Transition to the 2026 Edition: What Actually Has to Change

GUIDING QUESTION *You have three years to move your certificate to the new edition. On how many dates can that move actually be made, and have you looked at where those dates fall in your own cycle, or only at the deadline?*

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
"We have three years, so we have time."	Partly. The transition runs from 16 September 2026 to 30 September 2029, but a certified hotel transitions only at an audit: a scheduled surveillance or recertification, or a separate transition audit agreed with its certification body. Count the audits, not the months, and leave time after the last one for findings to be resolved and the decision taken.	
"We can transition at any audit we like."	No. The certification body has its own transition to complete through the accreditation process, a declaration with supporting documents verified afterwards, with declarations due by 30 June 2027 (Global ACI TECH-3-TR-2029-09-30). From which date it can audit against the 2026 edition is for the body to state; ask, in writing.	
"If we recertify to the old edition we get a full three-year certificate."	No. Certified clients must complete transition to the 2026 edition by 30 September 2029, and a certificate to the 2015 edition does not run beyond that date. A late recertification to the outgoing edition, where still permitted, buys a certificate that ends with the transition period; the certification body states the expiry it will apply.	
"The transition audit is a review of our updated documentation."	No. It examines whether the system meets the 2026 requirements in operation, which means records of the changed requirements having been applied, not only revised documents. Its extent depends on the changes as they affect the hotel and on the audit approach the certification body adopts.	
"It can be added to the surveillance at no extra cost."	Partly. The transition can be carried out at a surveillance or recertification audit, or at a separate audit. Any additional audit time is determined and justified by the certification body according to the changes and the audit approach; it may be small, or in some audits none, but it is neither free by right nor a fixed universal increment.	
"Our clients will accept the old edition until the deadline."	Partly. Until 30 September 2029 a valid certificate to the 2015 edition remains valid, but what a client or a tender accepts is a contractual question, not a normative	

What the market says	What actually holds	In our property
	one. Where a contract names the edition or requires current certification at renewal, the contract sets the deadline; read it.	

2. Objective evidence: what an auditor would examine

Line	What to examine	Found? (Yes / Partly / No)	Notes and location
Document	The certification agreement and the three-year audit schedule, with every audit date between today and the end of the transition marked as usable or not usable.		
Record	The written answers from the certification body on earliest available date, additional audit time, and the consequence of recertifying to the outgoing edition.		
Read	The contracts and tender responses in which the standard is named with a year, to establish where the commercial deadline actually falls.		
Seen	The new requirements operating in the building: not the procedure that describes them, but the thing itself being done on a normal day, by people who were not told an auditor was coming.		
Told	What the department heads believe has changed. Where the honest answer is nothing, that is often correct, and a transition plan that contradicts it without explaining why is a plan built from a table.		
Re-performed	One of the new requirements traced from the day it was introduced to the most recent record it produced, to see how much evidence the elapsed period has actually generated.		
Absence	No record of anyone having counted the usable audit dates, and no note anywhere of what happens to the certificate if the transition is not completed on the last of them.		

3. Common mistakes: self-check

Mistake	Why it matters	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)
Reading the transition period as a countdown rather than as a small number of usable dates.	It is the error that produces every other error in this subchapter.	
Buying the gap analysis first.	It is not useless, but it answers the question that is easy to answer and silent on the one that carries the risk.	
Assuming the certification body is ready because the standard is published.	The body has its own transition and it goes first, and its capacity in the final year is the tightest constraint in the whole system.	
Recertifying to the outgoing edition late in the period without asking what the certificate's expiry date will be, and discovering it on the certificate.		
Rewriting the document set to match the new clause structure.	It has never been required, it consumes the weeks that the new requirements needed, and it produces a manual that is beautifully organised around a document nobody in the building has read.	
Treating the transition as a quality department project.	Two of the three themes followed in this volume land on people who do not report to the quality manager, and the third lands on whoever decides what an opportunity is worth pursuing.	

4. Action plan

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

In brief

A transition looks like a technical problem and is a scheduling problem. The technical part reduces, after triage, to a limited number of new or strengthened requirements, each to be checked against the hotel's own context; much of a correspondence table is renumbering and clarification and costs a hotel an afternoon of cross-references.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 2b: The Lens, subchapter 4.9. This sheet does not reproduce the text of any standard; work with your own copy of ISO 9001:2026 from an authorised source.