Guidance for Determining Person-Days for Higg Facility Environment Module (FEM) Verification

1. Introduction

Person-days required to complete an on-site Higg FEM Verification will depend on various criteria summarized below. The number of person-days should be determined by taking all the applicable criteria into consideration. Thisnon-prescriptive guidance is aimed to assist a Verifier Body (VB) determine the estimated number of person-daysfor the purposes of quoting cost (if applicable) and scheduling.

2. Criteria for Determining Person-days

2.1. Is this facility a light water user?

Facilities which are a light water user may use water only for drinking and other domestic purposes. They may not have advanced water treatment procedures either.
Maximum number of Person-days recommended for onsite verification: 2

2.2. Does this facility have an onsite wastewater treatment plant?

Facilities with onsite process wastewater treatment plant are likely to have a full applicability in the wastewater and chemicals management sections. Depending on the level a facility reaches in the Chemicals Management section of Higg FEM, the facility may need to hire a Chemical Specialist verifier. Some facilities that have a small scale onsite process wastewater treatment plant may require lesser number of Person-days.
Maximum number of Person-days recommended for onsite verification: 3

2.3. Does the facility have wet processes and use chemicals onsite?

Facilities that have wet processes (determined through Site Info and Permits section) like Printing, Dyeing or Laundry will use chemicals onsite. Facilities which have multiple storage and handling locations of chemicals spread across its premises will require more time to assess and verify the Chemicals Management section.
Maximum number of Person-days recommended for onsite verification: 3

2.4. Has this facility been verified before?

Facilities which are familiar with the Higg FEM need a verification which suits their needs. Determining the accuracy at Level 2 and 3 questions may require more dialogue with the management and review of documentation. Quantitative metrics should be fully reviewed during each verification as they would change year over year.
Maximum number of Person-days recommended for onsite verification: 2

3. Notes

3.1. One Person-day corresponds to 8 hours working time. It excludes lunch breaks and breaks unless required by law in the country of execution of the verification

3.2. On-site verification should not be less than 1 person-day.

3.3. The total number of person-days spent on-site may not exceed more than 3.

3.4. Verification scheduling and preparation, travel time and report writing are not in the scope of this guidance

3.5. Verifier should review the facility's profile, self-assessment and relevant documentation prior to the site visit. Verifier should utilize the time onsite to delve into specific questions where more clarification is required.

3.6. Facilities and VBs should mutually agree upon the number of person-days required

3.7. On-site verifications with 1 person-day will likely be subject to at least one (1) Quality Assurance activity (e.g. desktop review).

3.8. This guidance is subject to updates based on feedback from SAC membership and Support tickets.

4. Guidance Use Cases

4.1. Case 1: Facility A is a cut and sew unit with a capacity of sewing 50,000 pieces per day. It has a washing unit and an effluent treatment plant (with a capacity of treating 1000 litres per day) in the same premises. The facility is a light water user. It will be verified for the first time and has not achieved Level 1 in all sections.
Recommended number of person-days required for onsite verification: 2

4.2. Case 2: Facility B is a textile mill with spinning, weaving, dyeing and finishing facilities. It is spread over an area of 250,000 square metres, with a zero liquid discharge effluent treatment plant, rainwater harvesting system, rooftop solar panels installed in the same premises. The facility has been completing Higg FEM since 2017 and has undergone brand led capacity building programs on environment management in the past. Facility is a heavy water user and has achieved Level 2 in EMS, Energy and GHG, Wastewater and Chemicals Management sections.
Recommended number of person-days required for onsite verification: 3

4.3. Case 3: Facility C is a standalone screen-printing unit with a screen washing facility. This light water user facility has primary and secondary effluent treatment processes. It is spread over 45,000 square meters. It has been classified as a low environment impact facility by the local pollution control & monitoring agency. It has completed Higg FEM for the first time and has not achieved Level 1 in all sections.
Recommended number of person-days required for onsite verification: 1

4.4. Case 4: Facility D is a fabric dyeing unit. While reviewing its chemical inventory list, it has been found to use 120 different chemicals. The facility has no on-site treatment of wastewater and wastewater is treated by an off-site Common Effluent Treatment Plant. The facility is a third time Higg FEM 3.0 user and has implemented several improvement initiatives identified in the previous assessments.
Recommended number of person-days required for onsite verification: 2