

Responsible Jewellery Council launches new Code of Practices Standard

Changes reflect industry's global evolving needs & consumer demands

LONDON, 23 April 2019 – The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC), the jewellery industry's foremost standard setting and certification body, has today launched its new Code of Practices, which defines responsible, social and environmental business practices for companies in the jewellery supply chain and commits members to adhere to a robust set of comprehensive auditable standards.

Since it was formed in 2005, the RJC's third Code of Practices iteration reflect the evolving needs of the industry and demands of consumers globally.

Significant changes include:

- the expansion of the scope of materials to include coloured gemstones (rubies, emeralds and sapphires) and silver
- the alignment of due diligence requirements with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains
- new requirements on the detection of laboratory grown diamonds

The launch comes after a collaborative 18-month consultation process by the RJC discussing proposed changes with members, civil society organisations and leading global standards and assurance bodies. More than 300 stakeholders were consulted via webinars and workshops across Asia, Europe and North America, ensuring those who are responsible for adhering to the changes contributed to their development.

From 23 April 2019 through to 22 April 2020, the RJC will accept certifications against either the 2013 or 2019 versions of the Code of Practices, to allow for the necessary transition for members with their various audit deadlines.

Tyler Gillard, Manager of Sector Projects, Responsible Business Conduct Unit, OECD, said: "The due diligence requirements in the COP show a real commitment to the OECD Guidance. The provision and its accompanying guidance provide, for the first time, a comprehensive due diligence approach tailored to the diamonds and coloured gemstones supply chains. I congratulate the RJC for its leadership in reaching this milestone, and encourage all members in the jewellery industry to step up their efforts to ensure these standards are meaningfully implemented as soon as possible."

David Bouffard, Chairman, Responsible Jewellery Council, said: "We are proud to launch the latest Code of Practices because it builds on RJC's 15 years of experience and data, and addresses the rapidly changing demands of the industry, from mine to retail.

"Consultation has been key, listening to the valuable feedback provided by our stakeholders. It was an essential part of the review process, with members, civil society organisations and leading global assurance and industry bodies all being incorporated into its development.

“The updated Code of Practices is an assurance from the RJC to our members that when they adhere to the industry’s most rigorous standards for responsible business practices, it reinforces their leadership position and instils trust with consumers.”

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About Responsible Jewellery Council

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit standards and certification organisation. It has more than 1,100 member companies that span the jewellery supply chain from mine to retail. RJC Members commit to and are independently audited against the RJC Code of Practices – an international standard on responsible business practices for diamonds, gold and platinum group metals. The Code of Practices addresses human rights, labour rights, environmental impact, mining practices, product disclosure and many more important topics in the jewellery supply chain. RJC also works with multi-stakeholder initiatives on responsible sourcing and supply chain due diligence. The RJC’s Chain-of-Custody Certification for precious metals supports these initiatives and can be used as a tool to deliver broader Member and stakeholder benefit.

The RJC is a Full Member of the ISEAL Alliance – the global association for sustainability standards. For more information on RJC Members, Certification, and Standards please visit <https://www.responsiblejewellery.com/>.