



## **Standards Committee Meeting**

**07<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

### **Summary notes**

**Standards Committee Participants:** Ainsley Butler, Purvi Shah, Charlene Nemson, Didier Backaert, Eleonora Rizutto, Jenny Hillard, Joelle Ponnelle, Laurant Massi, Maggie Gabos, Marie-Charlotte Druesne, Noora Jamsheer, Salah Husseini, Sara Yood.

**Apologies:** Coline Lemaitre, Tehmasp Printer, Ilan Keplan, Trisevgeni Stavropoulos, Pippa Howard

**RJC Management Team:** Suzanne Brooks (Senior Standards Manager), Caroline Watson (Assistant Standards Manager), Andreea Cojanu-Davidoiu (General Manager, Standards, Assurance & Certification)

### **Materials circulated in advance of call:**

- Meeting slides
- Standards Committee Minutes for February
- Draft ToR for Guest of the Committee concept
- RJC Governance Handbook

### **1. Introduction**

An introduction was conducted by Ainsley Butler, who reminded the Standards Committee (SCO) about the RJC's conflict of interest policy, anti-trust statement, and gave an overview of the agenda for today's call. Participation was noted by the RJC Senior Standards Manager. Previous meeting minutes were approved by Sara Yood and Joelle Ponnelle.

It was noted that the approved February minutes will be posted on the RJC website.

### Standards Committee questions from February Meeting

The RJC team went through questions asked at the previous meeting. A member noted how the governance procedure on the scope expansion for all coloured gemstones, pearls and corals required more clarification and next steps need to be identified. It was noted and agreed to check language currently used on the RJC website in reference to this. It was also agreed that the team would check representation of the coloured gemstones taskforce to ensure it is fit for purpose. A briefing document on the current status of the scope expansion will be circulated to the Committee. Overall, the team addressed the query around realistic timelines and clarity pending ISEAL requirements. Further, RJC highlighted which areas of the COP Guidance needs extra focus.

### **2. General updates**

Senior Standards Manager Suzanne Brooks welcomed 3 new Committee members to the group, Charlene Nemson, Hermes (Jewellery and watch retailer), Eleonora Rizutto, Bulgari (Jewellery and watch manufacturer and/or wholesaler forum), Maggie Gabos (Non-Industry), noting the pending Board approval. Each of the new Committee members gave a brief introduction to themselves and



their experience. An update was given on the status of the SCO composition. The Committee will meet once a month moving forward to deliver the workplan, noting that committee workload has been limited so far this year. An overview of the Committee composition as well as a recap on decisions on extensions and renewals was given. When asked about feasibility of timelines, it was noted that the updated workplan will be shared and will give clarity on project work and timelines. Outreach to identify new Committee candidates continues. 'Guests of the Standards Committee' concept proposed to ExCo, to be approved. This would be an opportunity to bring in resource and expertise for specific project focus areas. 3 potential candidates have been identified and shared with Committee, with further suggestions encouraged.

### Since last meeting

Focus of work over the last few months has been on ISEAL discussions regarding COP workplan, EU alignment and post-consultation drafting of standards, guidance and comment responses. LGMS presentation given to ExCo resulted in RJC team drafting separate standard for SCO review. Wider stakeholder outreach has been ongoing with key stakeholders. RJC attended the OECD Forum in April and met many stakeholders, participated in sessions and hosted a discussion session as part of the Chain of Custody standard update process.

### Member training

So far this year, RJC has hosted 8 member webinars on the COP, COP 6 & 7 and the Self-assessment process. Application portal walkthrough video, taking members through each step of the application portal. An employee training programme has been developed on the COP & CoC. First bi-annual RJC approved auditor workshop held in March on COP 3 and COP 14; next one planned for June 28<sup>th</sup> COP 6 and 7. Review of the RJC approved auditor training content under way to better support auditors through their RJC journey.

## **3. EU update**

Andreea gave a status update of the EU alignment process. Work is ongoing and application is in final stages, to be submitted shortly. An update on the completion of the various necessary elements was also provided. It was reiterated that it will take 45 days for the EU Commission to review admissibility, and another 9 months for reassessment (however this may be exceeded). Committee members noted the importance of the EU recognition when it comes to member audits against the EU regulation. It was also noted by a Committee member that there are no other schemes that have been given cross recognition at this point, and all schemes are at different stages.

## **4. ISEAL engagement**

RJC is only ISEAL member in the jewellery industry, that's why ISEAL compliance is so important. Melanie Grant is now an ISEAL board member. ISEAL confirmed RJC can roll COP update into a review, which is a change in the workplan but will allow RJC to use the significant update feedback as towards the full review. This approach was taken for several reasons; the delays in 2022; removes duplication of doing a full consultation (as the next ISEAL review was due in 2024); new timeline supports alignment with other standards release, like the LGMS; and allows for a more substantive



review on the standard. For the review, ISEAL require a 2-part Independent Evaluation Process (IEP), pre consultation and post-implementation, conducted by third-party audit. Looking to release COP in 2024. An additional round of consultation is required. IEP is not required for CoC and LGMS. RJC is committed to 2 more rounds of consultation of the LGMS, as consultation needs to be conducted on a draft standard. Committee member noted an update to be made on RJC website regarding standards review dates, and this was confirmed to be updated before the next meeting.

#### ISEAL independent evaluation process (IEP)

The shared timeline of IEP is the same process and timeframe for both part 1 and 2. Further detail will be included in the timelines and roles and responsibilities to be shared with the Committee. IEP may take up to 125 days.

#### ISEAL Foundations

ISEAL are updating the Code of Good Practice, the approach looking to be more flexible for reviews, particularly for consultations; meaning at least 2 rounds of input for standards development and 1 round on standards revision. 60 days and 30 days considered adequate time to submit comments in round 1 and 2 of consultation, respectively. It was asked when the consultation is aimed to begin, and it was noted to be around the end of 2023, based on tentative timelines. Based on this, a Committee member noted that a 60 day consultation may be challenging to complete within the timeline, and when timelines are presented next meeting, these need to be realistic. The Standards Manager noted the aim to continue work on the guidance and COP in parallel to the evaluation to maximise efficiency and use of time.

### **5. Standards update**

#### COP update

The Standards Manager gave a reminder of full COP update timeline and work completed. Draft standard shared with the SCO for February meeting. RJC finalising Guidance document workplan, and asked members who haven't, to put their names forward for review of guidance areas. Draft guidance outline completed pending COP draft discussions. RJC talked through ISEAL requirements around IEP and consultation length and next steps. Timelines, roles, and responsibilities to be presented to SCO along with relevant draft documents. Key decisions were highlighted for the Committee to consider for the next meeting. It was asked if there would be an opportunity to look at the work done so far on the COP and CoC before further consultations take place to allow a common understanding of the changes. It was confirmed that the necessary information will be circulated. It was noted in response to committee member question, that additional areas would be looked into as part of the review, such as benchmarking to other standards and initiatives. In response to a question, it was noted that version control from Committee will be managed.

#### CoC update

The Standards Manager gave a reminder of full CoC review timeline and work completed. An update was given on current drafting of the standard and relevant documents, to be circulated to the SCO



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for review once ready. Key decisions were highlighted for the Committee to consider for the next meeting.

#### LGMS update

In ExCo discussion in March, following RJC team presentation to ExCo on the potential to develop a lab grown supplement (based on consultation 1), the decision was to continue as a separate standard. Due to time constraints, the Senior Standards Manager paused this update for further discussion in the next meeting.

#### Timelines

Timelines dependent on actions and discussions to come out of the SCO and upcoming discussions.

#### Next steps

RJC to share summary of meeting action points post meeting for SCO feedback via email. Based on decisions/actions from this meeting, a detailed workplan of timelines with roles and responsibilities will be presented back to SCO in next call. RJC to update SCO on ExCo approvals and feedback on Committee membership proposals. RJC requested Committee members to keep free upcoming monthly meeting dates. Any necessary update meetings in between will be discussed and shared with the Committee as necessary.

#### AOB

Purvi Shah thanked the Committee and closed the meeting.