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ST★R Report

USC Marks Safety Priority with GBAC STAR Accreditation

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USC Marks Safety Priority with GBAC STAR Accreditation

Nationwide janitorial, staffing and security service provider United Service Companies (USC) has joined the prestigious list of companies achieving GBAC STAR™ Service Accreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™, (GBAC), a Division of ISSA. The GBAC STAR Service Accreditation provides third-party validation of a building service contractor's cleaning, disinfection and infection prevention protocols and procedures.

Founded in 1965, USC provides services across America with more than 10,000 employees and serves public and private venues, including hospitals, office buildings, hotels, airports, airlines, stadiums, convention centers and more. Trained workers serve as an extension of customers' businesses to help them host successful events, meet seasonal demands and more.



Rick Simon
USC President and CEO

GBAC STAR Report talked with USC President and CEO Rick Simon about his experience in accomplishing this accreditation.

What was involved in your achieving the GBAC STAR Service Accreditation?
To achieve this accreditation, we provided a multi-point checklist on how we clean, disinfect, inspect, train and, in

As a longtime ISSA member, we immediately understood the value that GBAC STAR offered. We're proud to continue to deliver our services with both care and cleanliness at the forefront.



some cases, we modified these to ensure we meet and keep the high standards set by GBAC. Safety has always been our top priority for every assignment. Over the past year, this meant taking the necessary steps to protect our staff and facility visitors within all different types of buildings. As a longtime ISSA member, we immediately understood the value that GBAC STAR offered. We're proud to continue to deliver our services with both care and cleanliness at the forefront.

Describe the customer experience your corporation had with GBAC.
Our experience was and continues to be great. GBAC not only continues to provide training for us but also to some very high-profile clients we have. Our clients appreciate this added service.

As a service provider, how do you employ this accreditation to reassure your customers that USC is focused on their safety?
First, we do this by making sure they understand what and who GBAC is and reminding them that everyone entering their premises should feel better about being there in a safe

environment. We use this in all of our presentations to current and potential clients. The GBAC STAR Service Accreditation gives USC a competitive advantage by publicly positioning us as experts in cleaning, disinfecting and infection prevention.

What would you share with those debating GBAC STAR accreditation?
Just do it. It is a small investment of funds and time to gain a big reward. The ongoing training available is worth your investment.

Do you have key learnings to share on achieving GBAC STAR?
Air quality is the next frontier that GBAC will work on for safety — the purity of air to reduce diseases from the common cold to COVID. This will be a big change for all of us and for the better.

What are the key messages you want readers to remember about this article?
Safety is a primal instinct, and if you don't make people feel safe, they won't leave the house, and we all know what that's like. Following the GBAC programs will make you feel safe. ☆



Patty Olinger
Executive Director, Global Biorisk Advisory Council

Are you prepared?

This last week has shown us how things can change at a moment's notice. With CDC changing its recommendation for masks at the end of July, we must be prepared to respond to be resilient. While I know we have worked hard this last 18 months, I realize people are tired. We're not done yet and we must remain vigilant.

This last month, some of the members of the GBAC Team traveled to different locations and tradeshows. I am really proud of what our GBAC STAR Facilities, Service Providers and Destinations have been able to accomplish in providing safety and building confidence for their employees, customers and communities. Take a few minutes to celebrate your successes!

The portfolio of GBAC STAR resources is growing. This month, we launched our GBAC STAR Registered Programs and Technology. The new criteria for GBAC STAR Destinations will be finalized. We are working on a GBAC STAR "Green" Program to help our facilities that are also LEED Certified. We are working on expanding our GBAC Academy educational offerings, and don't miss my webinar on Integrated Audits and Inspections at 11 A.M. CT/Noon ET on Wednesday, August 25. ☆



GBAC STAR Puts Major League Sports in the Lead

The month of July finds a plethora of major league sports playing regular-season games, wrapping up the year with championship finals or hosting summer training camps to prepare for the fall. These leagues value the health and safety of their fans, players, vendors and employees, and they demonstrate this



Steve Arehart
GBAC Director of Technical Operations

commitment with many stadiums or arenas proudly boasting GBAC STAR Facility and Service Accreditation™.

According to Steve Arehart, GBAC Director of Technical Operations, the National Basketball Association is leading the way with more than 20 facilities accredited with the GBAC STAR. The newly crowned 2021 NBA champion Milwaukee Bucks, that call the Fiserv Forum home, and runners-up Phoenix Suns, that play in the Footprint Center, have both achieved the GBAC STAR seal. Many NBA arenas double as NHL facilities as well, and that was the case for the repeat Stanley Cup Champion Tampa Bay Lightning and Amalie Arena.

Although they do not normally host an NBA franchise, they welcomed the Toronto Raptors for the 2021 season, all while maintaining the GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation. Their opponents in this year's finals, The Montreal Canadiens, and their home, The Bell Centre, also achieved accreditation in 2021.

"When we started the GBAC STAR accreditation, we identified industries to focus on that would have the largest impact. Hospitality has been the biggest so far with Hyatt leading the charge and committing all their hotels across the world very early on," Arehart said. "Next is the 'mass gathering' venues: convention centers, performing arts, arenas, theaters and stadiums. Some facilities adopted early on by word of mouth and others, like the NBA, identified the need for more knowledge and information regarding infection prevention and sought out league-wide third-part accreditation. It has been a huge thrill for me personally to be able to work with many of the teams



I've grown up rooting for and getting familiar with the leagues themselves."

FOCUSED ON MAKING THE BIG PLAY

The Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a division of ISSA, is laser-focused on providing the industry's only outbreak prevention, response and recovery accreditation — the gold standard of prepared facilities — for communities, businesses, service providers, facilities and events. The GBAC STAR seal demonstrates that a facility or service provider implements the industry's highest standards for cleaning, disinfection, and infection prevention measures — not only for COVID-19 but for other infectious diseases as well. GBAC is proud to share strategies with major league sports to ensure that the ball (or puck) keeps rolling for spectators across the nation.

For fans considering catching a live game with their favorite team, Steve says to determine if a facility is GBAC accredited, spectators should view the team website or the GBAC website, which lists a multitude of teams committed to ensuring the safety of fans, players, vendors, and employees.

"Both teams in the NBA finals, the NHL Stanley Cup finals, and both teams involved in The Super Bowl, including The Super Bowl host site, Tampa Sports Authority Raymond James Stadium are GBAC STAR Accredited," Arehart said. "Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, and host of the Men's NCAA Basketball National Championship, is accredited. Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, host of the 2020 National Football Championship Game, was the first outdoor stadium accredited and many of the host sites for the college football bowl season were accredited as well. It's been very fun to see GBAC represented at all of these major sporting events." ★



Reaccreditation Keeps Facilities on the Mark

The GBAC STAR™ reaccreditation process is picking up steam as more facilities mark their first anniversary of accreditation and work to renew it for the next twelve months. More than 4,000 facilities make up the GBAC STAR Family at this time, and it is anticipated most will apply for reaccreditation.

"GBAC Accreditation began early last summer which means those companies are now eligible for reaccreditation. The bulk of our accreditation last year took place in November and December so we will see an increase in reaccreditations this fall," noted Katie Cook, Program Manager, GBAC. "There was such an influx of facilities that came through and were approved during that timeframe, and we'll see more come through as the year goes on. But what we are experiencing right



Katie Cook
GBAC Program Manager

now is that a good majority accredited in the first few months are working to be reaccredited."

PLANNING FOR THE PROCESS

About 90 days from a facility's reaccreditation date, GBAC staff will contact the facility's primary contact with an email detailing the process. (If your facility has appointed a new primary contact, you must share this with GBAC at: www.gbac.com.) Sixty days out another email with an invoice will be sent, with the recipient confirming the process. After this invoice is paid, facilities receive access to the Reaccreditation Scorecard that guides them through the entire process. GBAC staff will work with the facility to ensure appropriate documentation.

The reaccreditation process includes these new learnings:

- Updates to Element 16, which strengthens infection prevention measures and highlights indoor air considerations
- The highly-demanded GBAC STAR Guidance for Indoor Air Considerations
- Multi-year discounts for GBAC STAR reaccreditation
- Updated GBAC Fundamentals Course with new guidance and best practices
- GBAC Academy — Virtual and hands-on training and education opportunities
- GBAC Webinar Series (free to the GBAC STAR Family)
- GBAC Registered Programs and Technology
- GBAC Coaching Services

CONSTANTLY GETTING BETTER

GBAC STAR is a continuous improvement program, and reaccreditation is the next step in maintaining improvements for these documents and processes that were put into place throughout the last year. Those renewing can build on an established foundation so the process will not be as daunting as last year when facilities received their initial accreditation.

"It's really about how well facilities have maintained their documents throughout the year, and it will not take as long as the original accreditation process. It will be more about reviewing documents instead of having to create them," Cook said. "The facilities I've talked to so far are excited about reaccreditation. They've been watching their goals, they've hit those goals and they want to put that in their documentation. Also, they're seeing the benefits of having these audits and inspections, which have helped monitor the processes they put into place."

Cook went on to add that continuing accreditation through the GBAC STAR Family offers extensive benefits, especially the new webinar series and new training opportunities. More benefits are anticipated in the future.

To learn more about this process, contact GBAC Sales at <https://gbac.issa.com/contact>. ★

CORONAVIRUS

What We Know about Virus Variants that Cause COVID-19 Disease

Dr. Gavin Macgregor-Skinner
Senior Director
Global Biorisk Advisory Council

Mutations occur in viruses as they spread from person to person. Many variants of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 disease have arisen since the outbreak was first detected in late 2019 in China. But only a few have spread to many countries.

The natural trajectory for any virus is that they mutate as they spread from



person to person, and whenever there is a significant mutation that changes the virus, then we get a new variant. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants persist. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 disease have been documented in the United States and many other countries during this pandemic.

BIG HITTERS IN THE COUNTRY

Currently, there are five notable variants in the United States:

Alpha (B.1.1.7) – First detected in the U.S. in December 2020. It was initially detected in the United Kingdom.

Beta (B.1.351) – First detected in the U.S. at the end of January 2021. It was initially detected in South Africa in December 2020.

Delta (B.1.617.2) – First detected in the U.S. in March 2021. It was initially detected in India in December 2020. Currently, this is the predominant variant in the U.S.

Gamma (P.1) – First detected in the U.S. in January 2021. It was initially detected in travelers from Brazil, who were tested

during routine screening at an airport in Japan in early January 2021.

Lambda (C.37) – First detected in the U.S. in January 2021. It was initially detected in Peru in August 2020.

These variants seem to spread more easily from person to person than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19, especially in those that are not vaccinated.

SAFETY DEPENDS ON YOU

COVID-19 continues to spread in the U.S. and variants are circulating. Take steps to protect yourself and others from the virus.

- Get a COVID-19 vaccine
- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth
- Stay six feet apart from people who don't live with you
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched often by people
- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available. ★

For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant.html>

Registered Technology and Registered Programs

The GBAC STAR™ Registered Technology and Registered Programs has just launched and allows companies to demonstrate how their technology or program aligns with the GBAC STAR™ Accreditation Program. Companies that have tools to assist customers in addressing their cleaning, disinfection and infection prevention measures can apply to register their technology or programs with the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a division of ISSA.

“As soon as we shared news of this process, so many people were interested and pushing to do the program that we pushed up the launch,” Sydney Schauer, GBAC Analyst, said. Schauer is a key member of the review team and serves as a liaison between facilities and manufacturers and the GBAC Scientific Advisory Board. “We’ve just wrapped the beta test and have implemented those learnings into the registration process so that it works best for the customer, GBAC and especially our Scientific Advisory Board because they are the group that ultimately makes the final decision of their assessment on the program or technology. We’ve finalized the registration process and the website is up and running.”

GBAC Registered Technology and Registered Programs sets out specific requirements for manufacturers to register their equipment, products, programs and more with GBAC. Requirements need to be met and be verified by the GBAC Scientific Advisory Board before a specific program or technology is registered. Achieving the registration is limited to only segments that are marketed and commercially available. A manufacturer will submit its technology or program to GBAC, and our scientific advisory board will review it to determine if it meets the specific standards and requirements. When the product or program is approved by GBAC, the manufacturer can then promote its product as a GBAC-registered product or program.

DETAILS OF MAKING IT HAPPEN

According to Schauer, to begin the process, companies must complete

the interest form which will generate an email to be provided to the applicant and they can set up a brief consultation to go over their product or technology. Applicants can reach out to her through the GBAC Registered Technology and Registered Programs link at <https://gbac.issa.com/gbac-star-registered-programs/>.

From that email, she will begin a consultation to learn about a customer's product or technology to determine if it fits the program standards and requirements. After receiving a registration link, customers will be prompted to pay the one-time registration fee and upload their documents. The documents must all be uploaded at once so it is important to make sure you have all documentation accessible before paying the registration fee. When the final

submission is made, the packet goes to the GBAC Scientific Advisory Board, which requires a four to six-week period of assessment. This internal team will discuss the assessment from the documents provided and schedule a conference call with the customer for additional comments and determine if the product or program can be registered.

“GBAC STAR Registered Technology and Registered Programs offers a template, along with a comment section, for all applicants to follow as they complete the process,” Schauer said. “It’s a step-by-step guide for every requirement.” ★



Sydney Schauer
GBAC Analyst

GBAC tv

Variant Exploits Weaknesses

While vaccination efforts are making solid progress in some parts of the nation, several states are suffering from a pandemic upsurge due to the lack of people receiving shots and summertime gatherings. The Delta variant is exploiting these opportunities as the number of new COVID-19 cases per day has doubled over the past three weeks, pushing hospitals and healthcare workers to their limits. Unfortunately, as our defenses weaken, other variants lurk on the horizon.

In the latest episode of BioTalk, a presentation of GBACTv, a webcast series produced by the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, and ISSA Media, Dr. Gavin Macgregor-Skinner, senior director of GBAC, along with Dr. Paul



Meehan, biorisk consultant serving on the GBAC scientific advisory board, share their expertise on this important topic with hosts Dr. Patty Olinger, Executive Director, GBAC, and Jeff Cross, Media Director, ISSA Media. The team discusses the Delta variant and the complications it poses to better controlling COVID-19, the severe threat it poses to the unvaccinated and how vaccinations protect lives in various ways. All episodes of BioTalk are available at <https://gbac.issa.com/media/gbactv/>. ★



Clorox Scholarships

It Takes a Team to be Clean

CloroxPro™ in collaboration with ISSA, the Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association, and the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a division of ISSA is offering complimentary access to the GBAC Online Fundamentals Course 2.0 Scholarships to help schools, businesses, athletic facilities, restaurants, public venues and other public spaces maintain a cleaner and healthier environment and reinforce visitor confidence as the world opens up.

Applications for the program are available now and will close on Thursday, September 30, 2021. To apply for a full scholarship or get more information, please visit <https://www.issa.com/clorox-gbac>.

ENSURING REOPENING SAFETY

“As facilities prepare to welcome back occupants and visitors at pre-pandemic levels, schools, businesses and other public spaces are focused on safeguarding their environments for all who may enter,” said Chris Tucker, Vice President and General Manager, CloroxPro. “Cleaning and disinfecting are a key part of a holistic strategy to help reduce the spread of illness-causing germs, beyond COVID-19. With more GBAC-Trained

Technicians supporting facilities of all kinds, we can all more effectively combat today’s and tomorrow’s contamination threats and help uphold public health and safety.”

CloroxPro will donate \$70,000 in GBAC scholarships to participate in the GBAC Online Fundamentals Course 2.0. The course, which is valued at \$300, teaches cleaning professionals across the nation the fundamentals of cleaning and disinfecting for health as well as prevention, response and control measures for outbreak situations such as SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

This newly updated, self-paced, online course focuses on three key learning objectives:

- Key principles of cleaning and disinfection for infectious diseases in the workplace
- Tools and processes for successful cleaning and disinfection
- Proper procedures for cleaning and disinfection.

Upon completion of the course within 30 days, individuals will receive a Certificate of Completion from GBAC and be able to use the GBAC-Trained Technician designation to promote their expertise. ★

Looking Ahead

Sign Up Now for GBAC STAR Bootcamp

The next session of the virtual GBAC STAR Bootcamp is set for August 23-24, running from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. EST each day. Only 100 participants are allowed each month for the Virtual Bootcamp and signing up early is highly encouraged. This course will be the newly updated GBAC STAR Bootcamp, a two-day digital briefing that reviews the accreditation process and takes a deep dive into the 20 elements. The course readies clients for the task of gathering their documents for accreditation. To learn more about virtual GBAC STAR Bootcamp and to register for the GBAC STAR Virtual Bootcamp, visit <https://bit.ly/GBACSTARBootcamp>.

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Integrated Audits and Inspections Webinar

Join GBAC Executive Director Patty Olinger for this critical discussion on Integrated Audits and Inspections 11 A.M. CT/Noon ET on August 25. The words “audit” or “inspections” normally put fear into our brains. This webinar will discuss how audits can be a valuable tool in your toolbox for knowing your programs better, assisting with training your staff and assisting with continually improving your programs. From internal self-audits to third-party external audits, join us as we explore how to change your view of audits and use them to improve your overall programs.

ISSA Members: \$49 (please send an email to gbacacademy@issa.com for a coupon code to use at checkout)

GBAC STAR Members: FREE (please send an email to gbacacademy@issa.com for a coupon code to use at checkout)

Nonmembers: \$99.

To register visit:
https://bit.ly/GBACAcademy_Audits



GBAC STAR

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