



Procedure for lapsed certification/ non-compliant businesses

This document is to outline the steps and actions taken when a previously certified business fails to renew or maintain its certification. Or where a business has been identified as non-compliant with certification standards.

Lapsed Certifications

Notification:

- The certified business is informed well in advance (3 month minimum) of the certification expiration date that the certification is due for renewal.
- Reminders are sent through various communication (email & Phone) channels to ensure the entity is aware of the approaching deadline.

Removal of Certification Label:

- If certification is not renewed within the stipulated time frame (2 years post award) Sustainable Travel Ireland removes the certification label from its website clearly indicating that the certification has lapsed.
- Sustainable Travel Ireland will also remove the business information from any outgoing lists/databases of certified businesses.

Non-compliance with Certification Standard

1. Identification of Non-Compliance

Upon identification of non-compliance with certification standards, Sustainable Travel Ireland will initiate an investigation. Non-compliance may be identified through routine audits, complaints, or other reliable sources.

2. Notification to the Business

The business in question will be promptly notified (within 5 working days) of the identified non-compliance, specifying the nature of the non-compliance and providing relevant evidence. This notification will be in writing and may include a deadline for the submission of a corrective action plan.

3. Corrective Action Plan Submission

The business is required to submit a comprehensive corrective action plan detailing how they intend to address and rectify the identified non-compliance. The plan should include specific actions, timelines, and responsible parties. This should be received by Sustainable Travel Ireland within 4 weeks.

4. Review of Corrective Action Plan

The certification body will review the submitted corrective action plan to assess its adequacy and feasibility. If the plan is deemed satisfactory, the certification body may approve it, and the business will be required to implement the proposed corrective actions within the agreed-upon timeframe. Sustainable Travel Ireland will review this action plan within 2 weeks of receiving.

5. Verification of Corrective Actions

Upon completion of the corrective actions, the certification body will conduct a verification process to ensure that the non-compliance has been effectively addressed. This may involve on-site inspections, document reviews, or other relevant assessments.

6. Certification Status Determination

Based on the successful verification of corrective actions, the certification body will determine the business's certification status (within 5 working days). If the corrective actions are deemed effective, the business may retain its certification. However, if non-compliance persists or the corrective actions are inadequate, the certification may be suspended or revoked.

7. Notification of Outcomes

The business will be promptly notified (within 5 working days) of the outcomes of the corrective action process, including any changes to their certification status. If certification is suspended or revoked, the reasons for such actions will be clearly communicated.

8. Appeals Process

The business has the right to appeal any decisions regarding certification status. An established appeals process should be followed, allowing for an impartial review of the case.

9. Continuous Improvement

The certification body will use the lessons learned from non-compliance cases to enhance the effectiveness of the certification process and improve communication with certified businesses.