



Quality Assurance Program



Dive Centers



Introduction



Curaçao Tourist Board (CTB) is committed to making every visit to Curaçao a unique experience. In line with this objective, CTB is introducing an accreditation program for Dive centers. This program aims to be an incentive for service innovation, recognizing and promoting the quality level of the dive centers.

1.1 For whom?

This minimum standard specifies requirements for service providers in the field of recreational scuba diving. It specifies three areas of services provision:

- Training and education
- Organized diving for certified divers
- Rental of diving equipment

The scope of the Quality Program for the local Dive Industry is to ensure quality and safety standards for recreational divers.



1.2 Why participate?

The benefits of having your dive shop certified are:

- **Recognition for Quality:** An independent quality certification that assures divers of the professional standards, safety measures, and environmental practices upheld by your dive center.
- **CTB Quality Assurance Program Plaque:** A plaque you can proudly display, showcasing your commitment to quality, safe, and responsible diving experiences.
- **Inclusion on Curaçao's Official Tourism Website:** Your certified dive center will be featured on www.curaçao.com, increasing visibility to divers worldwide.
- **Marketing Support:** Gain exposure through CTB's local and international marketing activities, expanding your reach to new diving communities.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Become part of a larger effort to protect marine life and ecosystems, aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (optional).
- **Business Improvement Recommendations:** Get professional insights and recommendations on how to innovate and improve your operations for even greater success. Upon request, CITI can conduct an "Innovation Scan" to assess if and how your business can implement innovation practices.

1.3 Development & Execution

The CTB Certification Program for Holiday Apartments is executed by Curaçao Innovation & Technology Institute (CITI), a non-profit government foundation. Throughout the years CITI has gained much experience in the field of quality certification. Previous activities are the development and execution of a quality program for Alternative Lodgings, and a CTB Certification Program for the Dive and Restaurant Industry. All CTB Certification Programs are evaluated, improved and repeated every two years. The CTB Certification Program for Dive Center is executed as follows:

- Phase 1: Information provision and registration;
- Phase 2: Execution of preliminary assessment;
- Phase 3: A 2-month period to make necessary improvements to comply with all certification criteria;
- Phase 4: Final assessment;
- Phase 5: Evaluation / granting of CTB certification.

1.4 How to participate?

Do you own a dive shop and would you like to have it CTB certified? Please contact CITI via audit@citi.cw. Participation in this program costs ANG 265,- (incl OB).



2. Audit Standards for Dive Centers

2.1 Starting points

The following criteria were identified as starting points for developing the CTB standard for Dive Centers:

- Dive shop is legally providing diving services;
- Diving services are provided with the safety requirements;
- A dive entity is responsible and ensures that the dive expert Providing services are responsible and knowledgeable on this area of expertise

2.2 Focal Points

To become certified, the following focal points are audited:

- Legal documents / certificates
- Information prior service provision and risk assessment
- Equipment regulations
- Staff documentation
- Transportation and emergency equipment
- Sustainability

2.3 List of Definitions

Auditor; auditors are trained professionals in assessing organizations and use standardized templates based on criteria to ensure consistency in the conduct of audits.

Auditee; the person or organization that is being audited.

Audit panel; a committee represented by the dive operator, the auditors and another specialist.

Audit; an audit is a wide-ranging examination of the auditee's procedures, records, facilities, and other relevant information to assess whether there is an adequate system in place to facilitate and demonstrate compliance with the legislation and criteria established.

Criteria; the criteria and the classification system are developed by the audit panel or solely delivered by the client. If necessary other specialists will be added to the audit panel. The criteria are recorded in a separate document and form the basis for the audits and the classification. The criteria have to be approved by the client.

Checklists; checklists are standardized forms developed by the auditors based on the approved criteria. Checklists are used to perform the audits.

Service provider; entity (individual or organization), including any individual acting on behalf of such an entity, which offers one or more of the following services:

- Training and education
- Organized and guided diving for certified divers
- Rental of diving equipment

Client; individual or group entering into a contract with a service provider for services for his or their own use.

Guided dive; organized dive where clients are accompanied under water by a Dive professional or higher appointed by the service provider.

Dive boat; boat that transports divers to/ from a dive site.

Criteria



2.4 Criteria

In the next paragraph, the minimum standard is displayed. These are the minimum standards that have been derived from several standards from the worldwide-recognized recreational membership and diver training organizations such as PADI and NAUI.

2.4.1 Legal documents/ certificates

2.4.1.1 Registration at the Chamber of Commerce Establishment shows proof of being registered at the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce.

2.4.1.2 Permits

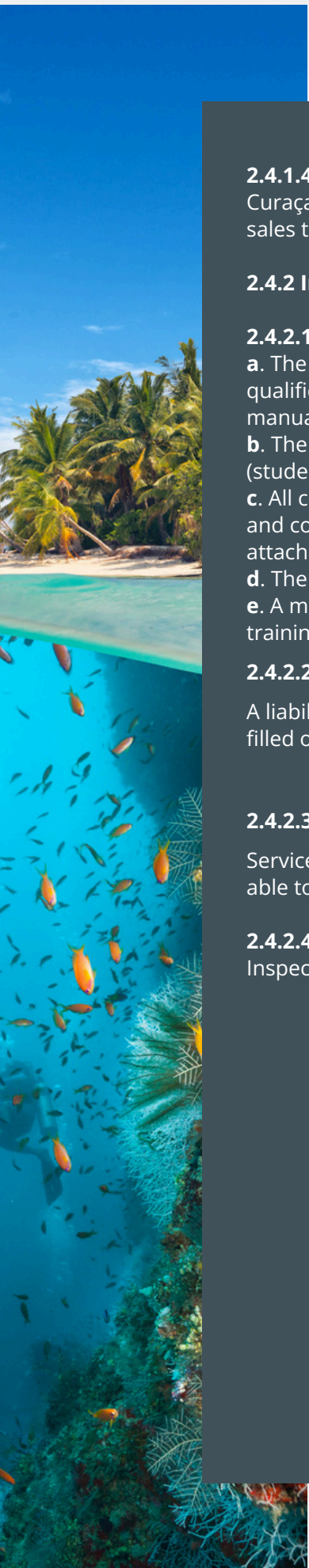
Establishment shows Identification Document of statutory director and all applicable mandatory permits:

- a. Establishment permit; Establishment permit is mandatory for an NV a BV, and for owners of a sole proprietorship who are not 'Yu di Korsou' (people with the Dutch Nationality, who are born in Aruba before 1986, or born before 2010 in Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba, St. Eustatius, or St. Maarten). If the address listed on the permit "Vestigingsvergunning" does not match the current location of the dive center, proof of application for a change of address has been made.
- b. Director's permit; Director's permit is mandatory for directors of an NV or BV who are not 'Yu di Korsou' (people with the Dutch Nationality, who are born in Aruba before 1986 or born in Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba, St. Eustatius, or St. Maarten before 2010).
- c. The service provider is registered at an international recognized dive organization like PADI, NAUI, SSI or others.

2.4.1.3 Business Premises

- a. The service provider has a publicly accessible storefront. (in case needed, visible signage required).
- b. Theory teaching shall be conducted in an environment that is free from significant distractions to learning, such as a briefing area. This should provide clients with sufficient working facilities and training aids (e.g., writing surfaces, reference materials, and computer, visual or audio materials) to ensure that clients can understand the information being presented.
- c. The service provider has documented approval for usage of the business premises. Such as a rental agreement or purchase agreement.

Criteria



2.4.1.4 Tax Obligations a. Establishment is Registered at the Tax Office of Curaçao by showing CRIB Nummer. b. Establishment shows proof of payment of sales tax payments of the past 6 months.

2.4.2 Information prior service provision and risk assessment

2.4.2.1 Student & course documentation

- a. The scope of each training course, including limitations of eventual qualification, is documented and provided prior to service delivery (instructor manual)
- b. The course procedures are documented and provided prior to service delivery (student manual)
- c. All course records (whether completed or not) must be accurately filled out and cover a period of at least 7 years. Additionally, a medical certificate must be attached, confirming the student's fitness for participation.
- d. The criteria for successful completion are documented and provided
- e. A medical history questionnaire is completed by all clients that are taking training services. As insurance or diving organizations require.

2.4.2.2 High risk activity

A liability waiver, making the customer aware that diving is a high-risk activity, is filled out and signed by the client before service delivery.

2.4.2.3 Pre-Dive / Safety briefing

Service provider provides briefing to customers prior to each guided dive and is able to show this with written guidelines.

2.4.2.4 Equipment inspection

Inspection prior to equipment delivery (I.C.O. unsupervised diving)

Criteria

2.4.3 Equipment Regulations

2.4.3.1 Diving Equipment

Diving equipment required to be worn by students always consists of an alternative breathing system as per dive organization regulations (PADI, NAUI, SSI, others).

2.4.3.2 Rental

- a.** Service providers do not rent or provide dive equipment to non-certified divers.
- b.** Service providers do not rent or provide diving equipment to student divers following a course with service providers excluded.

2.4.3.3 Maintenance

- a.** Records of maintenance, service, and inspection of diving equipment are documented. (either hardcopy or in digital form until equipment is sold or scrapped).
- b.** All diving equipment are inspected and maintained at least once a year.
- c.** On each cylinder, all cylinder markings should be clearly visible.
- d.** Service providers with their air fill compressors, quarterly air test level E standards, carried out by a qualified agency.
- e.** Service provider outsourcing air fills verify their suppliers comply with the quarterly air test level E standards, carried out by a qualified agency, by obtaining a copy of the test.
- f.** Buoyancy compensator, inspection, and maintenance at least once a year.
- g.** All diving equipment are trackable with either serial number or by being tagged.

2.4.3.4 Nitrox

Service providers offering Nitrox to their customers, provide an oxygen analyzer as a means of measuring the oxygen content. And maintains logs and fills of dives.

2.4.3.5 Dive Buoy


The service provider uses a certified dive buoy throughout the whole dive.

2.4.3.6 Marine Life

The service provider does not spear any marine life or chase or harass marine life except for Lionfish.

2.4.4 Staff documentation

2.4.4.1 Training and certification

- a. The service provider maintains documentation of training / certification, on all dive guides and instructors, incl. proof that certification of dive professionals is current, renewed, and in teaching status. This in accordance with member dive organization.
- b. The service provider employs at least one qualified dive professional, certified by an internationally recognized training agency. (In compliance with member dive organization).
- c. The minimum requirement to supervise certified divers is  Recreational Dive Supervisor.
- d. The minimum requirement to supervise student divers is Recreational Dive Instructor.
- e. All dive professionals should be CPR/ EFR providers and there should always be a certified CPR/ EFR provider present at the premises during the interaction with customers.

2.4.4.2 Liability Insurance

The service provider must have general liability insurance

2.4.5 Transportation and emergency equipment

2.4.5.1 Dive boats On all dive boats that are in use, the service provider provides:

- a. Must have a valid VV (Vis, Vaar Vergunning)
- b. All dive boats that are in use are to be currently inspected and approved by the Harbour Master or a Harbour Master-approved inspector.
- c. All boat captains have a local commercial license.
- d. Follow an established diver and passenger accountability procedure

2.4.5.2 Emergency procedure The service provider has a written emergency procedure for:

- Resuscitation
- Oxygen supply
- Evacuation
- Marine Life injuries
- Decompression

2.4.5.3 Vehicles

During a dive trip where divers are transported by the service provider in a bus or car to a dive site, the service provider provides:

- a. Phone / communication device.
- b. O2 kit with enough supply to get to medical center.
- c. First aid kit.
- d. Visible emergency plan (phone numbers of police, fire department, hospital, dive operator, and coast guard). As well as the procedures mentioned in 5.2.
- e. All vehicles transporting divers to/ from a dive site are insured, including passenger coverage.
- f. Inspected and approved by UOV (Uitvoeringsorganisatie Verkeer en Vervoer).
- g. Proof of confirmation that the applicable taxes for the vehicle have been paid for the corresponding year.

2.4.5.4 Dive site

For all locations where diving activities take place the service provider needs to have:

- a. O2 kit with enough supply to get to medical center.
- b. First aid kit.
- c. Phone / communication device.
- d. Visible emergency plan (phone numbers of police, fire department, hospital, dive operator, and coast guard). As well as the procedures mentioned in 5.2.
- e. The service provider follows an established diver and passenger accountability procedure.

2.4.6. SDG's (Optional criteria for the reduction of harm to the environment)

2.4.6.1. Quality Education

This action contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education

- a. Host Eco-Workshops and or Educational & Internship Programs: Offer workshops on marine conservation, sustainable diving practices, and ocean health for divers and the community.
- b. Provide the opportunity for educational student internships in marine biology, environmental science and / or hospitality, offering hands-on experience in sustainable diving practices.



2.4.6.2 Clean water and sanitation

This action contributes to SDG 6 + 14: Clean water and sanitation + life below water

- a. Reduce Chemical Use: Use eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaning products to prevent water contamination and protect marine life.
- b. Wastewater Management: Properly treat wastewater from your dive shop to prevent it from flowing untreated into the ocean.
- c. Encourage Water Conservation: Educate staff and customers on responsible water use examples: installing low-flow showers and faucets in wash areas and or stickers to remind people of responsible water consumption.

2.4.6.3 Responsible Consumption and Production

This action contributes to SDG 12

- a. Promote Reef-Safe Products: Educate divers (and sell) about reef-safe products such as: eco-friendly sunscreens, Defogs, airdrops, and / or hair conditioners.
- b. Zero Waste Initiatives: Offer refill stations for items like drinking water, sunscreen, and dive gear cleaning supplies to reduce single-use
- c. Promote recycling with recycling bins and collaboration with Green Phenix and/or Limpi Recycling, Green Force, and Fuse Caribbean (Or other partner organizations).

2.4.6.4 Climate Action

This action contributes to SDG 12 + 13

- a. Efficient Boat Operation: reduce fuel consumption by planning optimal dive routes to minimize travel time.
- b. Eco-Commitment: Educate divers on the importance of climate action, encouraging them to adopt eco-friendly and conservation practices (don't wear gloves, do not touch sea turtles, don't touch corals etc.)

2.4.6.5 Life Below Water

This action contributes to SDG 14

- a. Coral Conservation: (Partner to) support coral restoration and promote responsible diving practices that protect coral reefs. With the appropriate permits provided by GMN
- b. Avoid Anchoring on Reefs: Anchoring is prohibited except in emergencies.
- c. Organize Clean-Up Dives:
Regularly organize or participate in ocean and beach clean-up events, encouraging divers to join in these efforts. These activities aim to reduce marine debris and safeguard marine life. (Maintain detailed records or logs of participation to track progress and engagement)
- d. Avoid interfering with marine life, including feeding, or touching.

Terms and conditions



Terms and Conditions

3. Terms and conditions

3.1 Confidentiality

All information provided by participants will be dealt with confidentially. Only CTB and CITI have access to audit information provided by participants.

3.2 Accurate information

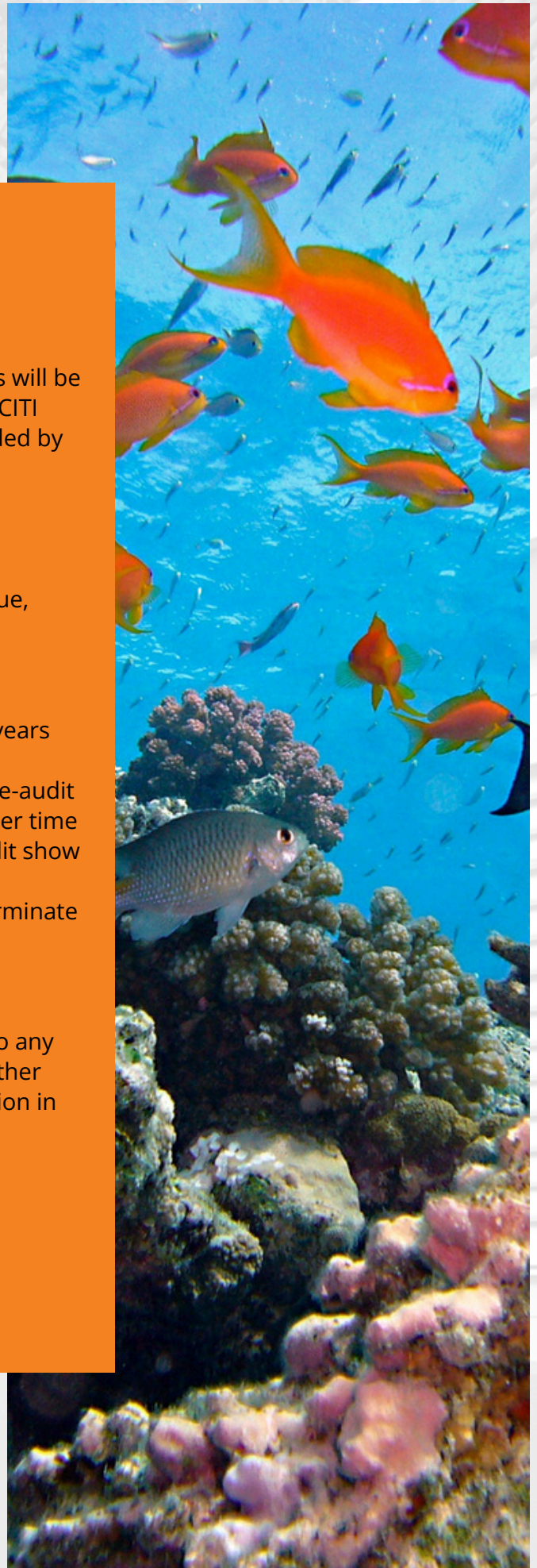
Participants provide the auditor with true,

3.3 Validity

The CTB audit is valid for a period of 2 years starting on certification date. After certification, CTB reserves the right to re-audit the certified service provider at any other time during these 2 years. Should the re-audit show that the service provider is no longer compliant, then CTB has the right to terminate certification.

3.4 Liability

In no event, will CTB nor CITI be liable to any direct or indirect lost revenue, or any other type of damage, arising from participation in the CTB Certification Program.



Audit Procedure



Registration

Information provision to potential participants; participant registers via www.citi.cw after carefully reading the terms and conditions



Payment client

CITI sends an invoice and after the invoice is paid, CITI will make an appointment to conduct the audit.



Audits

Audits will be conducted by an auditor.



Audit report

CITI will send an audit report with a summary of the findings to the participating dive shop.



Contact Us

+5999 738-6299

audit@citi.cw



