WORKSHEET 4.8

The Certificate, and What It Actually Certifies

Subchapter 4.8 · case in the book: Vilnius

Take your certificate off the wall and read the whole of it, including the line in small type at the bottom. Then write down four things: which legal entity is named, which sites, which activities, and what figure appears anywhere on it. The fourth answer is none, in every certificate ever issued against this standard. If your website says otherwise, the website is making a claim the certificate does not support, and somebody will eventually check.

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
Read the whole certificate once a year, small type included.		
Write the one-page summary: entity, sites, activities, standard, dates, number.		
Check the scope sentence against what the property actually does today.		
Ask for the scope to be corrected at reissue when it has drifted.		
Keep two separated statements: what the certificate says, what the property demonstrates.		
Publish the evidence for the figure wherever the figure is published.		
Verify your own entry in the public register, and offer the reference before the scan.		
Name one person in the group who owns the word certified.		
Never place a percentage inside a sentence about certification.		

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
«We are certified to the energy standard.»	Which legal entity, which sites, which activities? Three of your four hotels appear on no certificate at all.	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
«The certificate proves this hotel is energy efficient.»	It records that a management system was found to conform. Efficiency is a property of the building; conformity is a property of the system.	
«Our certificate confirms the fourteen per cent.»	No figure appears on it and none may. The improvement is yours to state, in its own sentence, with your own evidence.	
«The spa is in scope, it is inside our building.»	The boundary follows operational control and the scope wording, not the masonry. Read the sentence and the lease together.	
«It is valid until the date printed on it.»	It is valid while the register says so. The framed copy looks identical the day after a suspension.	
«The certification body wrote our scope statement.»	From words you supplied, and you were entitled to read it before issue. It is the most consequential sentence in the file.	
«We send clients a scan of the certificate.»	Send the number and the register. Anybody serious will check it anyway, and offering it first is the cheapest credibility available.	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Saying the company is certified rather than naming the entity, sites and activities.		
Never having read the scope statement in full.		
Assuming leased and concessioned spaces inside the building are inside the boundary.		
Placing a demonstrated percentage inside a claim about certification.		
Describing sister properties as certified because the brand is the same.		
Treating the printed certificate as the current status.		
Sending a scan where a register reference would be checked in forty seconds.		
Letting the scope wording drift for a whole cycle without asking for correction.		
Answering a client with cautious silence instead of two accurate sentences.		

Operative synthesis

- **A certificate is a statement of conformity about a management system, limited by the legal entity named, the activities in its scope, the sites listed and time subject to surveillance. All four limits are printed on it. The sentence that drops them (we are certified) is not a shorter version of the truth but a larger claim, and in a hotel group it is usually made by somebody who has never held the document.**
- **The printed document is a record of a status that lives in a register the certification body must publish. The decision behind it was taken by a person who did not carry out the audit, on a team's recommendation. Status can change without the paper changing, which is why the number and the register reference are worth more than the frame, and why a property that offers them first is treated as one that knows what it holds.**
- **No figure appears on any certificate issued against this standard, because attesting a quantity is a different activity performed by a different kind of body under a different standard. The demonstrated improvement remains a real and valuable thing; it belongs in its own sentence, on the property's own authority, with the evidence behind it. Two statements, never blended: what the certificate says, and what the property demonstrates.**
- **The scope sentence is the most consequential line in the whole exercise and is treated as a formality by nearly everybody. It decides what was audited and what may be claimed, it drifts as the property changes, and it is corrected by a telephone call. The boundary that sits behind it follows operational control and the record made when the system was established, not the outline of the building, which is why a leased spa can be inside the walls and outside everything else.**
- **In Vilnius nothing was fabricated and nobody behaved badly. A true figure had been welded to the wrong sentence, a single certificate had been read as covering four hotels, and nearly a year passed before anybody looked. The rewritten version was longer by nine words and could be checked in forty seconds. The next subchapter takes a certificate to its second surveillance visit and asks the question everyone hopes will not arise: what happens at surveillance when the system is intact, the audit is clean, and the number has gone the wrong way.**

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 4.8. 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.