

info CITO

Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec

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Insurance

ADVERTORIAL

Coverage for packages

As the manager of an accommodation establishment, it is essential that you sit down with your insurance broker and review the services you offer, to ensure that you have all the appropriate insurance coverage. Establishments like yours frequently offer various packages, such as personal care and/or relaxation, guided tours, etc. In that case, you must remember that your insurance contract does not necessarily cover all these activities. They must be approved by your insurer ahead of time. Some activities may require specific insurance, such as professional liability insurance. **For example**, a massage therapist who offers services on your premises must have professional insurance to cover all the legal fees and costs incurred if a guest claims to have been injured as a result of a massage.

Gentleman farmers

In rural regions, establishments often offer farm-related activities. Such activities can also involve risks, and so should be discussed with your insurance broker. They may be subject to certain restrictions in your insurance contract, in terms of physical risks, such as those related to outbuildings, or in terms of liability. Your broker will assess the risks involved in the activities and services offered. **For example**, you may offer pony or horseback rides, sell or offer tastings of local products on site, etc. Remember that your insurance contract is for accommodation, so it is essential that you be verifying with your broker whether or not these other activities are covered under the professional liability clauses of your insurance contract.

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Q&A ON THE CITO PLANNING SERVICE

In 2007, the CITO launched its planning service, as a way of helping all establishment operators looking to improve their classification results. It has become increasingly popular over the years. Jocelyn Dessureault, Director of Classification and the person in charge of this service, answers some questions about it for *infoCITO*.

See inside

A great new mandate for the CITO

The Regroupement québécois des résidences pour aînés (RQRA), an association of Quebec seniors' residences, recently announced that it has given the CITO the mandate to design and implement a mandatory classification program for residences belonging to the association. Starting in 2014, if all goes as expected, the 622 RQRA member residences, home to over 74,000 seniors, will start displaying stars indicating their classification rating as determined by the CITO.



IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you change your e-mail address... Remember to notify the CITO immediately. E-mail is a fast and simple way for us to send you important documents and messages concerning your classification.



Message from the Executive Director

In the coming weeks, the CITQ will begin applying new classification criteria for hotel establishments. These new criteria were announced last May by the Minister of Tourism at the launch of the 2012-2020 tourism industry development plan. Since then they have been publicized in a vast communication campaign, and the CITQ is committed to doing everything possible to simplify their implementation.

Accordingly, I would like to once again invite all operators to carefully read the paper guide sent to them last June. The guide, divided into several sections corresponding to the sections of an evaluation, explains the different classification levels for each criterion and is packed with useful information on how the classification process works.

I would also invite operators to consult the annotated guide that we have made available online in the section for operators on the www.citq.info website. As the advertisement here shows, the guide contains all kinds of details on the changes made to the criteria.

Operators should feel free to contact the CITQ if they have any questions about the new criteria, any time between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The CITQ also offers a wide range of value-added services, including a planning service designed to help operators reach the classification level they are aiming for. In that connection, see the interview with our Director of Classification in this issue.

It is one of the CITQ's absolute priorities to remain attuned to industry needs. Indeed, that is why the classification criteria were updated. This process is the result of broad-based consultations with all the stakeholders and extensive comparative studies of best practices elsewhere. It also received the support of all Quebec hotel associations, and many operators have told us how satisfied they are with the changes.

So we are delighted to launch these new criteria. We see them as another way of enhancing the quality of tourist accommodation, a goal that after all is at the heart of our mission.

M Rheault
Michel Rheault

Hotel associations meet with the CITQ for a working session

The executive directors of associations of CITQ member hotel establishments met in January for a working session on the new classification criteria for hotel establishments.



Clockwise: Gilles Labrune, Executive Director of the Association des petits hôtels de Montréal, Danielle Chayer, Executive Director of the Association des hôtels du Québec (AHQ), Jocelyn Dessureault, CITQ Director of Classification, Michel Rheault, CITQ Executive Director, Bill Brown, outgoing Executive Director, and Ève Paré, Executive Director of the Hotel Association of Greater Montréal (HAGM), and Natasha Desbiens, Executive Director of the Quebec Region Hotel Association (QRHA).

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEW CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA FOR HOTEL ESTABLISHMENTS?

Consult the annotated guide in the operators-only section at www.citq.info

Click on the question marks for useful details on the new classification criteria for hotel establishments





Jocelyn Dessureault, Director of Classification, answers questions from *infoCITQ* about the CITQ's planning service.

infoCITQ – Why did the CITQ decide to offer a planning service?

JD – Every year, many operators were asking us what we could do to help them improve their classification results. We first responded by offering a service we called “detailed letters,” explaining all the criteria for which the operator had not achieved the desired classification level.

We quickly realized, however, that this was not enough. Many operators asked us for improvement plans better tailored to their physical and budget constraints. Some wanted us to assess the impact of their renovations on their classification. Others asked us to examine their plans and predict what classification level they would achieve.

It was to meet all these different expectations that we came up with our planning service.

infoCITQ – How does it work?

JD – There are a number of different aspects. First of all, there are cases where the improvements have already been made. The operator provides us with a detailed report on the changes. We analyze them using special software to assess the impact on the establishment's classification. If the results don't meet the operator's expectations, we send him or her a report with recommendations.

For establishments planning improvements, we proceed as follows. Based on the results of the latest classification visit, we identify elements that could be improved. Then we talk with the operator about his or her goals and constraints – budget, layout of the establishment, etc. – and suggest improvements that could bring the establishment up to the desired level.

Finally, for establishments that have not yet been built, we meet the designers and review their plans and specifications (dimensions, materials, facilities, etc.). Then we use our software to assess the potential results for the establishment as planned. If the results do not live up to expectations, we suggest changes to the plans and specifications.

infoCITQ – Are the results guaranteed?

JD – No. A classification cannot be confirmed until the classifier has visited the establishment. For instance, the operator may use materials that are not of the quality originally indicated or that we recommended.

infoCITQ – Is the service free?

JD – Yes, if there is no need for a classifier to visit the establishment or for the operator to come to our offices. In this case, of course, the service may be less effective. Visiting an establishment is certainly the most reliable way of identifying the elements to be improved. Experience has shown us, for instance, that some operators tend to overestimate or misunderstand the condition (cleanliness and maintenance) of their establishments, although this is a very important part of their classification.

infoCITQ – When are there charges for this service?

JD – In cases when an operator asks us to visit his or her establishment or comes to meet us in person at our offices, some fees may apply. It is important to note that a cost estimate and an invoice covering the deposit for this kind of service are always sent to operators before the meeting or the visit. Any work done before the estimate is sent to the operator is not billed.

infoCITQ – Has the program proved popular?

JD – Since it was launched in 2007, over 300 operators of hotel establishments, tourist homes, bed & breakfast establishments, resorts and establishments in the “Other accommodation establishments” category, in no fewer than 20 tourist regions throughout Quebec, have used the CITQ planning service.

infoCITQ – Has the service been used mostly by establishments already in operation?

JD – Yes. According to our data, 76% of the establishments that have used our planning service were already in operation. The other 24% were in the planning stages.

infoCITQ – Why have operators used this service?

JD – Again according to our data, 42% wanted to earn an additional star or sun. Another 22% were looking to strengthen their classification results. 12% wanted to recover a star or a sun they had lost, and the other 24% were establishments still in the planning stages and aiming for a certain classification level.

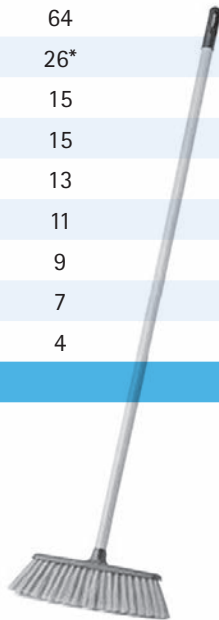
infoCITQ – How would you sum up the impact of this service so far?

JD – The planning service is certainly a good tool for improving the quality of tourist accommodation. It is also an opportunity for fruitful discussions. For instance, operators often ask us, during a planning visit, to meet with their maintenance staff and explain the impact of proper upkeep on the establishment's classification. The time and energy invested in this planning process are well worth it.

CLEANLINESS continues to top the list of complaints

In 2012, the CITQ handled 72 complaints by consumers who had stayed in tourist accommodation establishments. As in past years, cleanliness and the appearance of the establishment continued to top the list of customer complaints, for four classes of establishments.

GROUNDS FOR THE COMPLAINT	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
Cleanliness and appearance	64
Classification (number of stars)*	26*
Food services (6) Breakfast (9)	15
Service	15
Safety of premises	13
Misleading advertising	11
Range of services and amenities	9
Bedbugs and other insects	7
Prices	4



*For purposes of transparency, we have included all complaints about classification, even though some of them related to elements that are not covered by the classification criteria or to one-time events. For instance, "This establishment does not deserve four stars because the receptionist was impolite, or the air-conditioning system was not working."

CLASS OF ESTABLISHMENT	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS
Hotel establishment	51
Tourist home	12
Bed & breakfast establishment	7
Youth hostel	2
TOTAL	72

Answers to your questions:

Can a restaurant next to a hotel establishment be included in the classification?

No... In order for points to be assigned for Food Services, they must be offered on site, inside the establishment, and chargeable to the guest's room. This means that guests can pay one amount for all the services received, and do not have to leave the establishment to enjoy these services. Guests' comfort is an important factor in classification.

Can complaints by guests influence the CITQ's classification of an establishment?

Yes... Any complaint handled by the CITQ is entered in the operator's file so that the classifier can pay close attention to the specifics of the complaint on his or her next visit to the establishment. In addition, the CITQ notifies the operator that a complaint has been received and will be taken into account on the next classification visit, and invites the operator to follow up with the dissatisfied guest.

Are you eligible for the tax credit for modernizing tourist accommodations in the regions?

Download the form

Visit www.revenuquebec.ca/en

In the "Search" box, enter form number: CO-1029.8.36.HE (courtesy translation only; corporations must correspond with Revenu Québec in French)

For more details on eligibility criteria

Visit www.tourisme.gouv.qc.ca (French-only website)

In the "Search" box, enter the keywords "crédit modernisation"

