

Clarification on Legal Compliance with National Health and Safety Requirements for GSTC Certification

Important Notice for GSTC Stakeholders and Certificate Holders

25 September 2025

GSTC Accreditation Division

GSTC Standards require robust health, safety, and legal compliance, including in Hotels/Accommodation, Tour Operators, Destinations, MICE, and Attractions (hereafter, all relevant scopes). This document explains the meaning of legal compliance with health and safety management for GSTC Certification.

- The GSTC Standards applies to all relevant are as but does not replace specific legal or regulatory requirements of individual countries.
- To achieve GSTC Certification, an audit must be conducted to check the legal compliance in health and safety management, supported by documentary evidence. This means that GSTC auditors will check for the existence and accessibility of the necessary legal documents related to health and safety management, as well as assess staff awareness of these requirements.
- The GSTC audit does not replace on-site health and safety inspections. While the primary method of evaluation is through document review, GSTC auditors may also verify staff awareness through interviews and may observe visible safety elements, such as evacuation routes, during site tours.

What legal compliance with health and safety management covers

- Legal and regulatory alignment: Maintaining an up-to-date list of all applicable laws and regulations affecting health and safety.
- Evidence of compliance: Retaining certificates and other documentation that meet these legal requirements.
- Staff awareness: Ensuring relevant staff are aware of the legislation that applies to their activities.

What this means in practice

- A comprehensive risk management approach to protect guests, staff, and contractors across all functions.
- Documented procedures, checklists, and the designated teams or personnel responsible for preventing and mitigating health and safety risks.
- Ongoing training and routine inspections of safety equipment.
- Regular reviews of health and safety management, including emergency plans and emergency response procedures for facilities and activities.

Ensuring compliance with national health and safety regulations is an integral requirement for all GSTC-certified* entities. This clarification is issued to ensure consistent understanding of the applicable legal obligations across all GSTC certification scopes.

***Note:** The term "GSTC-certified" is a shorthand for "Certified by a Certification Body that is GSTC-accredited."