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Answer given by Mr McGrath
on behalf of the European Commission
(14.9.2026)

Directive (EU) 2024/825¹ on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (ECGT) introduces targeted amendments to Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices (UCPD) without changing its scope or logic of intervention. It applies to business-to-consumer commercial practices by traders.

Environmental recognition programmes such as Blue Flag, where awarded to demonstrate the water quality, environmental management and accessibility of public beaches managed by local public authorities, do not constitute commercial practices as such and are therefore, in principle, not covered by the ECGT. Accordingly, the Commission does not consider Blue Flag Programme specific guidance necessary.

Where a trader refers to the Blue Flag Programme in commercial communications directed at consumers, the ECGT/UCPD may become relevant depending on the circumstances. For example, a presentation that could mislead consumers into believing that the trader, its services or products are themselves covered by, or benefit from, a Blue Flag Programme certification could be assessed under those rules. By contrast, a factual reference indicating that a trader is located near a Blue Flag beach would not, as such, raise issues under the Directive. The assessment of individual cases remains the responsibility of the competent national authorities.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/825/oj/eng>.