

Standards Committee Meeting

12th February 2025

Summary notes

Standards Committee Participants: Purvi Shah (Co-Chair), Philippe Telouk, Robin Kolvenbach, Didier Backaert, Joelle Ponnelle, Marie-Charlotte, Noora Jamsheer, Charlene Nemson, Ainsley Butler (Co-Chair), Jennifer Hillard, Sara Yood, Maggie Gabos, Gavin Hilson, Marcin Piersiak.

Guests of the committee: Eduard Stefanescu, Kim Wenzel.

Apologies: Silvia Bezzone, Alexander Gul, Laurent Massi, Salah Hussein, Renata Lawton Misra, Monica Barcellos Harris.

RJC Management Team: John Hall, Melanie Grant, Suzanne Brooks, Effie Marinos, Caroline Watson, Andreea Cojanu Davidoiu.

Materials circulated in advance of call:

- Meeting presentation slides.
- Standards Committee Minutes for November, December and January meetings.

- **Introduction**

RJC Senior Standards Manager gave an introduction. The Committee was reminded of the RJC's conflict of interest policy and anti-trust statement and was given an overview of the agenda for the meeting. Participation was noted by the RJC Senior Standards Manager.

The January 2025 minutes were approved by Joelle and Robin. The November minutes were approved by Philippe and Joelle. The December meeting minutes were approved by Philippe and Joelle. *[Edit: Non-industry representative needed to approve – seek in March meeting]*

Standards Committee Co-Chair Purvi Shah updated the committee of the news that the RJC's Executive Director (ED) Melanie Grant is stepping down, and John Hall is stepping in as interim-ED. Thanks were given to Melanie for her time at the RJC.

- **Executive update**

John Hall gave an introduction and noted the importance of the upcoming work in standards and the value of the committee in that work. He noted the new system being implemented in coming months on the issuing of certificates. This year will be 20 years since the inception of the RJC, going from 14 members to over 2000. John noted an importance of changing regulation at the moment and ensuring we support our members on such changes and what they mean in practice, and how the standards play a key role in this. Following a question asked by the committee, it was confirmed RJC will be looking into doing something in May, as well as lots of activities or events throughout the year.

- **Standards update – COP and COC**

An update was given on the status of the standards development. Both the COP and COC standards were released on the 10th December with managed comms, a summary of changes and FAQs posted on website. The guidance documents also finished going through design and were publicly

released on the 4th February. Minor un-substantive changes have been noted and scheduled for update.

Training for the auditors is ongoing, and the new certification process requirements for members and auditors will be released soon. Member education will also soon begin. Identification of translator agencies is now underway, and work will begin soon. The development of the updated self-assessment is underway. The planning for the standards Roadshow is also underway, more details will be shared soon.

- **Additional guidance for COC recycled**

Following the transition out in place for COC exclusion of materials for claims, the same has been done for the new definition of recycled COC materials. As of 1 year from the effective date of the standard, members will need to declare the sources of their recycled material as per the 2024 COC standard. Additional guidance has been proposed to support this requirement and the transition. A supplementary guidance will also be issued.

A committee member suggested a change to the proposed wording, changing 'can' to 'must' – this change was agreed. Following 2 questions asking for clarification, the transition timeline was reiterated as 1 year from the effective date of the release of the COC, giving companies time to make the change and ensure proper implementation.

A committee member requested to submit some suggestions of changes to the guidance documents. RJC asked the committee member send over their comments. An explanation was given for the standards development process that revisions can't be made for standards at this time but will be noted in the RJC issues log. The guidance feedback will be considered on a case-by-case basis, factoring in the level of significance (substantive changes will be noted, while un-substantive changes may be included sooner), and a process will be shared in due course on how guidance feedback is to be incorporated.

- **Standards update - LGMS**

An update was given on the status of the LGMS standard approval, it is awaiting board discussion and approval. The proposal for the new governance structure for the board was outlined. A discussion was had on how the seats will be balanced across producers of mined material and lab grown. In response, the rationale behind the decision was outlined stating that the goal is to ensure balance between industry forums and ensuring equal representation in line with the current structure of the board – something which combining forms would not accomplish. Some concern was raised that representation may be unbalanced; feedback was welcomed by email after the call. Another committee member noted that the proposed structure supports the format of the separate LGM standard and acts as a point of differentiation.

The committee were reminded that the LGMS is subject to a process of transition and implementation. The effective date is 31 March 2025, with no audits before 31 July. All auditors to be qualified by 1 October 2025. A summary of the board discussions on the LGMS was given and the outcome of those discussions. In particular, it was agreed that the LGMS scope would mirror the COP (LGM diamonds, LGM sapphires, LGM emeralds, LGM rubies), and expansions will match any COP expansions. Further, functional components will not be included in scope e.g. rubies used in watch movements. Further discussions with the committee and lab-grown taskforce will be held to

discuss what a functional component entails, language used, and examples identified to feed into the guidance document. Some preliminary suggestions were given, but it was agreed that a dedicated discussion would be held on this. One committee member noted the importance of ensuring an accurate description of 'functional' components, ensuring any decorative LGM elements are included to avoid any risks. It was also noted that industrial LGMs are not in scope, but only those used in watches and jewellery. No changes are required to the standard following board discussions, only additions to the guidance were identified. Next steps are to have the proposal reviewed and approved by the ExCo and Board.

- **Standards committee updates**

Summary of the upcoming committee dates was given for 2025. A note was added that further information on the standards roadshow will be shared once information is available. The restructure of the committee was discussed, and when the time is right the committee will be asked for any suggestions or input into the committee.

A question was asked if the roadshow will just go into the standards changes or more, and it was confirmed that the roadshows will also include any changes to the audit and certification processes for members. Clarification as also requested on the process for the new committee restructure, and a summary was provided, noting the board approval required for final appointments of members, with the suggestion to share with the committee at the next meeting a more detailed outline.

A committee member also asked about board nominations, and it was confirmed that the AGM will be in June with the election process starting in the leadup to that – members are allowed to nominate candidates for the board.

Date of next meeting: 19 March 2025.

Committee meeting closed.