



RJC Standards Review of the 2017 Chain of Custody Standard – Terms of Reference

February 2024

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Introduction

In 2021, the RJC Management team started the process of updating the voluntary standard for the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC), the Chain of Custody (CoC) 2017 standard. The process will undertake a full revision of the CoC. To find out more information on specific suggested amendments please refer to the [draft CoC](#).

The update process will include a minimum of two public consultations and input from the multi-stakeholder Standards Committee to ensure that the update sets a benchmark within the jewellery industry on best practice for responsible business practices. implemented by members of any size.

Proposed Scope of the Updated Standard

The CoC Standard is a voluntary standard for RJC commercial members and defines an approach for members to handle and trade gold, silver and platinum group metals in a way that is fully traceable and responsibly sourced. The standard covers the entire jewellery and watch supply chain from mining through to retail. The standard and the standard setting process will be publicly available to provide guidance to interested parties who are non RJC members.

The RJC CoC Standard is intended to be applicable to all commercial members spanning the global jewellery and watch industry supply chain. The applicability of the Standard is global, for a business of any size from SME to large companies.

The scope of the standards development are directed by the RJC's Theory of Change (ToC), also known as the Roadmap to 2030. The ToC defines what RJC as an organisation aspire to achieve with its members by 2030 through the implementation of the 2017 Chain of Custody. It proposes a detailed framework

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for our industry with respect to the most impactful contributions we can make through our supply chains and provides attainable pathways to help the RJC and its members realise their collective ambitions.

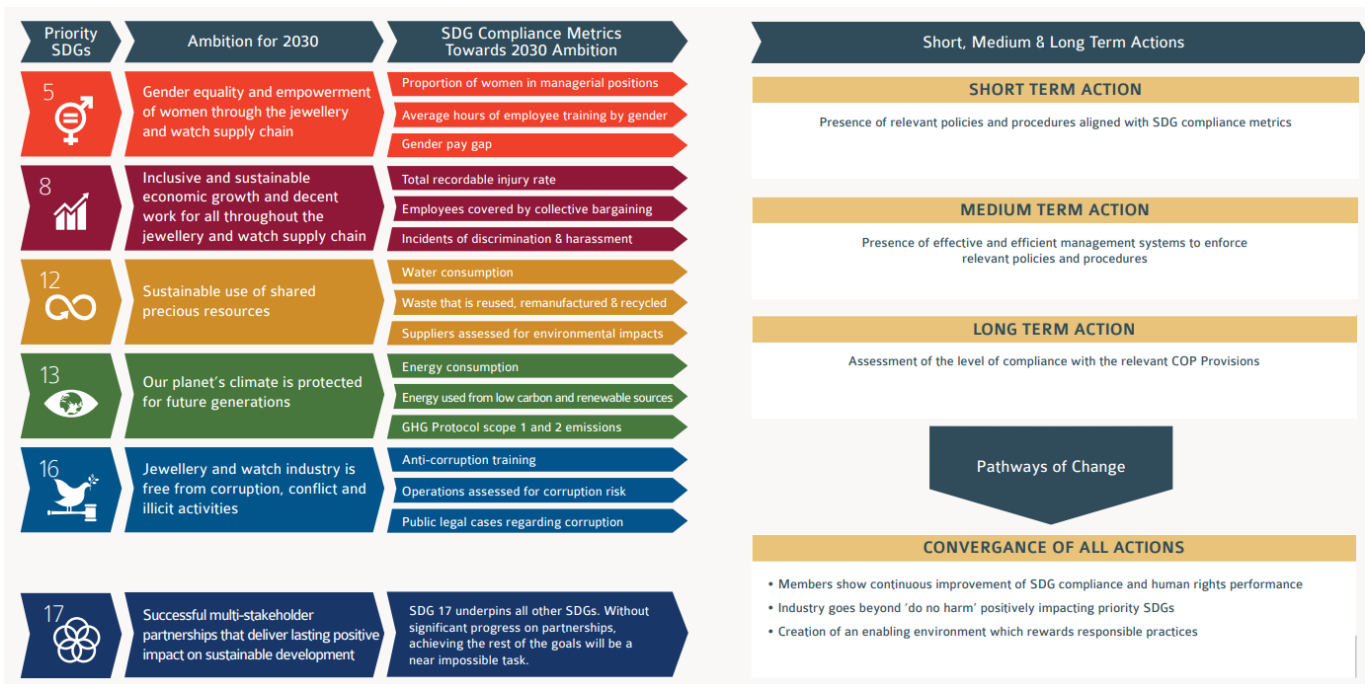


Figure 1. RJC Roadmap Schematic

The CoC has evolved with the industry, addressing issues that are affecting the jewellery supply chain. The CoC is, and will continue to be an important industry standard, as consumers and businesses embrace the necessity of traceability, responsible business practices and need to publicly demonstrate their compliance against 'best practice' industry procedures and policies. The main objective of this update is to ensure that CoC presents 'best practice' for responsible business practices in the jewellery industry and addressing current and future risks.

Certification to such a standard will provide a strong system for assuring stakeholders, shareholders, customers and business partners that a company

conducts its business ethically, responsibly and with integrity. This can add value to a company's products and help protect and enhance its brand.

As the number one standards body for the watch and jewellery industry, covering the entire supply chain from mine to retail, RJC has the responsibility, existing position and expertise to continue to provide a strong and reliable standard for the industry.

Social, Environmental & Economic Outcomes

Through an update of CoC 2017 standard the RJC seeks to bring integrity to and achieve a responsible, sustainable, world-wide jewellery and watch supply chain.

The standard is intended to have a positive impact for workers, communities and environments and create transparency at every level of the supply chain, reduce risks and vulnerabilities in a company's supply chain and improve management systems and operating procedures to strengthen businesses and make them more sustainable.

RJC is committed to an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable worldwide jewellery and watch supply chain. Importantly, CoC certification can reduce risks and vulnerabilities in a company's supply chain and improve management systems and operating procedures to strengthen the business and make it more sustainable. It simultaneously leads to better social and environmental conditions within the localised environment as well as the broader industry, bringing positive impacts for workers, communities and environments alike.

The review of the Chain of Custody (CoC) 2017 standard is intended to ensure value for certified companies by bringing integrity to their supply chains, sourcing practices and products; and help to protect and enhance their brand by increasing the confidence of customers that the jewellery they are buying is responsibly produced as certified by the RJC.

Risk Assessment and Unintended Consequences

The following have been identified as the significant risks that may affect the RJC achieving its intended changes.

Lack of engagement with RJC members due to unfeasible standards

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The RJC sets its standard to be ‘best practice’ for the jewellery supply chain, however with the geographical scope of the standard and sectors covered it requires a huge range of stakeholders find all provisions acceptable and feasible. Members sectors and national context may interpret the standard differently, so the RJC must ensure a balance is reached during the update process and ensure that ‘best practice’ moves the level of responsible business practices forward and does not force members/potential members to disengage from the certification process due to the standard being unfeasible.

Lack of partner recognition

One of the core reasons for the RJC establishment, was due to the ‘audit-burden’ encountered by its founder members multiple verification on similar issues. The RJC seeks to harmonise and cross-recognise with standards/organisations that overlap or are adjacent to the RJC standard as much as possible. There is a risk that an organisation may not recognise the RJC standard and could create doubt in the integrity of the RJC standard, especially if the other system were to become a requirement in a key sector/geographic region to the RJC. The RJC will need to ensure that harmonisation/cross-recognition is achieved with relevant standards/organisations.

Interpretation/Translations

As the RJC standard is a global standard, having its formal language set as English can create interpretations that differ once translated or inferred by non-native English speakers. The standards guidance needs to be written concisely, so that when translated it’s meaning is not altered or opens the possibility of interpretation to alter the intent of the provision within the standard. Readers should always refer to the formal language version of standards documentation to understand their intent and expectations.

Unintended Consequences

A separate consultation exploring the unintended consequences of the CoC has been conducted by a third-party consultant to ensure impartiality. The consultation was conducted by industry and non-industry members of the Standards Committee, it was understood that the Standards Committee members are best placed to understand and address any unintentional consequences of the CoC. All findings were related to RJC certification, barriers

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to entry, improvement to industry practices and governance. The consultation noted that there were no identified negative unintentional consequences from the CoC.

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Timeline

STEP	NOTES & STATUS	NEXT STEPS	TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION
Round one consultation	60 days of public consultation	During this time virtual round tables will be arranged to engage with stakeholders. Feedback forms will be made public	17 October 2022 – 17 December 2022
Summary of round one consultation	Combine feedback, draft response and amend CoC	Standards Committee to approve amended draft. Make responses public	01 February 2023
Round two consultation	60 days of public consultation	During this time virtual round tables will be arranged to engage with stakeholders. Feedback forms will be made public	16 November 2023 – 31 January 2024
Summary of round two consultation	Combine feedback, draft responses and amend draft	Standards Committee to approve amended draft. Make responses public	February 2024 – April 2024
Round three consultation	30 days of public consultation	During this time virtual round tables will be arranged to engage with stakeholders. Feedback forms will be made public	April 2024 - May 2024
Summary of round three consultation	Combine feedback, draft responses and amend draft	Standards Committee to approve amended draft. Make responses public	May 2024 - July 2024
Standards Committee approval of final CoC	Committee workshop	Release updated CoC & Guidance	July 2024 – September 2024

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CoC standard goes live	Once approved by the standards committee, the updated CoC standard can go live	Agree on when members start getting audited against the updated standard	November - December 2024
Members audited against new standard	Depending on auditor training, there will be a transition phase required	12-month period where members can choose to get audited on the old CoC 2017, or the updated CoC 2017	TBC

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