

MINUTES

Standards Committee Teleconference

Thursday 11 July , 2013

Teleconference dial-in times (allow 2 hours):

City	Local Time (24 hr)
Vancouver/Carlsbad/Seattle	0600
Salt Lake City	0700
New York/Toronto/Ottawa	0900
London	1400
Milan/Antwerp/Paris	1500
Johannesburg	1500
Nairobi	1600
Mumbai	1830
Melbourne	2300



Documents circulated:

- Minutes of Standards Committee meeting, 22 May 2013
- Concept note for RJC Human Rights Working Group

Participants: Marcelle Shoop, Susan Posnock, Missy Krause (on behalf of David Bouffard), Claus Teilmann-Petersen, Estelle Levin, Felix Hruschka, Iris van der Veken, Cecilia Gardner, Jennifer Horning, Wilfried Horner, Marianna Smirnova, Fiona Solomon, Graham Nicholls, Sam Brumale, Marieke van der Mijn, Michael Rae.

Apologies: Ryan Taylor, Alan Martin, Steven Oates, Larry Drummond, Philip Hunter, Andrew Parsons, Didier Backaert, Jon Hobbs, Stan Lurie, Eva Carlson, Assheton Carter, Stephane Fischler, Juliane Kippenburg, Ngomesia Mayer-Kechom, Angelo Palmieri.

1. Welcome (Chair/s)

- Marianna Smirnova from UL was welcomed to the Standards Committee. She has replaced Michèle Bruelhart, who has left UL and whose contributions to the Standards Committee and previously the Consultative Panel since 2009 have been greatly appreciated.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

- Minutes of the Standards Committee teleconference on 22 May 2013 were approved and will be posted on the RJC website at:
<http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/rjc-standards-committee/>

3. RJC Code of Practices review

3.1 General (Fiona Solomon)

- **Current and final comment period** open from June 2 to August 2, 2013. All of the COP Review documents are available on the RJC website. A collated version of the Guidance Chapters is also available, or they can be downloaded separately. Consultation webinars were held in early July for around 60 participants (recorded versions available on the website under 'Recent Webinars').
<http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/standards-development/code-of-practices-review/>

- RJC team working on **supporting toolkits** for Code of Practices, primarily Human Rights Due Diligence and Risk Assessment, which will be discussed during the teleconference. Copies of the drafts will be circulated for comment.
- **Other areas of work** to complete in the next few months include:
 - Proposal to introduce Surveillance Audits (*discuss August teleconference*)
 - Updating of Assessment Manual (*discuss August teleconference*)
 - Including Auditor Report templates to collect additional impacts data and identify full/part group designation for Certification Scope.
 - Updating of Self Assessment toolkit to new COP structure and provision wording
 - Updating of Certification Handbook to more user-friendly communications tool.
 - Updating of supporting training modules.
- RJC, Verite and Solidaridad have had preliminary discussions to create a **Human Rights Working Group** within RJC that can support sharing of best practice etc. Feedback sought on the concept proposal, as well as interest in participating.
- RJC attended the **ISEAL Alliance Conference** in June and presented on our collaboration and harmonisation work, for example with Fairtrade-Fairmined and gold refiner audits.
- The RJC team are revisiting our **Monitoring and Evaluation** plans, and will work with the Standards Committee on ‘theory of change’ and impacts evaluation plans. (*Discuss August teleconference*)
- **Regular webinar program** has been initiated, on topics related to Code of Practices /CoC / broader industry issues. Committee suggestions for future topics welcome.
 - **Committee discussion on Surveillance Audits included:**
 - Whether ‘Surveillance Audits’ is an intimidating name.
 - Support for the principle of surveillance audits to provide more oversight/review during the Certification Period. However to avoid audit fatigue, consideration should be given for recognising other regular audits as fulfilling this function eg BPP, and possibly internal corporate audits.
 - There will be further discussion at the August teleconference on potential objectives and options for these types of mid-Certification Period audits.

3.2 Risk Assessment Toolkit (Sam Brumale)

- Presentation of features and content of draft
- **Committee feedback included:**
 - Is the approach too comprehensive? What is needed to support the Self Assessment process? Sam noted that the risk assessment toolkit is not mandatory, is a layer down from the Self Assessment, and can be used to help prioritise limited resources to the more pressing risks. However the team will take another look at how the approach may be simplified.
 - Suggestion to split the Risk Assessment into two tools/tabs, with risk assessment the first step, then corrective action tracking.
 - The Self Assessment tool is potentially useful not just for Members, but also as a tool that can be sent to suppliers as part of supply chain inquiries, and to start introducing them to the RJC.
 - Suggestion to see if companies could pilot the tool in their supply chain.
 - Fiona noted that the RJC team are focused on how best to integrate the tools to support the various requirements of the COP, and how to find the right balance between simple and easy to use vs over-simplified such that the process does not actually add value.

3.3 Human Rights Due Diligence toolkit (Sam Brumale)

- Presentation of features and content of draft
- **Committee feedback included:**

- Sam invited feedback on the draft indicators, and suggested this could be a useful input from the Human Rights Working Group. The tool is not mandatory and can evolve, also via testing/piloting and feedback.
- Suggestion that since voluntary tool, it would be helpful to list alternatives that are also available in the public domain that Members could use.
- Question as to whether toolkits add to the ‘burden’ of RJC certification. In UL’s experience as an auditor, it was noted that while some Members may have an initial shock at how extensive the existing RJC guidance and tools are, when they go through the process they see the value. From an assessor point of view, RJC tools are some of the best around, and they use them as a best practice model to help set up tools for others.
- Suggestion that a simple version could be useful eg for contractors.
- Both draft toolkits will be circulated for feedback from the Committee.

3.4 Human Rights Working Group (Jennifer Horning)

- Jennifer introduced the draft concept note and its development.
- Key drivers included:
 - Existing work on key supply chain risks eg by Solidaridad and Verite
 - Helping companies that don’t know much yet about human rights or due diligence
 - Using the group to connect with other parallel initiatives
 - Since the RJC Code of Practices is introducing a new requirement aligned with the UN Guiding Principles, this will be a requirement for all Members.
- The concept is to develop a platform specific to RJC that can:
 - Define what is useful for RJC Members, in discussion with them.
 - Discuss experiences across the diversity of business sizes, geographies and supply chain spread.
 - Enable peer learning and possible collective efforts among Members.
 - Build capacity, particularly among smaller companies which make up the bulk of RJC’s membership.
 - Identify research opportunities that tie in with RJC’s Impacts work.
- Propose small steering group of 5-7 people and a larger membership of the Working Group that is open to any interested Member.
- Timeframes:
 - Form Steering group by end of August
 - Early October – hold first meeting
 - October – call for expressions of interest to become involved
 - November – first call of Working Group to discuss terms of reference
 - From then, on the Working Group would define their objectives.
- **Committee discussion:**
 - General support for proposal.
 - RJC noted that Ferial Zerouki (De Beers) and Bev Hori (GIA) have agreed to join the Steering group.
 - How to gather critical mass? RJC team and steering group Members will focus on outreach, and are optimistic there will be interest.
 - Interest in human rights and manufacturing sector.
 - Valuable to draw on experience in other supply chains.
 - Important to have diversity from geographical perspective – this may happen naturally but may also need targeted recruitment.

3.5 ISEAL Alliance Conference / Impacts Code (Marieke van der Mijn)

- Brief overview of conference and RJC next steps (see sides).
- **Committee discussion:**

- Question as to whether sub-themes for M&E projects had been identified yet. RJC noted that the initial identification of themes was brought to the Committee first, and then development of specific research questions will now be developed in discussion with key stakeholders and potential partners. This will continue to be a regular agenda item with the Standards Committee.

4. Update on other initiatives

- OECD Due Diligence Guidance: update from Fiona Solomon, RJC.
 - OECD's focus continues to be on implementation for the Gold Supplement. Opportunities for 'peer learning' activities will be circulated to RJC Members shortly.
 - The next OECD meeting will take place in Kigali in November.
- Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA): update from Susan Posnock (Jewelers of America).
 - IRMA's timeframe is to have an internal standards workshop in the Fall, and in-person meeting in early December to review the final revision, and then publish for comment in early 2014.
- Precious Stones Multi-Stakeholder Working Group: update from Fiona Solomon, on behalf of David Bouffard, Signet.
 - Current focus has been on the development of a Terms of Reference for a study into the precious stones supply chain, existing guidance for due diligence, and recommendation for further development of guidance/tools, particularly relating to the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. A call for potential authors will be issued shortly.
- Other updates from Committee members welcome.
 - Felix advised that the Alliance for Responsible Mining will hold its second round of consultation on the Fairmined Standard from July 15-September 15.

5. Any other business

6. Standards Committee schedule –2013 dates:

- Scheduled for COP Progress:
 - Thursday August 8 (end of comment period)
 - Thursday August 29 (final draft of COP)
 - Thursday September 5 (Committee approval of revisions, then go to Legal Review, then Exco, then Board)
- Other dates to be scheduled as required and post-COP Review.
- **Please note:** Committee members are welcome to contact Fiona Solomon and Marieke van der Mijn to arrange times to discuss input or feedback in more detail between formal meetings, or initiate discussion by email.