WORKSHEET 3.8

The Gap Between the Baseline and the Building

Subchapter 3.8 · case in the book: Perth

Write down, in one column, what your property actually was in the baseline year: rooms in service, floor area conditioned, which significant uses sat inside the boundary, who operated each of them, the occupancy band, the length-of-stay mix. In a second column write the same facts for last year. If the two columns differ in more than one line, part of your reported improvement is a comparison between two different buildings, and no amount of normalisation will separate it out.

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
Reconstruct the condition statement for the baseline year, with whoever was there.		
Write the same eight lines for last year and set the two columns side by side.		
Classify every difference as a relevant variable or a static factor.		
Read the revision rule and establish what would have had to happen for it to fire.		
List every revision ever made and note whether each improved or worsened the reported position.		
Examine whether the indicator's denominator still represents the load it represented in the baseline year.		
Record, for any revision, what the current figure would have been under the previous baseline.		
Set an interval at which the two columns are compared even when nothing has been flagged.		

These steps are the book's method, not requirements of ISO 50001. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property's own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
«The baseline has never been adjusted, which shows consistency.»	It may show that the revision rule is incapable of firing. Four minor changes do not trigger a rule written for a major one.	
«We normalise for occupancy, so the letting is accounted for.»	Occupancy is a relevant variable. A change in what occupancy means is a change to a static factor and normalisation cannot reach it.	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
«Outsourcing the laundry reduced our consumption.»	It removed a use from the boundary. Unless the baseline was adjusted, every later year is compared against a building that still had one.	
«The spa concession changed nothing physical.»	The plant and the meters are unchanged. Who sets the hours is not, and the property no longer controls a significant energy use inside its own boundary.	
«Reopening a closed wing is a return to normal, not a change.»	The baseline year is the reference. If the wing was shut in it, the reference describes a smaller building.	
«Every revision we made was individually justified.»	Then look at the sign of them. Three revisions in the same direction require an explanation that the individual justifications do not provide.	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Recording the baseline as a number with no description of the building attached.		
Writing a revision rule keyed to a major change and never defining major.		
Normalising for a relevant variable to absorb a change in a static factor.		
Treating a denominator as stable when the mix of trade has changed its meaning.		
Reporting the removal of a use from the boundary as a reduction in consumption.		
Failing to look at the sign of past revisions.		
Letting commercial decisions reach the reference by no route at all.		
Over-correcting into an annual rebuild, which destroys the comparability that gives a baseline its value.		

Operative synthesis

- **A baseline is a description of a building in a condition, carrying a number. The number is kept carefully and the description is usually kept nowhere, and four years later the property is comparing a present building against a reference that describes a past one, using a method that cannot tell it so.**
- **The standard's own vocabulary contains the remedy. Relevant variables vary and are normalised for. Static factors change and require the reference to be revised. Nearly every failure in this subchapter is a static factor being handled as though it were a relevant variable (a letting absorbed by occupancy normalisation, an outsourcing absorbed by nothing at all)**

and the fix is an eight-line condition statement written once a year and a revision rule that responds to accumulation rather than to a single large event.

- **The internal auditor does not decide whether the baseline should be revised. He establishes whether the property has a method that could ever fire, whether anybody applies it, and whether the revisions already made point consistently in the direction the property would have preferred. Those three questions are entirely within his competence and they were never asked in Perth in four years.**
- **The next subchapter moves to another building and a different question. When consumption moves and somebody has to say why, three true answers are usually available and none of them is a cause: the machine is old, the weather was hot, the house was full. The work of an investigation begins at the point where those run out.**

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 4b «The Lens», subchapter 3.8. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 50001, ISO 50003 or ISO/IEC 17021-1. It is not legal advice: energy law is that of the place where the property operates.