



Responsible Jewellery Council

PROCESS AND CRITERIA

FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF CONFORMITY
ASSESSMENT BODIES AND AUDITORS

NOVEMBER 2013

THE RESPONSIBLE JEWELLERY COUNCIL

The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) is a not-for-profit standards setting and certification organisation founded in 2005.

Our vision is a responsible world-wide supply chain that promotes trust in the global fine jewellery and watch industry.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The RJC Process and Criteria for the Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies and Auditors (T004_2013) documents instructions for Conformity Assessment Bodies and Auditors on how to apply for and conform with the requirements of RJC Accreditation.

The RJC Auditor Accreditation Application Form (T005_2013) should be completed and submitted to the RJC in order to apply.

This is a 'living document' and the RJC reserves the right to revise this document based on implementation experience and emerging good practice. The version posted on the RJC website supersedes all other versions. To verify this document is current, please visit: www.responsiblejewellery.com

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INQUIRIES OR FEEDBACK

The RJC welcomes feedback on this document. Please contact the Responsible Jewellery Council by email, telephone or post:

Email: accreditation@responsiblejewellery.com

Contacts: www.responsiblejewellery.com/contact-us

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I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The credibility of RJC Certification hinges on the quality and independence of the third party Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) and Auditors. It is essential that the RJC can satisfy itself that CABs and their Auditors have appropriate experience and expertise and that there is no conflict of interest when undertaking audits for individual Members.

1.2 Application of this Document

This document has been prepared for CABs and Auditors applying for RJC Accreditation. RJC Accreditation enables CABs and Auditors to conduct audits of RJC Members to independently establish conformance with the RJC Code of Practices and the RJC Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard. Figure 1 illustrates the Accreditation process.



FIGURE 1: RJC ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation reflects RJC endorsement of a CAB's competence, credibility, independence and integrity in carrying out its audits on RJC Members. The RJC Accreditation process is aligned with relevant requirements outlined in ISO17011¹. The formal definition of Accreditation used by ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) is "third party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks." (ISO/ IEC 17000:2004)

¹ ISO17011:2004. Conformity assessment – General Requirements for Accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

1.3 *Supporting References*

The following documents provide additional information to assist with the assessment process:

RJC Accreditation

- RJC Auditor Accreditation Application Form (T005_2013)

RJC Standards, Certifications and Audits

- RJC Certification Handbook (2013)
- RJC Assessment Manual (T001_2013)

RJC Code of Practices

- RJC Code of Practices (S001_2013)
- RJC Standards Guidance (G002_2013)
- RJC Assessment Workbook (T006_2013)

* Note: During 2014, both the 2009 and 2013 versions of the Code of Practices will be accepted for Certification as part of a transition period between the two versions.

RJC Chain-of-Custody Standard

- RJC Chain-of-Custody Standard (S002_2012)
- RJC Chain-of-Custody Certification Handbook (G003_2012)
- RJC Chain-of-Custody Standards Guidance (G004_2012)
- RJC Chain-of-Custody Assessment Toolkit (T007_2012) and Outsourcing Contractor Form (T008_2012)

These are publicly available from the RJC website www.responsiblejewellery.com.

2 ACCREDITATION PROCESS

RJC accepts applications for Accreditation from Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) operating anywhere around the world. The five general steps that apply to RJC Accreditation are outlined below:



Each of these is discussed further in the following sections.

3 APPLICATION

3.1 *Who can apply*

CABs need to be able to demonstrate that they conform to ISO17021:2011 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems.

This can be demonstrated by:

- Current ISO17021:2011 Accreditation by a third party firm that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum for ISO17021:2011 management system certification schemes.
- Documented evidence that demonstrates conformance with the requirements of ISO17021:2011, submitted to RJC, and reviewed by RJC's choice of an independent consultant with appropriate experience to verify the Application. Additional fees may apply (see section 10).

Note that conformance to ISO17021:2011 cannot be demonstrated through a First Party Audit.

CABs or Auditors that are not compliant with ISO 17021:2011 may still be eligible to conduct RJC Audits under a sub-contract arrangement with a CAB that is compliant. Such individuals and entities should consider applying under the Topic Expert Accreditation process.

3.2 *Application Form*

Applicants must complete the *RJC Auditor Accreditation Application Form* (T005_2013). Reference documentation should be supplied as supporting evidence for the claims and responses provided in the application form.

The application form contains the following sections:

Section A: General: Background information and contact details.

Section B: Geographic Location and Existing Accreditation: List each location Served by Head Office and existing recognised¹ Accreditation schemes (e.g. ISO17021, ISO14001, etc).

Section C: Competency Analysis For The Scope Of Accreditation: A brief description of the CAB's demonstrated capability, and experience for each of the areas for which RJC Accreditation is sought.

Section D: Auditor Details: Provide a current list of names, addresses and information for Auditors (employees and contractors) that the CAB proposes to utilise to conduct RJC Audits. Note that this can be updated over time.

Section E: Other Information: Additional information that can be used to support the CABs application.

Section F: Declaration: A signed statement that the information presented is accurate.

3.3 *Scope of Accreditation*

The applicant must state the scope of the Accreditation being applied for, in terms of the sectors of the jewellery supply chain for which the CAB proposes to carry out audits and which of the RJC's standards. CAB's must demonstrate their capacity, competency and experience, and provide evidence of such, for the scope being applied for. This includes the experience, qualifications and competency of the CAB's Auditors.

¹ As a minimum, existing Accreditation schemes must be recognised by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF)

3.3.1 SECTORS

The scope must indicate one or more (or all) of the following Member Fora:

- Diamond Mining
- Diamond Trading
- Diamond Cutting or Polishing
- Gold Mining
- Gold Processing & Refining
- Gold Hedging or Trading
- Platinum Group Metals Mining
- Platinum Group Metals Processing & Refining
- Platinum Group Metals Hedging or Trading
- Jewellery Manufacturing or Wholesale
- Jewellery Retail
- Service & Support Industries (e.g. laboratories, assayers, secure transport etc)

3.3.2 RJC STANDARDS

The scope must indicate one or both of the RJC's Standards:

- RJC Code of Practices: The Code of Practices covers responsible business practices, at the level of the business. All Commercial Members of the RJC are required to be audited by accredited, third party auditors to verify their conformance with the Code of Practices, and thus achieve RJC Member Certification within 2 years of joining the RJC.
- RJC Chain of Custody Standard: The Chain of Custody Standard provides requirements for responsibly-sourced jewellery materials produced, processed and traded through jewellery supply chains. Chain of Custody Certification is voluntary for RJC Members.

3.4 *Completed Forms*

Application forms must be completed in English. Electronic submission is strongly preferred. Any additional relevant documentation and the application fee must be submitted with the completed form to:

Email: accreditation@responsiblejewellery.com

Other Contact details: <http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/contact-us/>

The RJC shall acknowledge receipt of the application upon its arrival.

3.5 *Confidentiality*

Any information submitted by applicants in respect of RJC Accreditation will be kept strictly confidential by the RJC and will be used solely for the purposes of assessing the applicant's application for Accreditation.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 *Documentation Review*

The RJC shall conduct a review of the application documents against the Accreditation assessment criteria and provide a report to the applicant. Accreditation will not proceed until the documented systems meet the criteria. The RJC may seek additional information from the application where required.

4.2 *Assessment Criteria*

A detailed list of assessment criteria for Accreditation is presented in Appendix 1. Note that the list contains requirements which are either:

- **Mandatory** – demonstrated capacity and competence is required for RJC Accreditation in the scope which is being applied for.
- **Optional** – Although not mandatory for the scope being applied for, demonstrated capacity and competence in these areas will be considered in the overall application for RJC Accreditation

These are described in the following sections.

4.2.1 MANDATORY

The RJC has set the following mandatory criteria for Conformity Assessment Bodies:

- Technical experience in one or more of:
 - Diamond Mining
 - Diamond Trading
 - Diamond Cutting or Polishing
 - Gold Mining
 - Gold Processing & Refining
 - Gold Hedging or Trading
 - Platinum Group Metals Mining
 - Platinum Group Metals Processing & Refining
 - Platinum Group Metals Hedging or Trading
 - Jewellery Manufacturing or Wholesale
 - Jewellery Retail
 - Service & Support Industries (e.g. laboratories, assayers, secure transport, etc)
- Independent Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021 or demonstrable conformance with the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17021;
- Auditor assessment processes that conform with ISO/IEC 17024¹. All Auditors approved by the CAB must also conform with the criteria specified in Table 1 below.

¹ ISO/IEC 17024 Conformity assessment -- General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

TABLE I: AUDITOR SELECTION CRITERIA

Auditor Role	Minimum Selection criteria
All Auditors	Secondary education; and 5 years total work experience; and At least 2 years of the total five years work experience in business ethics, social and/or environmental management field; and Recognised formal auditor training. At least, four complete audits for a minimum total of 20 days of audit experience as an Auditor-in-training, under the direction and guidance of an Auditor competent as an audit team leader. The audits should be completed within the last 3 consecutive years. Current registration with IRCA1 or be able to demonstrate conformance with IRCA requirements or carry an equivalent recognised registration. Auditors must be impartial and not provided any consulting service relating to the RJC Certification to Members in the previous 3 years.
Lead Auditors	At least three complete audits for a minimum total of 15 days of audit experience acting in the role of an audit team leader. The audits should be completed within the last 2 consecutive years.

Note:

- Recognised auditor training must be competency based and delivered by a registered and qualified training organisation for auditor training.
- Secondary education is that part of the national educational system that comes after primary or elementary stage, but that is completed prior to entrance to a university or similar educational institution;
- The number of years of work experience may be reduced by 1 year if the person has completed appropriate post-secondary education;
- 'Audit days' only applies to time on site. It excludes preparation (for example planning) and post audit follow-up activities (for example reporting).
- [Source ISO19011:2011]

Further, all Auditors will be required to undergo training which covers the RJC Standards within the Accreditation Scope. Details pertaining to the nature of this training are provided in Section 6.

4.2.2 OPTIONAL

In addition to the mandatory criteria, the RJC assessment process will also consider the following:

- Existing management system Accreditation for the following standards:
 - SA8000
 - ISO14001
 - OHSAS18001
 - ISO9001
- Appropriate geographic coverage – does the CAB and its Auditors operate in or near regions where RJC Members are located. There are benefits to Members that include local knowledge of applicable law, local industry and minimising Auditor travel costs.

4.3 *Visits and Witness Audits*

The RJC reserves the right to supplement its decision making process by establishing an independent assessment team to conduct an on-site assessment at the applicant's offices.

The independent assessment team may also witness the applicant's team undertaking other management system certification assessment at their client's premises. Approval will be sought from both the applicant and the client before a witness audit is conducted. A suitable appropriate independent assessment team shall be selected that is free of potential professional conflicts of interests with both the CAB being witnessed and the client organisation. Matters relating to commercial confidentiality will also be addressed prior to the conduct of a witness audit.

5 ACCREDITATION DECISION

5.1 *Approval by the RJC*

Upon review of the applicant's documentation, and if relevant, findings from the on-site visit and witness audits, the RJC will make a decision on whether to grant RJC Accreditation to the applicant.

Applicants should allow approximately three weeks from submission before the decision to grant Accreditation is made. However, this time may vary if site visits and witness audits are required.

5.2 *Validity of RJC Accreditation*

If Accreditation is approved, the applicant's contact details will be posted on the RJC website, subject to further training requirements as outlined in section 6.

The RJC Accreditation is valid for four (4) years. RJC reserves the right to suspend or revoke Accreditation during this period where Auditors do not carry out their duties appropriately or otherwise impair the quality and credibility of RJC Certification (see section 8.3).

5.3 *Appeals and Complaints*

If Accreditation is not approved or has been suspended or revoked, the Applicant will be advised of the reasons for the decision. A further application can be considered by the RJC at a later date, where an Applicant is able to address the identified issues.

All appeals and complaints can be directed to the RJC in accordance with the RJC Complaints Mechanism (T007_2012).

6 TRAINING

In addition to meeting the selection criteria (Section 4), prospective Auditors will need to undertake additional training on the RJC Standards and certification process to become accredited. Training shall be coordinated by the RJC for potential Auditors and may cover some or all of the following topics:

- The RJC Standards
- The RJC Audit Process
- Topic and sector specific modules
- Refresher modules and updates as required

Training shall be offered primarily online via electronic learning tools. For more information contact: training@responsiblejewellery.com

7 PUBLICATION OF RJC ACCREDITED CABS AND AUDITORS

Those CABS and Auditors that meet the selection criteria for competence, and have been trained on the RJC Standard/s, will be added to a publicly available list of Accredited CABS and Auditors. Members will then be able to select Accredited CABS and Auditors from the list and contract their services according to location and availability.

8 UPDATES AND REVIEWS

8.1 *Changes to Scope and Capacity*

Once an Applicant is Accredited, the CAB must inform the RJC of any changes to its organisation that may affect the CAB's Accreditation scope, capacity and competence to conduct RJC audits.

Changes include changes to personnel (auditing employees and contractors), geographic location and status of existing Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021 or other management system certification schemes such as (ISO 14001, SA 8000, OHSAS 18001 and ISO 9001).

The CAB may also apply at any time to have its Accreditation scope expanded, where it can demonstrate the ability to do so.

8.2 *Quality Control*

Accredited CABs and Auditors and/or audit reports submitted to the RJC may be subject to impromptu witness audits and reviews by independent peers assigned by the RJC as part of the RJC's quality control processes.

The findings of the quality checks and reviews may prompt the need for refresher training and/or the implementation of other RJC controls designed to maintain the credibility of RJC Certification.

8.3 *Suspension or Loss of RJC Accreditation*

RJC Accreditation may be suspended or revoked if the quality of audits is compromised or the Accreditation Criteria (section 4.2 and Appendix 1) ceases to be complied with. This includes potential misconduct of Auditors which contravenes the five basic principles as identified by ISO 19011:2011.

1. **Ethical Conduct:** the foundation of professionalism.

- Trust, integrity, confidentiality and discretion are essential to all audits. This includes the prohibition of bribery, gifts and/or facilitation payments.

2. **Fair presentation:** the obligation to report truthfully and accurately.

- Findings, conclusions and reports reflect truthfully and accurately the Member's practices.

3. **Due professional care:** the application of diligence and judgement in assessments.

- Auditors exercise competence and care in accordance with the importance of the task they perform and the confidence placed in them by the Member and the RJC.

4. **Independence:** the basis for the impartiality of the Assessment and objectivity of the Assessment conclusions.

- Auditors are independent of the activity being assessed and are free from bias and conflict of interest.

5. **Evidence based approach:** the rational method for reaching reliable and reproducible conclusion in a systemic Assessment process.

- Auditors maintain an objective state of mind throughout the Assessment process to ensure that the findings and conclusions will be based only on the Objective Evidence.

Misconduct of Auditors against the above principles or RJC's requirements for Auditors will result in a 6 month suspension period, during which time the Auditor's details will be removed from the RJC website. The Auditor will be asked to demonstrate to the RJC, via corrective action or other action requested by RJC, that the issues which led to the suspension have been resolved.

If RJC is satisfied with the Auditor's response, the suspension can be lifted and the Auditor's details re-added to the RJC website. The Auditor's Accreditation will be revoked if the matters which led to the suspension have not been resolved at the conclusion of the 6 month suspension period.

9 REAPPLICATION

RJC Accreditation is valid for four years. CABs wishing to extend their Accreditation status are encouraged to re-apply within the 6 months leading up to the expiry date.

The re-application for continued RJC Accreditation status for another 4 years must contain the following information:

- Confirmation that the CAB continues to have the capacity, expertise and means to provide independent third party Certification audits for RJC Members
- Confirmation that the CAB continues to meet the assessment criteria applicable to the Accreditation Scope, as outlined in section 4.2 and Appendix 1
- Confirmation that the CAB auditors have the necessary qualifications, experience and audit principles in accordance with the criteria outlined in 4.2 and Appendix 1.
- Request for changes to the scope and capacity in accordance with section 8.2.
- Any changes to the CAB's organisation including its own accreditation and certification status, structure, contact names and other company details.

This information must be provided in writing using the CAB's official stationary and signed by the appropriate senior manager. All re-applications must be completed in English. Re-application fees are indicated in Table 2. Any additional relevant documentation accompanying the reapplication request must be submitted to:

Email: accreditation@responsiblejewellery.com

Other Contact details: www.responsiblejewellery.com/contact-us/

The RJC shall acknowledge receipt of the application upon its arrival. Once the re-application is reviewed and approved, the RJC will issue the CAB with the confirmation documentation and update information on the RJC website.

10 FEES

The following fees apply to all applications to cover processing and ongoing administration costs associated with Accreditation:

TABLE 2: RJC ACCREDITATION FEES FROM MAY 2016

Stage	Amount (Pound Sterling)	Comments
Initial Application	£500	The application fee must be settled prior to RJC processing the application and deciding on whether or not to grant accreditation. Application fee allows two person-days to review the applicants' documentation. Any additional time required as a result of additional review time, non-conformances, omissions or errors may be charged at £150 per hour. Post initial application, any accreditation scope expansions, as well as individual auditor applications will be charged a processing fee of £50.
Annual Registration	£500	Payable on the anniversary of the first verification assessment conducted by the RJC Accredited CAB. Registration fee includes listing on RJC website.
Fee For Processing Each RJC audit report received (Code of Practices Certification or Chain-of-Custody Certification)	£100 per audit report	Invoiced annually with the Annual Registration fee. This fee will cover all audit reports including mid-term review reports, surveillance audit reports, 'bolt-on' reports or other audit reports received, however does exclude revised audit reports.
Training	Free	Free
Re-application	£100	Added to the Annual Registration fee for that year, following successful review of the re-application.
If required:		
Site based Visits and Witness Audits	£1000 per day per person	Travel expenses shall be charged at cost. Invoiced per event.
External contractors, technical experts, interpreters, assessors or any other resource requirements	£125 per hour per person up to a maximum of £1000 per day per person or at cost plus 10%, whichever is the greater.	May be required for resolutions of disputes, witness audits, etc.

Please note that all amounts are quoted in British Pound Sterling and do not include statutory charges and taxes. Fees shall be reviewed annually. The RJC reserves the right to adjust fees as it deems appropriate and reasonable.

II REFERENCES

ISO/ IEC 17000:2004 Conformity assessment -- Vocabulary and general principles

ISO17011:2004. Conformity assessment – General Requirements for Accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

ISO17021:2011. Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems.

ISO17024:2012. Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

ISO19011:2011. Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing.

RJC Auditor Accreditation Application Form (T005_2012).

APPENDIX I: RJC ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

NOTE THAT M DENOTES A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT AND O DENOTES AN OPTIONAL REQUIREMENT.

Target Group	Category	Sub-category	Industry Sector Requirements (M = mandatory, O = optional)												
			Diamond Mining	Diamond trading	Diamond Cutting or Polishing	Gold Mining	Gold Processing or Refining	Gold Hedging or Trading	Platinum Group Metals Mining	Platinum Group Metals Processing or Refining	Platinum Group Metals Hedging or Trading	Jewellery Manufacturing	Jewellery Wholesale	Retail	Service Industry
Certification Assessment Bodies	Existing CAB Accreditation	ISO14001	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
		OHSAS 18001	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
		ISO 9001	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
		SA8000	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Conformance with:	ISO 17021	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
		ISO 17024	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
		ISO 19011	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Member geographic coverage	Head office region	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
		All sites	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Certification Assessment Bodies and Auditors	Relevant technical experience for the sector	Diamond Mining	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Diamond trading			O	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Diamond Cutting or Polishing			O	O	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Gold Mining			O	O	O	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Gold Processing or Refining			O	O	O	O	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Gold Hedging or Trading			O	O	O	O	O	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

12 GLOSSARY

Please refer to the following glossary for terms and acronyms used in the RJC Certification documents:

Accreditation	Recognition of an auditor's competence to carry out verification assessments and evaluate conformance against a standard.
Applicable Law	The relevant national and/or state and/or local laws of the country or countries in which the Member operates.
Auditor	An independent, third party person or organisation meeting the RJC's objective selection criteria and accredited to carry out Verification.
Business ethics	Ethical rights and duties existing between businesses and society.
Certification	An attestation by the RJC, based on the results of an audit by an accredited Auditor, that the Member has achieved the required level of Conformance against the Code of Practices.
Entity	A business or similar which operates one or more Facilities where there is ownership or Control of that Entity by the Member. The Entity can constitute part or whole of the Member.
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
Finance of terrorism	Any kind of financial support to those who encourage, plan or engage in terrorism.
First Party Audit	An audit that is performed by the person or organization that created and maintains the systems and processes being assessed.
Gold	A rare yellow metallic element with the chemical symbol 'Au'. It is a mineral with specific hardness of 2.5-3 on the Mohs scale of hardness and the atomic number 79.
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
Jewellery	For the application of the RJC Certification system, an adornment made of Precious Metals (including Gold) and/or set with gem stones (including Diamonds). Jewellery includes, but is not limited to, bracelets, rings, necklaces, earrings and watches.
Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)	A joint government, international diamond industry and civil society initiative to stem the flow of Conflict Diamonds.
Lead Auditor	A Lead Auditor is responsible for the efficient and effective conduct and completion of a Verification Assessment for a Member and may co-ordinate a team of Auditors.

Member	<p>Any business that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is actively involved for commercial reasons in the Diamond and/or Gold Jewellery supply chain; commits to the prevailing RJC Principles on business ethics, social, human rights and environmental performance; and undertakes the payment of the annual RJC commercial membership fee; is eligible to become a RJC Commercial Member. <p>The Member may consist of one or more Entities and/or Facilities.</p> <p>In RJC Certification system documents, the term 'Member' refers specifically to RJC Commercial Members.</p>
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RJC	Responsible Jewellery Council.
Sector	<p>A distinct part of the Gold and Diamond Jewellery supply chain. The RJC currently identifies the following Sectors amongst its Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diamond Mining Diamond Trading Diamond Cutting or Polishing Gold Mining Gold Processing & Refining Gold Hedging or Trading Platinum Group Metals Mining Platinum Group Metals Processing & Refining Platinum Group Metals Hedging or Trading Jewellery Manufacturing or Wholesale Jewellery Retail Service & Support Industries (e.g. laboratories, assayers, secure transport, etc)
SoW	System of Warranties
Standard	<p>An objective practice, procedure or process that is recognised as integral to the integrity of an organisation's business and/or products and/or services. For the RJC Certification system, the Code of Practices is the Standard relating to the Diamond and/or Gold Jewellery supply chain.</p>
Third party	<p>A person or body independent of the person or organisation being evaluated, and of user interests in that person or organisation.</p>
UN	United Nations
WDC	World Diamond Council

(Footnote)

1 International Register of Certified Auditors