

MINUTES

Standards Committee Teleconference 02 December 2015 – 15.00 London GMT

Participants:

Claus Teilmann Petersen, Cecilia Gardner, Marianna Smirnova, Steven Oates, Eleonora Rizzuto, Wilfried Hoerner, Eva Carlson, Michaël Geelhand de Merxem, Claire Piroddi, Ferial Zerouki, Felix Hruschka, Alan Martin, Ainsley Butler

RJC Management Team participants:

Anne-Marie Fleury, Andrew Bone, Catherine Sproule, Bethan Herbert, Maria Mursell

Apologies:

Charles Chaussepied, Didier Backaert, Jonathan Hobbs, Philip Hunter, Marylyn Carrigan

Documents circulated:

- Summary of Proposed Changes to the Roles and Responsibilities for the Standards Committee
- Minutes of the Standards Committee teleconference on 13 October 2015

The teleconference was opened by Claus as Co-Chair, and Bethan conducted a roll-call of attendants.

The anti-trust statement was noted for participants:

Attendees are kindly reminded that the RJC is committed to complying with all relevant antitrust and competition laws and regulations and, to that end, has adopted an Anti-trust Policy Statement, compliance with which is a condition of continued RJC membership. Failure to abide by these laws can potentially have extremely serious consequences for the RJC and its members, including heavy fines and, in some jurisdictions, imprisonment for individuals. You are therefore asked to have due regard to this Policy today and in respect of all other RJC activity.

1. Welcome (Co-Chairs)

A welcome was made to new committee Members by Anne-Marie:

- Claire Piroddi, *Kering Group*
- Michaël Geelhand de Merxem, *Antwerp World Diamond Centre*

All committee Members' biographies are available on the RJC website [here](#).

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of the Standards Committee teleconference on 13 October 2015 were approved with no comments/amendments.

Action point: Minutes of the October teleconference to be uploaded onto the RJC website.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Anne-Marie introduced the main agenda item for the call, running through suggestions made by the RJC Management Team on proposed changes to the role and responsibilities of the Standards Committee. Agreed changes will be made to the RJC Governance Handbook.



1. Term of non-industry members match that of industry members:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
2. Term of members of the committee – suggestion to increase from 2 to 3 years:
 - There was a question on the point at which this change would be applicable for current members. → Anne-Marie suggested an approach where, if the committee approves this change, current committee members with most of their term remaining would have the term extended to 3 years, but not those whose term is due to end at the AGM 2016. It was also clarified that Members would be able to stand for renewal of their current term for another (3 year) term up to a maximum of 6 years on the committee
 - There was a comment noted from an absent member who thought a 3 year term would be too long → The trade-off between experience and the need for rejuvenation of the committee with new members was discussed. Most participants on the call supported the extension, noting that 3 years would work well within the timeline for the revision of the standards, as well as considering the need for ‘institutional memory’ on the Committee.
 - ***This suggestion was agreed***
 - A suggestion to introduce the option of alternates was also put forward.
3. Appointment of non-industry Members – to be recommended by the RJC management team:
 - This proposal involves mapping expertise needs for the committee and seeking candidates (including re-appointments) with the existing committee.
 - The definition of ‘non-industry’ members was discussed. In the current version of the Governance Handbook, this is quite broad (and includes NGOs, standard-setting organisations, academic and research institutions, auditors, national governments, technical experts, etc.). No significant changes to this definition are proposed.
 - There was a question on the approval process for non-industry members. Non-industry members recommended by the RJC Management Team would need to be ultimately appointed by the Board (as is the case for elected industry members to the committee)
 - ***This suggestion was agreed***
4. Number of committee Members:
 - The proposal to reduce the committee by half to 14 Members (7 industry and 7 non-industry) was debated at length. The Committee currently has 28 ‘seats’ (2 for each of the 7 RJC industry fora, for a total of 14 industry members as well as 12 non-industry members with 2 additional non-industry seats which are currently vacant). This is a large group which is challenging to manage. Participation is an issue; the last three teleconferences of the committee had between 25%-60% participation. Reducing the size of the committee while maintaining the equal industry / non-industry balance is proposed as a way to reach decisions more efficiently and effectively.
 - The reduction in the range of representation and expertise on standards decision-making was noted as risk. Some participants pointed out that this could be mitigated somewhat by proposal 5 (below), which introduces the ability to use task forces made up of experts on key areas. Under a smaller committee with fewer members, the ability for smaller companies to have an effective ‘voice’ was raised as an issue.
 - A suggestion to have 10 industry and 10 non-industry seats was put forward as a way to allow for greater representation on the committee (both industry and non-industry) while still reducing overall numbers.
 - The idea of using alternates was discussed further and the group welcomed the chance to review this option. The idea of having ‘voting members’ and non-voting alternates was raised (via the section for written comments on the webinar).
 - ***This suggestion was not agreed and further options were proposed.***

At this point in the call several committee members had to leave as the call ran over its allotted time; as such the agreements made below may need to be discussed further with the committee.

5. Proposal to introduce task forces to advise on specific topics when needed.
 - Task forces will not be limited to committee members and could include industry and non-industry individuals.
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
6. Staggering members' joining the committee so that there is no mass exodus:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
7. Role of the Standards Committee –strategic issues.
 - The proposed change clarifies that the committee can discuss strategic RJC issues as they pertain to the overall standard and places the onus on the co-chairs to convey the discussions to the ExCo and feedback.
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
8. Role of the Standards Committee – to focus on standard setting and monitoring and evaluation (impacts) and not broaden the scope:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
9. Decision-making – lies with the committee, with final approval needed by ExCo:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
10. Conflicts of Interest – for these to be declared by committee members:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
11. Principles of Engagement – proposal to set out the expectation for committee members:
 - There was some discussion on whether to introduce requirements on minimum participation for committee members. The challenges participating, particularly for individuals from smaller organizations, were outlined and no minimum participation requirements were agreed. It was agreed that meetings should be scheduled with ample notice.
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
12. Role of co-Chairs – to represent the views of both industry and non-industry members; facilitate constructive critical input; etc.:
 - There was a question by an absent member about voting rights for co-chairs. Co-chairs do not vote under normal circumstances unless a tie-break is required.
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
13. Term of co-Chairs – for 3 years, with re-election possible for a maximum of 6 years:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***
14. Election of co-Chairs – one industry representative and one non-industry representative:
 - ***This suggestion was agreed.***

Action points:

- RJC management team to further outline 2 options for reducing the size of the committee: proposing a 20 person committee; and/or allowing for alternates.
- RJC management team to share proposed wording changes on the role of the standards committee.

Next call:

- Planned for the second half of January