



REFCOM F GAS COMPANY CERTIFICATION SCHEME

SCHEME HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

Refcom Certification Ltd (Refcom) has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to operate as a Certification Body under the EU fluorinated greenhouse gas (F gas) regulation.

Refcom has also been appointed as a Certification Body by the Department of Environment in Northern Ireland under separate NI Regulations.

Your company **must** be certified to handle fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) regulated by the EU if it services the following types of equipment for other businesses:

- stationary refrigeration systems that contain F gas
- stationary air conditioning and heat pump systems that contain F gas
- stationary fire protection systems that contain F gas
- refrigerated trucks and trailers



Servicing includes installing, repairing, maintaining, commissioning and decommissioning.

You must renew your company's certification every 3 years.

Full details on the scope of the F gas regulation can be found on the Defra website.

APPLICATION PROCESS (AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFIED COMPANIES)

To obtain an F gas certificate, your company must declare basic information about the business and prove that all employed refrigerant handling engineers have the necessary qualification to carry out their work.

You will need to demonstrate that you:

- employ sufficient trained and qualified engineers to carry out your work
- have procedures in place for the safe handling of F gases and to minimise emissions

The process of applying for F gas Company Certification, from received application to final certification, will usually take 2 - 3 days.
The process is outlined below.



APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

APPLICATION:

- Apply to Refcom online or download an application form at www.refcom.org.uk
- Contact Refcom on 01768 860409

To apply for company certification businesses will need to provide:

- basic information about the business
- a list of employed engineers holding an appropriate stationary equipment qualification in handling F-gases.

The required qualifications are as follows:-

- City & Guilds 2079 categories I-2
- CITB Safe Handling of Refrigerants J11-J12
- City & Guilds 6187 categories 1-6 (Unit 230/530)
- City & Guilds 7189 categories 2-3 (Unit 209/509)



The business must demonstrate that it employs a sufficient number of in-scope employed engineers to cover the expected volume of in-scope business activity.

- proof that appropriate recovery systems and refrigerant handling procedures are in place and in use.

APPLICATION REVIEW:

Refcom will undertake a document review of your application and information provided to check that the business meets the scheme requirements to move to certification. Should further information be required a member of the Refcom team will contact you.

CERTIFICATION GRANTED:

Refcom will notify successful applicants of their Company Certification by providing:

- a F gas company certificate
- registration of your details to a public database of Refcom F gas certificated businesses
- Refcom F gas quality mark, which you will be able to display to demonstrate your businesses status as a F gas certificated company
- Van labelling to demonstrate your status as a F gas certificated business
- notification to Defra of your certification status
- discounted insurance through the Refcom Insurance Scheme



Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified and given the reasons why they have not met the certification standards. Details will be provided of how you can re-apply or appeal against the decision.

AFTER CERTIFICATION:

Once the certification process requirements have been satisfactorily completed, an certified Refcom F gas business with a certificate of membership and can be promoted as a Refcom F gas certificated company.

RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION:

Certification must be renewed every 3 years.

You will be notified by the Refcom team when your company certification is about to expire, 60 days prior to certification expiry date, businesses will be contacted by email inviting them to renew online. Further reminders will be sent at 30 days, 7 days, and on expiry when your certification will be suspended if not previously renewed.

Early renewal does not affect the original renewal date, new certification will activate for three years upon expiry of the current registration.

Online renewals and payment can be made on the Refcom website at www.refcom.org.uk

Renewal packs, renewal fees and paper-based application forms are available to download from the

Refcom website at www.refcom.org.uk

OUTCOME OF THE RENEWAL APPLICATION:

Once the renewal application has been validated and assessed, the Refcom team will consider the application and then determine whether the business still meets the required standard.

Refcom will notify successful applicants and issue a renewed company F gas certificate and a receipted invoice for the payment made.

Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified and given the reason(s) why they have not met the certification standards. They will also be given details of how they can re-apply or appeal against the decision.

ONGOING SURVEILLANCE OF MEMBERS:

To ensure that your business continues to meet the scheme requirements, you may be subject to a random risk-based assessment and/or an on-site audit. Businesses are selected at random for a risk-based assessment or selected following a third-party complaint.

The purpose of the audit regime is to:

- A. further validate and authenticate the information provided by certificated businesses; and
- B. ensure that the certification standards are maintained.

Refcom shall request, as a minimum, the information specified below in order to verify the accuracy of the information provided by the relevant business.

- request information to verify that there are qualified refrigerant engineers employed in sufficient numbers to cover the expected volume of activities referred to in Article 2.2 of Commission Regulation 2015/2067 – ie installation, maintenance, commissioning/decommissioning or servicing of SRAC or heat pump equipment
- check the validity of those qualifications with the relevant awarding body
- request information to verify that the necessary tools and procedures are available to qualified employee(s) engaged in activities for which a F gas Company Certificate is issued.

ON-SITE RISK-BASED OR COMPLAINT TRIGGERED AUDIT

Refcom will:

- obtain evidence to confirm accuracy of information requested by the questionnaire based assessment.

Refcom will then notify the certificated business of the results of the audit. Where the business is found to be non-compliant, the business will be advised of any nonconformities and will be given a period of time to carry out and confirm rectification.

ON-SITE RISK-BASED AUDITS PROCESS

Where a business is selected for audit, it will be contacted directly by a member of the Refcom team who will arrange a time and date for the audit to take place. In all cases, the auditor attending will be appropriately qualified.

At the time the appointment is made you will be asked to arrange access to the relevant site(s).

The duration of the audit and the number of sites to be visited will depend upon the size of the business and the number of refrigerant engineers employed. However, for most businesses, the time required will be between 2 and 4 hours.

Some aspects of the audit may be covered by other certification schemes, to which the certificated business may already be accredited. Any such accreditation will not grant exemption from the provisions of Refcom's certification requirements but the auditor will take such schemes into account when carrying out the audit.

Any non-conformities found during the audit will be required to be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner, as set out below.

NON-COMPLIANCE:

In the event that Refcom discovers any non-conformities, either at the time an application is verified, or during a subsequent assessment or on-site audit, the business will be given a period of time to rectify the position so that it can achieve the necessary certification standard.

The time scale and arrangements for this process may vary according to whether the problems are deemed to be minor or major non-conformities.

A major non-conformity is where there is evidence of:

- deliberately misleading or false information being supplied to Refcom;
- a failure to meet the certification standards; or
- a failure to comply with Refcom's Terms of Certification.



In the case of minor non-conformities, ie where one or more unsatisfactory items have been identified that are not likely to affect the validity of the Certification, then the Business will be given a short time to correct them.

In the event of one or more major non-conformities, the business will be given a reasonable period to correct them. Refcom or its appointed auditor, as appropriate, will agree and document the points at issue and agree a timescale for the corrective action to be taken. During this period businesses will maintain their certificated status with Refcom.

Should the non-conformities arising from an on-site audit not be resolved within the agreed period of time to the satisfaction of Refcom's auditor, the matter will be referred to Refcom management team.

Unresolved non-conformities will be reviewed by the Scheme Manager, who will consider the facts and may suspend or withdraw the certification and inform the Competent Authority of the decision.

In this event, the business will be given the reason(s) for the suspension or withdrawal of certification and details of how to appeal against the decision, should it wish to do so. In order to regain certification with Refcom the business must reapply and pay the appropriate fees.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Complaints may be received from any source. These may originate, for example, from members of the public, Trading Standards, insurance companies, other certificated businesses, or similar organisations or persons.

The complaint may be against Refcom or one of its certificated businesses. The Scheme Manager will initially investigate the complaint by obtaining comments from all of the parties involved.

Complaints received by Refcom regarding members will be documented and investigated thoroughly by Refcom and all decisions regarding the outcome of complaints will be reviewed and approved by the Refcom Advisory Committee. All decisions regarding the outcome of any complaint will be advised to the member and/or complainant in writing. Should you not be satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution, you have the right to appeal against the complaint. The rules regarding complaints and appeals are outlined in the Terms of Registration which all members must abide by.

For further information on Refcom's complaint and appeals procedures, contact the Refcom team on 01768 860409 or view the procedure at www.refcom.org.uk/disclaimer/complaints-and-appeals

FURTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT REFCOM AT:

Old Mansion House, Eamont Bridge, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2BX

Website: www.refcom.org.uk

Telephone: 01768 860409



USEFUL WEBSITES:

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs..... www.defra.gov.uk

Enforcement www.environment-agency.gov.uk

ACRIB www.acrib.org.uk

The Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) www.thebesa.com

City and Guilds www.cityandguilds.com

CITB CSkills www.citb.co.uk



STANDARDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS:

The standards and documentation that underpin the Refcom F gas Certification Scheme are available on Refcom's website at www.refcom.org.uk

- Refcom Terms of Registration
- Refcom Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- Refcom Model Refrigerant Tracking Guidance
- Refcom Guidance for Complaints on Suspected Non-Compliance