



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

To: Chief Executives - Scottish Local Authorities

(copy: Building Standards Managers – Scottish  
Local Authorities, Certification Scheme Providers,  
Members of the Building Standards Resilience  
Liaison Group)

16 June 2020

Dear Chief Executive

**Certification Schemes under Section 7(2) of The Building (Scotland) Act 2003:  
Guidance on the role of certification as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak**

You will be aware that the Scottish Government recently issued “[COVID-19 – A Framework for Decision Making](#)” which explains the approach and principles that will guide us as we make decisions about transitioning out of the current restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. Guidance on the challenges of delivering a building standards service in your role of Local Authority verifier has also been [issued](#).

As Chair of the Construction Leadership Forum on COVID-19 Recovery Planning, I have worked with the construction industry and other interested parties to produce a ‘restart model’ for the phased restart of construction works. The restart model complements the Scottish Government’s guidance for the construction sector.

A key driver of the documents mentioned above is the health and welfare of workers and with this in mind, I would like to highlight the ‘certification’ option under Section 7(2) of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 which allows members of schemes approved by the Scottish Ministers to exercise the functions of approved certifiers of design or of construction.

Increased use of the certification process could help to reduce the risk of transmission of the coronavirus by reducing the number of people visiting building sites, as any parts of the building warrant work certified as complying with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 would not require to be inspected by the local authority verifier.

Currently, there are three certification schemes approved by the Scottish Ministers, which relate to the design stage of the building warrant process for structure and for energy

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

(domestic and non-domestic). A further two schemes have been approved for the construction phase, which are for electrical and drainage, heating and plumbing work. Further details of these schemes are appended to this letter.

'Scheme Providers' are responsible for the appointment of approved certifiers and must ensure that they have the appropriate qualifications and experience relating to the scope of the scheme, as well as having in place suitable insurance to cover the certification service they deliver. All certifiers are subject to assessment and audit by the Scheme Provider. I understand that there is capacity in all the certification schemes to undertake more certification work

Although certification is an optional method of compliance, certificates of design are routinely submitted as part of the building warrant process and can help facilitate the early approval of building warrants by removing the need for verifiers to check design compliance in these areas.

In delivering a building standards service, the use of certificates of construction would also have significant value at this time, where there is a need and requirement to actively manage the number of people on site to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Electrical, drainage, heating and plumbing work forming part of a building warrant can be certified by qualified building professionals as complying with regulations without the need for these elements to be inspected by the local authority.

The decision to use a certifier will, of course, lie with the building owner. However, the promotion of the existing schemes and ready acceptance of certification at any stage of a building warrant project by verifiers would have a positive impact on verification capacity, compliance with building regulations and, most significantly, at this time, the reduction in the risk of the transmission of COVID-19 infection.

Officials from Building Standards Division at Scottish Government will be available to respond to any queries that may arise, contact in the first instance should be via Stephen Garvin, Head of Building Standards Division (07836 504 781, [Stephen.garvin@gov.scot](mailto:Stephen.garvin@gov.scot)).

Kind regards



**KEVIN STEWART**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



Certification Scheme - Design	Scheme Provider
CERTIFICATION OF DESIGN (BUILDING STRUCTURES)	<b>Structural Engineers Registration Ltd*</b>  Website: <a href="https://www.ser-ltd.com/ser-scotland">https://www.ser-ltd.com/ser-scotland</a> Email: <a href="mailto:admin@ser-ltd.com">admin@ser-ltd.com</a> Telephone: +44 (0)20 7201 9116
CERTIFICATION OF DESIGN (SECTION 6 - ENERGY) NON-DOMESTIC BUILDINGS	<b>BRE Global Ltd</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.bre.co.uk/acd">www.bre.co.uk/acd</a> Email: <a href="mailto:acd@bre.co.uk">acd@bre.co.uk</a> Telephone: 01923 665505
CERTIFICATION OF DESIGN (SECTION 6 - ENERGY) NON-DOMESTIC BUILDINGS	<b>RIAS Services Ltd</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.RIAS-regs.co.uk">www.RIAS-regs.co.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:rias-regs@rias.org.uk">rias-regs@rias.org.uk</a> Telephone: 0131 229 7545
CERTIFICATION OF DESIGN (SECTION 6 - ENERGY) DOMESTIC BUILDINGS	<b>BRE Global Ltd</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.bre.co.uk/acd">www.bre.co.uk/acd</a> Email: <a href="mailto:acd@bre.co.uk">acd@bre.co.uk</a> Telephone: 01923 665505
CERTIFICATION OF DESIGN (SECTION 6 - ENERGY) DOMESTIC BUILDINGS	<b>RIAS Services Ltd</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.RIAS-regs.co.uk">www.RIAS-regs.co.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:rias-regs@rias.org.uk">rias-regs@rias.org.uk</a> Telephone: 0131 229 7545

Certification Name - Construction	Scheme Provider
CERTIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS TO BS 7671	<b>SELECT</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.select.org.uk">www.select.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:admin@select.org.uk">admin@select.org.uk</a> Telephone: 0131 445 5577
CERTIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS TO BS 7671	<b>CERTSURE LLP trading as NICEIC</b>  Website: <a href="http://certsure.com/about-us/">http://certsure.com/about-us/</a> Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@certsure.com">enquiries@certsure.com</a> Telephone: 0333 015 6625
CERTIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION DRAINAGE, HEATING AND PLUMBING	<b>Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF)</b>  Website: <a href="http://www.snipef.org/">http://www.snipef.org/</a> Email: <a href="mailto:schemes@snipef.org">schemes@snipef.org</a> Telephone: 0131 556 06000

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)