

Tour Operators and Travel Agencies Operating Own Tours\*

Specific Quality Criteria no. 230 - Checklist

2nd edition 2018

Self assessment

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\* Operators must fulfil other specific criteria applicable to their operations.

**In 4th edition the specific quality criteria is based on self-assessment checklists that applicants/participants complete themselves. The applicable criteria must be completely fulfilled. A clear explanation of how each criterion is fulfilled must be given with reference to appropriate documentation e.g. employee handbook/quality manual, safety plans, photos etc. Random and/or criteria will be verified by the auditor.**

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| ***230-1*** | ***Safety*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *230-1.1* | The company has written safety plans covering all tours and services offered to customers. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.2* | Safety plans are reviewed at least once a year. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.3* | Guides and other employees are briefed on safety plans every year. The briefing is done according to a written procedure. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.4* | The company ensures that employees, guides and drivers operate according to safety plans. This is for example stated in employment contracts and subcontracting agreements |  |  |  |
| *230-1.5* | The company ensures that contingency plans are at hand on every tour. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.6* | All guides and drivers can at all times easily contact the shift supervisor/immediate supervisor. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.7* | The company ensures that drivers and guides know where and how to call for assistance if needed, e.g. if a coach needs to be brought to the garage, they need assistance from the police or hospital/healthcare etc. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.8* | The company maintains a list of all drivers and guides, working on its behalf, employees and contractors alike, stating their education, training and experience. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.9* | The work environment of drivers and guides is assessed and their safety ensured, e.g.:   1. Facilities/room for work related gear and protective clothing. 2. Sufficient legroom. 3. Hands free microphone. 4. Safety belts and rear view mirrors. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.10* | The company gathers information on safety plans of suppliers, who are not members of Vakinn. This is done according to a written procedure. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.11* | A checklist has been compiled for safety equipment on tours and excursions e.g.:   1. First aid kit/equipment. 2. Communication devices. 3. Tracking devices. 4. Extra clothing. 5. Other equipment according to conditions on each tour. |  |  |  |
| *230-1.12* | The company has written guidelines on when to cancel tours due to weather. |  |  |  |
| ***230-2*** | ***Permits and Maintenance*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *230-2.1* | All vehicles have a valid MOT certificate. |  |  |  |
| *230-2.2* | All vehicles intended for public service and group tours have passed the group transport licence check. |  |  |  |
| *230-2.3* | All drivers hold a valid driving licence and endorsements appropriate to the class of vehicle they drive. |  |  |  |
| *230-2.4* | The company keeps a register of drivers detailing drivers licence numbers, endorsement details and expiration date. |  |  |  |
| *230-2.5* | Vehicles are cleaned satisfactorily, both interior and exterior, according to written cleaning plans. |  |  |  |
| *230-2.6* | A written plan for the maintenance of vehicles is in place, detailing daily checks performed by the driver and weekly/monthly/yearly checks performed by the maintenance crew. The plan is adjusted to use and wear. |  |  |  |
| ***230-3*** | ***Cooperation with Suppliers/Partners*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *230-3.1* | The company verifies that suppliers have all necessary licenses for their services. This is done according to a written procedure. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.2* | As a rule, the company visits suppliers and service providers to learn how their operations are conducted |  |  |  |
| *230-3.3* | The travel agency has written procedures on how to respond to changes in products or services that are provided by suppliers and partners. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.4* | The travel agency emphasizes doing business with accommodations that have been verified by Vakinn or another independent quality control system. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.5* | The travel agency emphasizes doing business with activity providers that have been verified by Vakinn or another independent quality control system. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.6* | Regular surveys are conducted among the clients to check their opinions on the performance of suppliers and service providers; ideas on how performance could be improved are forwarded when required. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.7* | The travel agency requires that all vehicles provided by suppliers/service providers must be up to the standards of Vakinn quality criteria. |  |  |  |
| *230-3.8* | The travel agency introduces the Vakinn quality system to Icelandic cooperating parties and encourages them to obtain a quality certification from Vakinn or another recognised quality control system. |  |  |  |
| ***230-4*** | ***Environment*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *230-4.1* | Marked roads or recognised vehicle tracks are always used. Where this is not possible, e.g. in winter, driving across areas with delicate eco-system must be avoided, cf. the current Nature Conservation Act. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.2* | The company ensures that streams and rivers are only crossed in designated places and vehicles are only driven into rivers and out of them at an angle that prevents damage to riverbanks. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.3* | The company ensures that streams and rivers are only crossed in designated places and vehicles are only driven into rivers and out of them at an angle that prevents damage to riverbanks. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.4* | Customers are informed about toilet arrangements and measures are taken to ensure that they follow instructions where conventional facilities are not available. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.5* | All non-biodegradable refuse and/or equipment is removed. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.6* | The company has established rules on the idling of vehicle engines. |  |  |  |
| *230-4.7* | Customers are reminded of responsible behaviour towards the environment. |  |  |  |
| ***230-5*** | ***Education and Training*** | ***Yes*** | ***N/A*** | ***How fulfilled/explanation*** |
| *230-5.1* | Drivers and guides have completed certified training, e.g. are certified guides and/or have substantial experience appropriate for the tour in question. |  |  |  |
| *230-5.2* | Guides have completed the course *Wilderness First Aid* (Fyrsta hjálp 1, 20 hours) from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organization and attend a refresher course (4 hours) every two years. |  |  |  |
| *230-5.3* | At least one employee on tours through the wilderness\*, e.g. guide or driver, has completed the course *Wilderness First Responder (WFR)* from ICE-SAR, or a comparable course from another organization, and attends a refresher course every three years. |  |  |  |
| *230-5.4* | At least one employee on tours through the wilderness\*, e.g. guide or driver, has completed the course *Navigation* from ICE-SAR or a comparable course from another organisation. |  |  |  |
| *230-5.5* | Drivers in highland tours have substantial experience of driving in the wilderness:   1. Driving on mountain tracks or challenging and difficult routes. 2. Crossing rivers. |  |  |  |
| *230-5.6* | Drivers receive training in:   1. How to provide information to passengers. 2. How to support passenger comfort and well-being. The training is conducted according to a written procedure. |  |  |  |

\* Wilderness is a place or area where it takes a minimum of two hours to get third party assistance. Please note; during summer mountain roads classified as F-roads are exempt from criteria 230-5.3 and 230-5.4.