



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Application for a Bridging Letter

1. Introduction

These Terms and Conditions govern applying for a Bridging Letter issued by SIZA to allow suppliers to complete their current season while implementing corrective actions following a new audit. The Bridging Letter also addresses operational difficulties related to scheduling audits during peak season when 66% of the workforce is present or when a packing or processing facility is not fully operational during the first audit visit.

2. Eligibility Criteria

Before applying a Bridging Letter, suppliers must ensure that they meet the following criteria:

- Bridging Letters are issued at the sole discretion of the SIZA office and are not an automatic right for all suppliers.
- The supplier's SAQ completion history will be reviewed. The application may be declined if previous SAQs were not approved within the timeframe between audit periods.
- The approval process will consider the supplier's overall risk status from the latest audit (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, etc.), past audit history, timeframe for corrective actions, SAQ completion, and adherence to subscription terms and conditions.
- SIZA may also consider or request additional supporting information, such as corrective action timeframes and evidence of past compliance.
- Applications are reviewed according to risk and cannot be submitted or considered if a supplier receives a critical finding during their audit.
- Applications will also not be considered if a supplier achieves a bronze audit status during the audit.
- Applications will also not be considered if high-risk non-compliances are indicated during the audit, such as abuse, discrimination or any kind of physical or psychological harm.
- Bridging Letters will not be issued if there are unresolved long-term improvement plans from past audits.
- Bridging Letter will not cover the extension of a Long-term Improvement Plan.
- Bridging Letters and Audit Completion Letters cannot have overlapping validity periods. A Bridging Letter will not be issued if the previous Audit Completion Letter is still valid because it cannot be used or seen as an extension of the previous audit validity period.
- The validity of the previous Audit Completion Letter may be extended up to three months after the new audit date if the application is approved by SIZA. The duration of the Bridging Letter is determined at the discretion of the SIZA office.

3. Application Process

To apply for a Bridging Letter, suppliers must adhere to the following requirements:

- Submit a formal online written request to SIZA using the prescribed application form: [Online Application Form](#).
- Provide details regarding the commodities grown, product seasonality, and packing timeframes.
- Clearly state valid reasons for requiring a Bridging Letter.
- The supplier must have completed a new audit within the previous 30 days with no critical findings before the application.
- The supplier must have an active and up-to-date SIZA profile, with all applicable subscription and visibility fees paid in full for the next cycle.
- The supplier's SAQ must be active to date and approved by SIZA.
- SIZA reserves the right to conduct site visits and inspections of the farm or packhouse during the approved bridging period.
- If a Bridging Letter is issued but the supplier fails to complete corrective actions within the stipulated timeframes, penalties will apply, such as a lower audit status rating, which implies a shorter audit validity period.
- Suppliers who successfully approved and received a Bridging Letter cannot apply for an extension on audit correction deadlines.
- Suppliers cannot repeat the application for a bridging letter in the same season or after the same audit took place.

4. General Conditions

- Suppliers are advised to check with their buyers regarding audit frequency requirements, as SIZA cannot override individual retailer or value-chain requirements.
- While SIZA aims to secure retailer buy-in for the SIZA Audit Frequency Matrix, compliance with buyer-specific audit requirements remains the supplier's responsibility.
- SIZA reserves the right to modify these Terms and Conditions without prior notice.

For further information, please contact the SIZA office at 021 852 8184 or email admin@siza.co.za.

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