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Specialty
Crops
Inspection
Division

AIM
Management
Series

“SCI moving forward in the 21st Century using technology, innovation, and old fashioned hard work”

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**Field Office Review
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INTRODUCTION

This instruction establishes Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division procedures for conducting Field Office Reviews (Area Offices, Sub-Offices, and Inspection Point offices) including procedures for planning, documenting, reporting, and distributing of reports. Field Office Reviews are conducted to ensure SCI's policies, regulations, procedures and instructions for grading, certification, and overall administration for its programs are implemented and working as intended. Field Office Reviews provide essential information to SCI's Management for continual Quality Management System (QMS) improvement.

Field Office Reviews are conducted annually at each field office location. The frequency of the review process may be modified in concurrence with the Associate Director of Inspection Operations depending on the extent of controls necessary to ensure operational procedures and processes are working as intended.

Primary responsibility for scheduling and conducting these systematic on-site reviews unless otherwise directed by the Associate Director of Inspection Operations are listed in the table below.

Office Type	Review Responsibility	Final Review Report Issued to
Area Office	Regional Branch Chief (RBC), or designee	Officer in Charge (OIC), RBC, HQ Inspection Chief of Staff and Associate Director of Inspection Operations
Sub-Office	OIC	Sub-Area Supervisor (SAS), OIC, and RBC
Inspection Point	OIC	OIC and RBC

The Regional Branch Chiefs (RBC) may delegate review responsibilities among RBCs, Assistant Regional Operations Branch Chiefs (ARBC), Headquarters Inspection Operations staff members, Area Officer in Charge (OIC) or Federal-State Inspection Management Branch Federal Program Managers (FPM). The OIC or Assistant Officer-In-Charge (AOIC) of the office being reviewed may be asked to assist/participate in part of the review.

To better ensure uniformity each RBC will annually assist and participate in at least one Area Office Review outside of their respective Regional territory.

Specific office functions and performance measures shall be evaluated for compliance with established policies. Non-conformities identified will be addressed via corrective action procedures. Additional procedures or programs may be included in the review at the request of SCI Management or the RBC.

GUIDE FOR ELECTRONIC USAGE

The AIM system of instructional manuals is available electronically in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) at the following intranet address:

<http://agnis/sites/FV/PPB/AIM/default.aspx>.

When accessed electronically, AIM materials have hyperlinks and hypertext (visible as underlined [blue text](#)) available to the PDF user. Clicking on a hyperlink takes the reader to a web site with information relating to the subject. Hypertext links the reader to a different page within the current manual, or a different manual, with information relating to the subject. For example, the hypertext in the Table of Contents allows a reader to go directly to the section of interest in the manual by clicking on the section title.

PDF offers a variety of tools depending on the Adobe version the reader has. The newer the version, the more tools available. PDF documents are easily searchable for content within a document or within multiple documents. To learn about the variety of PDF search options:

- Click on the “Help” tab on the top of any page in Adobe Acrobat,
- Then click on the “Adobe Acrobat Help” bar,
- Type the word “Search” in the “Search” box, and click on the “Search” button,
- A series of options will become available,
- Click on the “Access Search Features” link and follow the instructions for the type of search you are interested in.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Regional Branch Chiefs Responsibilities

- A. Assessing Area Office fiscal activities including contracts and agreements; evaluating the efficiency of inspection and grading, with respect to established policies and procedures; reviewing administrative operations and procedures; and evaluating supervisory skills and abilities;
- B. Reviewing the most current Inspection Point and Sub-Office office review reports performed by the respective Area office;
- C. Scheduling and performing Area Office Reviews;
- D. Summarizing Area Office Reviews:
 - 1. Identifying the findings and categorize into (1) positive findings, (2) non-conformances, and (3) observations.
 - 2. Documenting the non-conformances that affect the ability of SCI to achieve its stated quality objectives in the Corrective Action/Preventive Action Report (CPAR) (QMS B4.1a);
 - 3. Preparing the Area Office Review report and corresponding worksheets; and
 - 4. Approving and issuing CPARs to the OIC of the Area Office reviewed.
- E. Distributing the Area Office Review report and corresponding documents to the OIC of the office reviewed, **within 15 working days of the date(s) of the review**;
- F. Ensuring appropriate corrective action and/or preventive action is taken on all non-conformances;
- G. Tracking the CPARs issued as a result of the Area Office Review, until closed out; and
- H. Providing a completed review report to the Chief of Staff for Inspection Operations and the Associate Director of Inspection Operations once all corrective actions have been completed.

Officers-in-Charge Responsibilities

- A. Scheduling and performing Inspection Point and Sub-Office Reviews;
- B. Assessing respective Inspection Point and Sub-Office fiscal activities including contracts and agreements; evaluating the efficiency of inspection and grading with respect to established policies and procedures; reviewing administrative operations and procedures; and evaluating supervisory skills and abilities;
- C. Summarizing Inspection Point and Sub-Office Reviews:
 - 1. Identifying the findings and categorize into (1) positive findings, (2) non-conformances, and (3) observations;
 - 2. Documenting the non-conformances that affect the ability of SCI to achieve its stated quality objectives in the Corrective Action/Preventive Action Report (CPAR) (QMS B4.1a);
 - 3. Preparing the Inspection Point and Sub-Office Review Report and corresponding worksheets; and
 - 4. Approving and issuing CPARs to the IIC or SAS of the office reviewed.
- D. Distributing the Inspection Point or Sub-Office Review report and corresponding documents to the IIC or SAS of the office reviewed **within 15 working days of the completion date of the review**;
- E. Ensuring appropriate corrective action and/or preventive action is taken on all non-conformances, deficiencies, deviations, and inconsistencies requested in the report;
- F. Tracking the CPARs issued as a result of the Inspection Point or Sub-Office Review until closed out; and
- G. Providing a completed review to the RBC and ARBC once all corrective actions have been completed.
- H. For Area Office Reviews conducted in their respective office, be responsible for:
 - 1. Providing any assistance, documents, or records needed for the Area Office review;
 - 2. Responding, in writing, using the CPAR issued, **within 15 working days of receipt of the written report**; and
 - 3. Taking corrective and/or preventive action.

Inspectors-In-Charge (IIC) and Sub-Area Supervisors (SAS) Responsibilities

- A. Providing any assistance, documents, or records needed for the Inspection Point or Sub-Office review;
- B. Responding, in writing, using the CPAR issued, **within 15 working days of receipt of the written report**; and
- C. Taking corrective and/or preventive action.

Chief of Staff for Inspection Operations and Associate Director of Inspection Operations Responsibilities

- A. Reviewing the completed Area Office Review report, including the OICs response;
- B. Ensuring that significant CPARs are on the agenda for the next SCI Management Review meeting for further discussion and resolution, or calling a management meeting to discuss the issues

PROCEDURES**Regional Branch Chiefs**

- A. Will coordinate scheduling for each Area Office to be reviewed annually and provide the Associate Director of Inspection Operations and the Chief of Staff for Inspection Operations the annual schedule, including the proposed date for each review;
- B. Provide each OIC with advance notice of the proposed review date to arrange for visits to processing plants and inspection points;
- C. Prepare necessary worksheets for conducting the review, of procedures or programs requested by SCI Management or the Associate Director of Inspection Operations, if not included in the Field Office Review report;
- D. Conduct on-site Area Office Reviews by completing the applicable scopes from the Field Office Review report and other worksheets as determined prior to the review;
- E. Complete a working draft of the Area Office Review during the office visit to identify non-conformances;
- F. Determine if there are non-conformances of a serious nature which need to be immediately elevated to the attention of the Associate Director of Inspection Operations and, if so, notify same;

- G. Conduct an exit briefing of all findings with the OIC;
- H. Issue the completed Area Office Review report to the OIC **within 15 working days of the completion date of the review**, which includes:
 - 1. A cover summary page that includes:
 - a. Positive findings;
 - b. Non-conformance(s); and
 - c. Deviations, inconsistencies, or observations that need to be addressed as they may create non-conformances at a later date.
- I. Follow-up with the OIC after issuance of the Area Office Review report to clarify any issues;
- J. Follow the SCI QMS CPAR Procedure and QMS Instruction (QMS B4.0 and QMS B4.1) for ensuring that the identified non-conformances are resolved and tracked;
- K. Respond, in writing, to the OIC **within 15 working days of receipt of the CPAR**, indicating whether the proposed corrective and/or preventive actions and timeframes are acceptable or further action is needed for the non-conformances; the CPARs will proceed through the process established in the SCI QMS;
- L. Track and follow-up on any CPAR(s) issued as a result of an Area Office Review to its completion and close out;
- M. Include CPAR(s) on the Corrective Action/Preventive Action Status Summary (QMS B4.1b) for SCI Management Review;
- N. Finalize the Area Office Review report when all responses are acceptable and/or no further action; and
- O. Provide a completed review report to the Chief of Staff for Inspection Operations and the Associate Director of Inspection Operations once all corrective actions have been completed.

Officer In Charge Area Office Reviewed

- A. Will coordinate with Regional Branch on scheduling each respective Inspection Point and Sub-Office for review;

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- B. Provide each IIC or SAS with at least one week advance notice of the proposed review date to arrange for visits to processing plants and inspection points;
- C. Prepare necessary worksheets for conducting the review of procedures or programs requested by SCI Management or the Associate Director of Inspection Operations, if not included in the Field Office Review;
- D. Conduct on-site Inspection Point or Sub-Office reviews by completing the applicable scopes from the Field Office Review report and other worksheets as determined prior to the review;
- E. Complete a working draft of the Office Review report during the office visit to identify non-conformances;
- F. Determine if there are recurring or non-conformances of a serious nature which need to be immediately elevated to the attention of the Regional Operations Branch and, if so, notify same;
- G. Conduct an exit briefing of all findings with the IIC or SAS;
- H. Issue the completed Inspection Point or Sub-Office Review report to the IIC or SAS **within 15 working days of the completion date of the review**, which includes:
 - 1. A cover summary page that includes:
 - a. Positive findings;
 - b. Non-conformance(s); and
 - c. Deviations, inconsistencies, or observations that need to be addressed as they may create non-conformances at a later date.
- I. Follow-up with the IIC or SAS after issuance of the Office Review to clarify any issues;
- J. Follow the SCI QMS CPAR Procedure and QMS Instruction (QMS B4.0 and QMS B4.1) for ensuring that the identified non-conformances are resolved and tracked;
- K. Respond, in writing, to the IIC or SAS **within 15 working days of receipt of the CPAR**, indicating whether the proposed corrective and/or preventive actions and timeframes are acceptable or further action is needed for the deficiencies; the CPARs will proceed through the process established in the SCI QMS;

- L. Track and follow-up on any CPAR(s) issued as a result of the Inspection Point or Sub-Office Review to its completion and close out;
- M. Include CPAR(s) on the Corrective Action/Preventive Action Status Summary (QMS B4.1b) for SCI Management Review;
- N. Finalize the Office Review when all responses are acceptable and/or no further action is taken; and
- O. Provide a completed review to the Regional Operations Branch Chief and Assistant Branch Chief once all corrective actions have been completed.
- P. For Area Office Reviews conducted in their respective office, will:
 - 1. Prepare and assemble documents, reports, and other records for the review, as directed, and have them available by the review date or date requested;
 - 2. Respond, in writing, using the appropriate Corrective Action Report sheets issued, **within 15 working days of receipt of the issued report**, addressing the following:
 - a. CPAR (s)
 - b. Following the QMS CPAR Procedure and QMS Instruction (QMS B4.0 and QMS B4.1) for corrective and/or preventive action resolution; and
 - c. Determining the root cause of the problem and taking corrective and/or preventive action.
 - 3. Assist in tracking and following-up on CPARs to completion.

Inspectors-In-Charge and Sub-Area Supervisors

- A. Will prepare and assemble documents, reports, and other records for the Inspection Point or Sub-Office review, as directed by the OIC, and have them available by the review date or date requested;
- B. Respond, in writing, using the appropriate Corrective Action Report sheets issued by the OIC, **within 15 working days of receipt of the issued report**, addressing the following:
 - 1. CPAR(s)

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2. Following the QMS CPAR Procedure and QMS Instruction (QMS B4.0 and QMS B4.1) for corrective and/or preventive action resolution; and
 3. Determining the root cause of the problem and taking corrective and/or preventive action.
- C. Assist the OIC in tracking and following-up on CPARs to completion.

REPORT MANAGEMENT

All completed Field Office Review reports including worksheets, Correction Action Report sheets, and any additional follow-up correspondence shall be saved electronically together in a designated SCI share drive folder and retained for 6 years.

APPENDIX I – FV-398 FIELD OFFICE REVIEW REPORT

[Electronic version of the FV-398 Field Office Review Report](#)



**SPECIALTY CROPS INSPECTION DIVISION
FIELD OFFICE REVIEW REPORT**

FIELD OFFICE TYPE:		LOCATION:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Area Office <input type="checkbox"/> Sub-Office <input type="checkbox"/> Inspection Point				
NAME OF OIC, SAS, OR IIC:		DATE:		
REVIEWERS:				
CATEGORY	CONFORMS?			REVIEWERS' NOTES
	Yes	No	N/A	
I. FISCAL ACTIVITIES				
A. DEBT MANAGEMENT REPORT (DMR)				
1.	Does the OIC have the current DMR on hand?			
2.	Is the DMR report being reviewed on a monthly basis?			
3.	Is the OIC following procedures for applicants over 90 days?			
4.	Are delinquent account procedures followed?			
B. TRANSACTION REGISTER REPORTS (TRD)				
1.	Does the OIC know where to access the TRD?			
2.	Is the TRD being reviewed on a monthly basis?			
3.	Are errors to the TRD being reported?			
4.	Are errors corrected?			
C. REVENUE TRACKER (TMI Services)				
1.	Is the Revenue Tracker completed and processed according to Division instructions?			
D. BILLING – IN-PLANT (Processed Services)				
1.	Is there an adequate system in place to verify accuracy of billings?			
2.	Do billings agree with supporting documents?			
3.	Is turnaround time 10 days or less?			
4.	Are fee billings submitted by cutoff date?			
E. BILLING – LOT (Processed Services)				
1.	Is there an adequate system to verify the bills against the TRD for accuracy?			
2.	Appropriate charges from product group?			
3.	Minimum 1/2 hour charge?			
4.	Is turnaround time 10 days or less?			
F. CODs				
1.	Are CODs (checks/money orders) kept in a secure location and routinely submitted to the Service Center or lockbox?			
2.	Does the office maintain a copy of all checks or money orders sent to the Service Center until receipt is confirmed?			
II. CUSTODIAL ACTIVITIES				
A. GSA/GOV VEHICLES				
1.	Are all vehicles assigned to location properly identified by the correct FMMI code?			
2.	Assignment Transfer Form 1152 or other form from GSA?			
3.	Mileage log kept in each vehicle?			
4.	Are mileage logs accurate?			
5.	Are all vehicles needed in order to conduct the operation efficiently?			
6.	Is mileage properly reported to GSA?			
7.	Are AD-728's completed for all home-to- work drivers?			
B. USDA VISA CARD				
1.	Is vendor an approved source for supplies?			
2.	Are charges reconciled within 30 days in Access On-Line?			
3.	Is Budget Object Code correct?			