Multi-Site Certification for a Hotel Group

GUIDING QUESTION *If your group holds one certificate for several hotels, pick the hotel you would least like an auditor to visit and ask why. If the answer is that it works differently, has its own suppliers, or has never been audited by the group's own internal auditors, then the certificate that covers it rests on an assumption the certifier has not yet tested, and one visit could test it for every hotel at once.*

Property: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

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

1. Verification Pact: what is commonly believed, what actually holds, and your property

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	In our property
«The certifier will sample the big hotels.»	Sampling is partly random and partly by risk. Remote, different sites are prime candidates.	
«A finding at one hotel concerns that hotel.»	It is evidence about the central function and must be examined at every site.	
«All our hotels follow the same procedures.»	Only if the central function can see and require it at each. Different sites need declaring.	
«Remote sites can be left out of internal audit.»	Every site must be internally audited within the cycle.	
«If a site fails, remove it from the certificate.»	Sites may not be removed to avoid a nonconformity, and the central finding remains.	

2. What the standard requires, and what demonstrates it

From Table 4.13.a. The third column of the book (what is method, not requirement) is left out here: write what your property actually holds as evidence.

What is required	What demonstrates it in a hotel group	In our property
Single system under central control	Group policies, risk process and supplier rules applied and visible at every site	
Internal audit of every site	Each site audited within the cycle, remote sites included	
Central authority to act	Corrective action required and verified at any site by the central function	
Honest site classification	Site register with activities and risks; different sites grouped separately	
Findings extended to all sites	Every site checked for the condition found at one	
No exclusion to avoid findings	Scope changes only by planned decision, not in response to a finding	

3. The instrument: Table 4.13.b, Site register for a multi-site certificate

The instrument of this subchapter. The Johannesburg group's register as rewritten after the finding, sent to the certifier and updated whenever a site changes.

Site	Activities and specific risks	Group	Internal audit this cycle
Head office, Sandton	Central function: policy, risk, IT, suppliers, internal audit	Central	Audited annually
City hotels: Johannesburg (2), Pretoria, Durban	Business travel, events, corporate accounts	A	All four visited

Site	Activities and specific risks	Group	Internal audit this cycle
Cape Town hotels (2)	Leisure and events; seasonal agency staff	A with seasonal note	Both visited
Drakensberg resort	Leisure, weddings, spa, remote support	B	Visited; remote support contract reviewed
Game lodge	Private guests, rangers' tablets with itineraries and medical notes, charter manifests, satellite link, local IT contractor	C	First visit after finding; now twice per cycle

The rows above are the book's; the empty rows are for lines your property needs to add.

4. Common mistakes: self-check

Common mistake	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)	Where we see it
Describing sites as similar when their activities and risks differ.		
Leaving remote or small sites out of the internal audit programme.		
Allowing sites to engage suppliers outside the central function's control.		
Using a central risk assessment that describes only the typical site.		
Reporting to the management review in aggregates that hide individual sites.		
Proposing to remove a site from the scope to avoid a nonconformity.		
Abandoning multi-site certification instead of making central control real.		

5. Action plan

Step from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline
Describe every site honestly, and group sites by activity and risk.			
Add each group's particular risks to the central risk assessment.			
Audit every site in person at least once in each certification cycle.			
Require central approval and group security terms for every local supplier with access.			
Bring each site's security figures and events into the management review.			
When one site has a finding, check every site for the same condition.			
Change the scope only by planned decision, never to avoid a finding.			
Expect the certifier to choose the site you would least like visited.			

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

In brief

A multi-site certificate rests on central control. The group describes its sites honestly and groups them by risk, builds their differences into the risk assessment, audits every site in person within the cycle, gives the central function authority over local suppliers, brings every site into the management review, answers a finding at one site by checking all, and changes the scope only by decision. A certifier’s sample then tests a system that is the same everywhere it claims to be.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 5b: The Lens, subchapter 4.13. This sheet does not reproduce the text of the standard; work with your own copy of ISO/IEC 27001:2022 from an authorised source.