Terms of Reference for Green Marine Verifiers

Green Marine Overview

Green Marine is a voluntary environmental certification program offering a detailed framework to measurably improve environmental performance for maritime industry stakeholders. Green Marine's diverse membership extends from small local businesses to multinational corporations across Canada and the United States. The program is broadly applicable, providing a scalable framework for implementing best management practices and benchmarking environmental performance. *Participants* in the certification program include ship owners, port authorities, marine terminals, shipyards, and Seaway corporations. Key issues are addressed through *performance indicators* and include:

- air emissions (greenhouse gases, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter)
- aquatic invasive species
- cargo residues
- community impacts due to noise, dust, odor, and light
- community relations
- dry bulk handling and storage
- environmental leadership
- oily discharge
- ship recycling
- spill prevention and stormwater management
- underwater noise
- waste management

Each participant must complete an annual self-evaluation using Green Marine's online tool, the Smart Guide. For each performance indicator, the score on a scale of 1 to 5 is reported to Green Marine. Level 1 represents regulatory monitoring, while Level 5 indicates leadership and excellence. The results are published and must be independently verified every two years.

Verification Requirements

Obtaining and maintaining program certification requires each participant to submit their self-evaluation for third-party verification every two years. External verifications may only be conducted by Green Marine accredited verifiers. Participants must have their results verified by a Green Marine verifier within the first two years of joining the program to obtain their certification. The use of the Green Marine Certified logo is dependent upon the submission of verified results.

Verifier's Mandate

The mandate of Green Marine accredited verifiers is to evaluate the adequacy of the participant's justification for the levels reported to Green Marine via the Smart Guide. Specifically, verifiers must:

- Evaluate the relevance and quality of the participant's justification for each criterion marked as YES and N/A in their self-evaluation;
- If applicable, verify whether the participant has used appropriate methodologies and tools (such as those proposed by Green Marine in the annexes and/or other documents) to satisfy the program's requirements;
- Produce a verification report according to Green Marine's standards that describes, among other things, the verifier's observations, recommendations, and/or comments, as well as confirming the final performance levels reported as achieved for each applicable performance indicator.

Verifiers are not required to verify compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

Verifier-Participant Meeting

The verification process will follow these steps:
1. After completing and submitting their self-evaluation results using the Smart Guide, the participant must then indicate through the Smart Guide which verifier they hired. The selected verifier will then access the participant's completed Smart Guide to review justification and attached documentation. They may ask questions and request more information, where required.

2. The verifier is tasked to review all justification for all criteria claimed as fulfilled to achieve a level claimed. The review of justification will consist of:
    i. Review all documentation;
    ii. Validate methodologies for calculations (e.g., air emissions inventories);
    iii. Validate Annex requirements were completed.

3. A **face-to-face meeting** must take place between the participant and their verifier, **either in person or by video conference**, to review the self-evaluation results. During the face-to-face meeting, the participant will be asked to provide an overview of their activities and facilities, responsibility and authority for environmental management, and other related environmental management system certifications. The participant may ask questions or raise concerns at any time.

4. The verifier will **interview the relevant manager(s) and other staff members and may request a site tour to understand better** the justification submitted. For remote verifications, participants, at their discretion, are encouraged to give a live virtual site tour when feasible.

5. To complete the verification process, the verifier will provide the participant with a verbal report, followed by a **written report** of their findings and the participant's confirmed levels. Using the Smart Guide, the verifier will confirm the participant's verified results to Green Marine by the deadline for publication in the program's annual performance report.

Verification Timeline and Verifier Rates

Verifications generally take place between February and mid-May. The verification process begins as soon as the participant submits their self-evaluation for the previous calendar year (January through December) to Green Marine. The self-evaluation submission deadline is March 15th.

Green Marine strives to have all results verified (as required every two years) by mid-May, in time for the publication of Green Marine's Annual Performance Report. Extensions to the verification deadline may be granted to participants by Green Marine under extenuating circumstances.

Participants must select an accredited verifier from the list on the [Green Marine Website](#) and are encouraged to contact multiple verifiers before choosing one. Green Marine follows an open-market approach allowing verifiers to set their own competitive rates. The participant is responsible for paying the verifier's mutually agreed-upon travel and accommodation expenses.

Accreditation - Qualifications and Competencies

Verifiers are selected by Green Marine for accreditation based on their experience and must meet the following minimum qualifications and competencies:

Experience	Qualifications	Competencies
Verification & environmental experience	Minimum: certified compliance or Environmental Management Systems (EMS) auditor and Minimum: 5 years of experience conducting compliance, EMS, or International Safety Management (ISM) audits and Minimum: experience conducting at least three audits within the past five years	Apply appropriate auditing principles, procedures, and techniques to the planning and execution of Green Marine verifications such that they are conducted in a consistent, professional, and systematic manner. Verify the accuracy, significance, and appropriateness of the justification provided
Marine transportation experience – Shipping / Terminal / Port / Shipyard / Seaway Operations	Minimum: 1 year of experience within the marine transportation industry	Prior experience in the marine industry is required Examples of relevant fields of experience: Navigation, ship design, ocean engineering, marine and port maintenance and operations, marine environmental management and planning, health and safety, inspection, auditing, consulting, training, etc.

Training Requirements

Initial training To obtain Green Marine verifier accreditation, candidates meeting the minimum experience requirements must participate in a training session by conference call and pass a written competency exam to ensure their understanding of the program's principles, requirements, and verification standards.

<u>Annual verifier accreditation session</u>

All verifiers must participate in an annual verifier accreditation session held at the beginning of each year to maintain accreditation. This yearly mandatory session serves to refresh verifiers on the certification process and to review program updates

Administration Fees

Accreditation is subject to the following Green Marine fee structure:

Initial training Non-refundable charge to new candidates prior to training	*CAD/USD $300
Annual verifier accreditation session Necessary to maintain accreditation	*CAD/USD $100

*Currency depends on the primary address of the verifier

Conflict of Interest Clause

Verifiers are not permitted to conduct verification for a participant if the verifier or any personnel employed by the same company as the verifier has done work for the participant related to the implementation of the Green Marine program during the previous two (2) years.

Quality Control

Quality control is an essential component of the verification process and ensures that Green Marine verifiers are competent, consistent, and provide high-value verification services to participants.

The following External Verification Quality Control procedures are in place at Green Marine:

1) <u>Annual verifier accreditation sessions</u>: at the beginning of each year, verifiers must attend a mandatory update session by conference call to renew their accreditation. Agenda items on these calls include, but are not limited to:
    o Reviewing program processes, including certification, self-evaluation, and verification;
    o Reviewing recent program updates;
    o Clarifying criteria interpretation;
    o Reviewing verifier guidance documents, such as *Green Marine Verifier Terms of Reference* and *Guidelines for Verification Report Writing.*

2) <u>Spot checking verification reports</u>:
    Participants must have their verification report shared with Green Marine if requested by Green Marine and with appropriate confidentiality ensured. Green Marine will request

verification reports from the verifiers with the participant informed to conduct a spot check for quality control.

A minimum of six reports are reviewed each year: the three verifiers that conducted the most verifications will each have one random report checked. Of the remaining verifiers that conducted at least one verification that year, three will be randomly selected to have a report checked. Additional reports in given conditions will also be reviewed:

- o If a verifier is conducting its first Green Marine verification, the report is checked;
- o If a verifier's prior spot check resulted in any issues or inconsistencies, their next report would be checked;
- o The review includes a verification report for each of the three programs for the different participant types: Ship owners, Ports & Seaway, and Terminals & Shipyards. If not already included from the above selections, an additional random selection is made.

Report spot check process:

- o Once the verification deadline has passed, Green Marine contacts those verifiers that have been selected for a spot check and requests a copy of the complete verification report. Green Marine then gets back to the verifiers with feedback, suggestions/recommendations for improvements, warnings, etc.;
- o Green Marine completes a form that follows the framework of the *Guidelines for Verification Report Writing* that is used to provide feedback to the individual verifiers under review;
- o General findings and feedback from the spot checks are shared with all verifiers at the annual debrief session.

3) <u>Verification shadow</u>: Program managers may, with coordination and permission from both the participant and verifier, attend verifications as observers to better understand the verification process.

4) <u>Annual verifier debriefing session</u>: Green Marine organizes a meeting during which issues or questions raised during the verification period are discussed at the end of the verification period. This optional meeting is also an opportunity for verifiers to share observations, comments, and feedback on their individual experiences.

It is incumbent on verifiers to answer or address any questions or concerns raised by Green Marine about the verification process to the satisfaction of Green Marine.

Final Discretion

All decisions related to verifier recruitment and training are subject to the discretion of the Green Marine.

Green Marine has the right to withdraw or suspend the accreditation of a verifier if they have misleadingly used the accreditation or has acted in a way that could harm the reputation of Green Marine, its program, or its members.