



NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until Monday 25 November, 2013

RESPONSIBLE JEWELLERY COUNCIL LAUNCHES NEW CODE OF PRACTICES AND CELEBRATES THE CERTIFICATION OF OVER 300 MEMBERS

LONDON - The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) today formally launches its new Code of Practices, and also celebrates a milestone of over 300 Members achieving the Certified Member level, and now accounting for more than two-thirds of its growing membership.

During 2012 to 2013, the RJC carried out an extensive multi-stakeholder review of its mandatory Member standard, the Code of Practices. The revision incorporates valuable feedback from over 500 responses through webinars, submissions and market outreach in Asia, Europe and North America. The result is a new Code of Practices that emphasises RJC's comprehensive approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) issues from mine to retail and the growing importance of responsible supply chains. The accompanying guidance and toolkits have also been significantly revised, so as to provide more detailed implementation support for businesses.

Significant changes in the new Code of Practices include:

- Alignment with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- New sections on Provenance Claims for diamonds, gold and platinum group metals; Sourcing from Conflict-Affected Areas; and Sourcing from Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
- New sections on Free Prior and Informed Consent, and Mercury, for RJC Members in the mining sector

There is also a new structure which Members should find easier to navigate and connect the relevance of the standards to their own business.

During 2014, the RJC will accept Certifications against either the 2009 or 2013 versions of the Code of Practices, to allow for the necessary transition for Members with their various audit deadlines. From 2015, the new Code of Practices will be in full effect.

"The RJC is very proud of the hard work of its team, the Standards Committee and the many contributing stakeholders in working to revise and improve the Code of Practices. As the flagship standard for Members, we want to ensure that it has continued relevance on emerging issues and positive impact in the jewellery supply chain. RJC looks forward to the ongoing support of Members in achieving certification against the new COP in the coming years, and collectively demonstrating the commitment of the sector to responsible practices", says James Courage, RJC Chairman.

www.responsiblejewellery.com

“RJC's new 2013 Code of Practices is an important milestone for the organization. Crafted by the industry and civil society representatives, it is an excellent example of how change can be achieved and maintained through open dialogue and collaboration,” says Ryan Taylor, Co-Chair RJC Standards Committee and CEO of the Fair Trade Jewellery and Co.

“The Code of Practices review has taken on board the challenges for the jewellery sector in India during its Asian outreach efforts, in harmonizing with parallel programs, and in supporting responsible supply chains. The new standard will continue to support current and future Members in their efforts to manage emerging risks and provide assurance of good practice. As a major jewellery retailer and RJC Founding Member, we are proud to see RJC meet these challenges for the sector and provide concrete tools for companies to tackle them,” says David Bouffard, Co-Chair RJC Standards Committee and Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Signet Jewelers Ltd.

Links:

- [The new RJC Code of Practices](#)
- [Recorded Webinar on the Overview of Changes](#)
- [Participants in RJC Standards Committee](#)

For further information please contact:

Mila Bonini, Communications Manager, Responsible Jewellery Council

Telephone +39 334 5488723, mila.bonini@responsiblejewellery.com

About RJC

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit standards setting and certification organisation. It has more than 460 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 www.responsiblejewellery.com

www.responsiblejewellery.com