

RAQQAM

Regulatory Affairs & Quality Assurance Management

Take a moment and step into our world

Explore our history and discover our approach,
strength and the motivation behind everything
we have achieved

We started operating in the mid of 2011, and ever since, we have grown to become one of the most trusted regulatory, quality, and scientific affairs solutions providers & advisors in the FMCG sector across the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT).

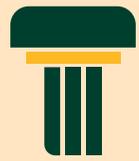


What do we do?

We bridge the gap between FMCG companies and authorities to maintain compliant products and responsible regulations while guaranteeing public safety.

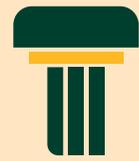
How do we do it?

Our work is built on four pillars:



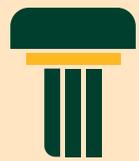
Knowledge In Legislations

We have extensive understanding of current legislations and instant awareness of new amendments, drafts, and updates regarding FMCG regulations.



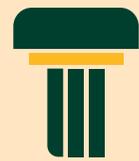
Trusted Relations

We are deeply rooted in the industry and continuously connected with its key players and legislators.



Scientific Research

We conduct meticulous research to acquire an absolute comprehension of individual cases.



Technical Reasoning

We reconcile the ever-changing regulations with the FMCG companies' cases using science-based arguments.

Endless Possibilities

“Our profound erudition in regulations and related scientific reasoning widens our perspective to see numerous possibilities to resolve even the most intractable quandaries.”



Our Values

Strategic Thinking | Our work is almost invariably facing unprecedented challenges due to new scientific findings, products, on-going innovations, and regulations. We aim to always think of sensible and sustainable solutions beneficial for all parties.

Integrity | Our work is tightly interconnected with public health; thus, we are responsible and only advocate cases that are indeed healthful.

Proactivity | We are regularly on the lookout for new regulations, scientific findings, products, and on-going innovations. That gives us predictability; hence we act proactively to prevent any possible difficulties.

Empowering People | Public health is society's responsibility; this is why we empower our team and share our experience with everyone to ensure a healthier future.

Our Services

Product Compliance:

- Formula validation
- Label validation
- Technical translation
- Registration

Regulatory Intelligence:

- Research & analysis
- Horizon scanning
- Early updates & warning

Quality Assurance:

- Halal, EQM, ECAS...
- QA consultancy
- Investigating & Auditing
- Training

Advocacy:

- Crisis management
- Special approvals
- Problem solving



Product Compliance



Formula Validation

Formula validation is vital for products' compliance and safety. Our expert staff validates the core formula within the framework of the target country's regulations and technical requirements.

We review the product's data and advise on the below based on the applicable standards and regulations:

- Permissibility of ingredients and additives along with their permitted limits and functions
- Physical and chemical properties relevant to the product
- Microbiological parameters
- Shelf life
- Contaminants including heavy metals and pesticides

Label Validation

Exponential awareness on labelling compliance across the region is paving the way for continuous regulatory improvements and more stringent regulations.

Noncompliance with the targeted market can lead to determinantal consequences on both the product and the business. This is where we come in ensuring products' labels are in line with the regulations and standards of the targeted countries to ensure highest mitigation of possible risks.



Our label validation services:

Label review

Full label review and validation to ensure compliance with technical regulations and standards

Text scrutinizing

Thorough word for word assessment, scrutinizing all marketing texts, logos, etc. Creating a compliant nutritional facts table

Reviewing claims

Reviewing and validating claims

Arabic text

Providing Arabic text for labels

Technical Translation

We provide technical translations from English to Arabic or vice versa

Our technical translation service covers the below:

- Translation of labels from English to Arabic by using technical terms in line with the local regulations and common practices
- Translation of technical regulations and standards
- Translation of news, laws and decrees
- Translation of leaflets, presentations and brochures

Registration

We provide support in registration of food, health supplements, cosmetics, personal care products, disinfectants, and detergents.

- **Company registration:** Recommendation of classifications, researching designated authorities and identification of registration requirements.
- **Product registration:** Assistance in declarations typing, fulfilling forms and compiling dossiers.
- Submitting applications (where applicable) and following up with officials to expedite processes.



Quality Assurance

QA Consultancy

Certifications are necessary to provide assurance to the authorities proving that your product complies with a technical requirement or a particular regulation in place. The absence of certain certificates can prevent your products from entering targeted markets or place shipments at risk of delays and recalls. Certifications can be tedious, time-consuming & expensive to achieve. That is why we support the process to ensure companies' interests and investments are well-observed and optimised.



We provide consultancy for systems-based and product-based certifications in the FMCG industry. Our consultancy process is streamlined through years of experience in the certification processes and requirements that ensures achieving implementation efficiency at minimum costs. We ensure the certification requirements are met, support applications and follow up with certification stakeholders to drive an expedited accreditation.



We manage entire certification processes from the selection of the notified bodies till a hard copy of the certificate is issued. We address any requests, complications, and communications during the process to deliver peace of mind & assurance for requesting companies.



We provide consultations at different levels and of various involvements for the following certifications to name a few:

Food safety

- » Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP)
- » Food Safety Management System (ISO 22000:2018)
- » Food Safety System Certification (FSSC 22000)

Other ISO Certification

- » Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015)
- » Environmental Management System (ISO 14001:2015))

Special Certification

- » Halal
- » Global GAP
- » Organic
- » Non-GMO



Halal

Halal Certification is a product-based certification system. Unlike International Standard Organization (ISO) there is no unified, international organization for Halal Standard. Hence, there are multiple Halal Standards & Regulations followed by different national authorities and certification bodies throughout the world.

Our team of experts includes lead auditors and technical experts from Halal Certification bodies and has a combined experience of assessing more than 500 companies. We are well connected with over 133 Halal Certification bodies around the globe. We provide support for all International & National standards and guidelines.

Utilizing our experience and expertise we have devised an effective & efficient process for Halal Certification that reduces cost & time for our clients.

Irrespective of the target countries or products, we can help get your product & company certified from an approved certification body relevant to your target market requirements.

ECAS

Emirates Conformity Assessment Scheme (ECAS) is the certificate of conformity for UAE. Following are the products that requires mandatory ECAS certificate to be imported into UAE. It is regulated, implemented & issued by Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology (ESMA) a federal authority of the UAE.



Honey



Energy Drinks



Cosmetics & Perfumes



Food Contact
Materials



Other products

EQM



علامة الجودة الإماراتية
Emirates Quality Mark

Emirates Quality Mark (EQM) is the quality mark of the United Arab Emirates (the UAE). It is regulated & implemented by Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology (ESMA) a federal authority of UAE.

As per the present regulations, EQM is mandatory for regulated products. Without EQM the regulated products and will be recalled from the market, if initially entered.

- Bottled Mineral & Natural Mineral Water
- Fruit Juices & Nectars
- Juices with Milk
- Flavored Artificial Drink (Non-Carbonated)
- Artificial Juice Powder
- Fruit Drink (Direct Consumption)
- Fresh Fruit Juice
- Yogurt
- Sweetened Yogurt
- Flavored Yogurt
- Flavored Milk
- Laban Drink
- Flavored Laban
- Camel Milk
- Goat Milk

Investigating & Auditing



Our team comprises of professionals with certification body experiences with a total auditing and inspection of almost 300 man-days. Coupled with our experience in regulatory and scientific affairs consulting, we are experts in identifying, assessing, analyzing, and solving problems in its root cause.

We use our special skills to provide the industry including manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers, warehousers catering businesses, restaurants and others with our inspection & internal auditing services. Following are some of the situations where you can avail this service to name a few:



- For exporters or manufacturers who want to ensure the quality of the products received at the port of entry. *(Inspection)*
- For exporters or manufacturers who want to ensure that their distributors, retailers or suppliers are in compliance with the quality & food safety requirements. *(Second Party Audit)*
- For distributors or retailers who want to ensure that their manufacturers or suppliers are in compliance with the quality & food safety requirements. *(Second Party Audit)*
- For manufacturers to ensure that their implemented quality & food safety system is in compliance with the requirements. *(Internal Audit)*
- For restaurants or catering companies to ensure that their outlets are in compliance with the food safety requirements. *(Inspection)*
- As a pre-inspection before the periodic inspection by the authorities, certification bodies and/or partners to ensure compliance and close gaps, if any are found. *(Inspection)*

Training



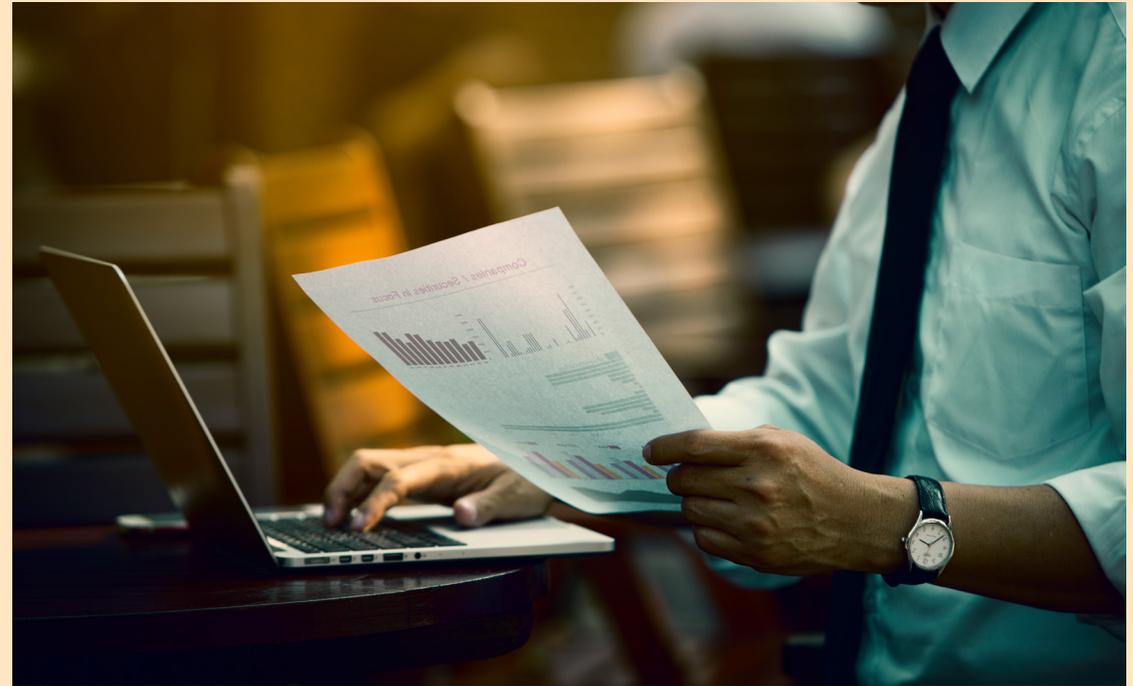
We conduct trainings
on all our services,
including:

- Introduction to Overall Regulatory compliance
- Product specific compliance
- Label Validation Training
- Formula Validation Training
- Horizon Scanning Navigation Training



Regulatory Intelligence

Research & Analysis



- Identification and monitoring of relevant issues, trends, developments, and changes accomplished using horizon scanning and other monitoring and market research survey methods.
- Assessing and understanding the resulting policy, standard and legislation challenges to enhance business planning and preparations.
- Envisioning desired future goals and objectives and identifying specific actions for realizing them, based on the development of specific scenarios.

Our Research and Analysis service is conducted in three phases

Horizon Scanning

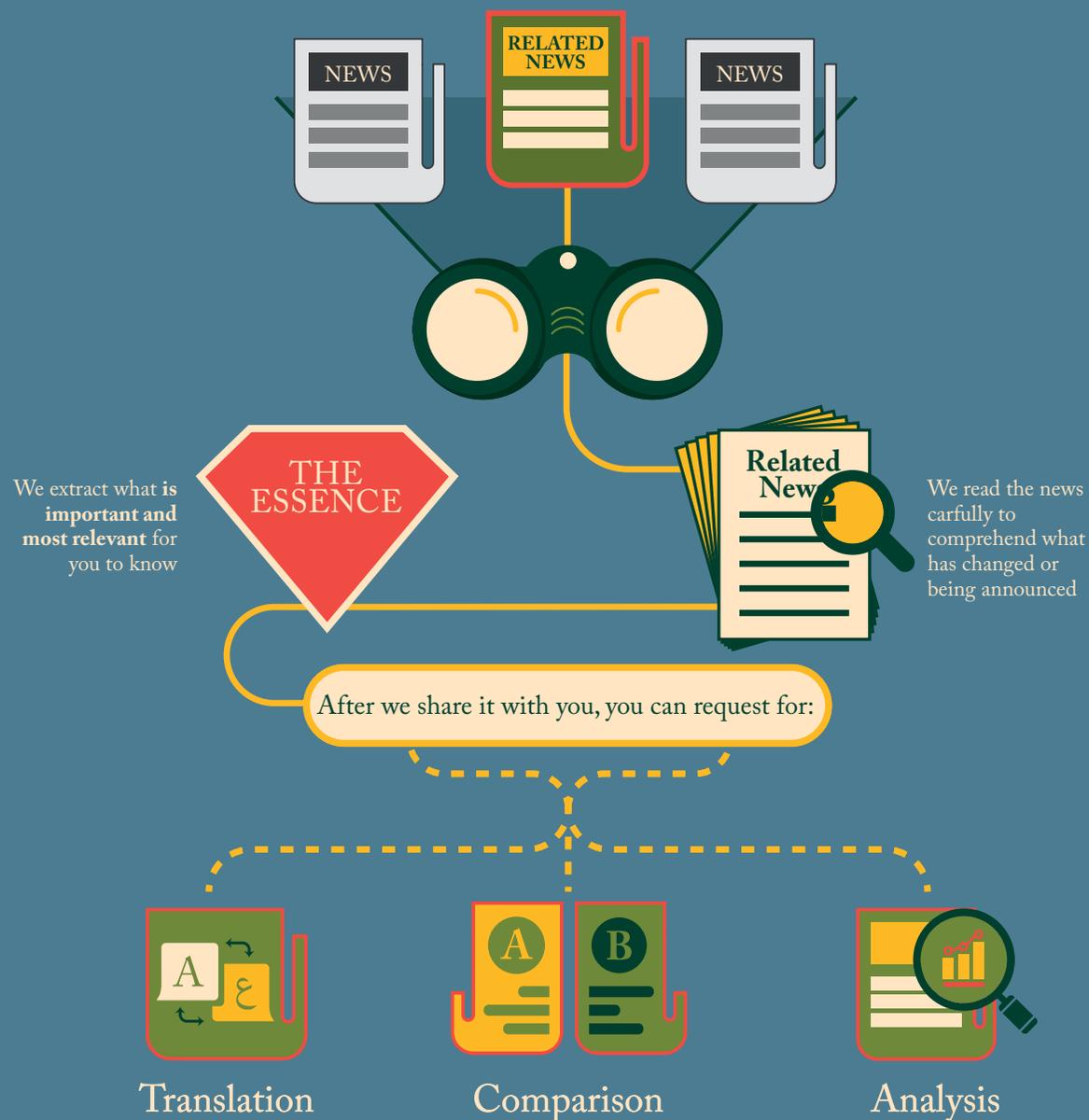


Our Horizon Scanning Team is always on the go. Investigating and researching recent updates from authorities across the region to spread awareness and ensure that your team is always up to date with any released news, decrees, circulars or implementations of any standards or regulations that is vital

to guarantee continuous awareness of all recent updates related to your business.

We strive to always be on top of all recent news to ensure that our clients are also in line with all regulations in place at any given time.

Horizon scanning also helps us be aware of any upcoming changes and be prepared to implement them and spread awareness to our clients early on so they are always prepared for market changes. This helps ensure that their products are resilient to different future environments.



How the Horizon Scanning benefits you:

Proactivity is one of the values that we live up to.

This is why we made this service to send relevant news for you to:



Avoid Losses



Realize Threats



Foresight Opportunities

Early Updates & Warnings



Our Early Updates & Warning service alerts our clients to potential changes of any regulations or policies, legislations, drafts, etc. concerning their products. The new Early Updates & Warning Service is designed to help our clients prepare against such changes by providing timely notifications about

possible alterations and revisions to the existing status quo. We depend on credible and trusted Authority sources only to offer trusted alerts for organizations so they can have adequate time to take the necessary steps to adhere themselves to these changes.

Just like the famous swiss cheese model designed for risk management to help control and mitigate risks, our Early Updates & Warning service is designed to fit into an organisation's wider defense strategy and to complement existing controls by adding another layer of defense.



Advocacy

Crisis Management



Provides solutions for solving non-conformity and compliance issues upon receiving the shipments at the borders throughout the products' life-cycle. Depending on the nature of the crisis we identify the problem, analyse possible solutions, perform negotiations until we find a suitable solution for both the authority and our clients. Depending on the

situation we can either accommodate for a long term or a short term solution.

There are a variety of short-term solutions, including but not limited, to the conditional release of shipments for a certain agreed period to help reduce demurrage fees.

There are also a variety of Long-term solutions, including but not limited to; analysing the situation, and communicating with scientific arguments to negotiate with authorities, and attempting to amend regulations to remove trade barriers where applicable.

Special Approvals

In some cases, regulations may contradict with their initial purpose. We identify, prepare and execute applications to provide special approvals to help fix these cases with a scientific approach keeping in mind consumer health and public safety criteria.



Depending on the situation and the special approval required we tailor a solution in a step-by-step format:

- Thoroughly studying and analyzing each case.
- Identifying possible arguments.
- Collecting supporting evidences.
- Conducting risk analysis for possible solutions.
- Compiling scientifically supported dossiers.
- Execute the most suitable solution and follow up till success is achieved.

Problem Solving

Finding suitable and favorable solutions for solving all the non-conformity and compliance issues related to your products:



- If a non-compliance (Quality or Regulatory Compliance) occurs during or after the production.
- Handling Consumer and Customer complaints and inquiries.
- Providing Risk Assessment and Solutions related to occurred cases.
- Reduce and eventually eliminate Parallel Import and Parallel Trade products imported by a third party to help protect your reputation, brands and company image due to potential non-Quality and/or non-Regulatory Compliance.



Assistance with product recall or withdrawal

- Companies may encounter Regulatory issues with Government authorities which may lead to products' withdrawals or recalls, in this situation we can be your spokesperson with the authorities utilizing our technical and scientific know-how with our great relations throughout the GCC, North African and Middle Eastern authorities.
- Communicating with the authorities to minimize withdrawal damage, protect the brand name and reduce losses where possible.
- Prepare the corrective action and negotiate with the authorities to accept the new productions.



Assistance in consignment release

Accelerating shipment clearance, by liaising with the customs to release a stopped shipment if only document(s) are missing or there is a minor labelling non-conformity, ensuring that demurrages are at minimum.



Negotiation & representation with authorities

- We can be the representative of your company:
 - » Be your company's Scientific Ambassador
 - » Representing your business during Scientific and Regulatory events (Forums, Summits, Workshops, Conferences etc..) and convey messages when moderating and speaking.
- Building relationships with the local authorities, Chambers of Industry, Chamber of Commerce and NGOs on behalf of your company.
- Negotiating with authorities on your behalf and trying to use scientific arguments and technical justifications, including international references and/or scientific studies or publications, to arrive at a resolution, which may include halting, delaying, or amending new regulations where applicable.



Thought Leaders



Dr. Hassan Bayrakdar

Founder and Managing Director

Graduated from the Université Henri Poincaré Nancy - France with Ph.D. degree in Chemistry, specialized in food quality and regulations, regional and international F&B standards.

Having spent 19 years leading food companies, monitoring and establishing food standards across the MENAT region, Dr. Hassan obtained an extensive knowledge of Regulatory, Scientific and Quality Systems relevant to food and beverages manufacturing such as expertise on Halal, food regulations and laws, crisis and Issue management.

Remarkable industry expertise sets the benchmark for tactical advocacy deliberation, authorities communications & negotiations, and issue & crisis management.



Yasser Ramzi
Operations Manager

Yasser is a diligent and self-directed Sales and Marketing professional who started his career with RAQAM in 2014. Formerly leading a successful and talented team of Regulatory specialists as an Operation Manager at RAQAM, Yasser has developed and implemented efficient systems to deliver successful projects to our esteemed clientele.

Yasser has also been utilizing his technological expertise to support the entire business workflow and has now taken a new challenge to improve client communications and customer satisfaction.



Tafseer Al Ansari
QSA Manager

The expert of certifications and quality processes such as ISO 22000, FSSC 22000, HACCP, Halal, Organic, CoC and other. Specializes in technical research & scientific affairs projects with a problem-solving and proactive approach.

With over 12 years of experience in quality assurance field for FMCG industry, in food certification body as auditor & trainer and in consultanting for quality, regulatory & scientific affairs, Tafseer has accumulated a large track record of successful projects in the region.

Tafseer did his BS in Agricultural & Biosystems Engineer from USA and has a Masters Degree in Biotechnology.



Omar Hisham
BD Manager

After more than 12 years of marketing and business development, experience becomes a key differentiator for operational achievements and strategic leadership.

With B.Ss in business administration, marketing major. Omar brings in adequate knowledge in brand representation and commercial alignment.

He is skilled with customer debriefing, situation analysis, strategic planning and solution development.

last but not least, he empowers our portfolio with new adventures and top-notch communications level.



Rasha Al Odeh

Regulatory Affairs Specialist

Dynamo team leader at RAQAM with more than 5 years of experience in the FMCG industry.

An expert of handling regulatory affairs projects successfully through her advanced research skills, knowledge of processes, and the prudent approach with the authorities.

She is skilled in label and formula validations, product registrations, translations, addressing technical queries and in leading research projects.

Rasha enjoys conducting food training workshops to improve the regulatory and scientific affairs infrastructure and processes around the world.



Noor Hamadeh

Regulatory Affairs Specialist

Synergy team leader at RAQAM with more than 2 years of experience in cosmetics, disinfectants & detergents categories.

Supporting key accounts with regulatory requirements from innovation to distribution, ensuring products are compliant and registered while keeping her clients up to date with all the changes in the regulatory legislations and guidelines that may impact their products.

Noor has unmatched skills in product compliance including label and formula validations, product registrations, scientific affairs and research projects, advocacy & negotiations with authorities, and managing regulatory issues and crisis situations.

Coverage

Category range





Saudi | UAE | Oman | Qatar | Bahrain | Kuwait | Yemen | Jordan | Lebanon
Palestine | Syria | Iraq | Egypt | Libya | Algeria | Morocco | Tunisia | Turkey



Capabilities



Reducing custom duties and saving millions for a chocolate manufacturer:

After studying the formula of a product, a solution was found to try and place the product under a different category with a different HS code.

After analyzing the situation, RAQAM influenced the authority to change the classification of the product from chocolate to wafers and in turn reduced the custom duties from %15 to %8 in Saudi Arabia.



Shipment stuck at the port waiting for destruction due to suspected food safety issue

A shipment was scheduled for destruction in Qatar port when the authorities detected a microbe in the products. The importer tried to understand the reasoning and they couldn't find any solution for this issue, RAQAM was brought on board after all other solutions expired.

We analyzed the situation and found out there is a proven acceptable limit for this microbe in international regulations. RAQAM took over the communications with the concerned authorities and successfully obtained the approval for a retest based on the international regulations' findings. After the test results came, the microbe was within the limits and the shipment was released.



Getting an approval for food additives used in some food products that are not in the positive list of GSO 2500

After the release of the new additives' regulation back in 2015 "GSO 2500:2015", companies suffered to get their products registered in Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries; the regulation was based on CODEX 192 however there were around 70 pages missing from that regulation due to a technical error. When the conformity officials were following the new GSO 2500:2015 regulation, they started rejecting any product that contained an additive not in the positive list of that regulation. RAQAM stepped in and was able to get an exception for a manufacturer's products to get the registration done without any issue when they import the products.

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