Responsible Jewellery Council CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK



Responsible Jewellery Council



THE RESPONSIBLE JEWELLERY COUNCIL

The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) is a not-for-profit standards setting and certification organisation for the diamonds, gold and platinum group metals jewellery supply chain.

Our vision is a responsible world-wide supply chain that promotes trust in the global fine jewellery and watch industry. The RJC is a Full Member of the ISEAL Alliance – the global association for sustainability standards. RJC's standards are set through transparent and collaborative multi-stakeholder processes. The RJC auditor accreditation program oversees auditor training and assurance.

And RJC's monitoring and evaluation program assesses the impacts of Certification to help improve outcomes for all stakeholders.

November 2013



THE BUSINESS CASE FOR RJC CERTIFICATION

Want to show investors, suppliers or customers that you apply rigorous standards in your business?

Aiming to protect your business' reputation by being able to proactively respond to ethical issues?

Keen to strengthen your internal management systems?

Trying to keep up with the challenges of responsible sourcing?

Looking for independent assurance for your claims about the provenance of jewellery materials?

Are consumers or stakeholders asking about your commitment to responsible practices?

These are all good reasons to seek RJC Certification.

The RJC's voluntary standards cover a wide range of corporate responsibility issues and are specially designed for the jewellery supply chain.

RJC Certification is achieved through an independent, third party audit of your business. RJC provides training, guidance and tools to help you through this journey.

RJC's Members say that the benefits of an external audit include having 'fresh eyes' review their systems and practices, and using the process to drive effective and efficient improvements to their businesses.

More broadly, a growing number of stakeholders recognise the value of certification against voluntary standards. The ability to benchmark yourself against best practice gives you confidence in your business, its reputation, and its power to make a difference.

WHO CAN BECOME CERTIFIED?

To become formally Certified, businesses need to join the RJC and pay a membership fee. The RJC exists solely to operate and continually refine the RJC program on behalf of its Members. Member support is a top priority both on the path to certification and beyond.

While any business can download RJC's standards from RJC's website and benefit from the general guidance on key issues, assessing risks and establishing systems, only RJC Members can gain the status and benefits of RJC Certification.

HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?

RJC Membership is open to any business, large or small, operating anywhere in the world, which is active in diamonds, gold or platinum group metals.

On joining the RJC, Commercial Members join one of the following Member Forums.





WHAT ABOUT TRADE ASSOCIATIONS?

Trade associations are also welcome to join RJC as Members, though they are not required to seek Certification. Trade associations can play a vital role in outreach and support for RJC's capacity building with their own memberships.

WHAT IF I'M A SMALL BUSINESS?

Small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are a critical part of the global jewellery supply chain. Certification can seem daunting with all of the other pressures that small businesses often face. However, around 40% of RJC's current Members are SMEs, and they report that the Certification process has helped them identify valuable ways to improve their business.

RJC offers:

- A low minimum fee for small businesses
- Training for you and your team, and access to a help desk
- Standards Guidance advice that answers common small business questions

Toolkits that help you review and improve your business

For more information on joining RJC click here

WHAT IS CERTIFICATION?

Certification in a range of sectors, including forestry, agriculture and tourism, is used to demonstrate responsible practices, supply chain transparency, or a commitment to continuous improvement.

Through RJC, the jewellery sector now has a globally recognised Certification program that has been specially tailored to address its needs and issues.

A CERTIFICATION SYSTEM HAS FOUR IMPORTANT ELEMENTS:

AUDITOR

ACCREDITATION

Elements of a certification system [Adapted from ISEAL Alliance, 2008]

Standard

A voluntary standard lays out the requirements to be met;

STANDARD

2 Auditor Accreditation

Independent, third party auditors are accredited as competent to evaluate conformance against the standard; Independent third party audit

THIRD PARTY

Audits of Members by accredited auditors provides verifiable Objective Evidence that the business meets the requirements of the standard;



Certification decision

A decision on certification is taken on the basis of the results of the audit.

Use the Certification Period to:

IMPROVEMENTS RE-CERTIFICATION

Improve compliance

CERTIFICATION

- Build capacity to manage risks
- Learn from best practice

Then Re-certify to continue your RJC Membership and assurance of responsible practices.

RJC STANDARDS



RJC CODE OF PRACTICES

The RJC Code of Practices (COP) was revised in 2013 and covers a wide range of important topics for the jewellery supply chain. The COP was developed through multi-stakeholder consensus and builds on a wide range of international standards. The COP aims to set out responsible business practices covering human and labour rights, environment, and business ethics. It can be applied by any size of business, in all sectors of the diamond, gold and platinum group metals jewellery supply chain, from mining through to retail.

All RJC Members must achieve Certification against the Code of Practices to maintain their Membership. Members have two years from joining to achieve Certification against this standard.

For more information click here



RJC Chain-of-custody Standard

The RJC Chain-of-Custody (CoC) standard was launched in 2012. It applies to gold and platinum group metals, and unlike the COP, certification against this standard is voluntary for RJC Members. RJC's CoC standard aims to provide a platform for growth in responsible sourcing in the jewellery supply chain. It builds on the Code of Practices by requiring the COP (or equivalent) as a companion Certification, so it's a way to connect businesses with responsible practices through each step of the supply chain.

Refiners can use the RJC CoC standard to be audited according to the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. Crossrecognition agreements with the London Bullion Market Association (LBMA) and the Conflict-Free Sourcing Initiative mean RJC's CoC Standard is an effective way for refiners to meet the requirements of multiple standards at once.

For more information click here

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WHAT IS RJC CERTIFICATION?

THE STANDARDS

RJC's mandatory standard for Members is the Code of Practices. Members are required to meet the COP within two years of joining RJC.

As a Member benefit, RJC's voluntary Chain-of-Custody standard may also be used to support responsible sourcing efforts as desired.

AUDITOR ACCREDITATION

The RJC accredits independent, third party auditors that can carry out your audit. This process ensures that auditors have the right competence, experience and internal controls. RJC provides regular auditor training about its standards and the uniqueness of the jewellery supply chain.

RJC welcomes auditor applications, both from global and national firms. Auditors can apply independently or be encouraged by Members to contact RJC to seek accreditation.

INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY AUDIT

Members prepare for the independent certification audit by carrying out a self assessment. This involves allocating some time to review internal systems and bring them into conformance. RJC provides training and support for Members in this process.

Members then engage with an accredited auditor to undertake their audit, which involves a visit to the company's site/s. Accredited Auditors are independent third parties. RJC does not carry out the audits itself.

Businesses often ask 'how much does it cost?' The answer is, the more advance preparation during the self assessment, the lower the audit cost. Cost will vary according to the size of the business, the types of risks, and the areas where the business operates (which relates to travel costs for auditors). Members are encouraged to contact auditors directly and seek quotes in order to better understand the likely costs. This is a professional engagement exactly like retaining finance, legal or marketing expertise.

CERTIFICATION

On completing the audit, the auditor provides a report to the RJC that includes a Statement of Conformance. On this basis, RJC can grant Certification for one or three years. One year Certifications are granted when Major Non-Conformances against the Code of Practices are found. This provides Members with a year to work on corrective action, encouraging them to improve.

Certified Members are allocated a unique RJC Certification number for each successful audit. A publicly available list of Certified Members and the details of each certification is maintained on the RJC website.

For more information on RJC Accreditation click here

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CERTIFICATION SCOPE

For the RJC Code of Practices, RJC certifies Members as a whole, rather than each separate facility. This is to encourage broader uptake of responsible practices across all relevant facilities within a Member company, not just at the 'better' sites.

RJC Members must include within their COP Certification Scope all the facilities that they own or control which contribute to the diamonds, gold and platinum group metals jewellery supply chain.

The RJC CoC standard is voluntary and therefore not a requirement for RJC Members. The CoC Certification Scope does not need to include all facilities under the Members ownership or control and can cover individual facilities. CoC Certification also does not need to cover all of a Member's precious metals sourcing or sales, and the scope will depend on availability of CoC Material inputs and customer demand.

Details on the COP Certification Scope and, where applicable, CoC Certification Scope for each Certified Member can be found on the RJC website by clicking on the individual Member link, and then clicking the link under 'Certification Information'.

Any concerns about RJC Certified Members or Certification Scope can be raised through the RJC Complaints Mechanism.

UNDERSTANDING IMPACT

RJC's work with its Members isn't just about certification for its own sake. It aims to improve the way the jewellery supply chain deals with key issues, in turn leading to positive impacts for workers, communities, business partners, the environment and broader stakeholders.

To understand its impact, RJC:

- Monitors all conformance data from audit reports
- Seeks feedback from Members following their Certification experience and from all stakeholders during standards development
- Develops case studies on individual Members and their outcomes from the Certification process
- Conducts and evaluates independent research on an ongoing basis to assess impacts for specific sectors and issues

WHERE DO I START?

RJC SUPPORTS ITS MEMBERS

When you join the RJC, you join an organisation that is here to help you achieve best practice. RJC supports your Certification process with:

- Training and peer learning opportunities
- Toolkits that lead you step by step
- Comprehensive Guidance
 documents
- A help desk.

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KEY GUIDANCE AND TOOLS

To get started, it helps to understand the hierarchy of supporting documents.

	Code of Practices	Chain of Custody
Constraints and the second sec	STANDARD	
	RJC Code of Practices (COP) 2013	RJC Chain-of-Custody (CoC) Standard 2012
 Answer Deter Control TANDARDS Guidance Weinstein Guidance Guidance	STANDARD-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE:	
	COP Standards Guidance – background and implementation guidance on each of the COP provisions.	CoC Standards Guidance – background and implementation guidance on each of the CoC provisions.
Constructions Constr	GENERAL GUIDANCE	
	Assessment Manual 2013 – ho Self Assessments and prepare t	-
	TOOLKITS	
	Self Assessment Workbook – an Excel spreadsheet to help you assess conformance internally and put in place corrective actions pre-Audit. Risk Assessment Toolkit – an Excel spreadsheet that sets out a process for risk assessments. Human Rights Due Diligence Toolkit – an Excel spreadsheet that guides you through a human rights due diligence process.	CoC Assessment Toolkit – an Excel spreadsheet to help you assess conformance internally and put in place corrective actions pre-Audit. CoC Outsourcing Assessment – an Excel spreadsheet that can be used where outsourcing contractors handle CoC Material.
These are designed to help you understand the requirements and take you		

These are designed to help you understand the requirements and take you step by step through the process of making sure your business meets them. RJC provides free Member training that will help you find out more.

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MANAGING THE PROCESS

Members are encouraged to nominate an internal RJC Coordinator for their Self Assessment process and Audit. The Co-ordinator can help oversee:

- Completing or delegating the Member's Self Assessment
- Being a central point of contact and support
- Co-ordinating the engagement of the Accredited Auditor
- Assisting the Auditor with information, scheduling and logistics for the audit
- Liaising with the RJC Management Team on progress.

WHAT IF I NEED MORE HELP?

Members can also consider seeking the assistance of a competent consultant or advisor. Members may also choose to seek external assistance to assess potential problems and identify solutions. Note that to prevent conflicts of interest, such advisors cannot also play a role in the audit.

WHAT DOES AN AUDIT INVOLVE?

Auditors are engaged by the Member directly. You can choose from a list of RJC Accredited Auditors available on the RJC website.

Auditors will usually carry out the following steps:

A preliminary desktop review of the Member's Self Assessment and other related information;

- Selection of a representative set of the Member's Facilities and practices to visit and assess;
- Verification of the Member's Self Assessment through on-site review at the selected sample of Facilities;
- Identifying non-conformances which require corrective action and carrying out followup reviews of progress against milestones, if required;
- Preparing Reports to the Member and the RJC Management Team, including a Statement of Conformance that allows RJC to grant Certification.

ONCE YOU'RE CERTIFIED

Congratulations! You will benefit from knowing where you have good systems and practices in place.

If you have any non-conformance areas, you can work on these to make improvements during the Certification Period. This may involve getting a better understanding of the issues, making sure relevant staff all understand what needs to be done, and learning about how other Members have dealt with key risks.

Depending on your Certification Period, Re-Certification will be required in 1 or 3 years. Your systems and practices can always be improved, so take the opportunity to build internal capacity and learn from best practice. RJC will be growing its training program to support Members in continual improvement.

RJC encourages you to share your experience with us, and with other Members and stakeholders, so that we can work together to make responsible practices the way to do business in the jewellery supply chain.

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