Ongoing work on remote audit at the OECD

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WTO SPS COMMITTEE - Thematic session on the use of remote audit and verification in regulatory frameworks

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

21 June 2022

Project outline

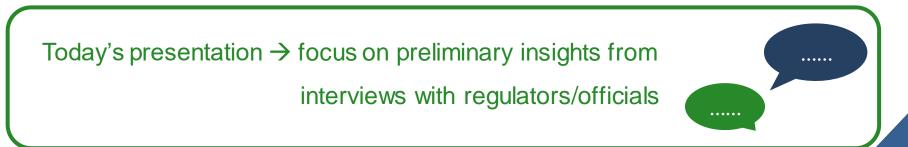
Project is composed of three parts

- 1. Overview of concepts and definitions
- 2. Case studies (importers and exporters, public and private sector, preliminary cost benefit analysis)
- 3. Key findings

Approach

- Literature review
- Interviews (regulators/officials, businesses and other stakeholders)
- Questionnaire

Final report: December 2022



Consistency issues

- Issues around definitions
 - "Remote Audit"
 - "Hybrid"
- Not "one size fits all"
 - Different approaches across trading partners
 - Different approaches on export and import side
 - Distinctions between systems audits and audits of premises
 - Even within countries, systems and methods are evolving

"Communication is key – a successful remote audit requires openness and transparency"

Benefits and advantages

- Enabled trade to continue during pandemic restrictions
- Cost savings, particularly travel expenses
- Likely to become more efficient over time, with greater familiarity
- Useful approach for existing trading partners and previously audited establishments (where there is already a high level of confidence and trust)



"Remote audits can be used to involve and help train staff – they can watch remotely"

Costs and disadvantages

- Requires more preparation time and human resource commitment
- Can potentially generate significantly more documentation (and additional time required to examine this) – far more than needed
- Requires more specialised skills and technologies (may be costly)
- More limited in terms of what can be seen and verified
- Time zones and language could be problematic
- Only suitable for trading partners/premises where there is an established relationship and existing trust



Digital technologies

- Use of existing standard digital platforms or tools
- Challenges of connectivity
- Modest focus on data protection, privacy and cybersecurity issues





We would love your inputs

We would welcome additional interview candidates – officials, businesses and other stakeholders

Please contact: Annelies.Deuss@oecd.org

THANK YOU

