from La Anónima and Fernanda Michelutti, Process & Sanitation Authority Sr. Manager, PepsiCo, the group continues to make meaningful strides towards advancing industry standards and fostering collective growth in the South LatAm region.

The group's commitment to meeting regularly is commendable, having convened 14 times throughout the year. Achieving quorum at each meeting underscores the dedication and participation of group members.

Main Achievements

> Food safety culture emerged as a critical and prioritised topic within the group, with a commitment to driving positive change and enhancing food safety practices across the region.

> Despite facing challenges due to regional government dynamics, the Local Group remains persistent in engaging with regulatory authorities to foster collaboration with governmental bodies, crucial for regulatory compliance and industry advancement.

SOUTH LATAM LG MEMBERSHIP

Category	Value
Members relieved from duty	0
New members receiving an induction	4
New members joining in the year	6
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	27
Other	4
Food service	0
Retail	5
Manufacturing	20
CGF members	22
Total members	29
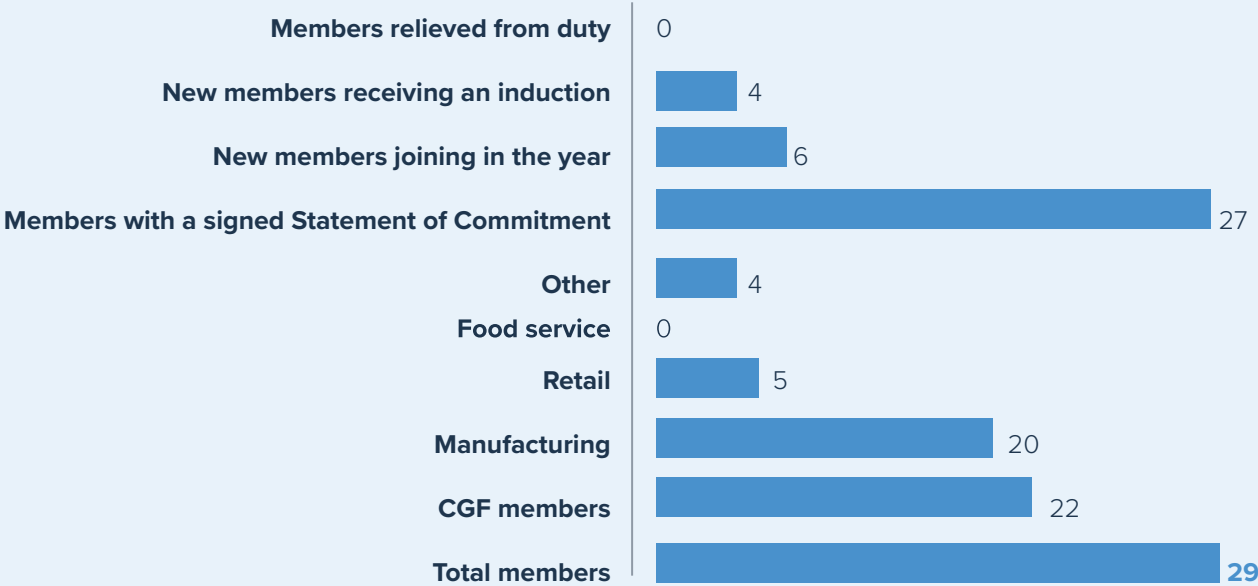
EMEA (est. 2016)

The EMEA Local Group, consistent meetings and quorate attendance demonstrate a commitment to fostering collaboration, sharing knowledge, and addressing regional priorities within the food industry.

Led by Lindsay Hay, R&D Director Global Food Safety Quality Assurance from PepsiCo and Caroline Easterbrook, Director - Compliance Operations, from Amazon, the group is well-positioned to navigate the complexities of the EMEA market and drive impactful initiatives that benefit member companies and stakeholders across the region. The group has met four times throughout the year, maintaining quorum in all meetings.

Main Achievements

> Significant progress has been made in the detailed data analysis of the EMEA region regarding understanding the food and beverage business, GFSI penetration and food safety risk management within this landscape. The local group members were divided into 4 subgroups to provide greater focus across 4 key areas of work.

> User Guide to the Evaluation of GFSI- recognised Certification has been created. This resultant document demonstrated progress across a detailed analysis of the GFSI- recognised certifications versus total food manufacturing business.

> Initial analysis into the stakeholder mapping of third party certification, companies and bodies involved in capability building has also been developed.

> Focus has turned to deepening the understanding of the drivers of poor uptake of GFSI and the development of a framework to gain targeted stakeholder feedback through a survey assessment of the region.

> A significantly deeper understanding of the food safety landscape for the EMEA region is now developed which will result in any activities being executed in a much more targeted and efficient manner, with the expected work momentum to increase significantly for the balance of 2023 and into 2024.

EMEA LG MEMBERSHIP

Category	Value
Members relieved from duty	0
New members receiving an induction	1
New members joining in the year	1
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	27
Other	1
Food service	6
Retail	8
Manufacturing	13
CGF members	14
Total members	27

Australia-New Zealand (est. 2019)

Chandaka Ratnapala, Head of Technical and Quality- Fresh Food and Longlife, Woolworths Group is the chair of the Australia-New Zealand Local Group and the group has met nine times throughout the year, with one meeting being non-quorate.

Main Achievements

> Efforts to grow LG membership have seen mixed success. However, new, and prospective members now represent a broader cross-section of food business operators (FBOs) and service providers. The LG has met multiple times with the national food regulator on a range of topics of mutual interest. The regulator remains very keen to engage with the LG with further discussions in train.

> Preliminary discussions held with Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology on local auditor initiatives to address issues of mutual interest. LG activities are seeking to tie in with GFSI global efforts.

> Initial discussions on programme of work on auditor issues revealed significant interest in aligning GFSI global efforts.

MEETINGS

1
MEETINGS HELD
(FACE TO FACE)

7
MEETINGS HELD
(REMOTE)

8
QUORATE
MEETINGS

1
MEETINGS WITH OTHER BODIES

3
MEETINGS WITH REGULATORS

AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND LG MEMBERSHIP

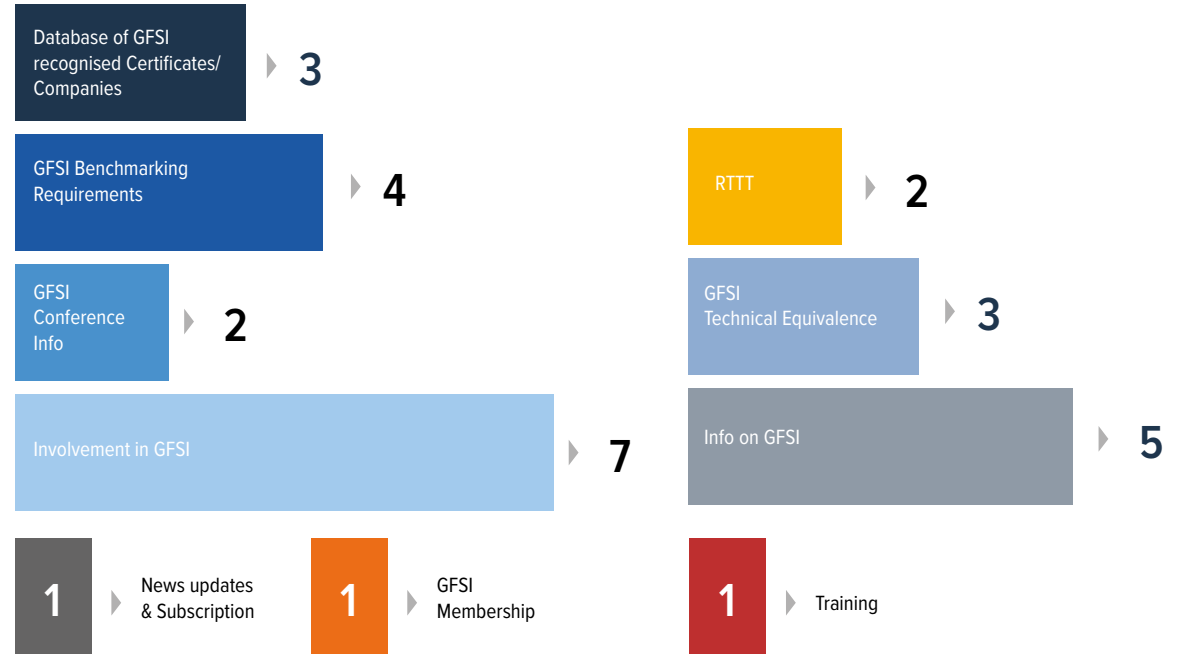| Category	Value
Members relieved from duty	0
New members receiving an induction	3
New members joining in the year	3
Members with a signed Statement of Commitment	11
Other	2
Food service	1
Retail	2
Manufacturing	5
CGF members	7
Total members	10

6
Coalition Team

GFSI maintains an open channel for stakeholders to get in touch and seek clarification on various topics, fostering transparent and direct communication (Article III, GFSI Governance model and rules of procedures).

This ensures that questions and concerns are addressed promptly and accurately. The recent GFSI enquiry statistics reveal a broad spectrum of interests and information needs among stakeholders.

The most frequently queried topic was GFSI recognised certifications, with 191 enquiries. Following this, GFSI recognised CPOs and the Global Markets Programme received significant interest, with 56 and 33 enquiries, respectively. Auditing also drew substantial attention with 20 enquiries.

Other categories, including involvement in GFSI, benchmarking requirements, and technical equivalence, garnered a moderate number of enquiries, underscoring the diverse priorities and concerns of those engaged with GFSI initiatives. These statistics highlight the varied information needs and areas of focus among GFSI stakeholders.

CATEGORY & NUMBER OF APPLICANTS

Category	Number
Database of GFSI recognised Certificates/Companies	3
GFSI Benchmarking Requirements	4
RTTT	2
GFSI Conference Info	2
GFSI Technical Equivalence	3
Involvement in GFSI	7
Info on GFSI	5
News updates & Subscription	1
GFSI Membership	1
Training	1

361 TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS

56 GFSI RECOGNISED CPOS

191 GFSI RECOGNISED CERTIFICATION

20 AUDITING

33 GLOBAL MARKETS PROGRAMME

32 OTHER APPLICANTS

7
Conclusions
—

Underpinning all the activities is trust in the GFSI brand. In 2023, the Coalition continued its journey of improved governance, an essential component of food safety management systems across the entire value chain.

Significant progress has been made in ensuring that the mechanisms underpinning trust in GFSI have been significantly strengthened and **this report is the first edition of the reporting process against those Governance mechanisms.**

The report is not a complete account of all the activities but is intended to **provide transparency that the Rules of Governance** are being implemented and adhered to.

This report additionally marks the publication and implementation of the new rules for Governance. Considerable progress has been made in improving the transparency of how GFSI operates and what activities it is involved in. Considerable progress has also been made on ensuring the Scientific and Technical basis for GFSI activities.

While much work remains to be done this report represents an important milestone on the Race To The Top and it is hoped will increase trust and confidence across the whole GFSI Eco-system in the robustness and integrity of third party certification.

8

Annex

■ **Steering Committee & Sub-group Compliance Reports**

	Steerco	Technical Committee	Private Public Partnerships	Capacity Building	Governance
MEMBERSHIP					
Total number of members	19	3	3	6	5
Number of CGF Members	19	3	3	6	5
Number from Manufacturing	9	1	2	2	2
Number from Retail	7	2	1	2	3
Number from Food Service	3	0	0	2	0
Number from others	0	0	0	0	0
Number of members with a signed Statement of Commitment	19	3	3	6	5
Number of new members joining in the year	3	0	1	1	0
Number of new members receiving an induction	3	0	2	1	0
Number of members relieved from duty	0	2	0	0	0
MEETINGS					
Number of meetings held (face to face)	2	1	2	2	0
Number of meetings held (remote)	4	6	8	11	6
Number of non-quorate meetings	0	0	0	0	0
Attendance at meetings (%)	93	88	75	80	80

	Steerco	Technical Committee	Private Public Partnerships	Capacity Building	Governance
STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS					
Number of meetings with regulators	1	0	2	2	0
Number of meetings with NGOs	0	0	2	2	0
Number of meetings with other bodies	0	0	0	0	0
COMPLAINTS					
Number of complaints received	4	6	0	0	0
Number of complaints upheld	1 Partially	6	0	0	0
GOVERNANCE MODEL AND RULES OF PROCEDURE (ONLY RELEVANT FOR THE GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE)					
Date of review	NA	NA	NA	NA	Jul 23
CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT (ONLY RELEVANT FOR THE GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE)					
Date of review	NA	NA	NA	NA	Jul 23

Local Group Compliance Reports

	Aus NZ	China	EMEA	Japan	Mexico	South LATAM	US Canada
MEMBERSHIP							
Total number of members	10	28	27	45	17	29	42
Number of CGF Members	7	17	14	45	9	22	12
Number from Manufacturing	5	10	13	26	13	20	21
Number from Retail	2	7	8	13	2	5	11
Number from Food Service	1	11	6	5	0	0	1
Number from others	2	0	1	1	2	4	9
Number of members with a signed Statement of Commitment	11	27	27	45	17	27	42
Number of new members joining in the year	3	0	1	17	4	6	4
Number of new members receiving an induction	3	0	1	2	3	4	4
Number of members relieved from duty	0	0	0	11	1	0	0
MEETINGS							
Number of meetings held (face to face)	1	6	1	16	0	0	1
Number of meetings held (remote)	7	4	3	32	10	9	11
Number of non-quorate meetings	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attendance at meetings (%)	62	55	65	82	54	46	65

	Aus NZ	China	EMEA	Japan	Mexico	South LATAM	US Canada
STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS							
Number of meetings with regulators	3	4	0	13	0	0	0
Number of meetings with NGOs	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Number of meetings with other bodies	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
COMPLAINTS							
Number of complaints received	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Number of complaints upheld	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GOVERNANCE MODEL AND RULES OF PROCEDURE (ONLY RELEVANT FOR THE GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE)							
Date of review	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT (ONLY RELEVANT FOR THE GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE)							
Date of review	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

› Abbreviations

ATPD	Auditor Training and Professional Development
BMR	Benchmarking Requirements
CB	Certification Bodies
CB2B	Certification Bodies to Business
CGF	The Consumer Goods Forum
CPO	Certification Programme Owners
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBO	Food Business Operators or Owners
FSS	Food Safety Systems

G2B	Government to Business
GFSI	Global Food Safety Initiative
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
LG	Local Group
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PPP	Public Private Partnership

RTTT	Race to the Top
SAFWG	Stakeholder Advisory Forum Working Group
STAG	Scientific and Technical Advisory Group
SteerCo	Steering Committee
TSC	Technical Sub-Committee
TWG	Technical Working Group
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization

About the Global Food Safety Initiative

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI; the Coalition) is a CEO-led Coalition of Action from The Consumer Goods Forum, bringing together 44 retailers and manufacturers and an extended food safety community to help oversee food safety standards for businesses and help provide access to safe food for people everywhere. As one of the world's largest networks to help achieve safe food, GFSI is committed to making food safety everyone's business and the Coalition members are addressing challenges facing food safety systems in their supply chains and the markets they operate in, and are helping to raise the food safety bar globally. Its ambition is to strengthen and harmonise food safety systems so they are able to feed the growing, global population and develop markets that can deliver food safely, no matter where in the world the consumer is.

www.mygfsi.com