

# Safetree Contractor Certification - Guidance

The Safetree Contractor Certification (“certification”) is an assessment of health and safety, employment, and professional standards. These standards have been developed in partnership with industry contractors, management companies, forest owners and government. The standards reflect international good practice.

This document explains the certification process and provides the list of standards.

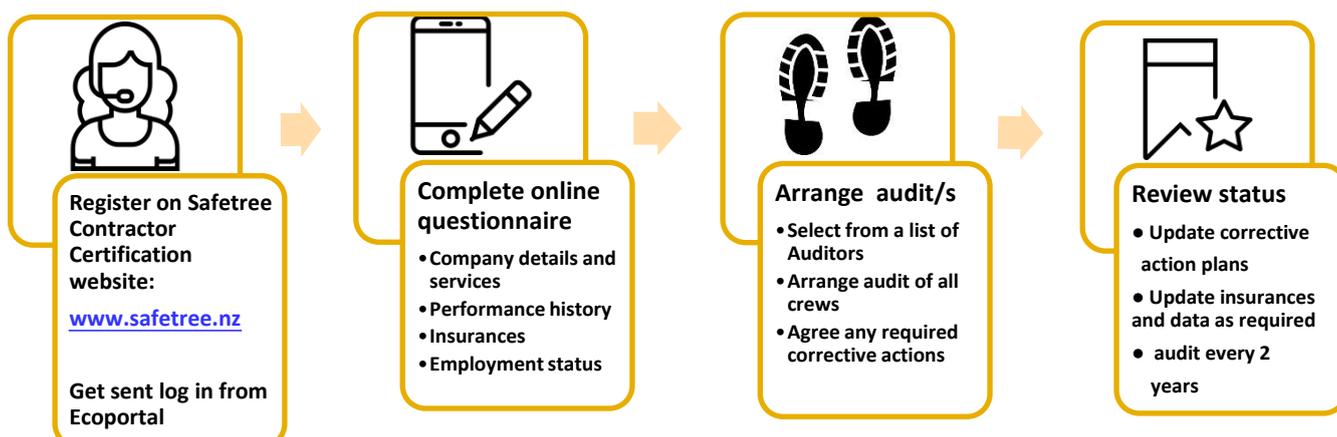
## Why Certify Contractors

Certification benefits all of us in the forestry industry. It helps workers and their families select employment from professional contractors that invest in health and safety. It helps forestry contractors know what good standards look like and provides a method to demonstrate their investment and professionalism. It helps forest owners and management companies find contractors that meet industry standards.



## Steps to Certification

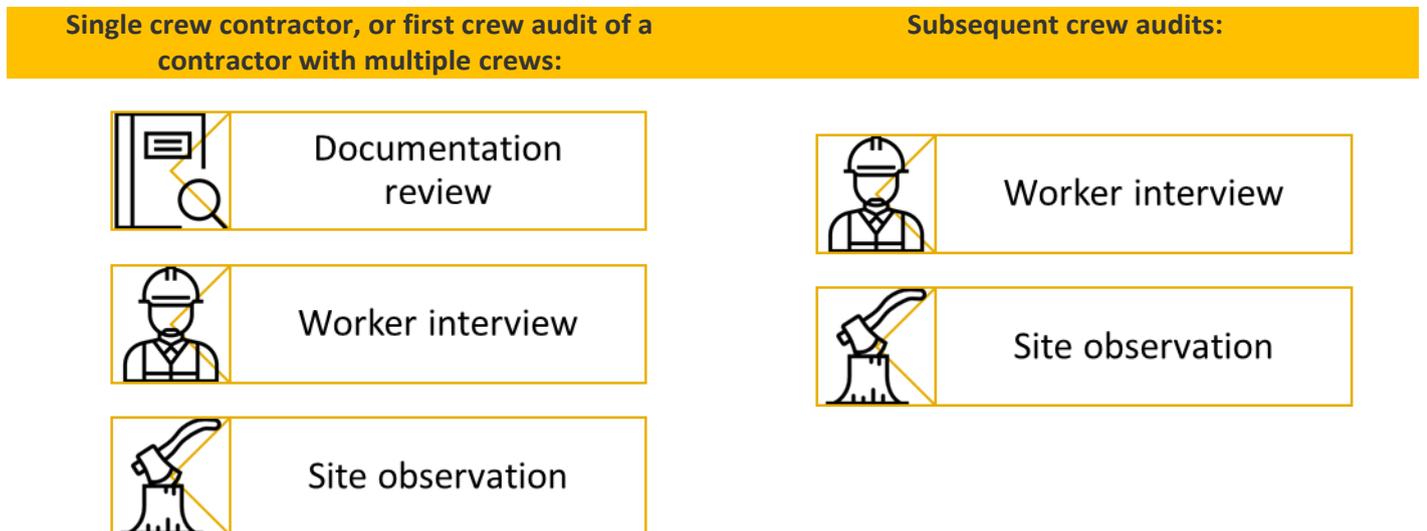
The process for becoming certified is represented below.



# How the Standards are Assessed

The standards are assessed by information provided by contractors through the Safetree website and by audit. Information collected through the Safetree website includes insurances, safety statistics and employment status.

The audit has three parts: a documentation review; an interview with workers; and a site observation. All crews must be audited, but the documentation review can be completed with only one of the crews.



At least one audit must include an observation of a daily planning meeting/tailgate. If logistics or travel cost prohibit the Auditor's presence, the Auditor can attend via teleconference or videoconference.

The site observation must include assessment of two critical risks. If the contractor does tree felling and/or extraction these should be assessed as the priority topics for that contractor. Observation of a critical risk activity should not create risks. [A critical risk "badge" will be visible on the dashboard and public register for all critical risks assessed that do not require corrective actions. A contractor may ask the Auditor to assess more than one critical risk in order to earn additional critical risk badges.]

Documented safety management plans for the critical risk activity will be expected to be on site and available for review during the site observation.

## Who can do the Audit?

audits must be conducted by a Safetree Approved Auditor (Auditor) to be considered for Safetree Contractor Certification. A register of Safetree Approved Auditors is maintained by Safetree. Auditors on this register have been approved by the Forest Industry Safety Council (FISC) Certification Panel as having met the following criteria:

- NZQA level 4 or higher in safety
- Relevant forestry experience
- Auditing training and experience.

The cost of the audit is a contractual agreement between the contractor and FISC. An indicative cost of a full days audit is between \$800 and \$1000.

All Auditors will have a peer auditor for their first audit and are subject to peer review twice a year.

Auditors operate under a Code of Conduct that requires them to act professionally, confidentially, and without bias. They are not for example allowed to "sell" products or services and must declare conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest would include for example, a forest owner’s auditor certifying their own contractor.

A copy of the Auditor Code of Conduct can be found on the Safetree website. Any complaints about auditor conduct can be escalated through [Certification@safetree.nz](mailto:Certification@safetree.nz) for review by the FISC Certification Panel. Auditors found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct can have their approval withdrawn.

## The Standards

The Standards cover seven areas:

			
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vision</li><li>• Resource</li><li>• Performance</li><li>• Risk Profile</li></ul>	<p><b>Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation</li><li>• Representation</li><li>• Information</li><li>• PCBU Collaboration</li></ul>	<p><b>Risk Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identification</li><li>• Assessment</li><li>• Control</li><li>• Monitor &amp; Review</li></ul>	
			
<p><b>Forest Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site Planned</li><li>• Daily Risks</li><li>• Responsibilities</li></ul>	<p><b>Health Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impairment</li><li>• Hazardous Substances</li><li>• Return To Work</li><li>• Welfare</li></ul>	<p><b>Competency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Status Assessment</li><li>• Crew Essentials</li><li>• Specialist Roles</li><li>• Supervision</li></ul>	<p><b>Critical Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tree Felling</li><li>• Extraction &amp; Breaking Out</li><li>• Processing &amp; Loading</li><li>• Maintenance Of Machinery</li><li>• Driving</li></ul>

The standards for each area are listed below. Contractors should review the standards before starting the certification process.

## Leadership

1. Risks profiled		Assessed by:
	<i>1.1. Risks have been profiled by the PCBU and information about the most critical risks is provided in a useful way that workers can understand.</i>	Documentation review
2. Vision communicated		Assessed by:
	<i>2.1. There is a documented health and safety statement. It covers goals and commitments of the contractor to workers and the commitments required of workers.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>2.2. There is evidence of managers responding to error and rewarding good practice. Learnings are communicated.</i>	Worker interview
3. Health & safety resourced		Assessed by:
	<i>3.1. Workers have sufficient time and support to meet health and safety goals. Health and Safety (H&amp;S) representatives have time and support to perform their role.</i>	Worker interview
	<i>3.2. The job and crew are resourced with appropriate and maintained equipment to enable the job to be done safely and meet health and safety goals.</i>	Worker interview & site observation
	<i>3.3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided, worn correctly and in good condition for both workers and site visitors.</i>	Site observation
	<i>3.4. There is evidence of an assessment methodology to determine and maintain task competency. The method must have defined the supervision level required to make the assessment and the ongoing safe behaviour observation requirements to check ongoing understanding.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>3.5. There is a system for inducting workers, checking their competency, and allocating tasks and ensuring supervision accordingly.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>3.6. There is a documented system for identifying and recording the maintenance, inspection and certification requirements and history for plant and equipment.</i>	Documentation review
4. Performance reviewed		
	<i>4.1. There is evidence of incident investigation and sharing learnings.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>4.2. There is evidence of reviews of health and safety performance.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>4.3. There is a method to seek workers suggestions for improvement and follow up on these suggestions.</i>	Worker interview

## Engagement

5. Workers engaged & empowered		Assessed by:
	<i>5.1. There is evidence of periodic safety meetings where all workers are invited to participate in broader health and safety planning and review performance.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>5.2. Workers have opportunity to engage in matters concerning their health and safety. (If a worker has requested it, an election must be held for a HSR according to ratio requirements). Issues raised are resolved.</i>	Documentation review & worker interview
	<i>5.3. . Workers are empowered to call STOP if they think something is unsafe.</i>	Documentation review & worker interview
	<i>5.4. Workers have access to health and safety information e.g.: safety alerts, newsletters, codes, good practice guidance.</i>	Worker interview
	<i>5.5. There is a clear method of consulting, cooperating, and coordinating with other contractors.</i>	Documentation review

## Risk Management

6. Risk identification systems		Assessed by:
	<i>6.1. There is an effective method to report and respond to: safety issues; hazards; incidents; near hits; and improvements.</i>	Documentation review & worker interview
	<i>6.2. There is evidence of consultation and collaboration of PCBU's to identify and monitor risks.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>6.3. There is a system to identify risk activities or incidents that require notification to WorkSafe NZ.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>6.4. There is instruction on maintaining the scene for notifiable events.</i>	Documentation review
7. Risk assessment methods		Assessed by:
	<i>7.1. There is an effective method for assessing and prioritising risks.</i>	Documentation review
8. Risk controls applied		Assessed by:
	<i>8.1. There is a communicated method for selecting controls based on their effectiveness.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>8.2. When risk controls are developed and revised, workers are asked about their actual experiences of doing the work.</i>	Documentation review
9. Risk controls checked		Assessed by:
	<i>9.1. There is evidence of an inspection and audit programme of risk controls.</i>	Documentation review
10 Risks reviewed		Assessed by:
	<i>10.1. There is evidence of change to risk controls in response to learning or feedback.</i>	Documentation review

## Forest Management

11 Responsibilities defined		Assessed by:
	<i>11.1. There is evidence of the agreement between PCBU's defining responsibilities and duties.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>11.2. The employment status and entitlements of all workers is known.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>11.3. Minimum employment entitlements are met.</i>	Worker interview
12 Site planned		Assessed by:
	<i>12.1. The contractor has determined site controls based on a pre-site hazard identification.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>12.2. There is clear marking and signage of designated safe areas and danger zones.</i>	Site observation
	<i>12.3. Hazardous substance storage tanks are in locations with minimal risk of mobile plant collision and have planned spill containment and/or recovery plans as appropriate for their size and classification.</i>	Documentation review and site observation
	<i>12.4. There is clear instruction signage for visitors with defined induction and escorting restrictions.</i>	Site observation
	<i>12.5. The site is managed with care avoiding:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- congestion</li> <li>- maintaining separation distances</li> <li>- managing threats of falling objects/hazards</li> <li>- avoiding accumulations and obstructions.</li> </ul>	Site observation
	<i>12.6. There are stocked first aid kit/s on site, protected from contamination.</i>	Site observation
	<i>12.7. There are fire extinguishers of suitable size, pressure and in date. At least two 9kg foam (class B) if flammable liquids.</i>	Site observation
	<i>12.8. There is an effective means of calling for help available to all workers.</i>	Site observation
	<i>12.9. Emergency procedures are fit for purpose (relevant to the size and type of business) and periodically tested.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>12.10. There is a documented system that explains how lone workers are kept safe.</i>	Documentation review

**Forest Management continued**

13.	Daily risks planned	Assessed by:
	<i>13.1. Daily meetings are held to assess changing risks on site and plan implementation of risk controls.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>13.2. Visitors sign in and receive health and safety instruction on all relevant controls including PPE and supervision.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>13.3. No person under the age of 15 is present in any area of the workplace when logging operations or tree felling is carried out.</i>	Documentation review
	<i>13.4. Any observation of activities that could cause an imminent risk of serious injury or illness must be corrected immediately by those in control of the site.</i>	Site observation

## Health Risks

14.	Health risks managed	Assessed by:
	<p><i>14.1. Health risks have been identified and controls in place to minimise effect of work on health and health on work.</i></p>	<p>Documentation review and worker interview</p>
	<p><i>14.2. Work hours are managed to avoid fatigue. Priority is safety over performance – workers are provided opportunity to rest.</i></p>	<p>Documentation review and worker interview</p>
	<p><i>14.3. There is an inventory of hazardous substances and safety data sheets available. Where there is potential for exposure to conditions causing chronic health impact there is evidence of health monitoring.</i></p>	<p>Documentation review and worker interview</p>
	<p><i>14.4. There is a Drug and Alcohol policy that includes a statement position on rehabilitation support and requirements for testing. Testing requirements must include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- pre-employment and internal transfer to safety sensitive roles</i></li> <li><i>- after significant incident where actions may have contributed</i></li> <li><i>- reasonable cause where there is question of impairment from actions, appearance, or behaviour</i></li> <li><i>- random for safety sensitive roles including driving</i></li> <li><i>- follow up for workers previously tested nonnegative</i></li> </ul>	<p>Documentation review</p>
	<p><i>14.5. There is support given to workers who have had injuries or ill health to help them back to work.</i></p>	<p>Worker interview</p>
	<p><i>14.6. Where a work site is established and access to the site permits, toilet facilities are provided and maintained. There is provision for workers to take a breakout of bad weather and access drinking water.</i></p>	<p>Worker interview</p>

## Competency

15.	Crews competent	Assessed by:
	15.1. <i>The competency of all workers in the crew is documented in a competency matrix that records their status as either: “competent”; “under supervision”; or “under documented training”.</i>	Documentation review
	15.2. <i>There is a competent person in charge of each operation and responsible for supervision.</i>	Documentation review
	15.3. <i>There are a minimum of 2 current first aiders on site.</i>	Documentation review
	15.4. <i>Lone workers have current first aid certificate.</i>	Documentation review
	15.5. <i>All crew have or are undergoing training in nutrition and hydration; stress, fatigue, and substance abuse (equiv. to NZQA 22994).</i>	Documentation review
	15.6. <i>All drivers are licensed for the class of vehicle driven.</i>	Documentation review
	15.7. <i>Fire fighters have training in personal safety at vegetation fires (equiv. to NZQA 3285) or are under supervision by same.</i>	Documentation review
	15.8. <i>Agrichemical operators have training in handling (equiv. to “Growsafe”) If class 6.1; 9.1 – 9.4 if applying to water then they are an “approved/certified handler”.</i>	Documentation review
	15.9. <i>Class 1 explosives operators are “approved/certified handler” and hold a Controlled Substance License.</i>	Documentation review
	15.10. <i>Manual tree fallers hold at least NZQA level 3 in tree felling to have been assessed as “competent”. Fallers who don’t hold the qualifications or are under training for particular tree felling tasks are not considered qualified and need to be supervised when felling trees.</i>	Documentation review
	15.11. <i>The head breaker out (cable extraction) is competent to NZQA 1258.</i>	Documentation review
	15.12. <i>All workers supervising critical risk activities or who may have supervision of the crew at any time must have been assessed competent to do so</i>	Documentation review
	15.13. <i>Workers leading risk assessment and/or incident investigation activities must have been assessed competent to do so.</i>	Documentation review
	15.14. <i>Crew foremen understand the health and safety management system and their role in application of it.</i>	Site Observation

## Critical Risks

16.	Tree Felling	Assessed by:
	16.1. <i>There is an effective and tested means of communicating with tree fallers at all times.</i>	Site observation
	16.2. <i>The mean tree height is known and used to calculate the safe retreat position.</i>	Site observation
	16.3. <i>Felling within 2 tree lengths of road has a traffic control plan.</i>	Site observation
	16.4. <i>Felling within 2 trees lengths of power lines shall have an agreed felling plan with the asset/network owner.</i>	Site observation
	16.5. <i>There must be a criteria for authorising access into the danger zone and process to provide authorisation.</i>	Site observation
	16.6. <i>There is a process for assessing risk controls to deal with:</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Hung up trees;</i></li> <li>- <i>Stem rebound;</i></li> <li>- <i>Dead trees.</i></li> </ul>	Site observation
	16.7. <i>There is a system to assess workers fitness to work on high-risk tasks including impairment from drugs and alcohol.</i>	Site observation
	16.8. <i>Tree fallers have first aid materials with them at all times, and if lone working are competent first aiders.</i>	Site observation
	16.9. <i>There is a site-specific emergency response plan to recover someone from a tree felling incident.</i>	Site observation

## Critical Risks continued

17.	Extraction and Breaking Out	Assessed by:
	<i>17.1. There is a documented process for determining safe retreat positions for each line or days' work.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.2. The safe working load of the wire/rope has been calculated for cable harvesting.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.3. There is a maintenance plan for rigging and a process for identifying wear and tear.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.4. The safe operating lead has been calculated for towers and yarders.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.5. The safe load limit has been calculated for extraction.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.6. There is a process to assess risk controls for a fouled drag.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.7. There is a system to assess workers fitness to work on high-risk tasks including impairment from drugs and alcohol.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.8. There is first aid equipment and competent first aiders to respond to an extraction incident.</i>	Site observation
	<i>17.9. There is a site-specific emergency response plan to recover someone from an extraction incident.</i>	Site observation
18.	Processing and Loading	Assessed by:
	<i>18.1.Lights work on machines and windows are clean.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.2.There is a well communicated skid plan that identifies safe areas, loading zones, and flows.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.3.The site has been planned to minimise reversing vehicles, provide sufficient turning space and maintain visibility.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.4.The load limit and stability of log stacks has been determined and applied.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.5.There is effective separation between workers and operating machines.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.6.The risk of chainshot has been assessed and controls implemented to protect workers.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.7.There is a system to assess workers fitness to work on high-risk tasks including impairment from drugs and alcohol.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.8.There is first aid equipment and competent first aiders to respond to a processing or loading incident.</i>	Site observation
	<i>18.9.There is a site-specific emergency response plan to recover someone from a processing or loading incident.</i>	Site observation

## Critical Risks continued

19.	Maintenance of Machinery	Assessed by:
	<i>19.1. An area of flat and stable land is designated for planned machine maintenance.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.2. The types of maintenance tasks suitable for onsite response have been identified, assessed, and resourced with fit for purpose PPE and tools.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.3. Workers with allocated machine maintenance tasks are assessed competent to do so.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.4. Machinery maintenance is a scheduled activity and only undertaken when weather conditions are suitable.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.5. Workers undertaking high risk tasks are fit to perform the task and unimpaired</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.6. There is a documented system for isolating and locking out energy sources and moving parts of machinery prior to working on them.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.7. There is first aid equipment and competent first aiders to respond to a machinery maintenance incident.</i>	Site observation
	<i>19.8. There is a site-specific emergency response plan to recover someone from a machinery maintenance incident.</i>	Site observation
20.	Driving	Assessed by:
	<i>20.1. There is a clear expectation about driver behaviour: to include journey planning; speed restriction; impairment from fatigue, drugs, and alcohol; wearing of seatbelts; and use of handheld devices.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.2. There is a system for monitoring and responding to concerns about driver behaviour.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.3. There is a clear expectation about the specification requirements for vehicles used for work. For example: safety rating and protective features such as ABS and airbags.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.4. There is a system to ensure all planned maintenance and inspection is up to date on work vehicles.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.5. All drivers of vehicles are expected to do a pre-use check of the vehicle and report any faults.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.6. All drivers of work vehicles are licensed for the class of vehicle driven.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.7. There is a system to assess workers fitness to work on high-risk tasks including impairment from drugs and alcohol.</i>	Site observation
	<i>20.8. There is a stocked first aid kit and emergency supplies in all work vehicles.</i>	Site observation

## Certification Status

After the review is completed, the contractor will see their certification status in Ecoportal website.

 <b>Certified</b>	 <b>Conditionally certified</b>	 <b>Not certified</b>
Contractor has completed all assessments and has no corrective action plan to address.	Contractor has completed all assessments and has an agreed corrective action plan in place.	Contractor has either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not completed all assessments</li><li>• Had more than 10 corrective actions within the audit</li><li>• Has not satisfactorily rectified an agreed corrective action plan</li><li>• Or there was evidence of an imminent risk of serious harm</li></ul>

Completing all elements of the assessment and satisfying insurance conditions is mandatory for all contractors. If there are any gaps in this mandatory information the contractor will have a “Not certified” status.

Any contractors with a “Not certified” status will not appear on the public register.

## Corrective Actions and Agreed Actions Plans

An Auditor will mark a Standard as “falls short” if the standard is not met or there is not enough evidence to demonstrate the standard has been met. Whenever there is a “falls short,” the Auditor must agree with the site supervisor what action must be taken to meet the standard and/or what evidence will demonstrate that the standard is being met. This conversation takes place at the end of the audit and the agreement of action and timeframe is recorded.

If a question is not applicable to a contractor’s activities the question will be removed from the scoring.

If an Auditor has not been able to ascertain whether employment conditions are being met, they must raise a corrective action requiring the contractor to submit an Accountant Verified Employment Questionnaire. This questionnaire will be provided by Safetree and was created by the Labour Inspectorate.

Where a Standard has been met but the Auditor sees opportunity for improvement, they may provide recommendations and share good practice.

The maximum timeframe given for any corrective action is 3 months. If a corrective action is not completed in the agreed, timeframe the contractor’s status will move to “Not certified”. Contractors can apply one time to extend a corrective action timeframe. It is at the Auditors discretion to approve the request.

## Significant Gaps

Where more than 10 corrective actions are required in any one audit, the audit will be recorded as having Significant Gaps and will require the audit to be repeated for that crew.

Where an imminent risk of serious harm is observed during an audit, the audit will be recorded as having Significant Gaps. It is at the Auditor's discretion whether the audit continues, and a targeted revisit is scheduled, or the audit is suspended and rescheduled in full.

Significant Gaps will result in the Contractor status "Not certified".

## Appeals and Escalations

The actions agreed at the audit are entered into the Ecoportal system to generate an action plan that tracks progress and sends reminders to all relevant parties. If a contractor disagrees with an action that is recorded in the system, they should first consult with their Auditor to discuss understanding of what was agreed at the time of the audit.

A contractor can appeal a corrective action or significant gap and must do so by creating an escalation in Ecoportal within 14 days of it being uploaded into their account. The Safetree System Administrator sends all escalations to the FISC Certification Panel to determine and advise on any necessary policy creation or amendment.

## How to Prepare for an Audit

Below is a list of all documentation that Auditors will need to review. These documents must be readily available on site for the arranged time of audit, or you must arrange an alternative meeting place for review of the documentation.

Operational documentation must be seen in use on site. If the documents are related to record of activity, examples must be available for inspection for the year before the audit date. The last five years of records of notifiable events must be made available within seven working days at an Auditor's request.

## Preparation Checklist

Documentation	Check
Primary PCBU Contract Agreement/Responsibilities Document	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-Site Hazard ID/Risk Profile	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Safety Policy Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug and Alcohol Policy (inc. rehabilitation support, pre-employment, post incident, reasonable cause, random and follow-up testing)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety Meeting Records	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker Health and Safety Information and Communication materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational Hazard Management Records (tailgates)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazard and Incident Reporting Records	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Assessment and Control Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investigations of Notifiable Events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Auditing, Inspection, and Performance Monitoring Records	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous Substances Inventory; Safety Data Sheets; and Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor Register and Instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Safety Induction Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational Risk Information for Workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker Employment Status Log/Register	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competency Matrix/Register and Assessment Methodology (crew and individual competencies)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance Matrix/Register (inspection, certification, and maintenance requirements)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Procedures (inc. Lone Working Plan)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Control Plans appropriate to Critical Risks – Tree Felling; Extraction and Breaking Out; Processing and Loading; Maintenance of Machinery; Driving	<input type="checkbox"/>

# The Safetree Register of Certified Contractors

There are more than 280 Safetree Certified Contractors and their names will appear on the Register when they sign up to Safetree's new online portal. In the meantime, if you'd like to view a full list of contractors email [info@safetree.nz](mailto:info@safetree.nz).

Click the REQUEST LOGIN button below if you Certified and want to join the Register, or if you are not certified and would like to start the certification process.

## Maintaining Certification

Safetree will notify contractors by email and through their Ecoportal dashboard of expiring insurances and statistics requiring update. The audit must be renewed every two years.

Certification status will automatically drop to Not Certified if certification criteria are not maintained and the contractor will be removed from the public register on the Safetree website.

## Further Information

Information about Safetree Contractor Certification is provided on [www.safetree.nz](http://www.safetree.nz)

All enquiries should be made to: [Certification@safetree.nz](mailto:Certification@safetree.nz)

Safetree Contractor Certification is delivered in partnership with Ecoportal.



<https://www.ecoportal.com/>

