

Versions Issued

Version	Date	Description of Amendment	Approved by:
1.0	December 2023	First version	SEG Board
1.1	1 December 2024	Addition of timescales, costs	SEG Board
1.2	16 December 2024	Further updates to be more generic to all CABs	SEG Board

This document is the property of the Sustainable Eel Group. It is effective from the date above.

1. Purpose and Scope

This describes the process for gaining and providing certification to the SEG Standard and the relationships between the parties involved. It is intended as an explanatory guide to the full [202 SEG Assurance System](#), focusing the main steps involved in gaining SEG certification for those considering it for the first time. It is not a normative document; not part of the formal assurance system.

2. Definitions

The parties and key documentation involved in the process are:

- 2.1 Auditor:** Qualified and SEG approved auditor contracted by the CAB to conduct on-site and off-site assessments of clients' conformity with the SEG Standard.
- 2.2 Applicant:** An organisation, individual or business considering becoming SEG certified.
- 2.3 CAB:** Conformity Assessment Body. This is the independent competent organisation contracted by SEG to provide certification services for the Standard. Approved CABs are published on the [SEG website](#). The CAB is the lead organisation that organises and contracts the following to assist in providing those services.
- 2.4 Client:** An organisation, individual or business seeking certification to the SEG Standard.
- 2.5 Lead Auditor:** This a qualified and experienced Auditor contracted by the CAB, primarily responsible for administering the SEG Standard Online Reporting Tool (ORT). It will also carry out audits and provide guidance and training to other auditors.
- 2.7 Online Reporting Tool (ORT):** online platform accessible for clients behind login codes enabling them to provide information proving SEG standard compliance.
- 2.8 Reviewer:** person checking the work submitted in the Online Reporting Tool (ORT) by the client for completeness and quality.
- 2.9 SEG:** The Sustainable Eel Group. SEG is the owner of the SEG Standard scheme and system.
- 2.9 103 SEG Standard:** The Sustainable Eel Group Standard. All parties, including Clients, should understand the content, meaning and implications of the Standard. The current version is available at: <https://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/download/>
- 2.10 202 SEG Assurance System:** The procedures and guidance by which the SEG Standard is administered – a key reference for the CAB, Lead Auditor, Auditors and Clients. Available at: <https://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/the-seg-standard-system/>

3. Process

This is the process for certification, explaining the roles of the parties involved:

- 3.1** The Applicant approaches SEG or the CAB, seeking information on how to become SEG Certified.
- 3.2** Within 7 days SEG or the CAB provides the Applicant with an information pack, to include: (a) this procedure, (b) the SEG Standard, (c) SEG Standard Terms and Conditions, (d) CAB Terms and Conditions. The Applicant is referred to this web-page: [how-to-apply-for-seg-certification/](#)
- 3.3** Applicant approaches CAB with a formal request to be a SEG Client, contact:
France, Spain and Portugal and United Kingdom: certificationfrance@controlunion.com
Netherlands, Germany and other countries: eschipper@controlunion.com
- 3.4** Within 7 days, CAB provides applicant with an Application Form (AF).
- 3.5** Applicant completes and submits the AF within 14 days.
- 3.6** When the AF is complete, the CAB provides an Offer Letter (OL) within 14 days.
- 3.7** The Applicant considers the OL and returns it, signed, within 14 days.
- 3.8** The Applicant then becomes a Client and the CAB requests the Lead Auditor to provide the Client with access codes to the ORT within 7 days of payment.
- 3.9** Access to the ORT is a separate fee and explanation is included in the OL. The ORT contains an obligatory Self Assessment (SA) and note that this SA helps the:
 - (a) client to understand exactly what the SEG standard means, what is required for certification and how close they are to conformity;
 - (b) client prepare for assessment;
 - (c) CAB / auditor to prepare for assessment.
- 3.10** The Client completes the SA within 30 days. Extensions can be provided in extenuating circumstances.
- 3.11** Reviewer assesses the SA and:
 - (a) within 14 days provides feedback to the client on how well they have complied and what non-compliances require completing before proceeding to full assessment,
 - (b) when the Client has completed the SA successfully the assessment may be planned.
- 3.13** CAB assigns an auditor to conduct the full assessment within 7 days. CAB and Auditor form a contract agreement for assessment.
- 3.14** Within 60 days (or longer if mutually agreed), of the Client completing the SA, the auditor conducts assessment to the SEG Standard according to the guidance and procedures in the [202 SEG Assurance System](#). Auditor provides feedback, draft audit report and any Corrective Action Reports for non-compliances within 14 days of the audit.
- 3.15** Client responds to audit report within 14 days. Either agrees with report or responds to corrective actions required until Client and CAB / Auditor agree the outcome.
- 3.16** Following the Client's agreement of the report, within 7 days CAB communicates the outcome of the assessment, which could be: Non-Compliant, Conditionally Certified or Certified. The decision chart for this is at Appendix 1.
- 3.17** CAB issues, assessment report and covering letter and Client and, if relevant, Certificate and SEG standard terms and conditions; cc to SEG.
- 3.18** SEG updates its [register of certificates](#).
- 3.19** Client is subject to surveillance audits and monitoring. This includes an annual update to the ORT as annual SA.

4. Complaints and appeals

- 4.1 Any complaints or appeals regarding the outcome or process should be directed initially to the CAB, using their complaints procedure.
- 4.2 If the Client and CAB cannot resolve the complaint, it should be escalated to SEG. The SEG complaints and appeals procedure is accessible at:
<https://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/complaints-procedure/>

Appendix 1. Certification decision processes for initial and surveillance audits.

- NB. 1. Self Assessment first completed by client
 2. Auditor completes full assessment.
 3. NC = non-compliance

