



Standards Committee Meeting

22nd November 2022

Summary notes

Standards Committee Participants: Purvi Shah, Ainsley Butler, Coline Lemaitre, Robin Kolvenbach, Didier Backaert, Joelle Ponnelle, Marie-Charlotte, Jennifer Hillard, Laurant Massi, Pippa Howard, Salah Hussein, Sara Yood

Apologies: Ilan Keplan, Noora Jamsheer, Tehmasp Printer, Trisevgeni Stavropoulos

RJC Management Team: Suzanne Brooks (Senior Standards Manager), Caroline Watson (Assistant Standards Manager), Charlotte Stanbridge (Assistant Standards & Training Manager).

Materials circulated in advance of call: Presentation slides, Minutes from October meeting, ASM workplan draft, Coloured Gemstone Taskforce ToR.

1. Introduction

An introduction was conducted and the Senior Standards Manager gave an overview of the agenda for today's call and conducted a roll call. The committee were reminded about the RJC's conflict of interest policy and anti-trust statement. Previous meeting minutes were approved by Joelle Ponnelle and Pippa Howard.

2. Standards committee engagement

Senior Standards Manager gave an overview of the Standards Committee composition. It was highlighted that the board will be asked in December to extend the terms of those ending in December 2022 for one year, to December 2023 to carry out the critical project work currently ongoing. This also includes approving those eligible for a reappointment for another term. The Senior Standards Manager also welcomed Robin Kolvenbach as the new representation for Argor-Heraeus. Current Committee vacancies were also highlighted and RJC welcome nominations from Committee members for filling the vacant positions. A Committee member asked if nominations that had already been presented are being considered, and it was confirmed that they are.

It was stated by a Committee member that to effectively execute the CoC review and develop effective guidance, it is essential to involve experts in the CoC supply chain dealing with CoC and precious metals. It was asked what is needed when proposing a new nomination for the Committee, and it was clarified that a short bio would need to be submitted.



3. General updates

EU update

RJC is in contact with Kumi who is responsible for the assessment of RJC alignment with the EU Conflict Mineral regulation. RJC is clear acting to address not aligned provisions. It has become clear there will be a slight delay in the submission date, which is possible any time after January 2023. The aim is to submit by end of January/February. The timeline for EU application notes that admissibility is assessed within 45 days from application, with the desk-based assessment following. The assessment will not include shadow audits. A Committee member noted that for refiner members it would be a great relief to be able to use RJC certification to prove eligibility to alignment with the EU legislation. It was asked what criteria we are not aligned with, and it was agreed that further detail would be shared at the next meeting.

ASM workplan

The updated ASM workplan timeline was circulated to committee members prior to the call and included more specific delivery dates. The next step is to engage with key stakeholders to create a working group. RJC welcomed Standards Committee suggestions on other stakeholders to engage in this working group as well as volunteers to be a part of the group from the committee.

Coloured Gemstones Taskforce

The Coloured Gemstone Taskforce ToR circulated before the call. Changes to COP and the expansion of scope highlight the importance of this taskforce and their expertise. RJC noted to re-evaluate the work and the ToR to then make a formal recommendation. A Committee member requested to get more information on when the formal inclusion of pearls and corals were agreed to be included in the scope expansion and what level of scope research was done into this. Ideas were raised around the risk of pearls and corals being included, noting their existence as a living organism, which differs from other materials in RJC scope. It was agreed that RJC would look into this. It was also noted that the expansion of scope to coloured stones applies to all coloured gemstones in alignment with industry – RJC will get back to the committee on the specific scope within ‘all coloured gemstones’. It was noted that communication between the Coloured Gemstone Taskforce and the committee is essential.

ISEAL

The 2022 progress and improvement plan has been submitted. The annual review with ISEAL was held, with discussions on RJC's plans, recommendations, and ways we can simplify information exchange.

4. Standards review and development update

A timeline illustrating the 3 standards consultation reviews (COP, CoC, and LGM) was presented to identify the upcoming work for the Standards Committee. November, January, February, March, May, June and July were highlighted as key areas where Committee engagement will be most prominent, including document review, workshops and approvals. It was noted that the COP aims to be launched in March, however there is a change this may be impacted by the work on the LGM.



When asked how much feedback has been received on the CoC consultation so far, it was noted that there has been a good level of comments from the roundtables, as well as through the web form and via email. There are some views that have been repeatedly expressed from various stakeholders. It was also clarified that auditors were included in the roundtables to ensure their feedback was recorded.

COP update

The last round of COP consultation was completed and there is an ongoing review on the LGM overlap. There is the possibility to conduct a post substantive review to align the COP and LGM if necessary. This would avoid delay of the COP release.

LGM update

Work is ongoing on the COP and LGM to understand the operational elements of it. A presentation has been planned to the Executive Committee to discuss this work, with the support of the co-chairs. RJC aims to conclude draft 1 by January/February 2023. It was asked if a decision has been made on a separate standard or COP scope expansion, and it was noted that this topic is due to discuss with the Executive Committee.

COC update

RJC thanked the Committee for feedback and noted that the consultation is ongoing until December 17. Round 2 is expected to begin in February 2023. It was raised that the update of the guidance is essential for implementing the updated Standard.

5. Training

The Assistant Standards and Training Manager gave an overview of the training conducted this year (including webinars, toolkits and resources) as well as a summary of upcoming training planned. There will be a 3-year strategy coming soon and will update further at the next meeting.

6. AOB

The Senior Standards Manager proposed 2023 Standards Committee meetings are held bi-monthly, with interim engagement with emails or calls when/if required. It was further suggested by a committee member that with the projected workload it would be important to ensure the possibility for more frequent meetings if needed, possibly in smaller groups. 2023 dates were proposed in the meeting for: COP in person workshop January/February, 22 February, 19 April, 21 June, 23 August, 18 October, 13 December.

A Committee member asked if there will be separate working sessions for the COP/CoC. RJC confirmed that there will be. It was also suggested to consider scheduling an in-person workshop or meeting around the OECD minerals conference. Standards Committee chair closed the meeting.