WORKING MATERIAL · SUBCHAPTER 4.12

Suspension, Withdrawal, and the Door That Closes

GUIDING QUESTION *If your certificate were suspended tomorrow, how many places would still be telling the market you hold it, and how many of those places could you actually change?*

Property: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

How to use this sheet: work through the four parts with the people who own the process. The left-hand text comes from the book; the empty columns are for what is true in your property.

1. Verification Pact: what the market says, what actually holds, and your property

What the market says	What actually holds	In our property
"A suspension is a private matter between us and our certification body."	No. A suspended certification is temporarily invalid, and the body has to state the true status to anyone who asks; in practice the suspension also appears in its directory and in public registers of accredited certificates. The certification agreement normally obliges the client to stop presenting itself as certified for as long as the suspension lasts.	
"If this body is difficult we will move to another one."	No. Under Global ACI TECH-3-002 (formerly IAF MD 2) only a valid accredited certification can be transferred, and a suspended one cannot. The suspension has to be resolved with the current body first; changing body is a decision for a year without open trouble.	
"The clock stops while we are suspended."	No. Suspension does not extend validity: the expiry date stays where it is, and surveillance remains due at least once a calendar year. Months spent suspended come out of the time left to resolve the issue and to complete recertification before expiry.	
"We can ask for a voluntary suspension now and sort it out later."	Partly. Voluntary suspension is a recognised ground in ISO/IEC 17021-1, but it is a request the body decides on and sets terms for. It suits a planned closure or refurbishment; it does not cancel an open major, stop its response deadline or move the expiry date, and the body is not obliged to accept it as a way round an audit that is due.	
"The pre-transfer review is basically an audit, so it will take months."	No. The pre-transfer review under TECH-3-002 is the accepting body's review of the certification's status: validity, scope, recent audit reports, open findings and their status, complaints and the position in the cycle. It is normally carried out on records, with a visit only where the accepting body judges it necessary, and its pace depends largely on how quickly the client supplies those records.	
"It is either the full certificate or nothing."	No. Scope can be reduced, at the client's request or by the body's decision, to exclude parts that persistently or seriously fail to meet requirements, and reduction is one of the outcomes when a suspension is not resolved in time. What remains inside the reduced scope must still meet every requirement, and the scope must still describe truthfully what the hotel does.	

2. Objective evidence: what an auditor would examine

Line	What to examine	Found? (Yes / Partly / No)	Notes and location
Document	The certification agreement, including the clauses on suspension, withdrawal, use of marks and notification of changes: read, not filed.		
Record	The public register entry for the property, with its date, and the correspondence trail of any finding currently open.		
Read	The claim inventory set against the live channels: website, listings, tender library, group report, printed collateral, and the contracts in which certification is named as a requirement.		
Seen	The claim as it currently appears in a channel the property does not control (an online travel agency page, an operator's catalogue), viewed as a client would view it.		
Re-performed	One claim traced from the sentence on the page back to the person who can change it and the workflow required to do so, to establish the real correction time rather than the assumed one.		
Told	What the commercial team believes the certification says about the property, which is routinely more than it says and is the source of most of the exposure.		
Absence	No inventory of live claims, and no record that anyone has looked at the property's own entry in the public register.		

3. Common mistakes: self-check

Mistake	Why it matters	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)
Believing a suspension is private.	It is a public record, and the people most likely to read it are the ones evaluating your bid.	
Planning an escape after the trouble starts.	A suspended certification cannot be transferred, and a voluntary suspension does not stop a deadline; scope reduction can address a failing part, but only as agreed or decided by the body, never as a way of hiding it.	
Assuming the clock stops.	It does not, and a long suspension late in a cycle can end in expiry without anybody ever deciding to withdraw anything.	
Counting only the claims you control.	The eleven-day correction applies to your own channels; the exposure sits in the catalogue somebody else printed and the tender you already submitted.	
Letting the group and the property run the certification on different calendars.	A consolidation planned in a head office and a rejected response managed at a property are the same event seen from two rooms, and nobody was in both.	

4. Action plan

Position from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline

In brief

Suspension and transfer are one lesson approached from two sides. A suspension changes nothing about the hotel and everything about the truth of what the hotel has published, and it does so in a record the market can read. A transfer is available only to a property whose certification is valid and not suspended, which means that door is open exactly while you have no reason to use it; voluntary suspension, scope reduction and restoration after expiry are separate processes with their own conditions, decided by the body.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 2b: The Lens, subchapter 4.12. This sheet does not reproduce the text of any standard; work with your own copy of ISO 9001:2026 from an authorised source.