



# Accreditation and Certification Procedures

for Textile Exchange Standards

February 2013

## Table of Contents

Foreword.....	4
Procedures Review Process .....	4
Introduction .....	4
Section A – Objective of this manual .....	5
Section B – Principles .....	5
Section C – Scope .....	5
Section D – Normative References .....	5
Section E – Accreditation Body Requirements .....	6
E1 General Requirements .....	6
E2 Inspection and evaluation requirements for Accreditation Bodies .....	6
E3 Approval decision.....	7
Section F – Certification Body Requirements .....	7
F1 General Requirements .....	7
F2 TE Accreditation Procedures Application.....	8
F2.1 Certification Fee .....	8
F2.2 Reporting on activities .....	8
F2.3 Cooperation with other approved Certification Bodies.....	9
F2.4 Information for operators .....	9
Additional Requirements and Clarifications to ISO/IEC 17065.....	10
Additional <i>Terms and definitions</i> .....	10
Synonyms.....	10
In addition to 4.1.1:.....	10
In addition to 4.1.2.2 f): .....	11
In addition to 4.1.2.2:.....	11
In addition to 4.2:.....	11
Conflict of Interest .....	11
Division of functions.....	12
In addition to 4.6 a): .....	12

---

In addition to 4.6:.....	12
In addition to 6.1.2.1 a): .....	12
In addition to 6.1.2.1 e):.....	13
In addition to 6.1.2.2:.....	13
In addition to 6.2.2.4:.....	13
In addition to 7.1.1:.....	14
In addition to 7.2:.....	14
Application form and the operator’s obligations.....	14
In addition to 7.4:.....	14
Inspection protocol .....	14
Re-evaluation .....	14
Frequency of inspection.....	15
Particular requirements to address high-risk situations.....	15
Reporting.....	15
In addition to 7.4.1:.....	16
In addition to 7.4.6:.....	16
In addition to 7.6:.....	16
Exceptions to certification requirements .....	16
In addition to 7.8:.....	17
In addition to 7.9:.....	17
In addition to 7.10:.....	17
Notification of changes made by the operator.....	17
In addition to 7.11.1:.....	17
Dealing with non-conformities .....	17
In addition to 7.12:.....	18
Maintaining and managing records .....	18
In addition to 8.2.1:.....	19
Abbreviations/References .....	19

## Foreword

Textile Exchange is an international, member-supported non-profit organization established in 2003 under the original name of Organic Exchange. Textile Exchange is committed to the responsible expansion of organic cotton and other sustainable textile value chains.

A key focus for Textile Exchange is promoting and ensuring integrity in sustainability claims made about products or a company. Textile Exchange has developed standards that ensure these product and content claims can be validated through a third party certification. Certification Bodies will assess a company against the standard's requirements, issue a certificate of conformity and continually monitor adherence to the standard. These Certification Bodies are then assessed by an Accreditation Body against requirements detailed in these Procedures. The main purpose of these Procedures is to provide a more credible, consistent and reliable implementation of this oversight process.

## Procedures Review Process

These Procedures will undergo a scheduled review at least every 2 years. This is subject to early revision and update if deemed absolutely necessary, such as in the case of major standard revisions by Textile Exchange. The first scheduled review will begin in 2015.

## Introduction

The development of these Procedures involved input and guidance from many sources, such as Accreditation Bodies, Certification Bodies, Standards owners, and NGO's. These Procedures were written and adapted from the previous *OE 100 and OE Blended Standards – Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification Bodies* with guidance from ISEAL's *Code of Good Practice for Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards*.

## Section A – Objectives of this manual

These Procedures set out the requirements for Certification Bodies to achieve and maintain approval to perform certification to the chosen Content Claim Standard-based standard(s) owned by Textile Exchange, including the Organic Content Standard (OCS) and Recycled Content Standard (RCS), and to implement their related quality assurance systems. These Procedures also specify the approval and monitoring procedures that the nominated Accreditation Body will use to evaluate the Certification Body.

## Section B – Principles

Organizations performing professional and objective auditing of manufacturing facilities and operating product certification systems can apply for approval as certifiers to TE standard(s). These organizations are referred to as 'Certification Bodies' in the following document.

For this approval process, as well as for continuous monitoring of the approved Certification Bodies, TE is cooperating with 'Accreditation Bodies' that will provide oversight of the Certification Body and agree to follow the approval and monitoring procedure and the requirements as specified in this document. The applying Certification Body may assign its actual or preferred Accreditation Body, as long as the chosen Accreditation Body is a recognized national or international Accreditation Body (e.g.: member of the International Accreditation Forum), has the necessary competence, and follows the given procedures to accredit to the TE standard.

The requirements for Certification Bodies set out in this manual are specific requirements relating to all TE standard(s) and are in addition to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*. These requirements are ordered below in the same structure as ISO/IEC 17065 for ease of application. The Certification Body must comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065.

## Section C – Scope

The procedures and requirements as specified in this manual are applicable for Certification Bodies that apply for accreditation to certify against the TE standard(s) and for the Accreditation Body performing the oversight. This document supersedes all previous Accreditation Procedures versions and amendments. These procedures apply to accreditation and certification of Content Claim Standard-based standard(s) owned by Textile Exchange, including the Organic Content Standard and Recycled Content Standard.

## Section D – Normative References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document and are to be used in conjunction as binding requirements wherever applicable.

- **ISO/IEC 17011 – Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies**
- **ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services**
- **ISO/IEC 17021 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems**
- **Content Claim Standard**
- **Content Claim Standard Implementation Manual**
- **The applicable TE Standard (e.g.: *Organic Content Standard* or *Recycled Content Standard*)**

## Section E – Accreditation Body Requirements

### E1 General Requirements

Accreditation Bodies must provide proof that they comply with the procedures of ISO/IEC Guide 17011: 2004 *Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies* and must agree to follow the TE approval and monitoring procedure as provided for in this document.

Through their accreditation activities, Accreditation Bodies must understand and implement the requirements of the Normative References listed above and the TE Standards' overall goal to maintain chain of custody of the input materials being claimed in the final product.

Accreditation Bodies are responsible for calibration of the Certification Bodies they have accredited, which refers to the consistent implementation of the standard's requirements among accredited Certification Bodies. This can be accomplished through evaluation of training and calibration methods the Certification Bodies employ.\*

\*NOTE See 8.2 General management system documentation (Option A) in regards to the Management System Manual.

### E2 Inspection and evaluation requirements for Accreditation Bodies

Textile Exchange requires that the assigned Accreditation Body include the following specific minimum inspection and evaluation elements in its respective accreditation and monitoring procedure:

- a) Accreditation audit to the headquarters / main office of the initially applying Certification Body
- b) Witness audit performed at a representative site for the initially applying Certification Body (to verify chain of custody, protective measures against commingling etc.).
- c) Continuous monitoring of approved Certification Bodies, including performing at least one update accreditation visit every second year to the/an office conducting standards certifications and at least one witness or review audit<sup>1</sup> every second year of granted accreditation. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Witness and review audits are specific audit tools of accreditation bodies. In a witness audit the accreditation body is accompanying an inspector / inspection team to an on-site inspection and assesses the performance. In a review

accreditation visit and witness or review audit may be performed in the same year, but there must be at least one annual accreditation audit that reviews the following documentation:

1. the management system of Certification Bodies
  2. the competence of Certification Body personnel
  3. the assessment process
  4. an annual verification of the records and procedures CB's use to track and report on certified sites for each standard the Certification Body is accredited to.
- d) A minimum of 5 operator files, representing at least 1.5% or more of the files of operators contracted by the Certification Body should be checked on each update accreditation visit.

NOTE: When translators are used in audits, the translators must be independent of the enterprise being evaluated. Where this is not feasible due to logistical difficulties, the name and affiliation of translators shall be included in audit reports.

- e) Accreditation Bodies are required to submit the decision outcomes of the annual monitoring procedure in an annual report to TE for each accredited CB that includes a verification of site data. TE will submit the unit data received from the Certification Body for review by the Accreditation Body.

TE reserves the right to review any records or accompany an Accreditation Body audit of a Certification Body.

### **E3 Approval decision**

The Accreditation Body decides if accreditation to the standard, based on the procedures and requirements of this document, can be granted to the Certification Body.

Once accreditation is given, TE engages in a 'Certifiers Contract'. TE reserves the right to withdraw or terminate the contract and to call on the Accreditation Body to investigate problems. Details for this procedure are provided for in the 'Certifiers Contract'.

## **Section F – Certification Body Requirements**

### **F1 General Requirements**

Certification Bodies applying for accreditation to any TE owned standard must first meet the following criteria:

- a) Be a legal entity.
- b) Be able to demonstrate the applicable experience and qualifications of the auditors involved in the certification of the standard.
- c) Be able to ensure certification to the standard is applied consistently by all its certification personnel through a documented management and training system.

---

audit the accreditation body is auditing an inspected/certified entity with the previous inspection report at hand without the inspector / inspection team being present to assess the performance.

- d) Stay informed on the development of new and revised production methods in the industries of the scope(s) they have applied.
- e) Be able to enter into a contract and comply with TE procedures.
- f) Have sufficient personnel and financial stability to properly, impartially, and effectively perform certification activities.

## **F2 TE Accreditation Procedures Application**

The application process occurs in the following order:

1. The Certification Body sends accreditation request to [integrity@textileexchange.org](mailto:integrity@textileexchange.org) to begin the accreditation process.
2. TE will send an application form to be completed. Note that all information must be submitted and all requirements met in order for the application to be considered.
3. Certification Body sends completed form and application fee to TE.
4. After acceptance of the application by TE, the Certification Body must apply to the agreed Accreditation Body to assess compliance with these Procedures.
5. After accreditation has successfully occurred, the CB will provide proof to TE in the form of a certificate issued by the Accreditation Body. TE and the Certification Body will then enter into a formal contract.

NOTE: The Accreditation Body must have prior authorization from TE before beginning the accreditation process. Communication between the Accreditation Body and TE is included as part of the application process.

### **F2.1 Certification Fee**

The Certification Body shall pay a fee as determined by Textile Exchange (presently \$100 USD) per site inspected and/or certified. This fee will be paid by the Certification Body directly to TE. Payment of the certification and application fees must be made within 30 business days of receipt of invoice from TE.

### **F2.2 Reporting on activities**

- a) A report on the relevant activities is to be sent to TE by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month as well as an annual summary report in January of the following year. All reports must be submitted in a timely fashion. Certification Bodies must keep accurate records of the inspected and/or certified operators and include the following information for each site in the reports:
  1. Site name
  2. Site address
  3. Primary site contact: name, email, and phone number
  4. Total number of units certified
  5. Products that have been certified, noting percentage of Claimed Material
  6. Date of original certification
  7. Date of most recent certification
  8. Expiry date of current certification
  9. Name of any subcontractors used

10. Processes/activities of any subcontractors used
- b) Certification Bodies shall submit from time to time, upon request by TE, detailed inspection documentation in order to permit TE to ascertain certifier's adherence to the standard, and any procedural rules and interpretations issued from time to time by TE. TE shall be bound to treat any of this information confidentially.

### **F2.3 Cooperation with other approved Certification Bodies**

Certification Bodies shall cooperate with all other TE approved Certification Bodies in order to ensure worldwide equal application of the standard and inspection and certification procedures under the supervision of the TE Director of Industry Integrity.

Where products in the production chain have been certified by other TE approved Certification Bodies, the Certification Body shall accept certificates issued in accordance with the standard.

### **F2.4 Information for operators**

The Certification Body shall provide to operators an up-to-date description of the procedures to be applied for conducting certification. The Certification Body shall inform, in a timely manner, operators about:

- a) contractual conditions, including fees and possible contractual penalties;
- b) the operator's rights and duties, including the appeals procedure;
- c) the current version of the standard and corresponding relevant documents released by TE;
- d) program changes, including regular updates of procedures and standards;
- e) the evaluation and inspection procedures applied by the Certification Body in the course of certification;
- f) the means it uses to determine the time needed to perform an inspection; and
- g) documentation to be maintained by the operator to enable verification of compliance with the standard by the Certification Body.

## Additional Requirements and Clarifications to ISO/IEC 17065

These Accreditation Procedures require that the Certification Body meets the requirements ISO/IEC 17065.

Any reference to the “standard” or “scheme” in ISO/IEC 17065 language applies to the Textile Exchange standard(s) for which the Certification Body is seeking accreditation. Any requirements listed in these procedures that are above and beyond ISO/IEC 17065 must also be met.

The following sections correspond to ISO/IEC 17065’s document structure. Information below is in addition to or expanded criteria for the corresponding ISO/IEC 17065 section that gives clarification or further requirements. Section titles from ISO/IEC 17065 are listed in Italics.

### Additional *Terms and definitions*

**Inspector** – A person that examines and evaluates the production or handling of a claimed material by an applicant for verification to establish compliance with a standard.

**Standard** – for the sake of this document, all references to the “standard” refer to the Content Claim Standard (CCS), Organic Content Standard (OCS), Recycled Content Standard (RCS) as well as any other standards that come under the ownership of Textile Exchange.

*See the CCS for further definitions.*

### Synonyms

The terms defined in ISO/IEC 17065 and in these procedures that are used interchangeably are listed below in the table. Other possible synonyms are included for ease of reference.

ISO/IEC 17065	TE Accreditation Procedures	Other
Evaluation	Inspection	Assessment
Auditor	Inspector	
Scheme	Standard	
Client	Site, Operator	Unit, Certified Entity, Organization

### In addition to **4.1.1**:

The structure of the Certification Body shall foster confidence in its certification operations. In particular, the Certification Body shall:

- a) Have documents attesting to its status as a legal entity;
  - b) Have documented the rights and responsibilities relevant to its certification activities;
- and

- c) Identify the management (body, group or person) that has overall responsibility for the functioning of the Certification Body, including its finances.

**In addition to 4.1.2.2 f):**

Clients must return all outstanding certification documentation to the Certification Bodies.

**In addition to 4.1.2.2:**

- l) The client allows the Certification Body to exchange information with other TE approved Certification Bodies and authorities (approval bodies or Accreditation Bodies) including TE to verify information, especially the certification status of certified products, as part of its on-going evaluation.
- m) The client discloses all information about any TE standard certification-related activity with other Certification Bodies.
- n) The client confirms that they are not currently engaged, nor will they engage, with another Certification Body to certify them against the same TE standard(s) at the same time.
- o) The client informs the Certification Body about any other certifications and Certification Body relationships that share the same scope as the TE standard(s) (e.g.: organic cotton for the Global Organic Textile Standard and OCS).
- p) The client informs the Certification Body if they do not want their certification information that is reported monthly to TE to be made publicly available. In this case, the Certification Body will inform TE.

**In addition to 4.2:**

**Conflict of Interest**

*A conflict of interest is defined as an actual or perceived interest in an action that results in or has the appearance of resulting in personal, organizational, or professional gain.* Rules and procedures shall be established to prevent or minimize threats of conflicts of interest. In particular:

- a) The Certification Body shall require personnel, committee and board members to declare existing or prior association with an operation subject to certification. Where such an association threatens impartiality, the Certification Body shall exclude the person concerned from work, discussion and decisions at all stages of the certification process related to the potential conflict of interest.
- b) If a conflict of interest between certification personnel and an operation is found after assessment has occurred, another unbiased person must be assigned to assess if it has affected the certification process as well as complete the remainder of the process if possible.
- c) Personnel must not be allowed to assess their own work.

**Division of functions**

The Certification Body shall not provide any other products or services which could compromise the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of its certification process and decisions. In case the Certification Body also performs other activities in addition to certification, it shall apply additional measures to ensure that the confidentiality, objectivity and impartiality of its certifications are not affected by these other activities. In particular the Certification Body shall not:

- a) Produce or supply products of the type it certifies;
- b) Give advice or provide consultancy services to the applicant/operator as to methods of dealing with matters which are barriers (eg.: non-conformities identified in the course of the certification process) to the standard's certification. Explanations regarding the standard and its quality assurance system are not considered to be advice or consultancy. General information or training may be given as long as this service is offered to all applicants/operators in a non-discriminatory manner.

**In addition to 4.6 a):**

This includes current copies of the standard, supporting documents, and links to any vital information on the TE website.

**In addition to 4.6:**

- e) information about policy and procedures with respect to non-conformities;
- f) a list of certified operation's names, the country location, the standards that they are certified to, a list of the product categories that are certified to the standard, effective date of certification and the expiry date of certification.

**In addition to 6.1.2.1 a):**

Criteria should specify minimum education, training, technical knowledge and work experience relevant to the scope of certification issued. The Certification Body must ensure that:

1. For each standard certification decision, at least one of its personnel involved must have a university or bachelor degree in the field of the production scope under audit plus expertise in quality management issues, or 3 years professional experience as a technician in the relevant industry plus expertise in quality management issues or 2 years professional experience in inspection and certification of processors in the relevant industry.
2. For each standard certification decision, all personnel are able to demonstrate an understanding of the production methods, issues and risks specific to the client's local industry/business sector. Relevant education and/or work experience can be used.
3. For each standard certification decision, all personnel have knowledge of business management practices; audit principles, practices and techniques; and the Certification Body's procedures.

4. Each inspector is able to demonstrate an understanding of the principles and criteria of the standard and other normative documents.
5. Each inspector is able to demonstrate the ability to interview stakeholders without compromising the source of information.
6. Each inspector is able to produce written reports that are clear, accurate, and articulate the audit findings in relation to the standard and regional legal requirements.
  - i. Note: Certification Bodies can refer to ISO/IEC 17021 Annex D for guidance on the qualities and behaviors of good inspectors in assessing inspectors during the hiring process.

**In addition to 6.1.2.1 e):**

Certification Bodies must:

1. Review the competence of its personnel in light of their performance in order to identify training needs and ensure on-going professional development; and
2. Conduct performance reviews of personnel responsible for evaluation, inspection and certification on an annual basis. Clients shall be provided the opportunity to comment on auditors' performance which, when provided, shall be used in the evaluation of auditors. However, client comments on auditor performance shall not be considered as impartial and shall form only a portion of the auditor evaluation.
3. Ensure that new personnel have sufficient competence according to the requirements of their respective positions. New inspectors are to receive qualified training courses of on-site inspection for the standard's certification or undergo an on-site apprenticeship period accompanying at least 5 inspections carried out according to the standard's certification system while under the supervision of qualified staff.

**In addition to 6.1.2.2:**

- i) Responsibilities of assigned personnel

**In addition to 6.2.2.4:**

- g) Keep final responsibility for the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, suspending or withdrawing of certification. Delegation of certification decisions is not permitted.
- h) Ensure that the subcontracted body or person is:
  1. Competent to perform the subcontracted work consistent with the requirements set out in these procedures for the Certification Body and its personnel.
  2. Not involved, either directly or through the body/person's employer, with the operation, process or product that is subject to certification in any way that may compromise impartiality and
  3. Committed to the policies and procedures as defined by the Certification Body.

- i) Monitor the performance of the persons or bodies subcontracted for the work.

**In addition to 7.1.1:**

NOTE 3 Section 9 “Process Requirements” of ISO/IEC 17021 can be used for additional guidance on how to structure and implement an audit.

**In addition to 7.2:****Application form and the operator’s obligations**

The Certification Body shall require completion of an application form, signed by a duly authorized representative of the operator. To enable evaluation and assignment of qualified personnel, the Certification Body shall require operators to provide information as to whether another Certification Body has denied certification, and any known reasons for that denial. Additionally, the operator must provide a copy of their last assessment report, if one was performed to the standard, in order to ensure that unresolved nonconformities on the part of the client are taken into account by the new assurance provider.

**In addition to 7.4:****Inspection protocol**

Inspection is carried out in order to verify information and compliance with certification requirements applicable to the operator. It shall follow a set protocol to facilitate non-discriminatory and objective inspection.

The inspection protocol shall at the very minimum undertake the following, as applicable to the operator:

- a) Assessment of the processing system by means of visits to facilities and storage units (which may also include visits to non-certified areas if there is reason for doing so);
- b) Review of records and accounts in order to verify flow of goods (input/output reconciliation and the tracing back);
- c) Identification of areas of risk to product integrity;
- d) Verification that changes to the standards and to related requirements have been effectively implemented; and
- e) Verification that corrective actions have been taken.

NOTE: When translators are used in audits, the translators must be independent of the enterprise being evaluated. Where this is not feasible due to logistical difficulties, the name and affiliation of translators shall be included in audit reports.

**Re-evaluation**

- a) The Certification Body shall re-evaluate operators annually in order to verify whether they continue to comply with the applicable standard. Mechanisms shall be in place to

effectively monitor whether corrective actions have been implemented in a timely manner.

- b) The Certification Body shall report and document its re-evaluation activities, and shall keep operators informed about their certification status.
- c) Re-evaluation shall follow the procedures outlined in ISO/IEC 17065 section 7.4 (i.e. Evaluation).

### **Frequency of inspection**

- a) Inspections are to occur at least annually, within each calendar year, and within the validity period of the scope certificate.
- b) The Certification Body may decide on exceptions from the annual onsite inspection cycle for sub-contractors with a low risk potential. Such units must be clearly identified, must have a contract with the licensee (who is responsible for their compliance with these standards) and may be subject to inspection at the Certification Body's discretion.
- c) In addition to the regular inspection visit, Certification Bodies that are certifying more than 50 sites to the standard must perform a minimum of 2% unannounced inspections. Notice of no more than 48 hours may be given in advance of an unannounced inspection.

### **Particular requirements to address high-risk situations**

The Certification Body shall amend and adapt its certification procedures to address higher risks found in certain situations specific to the standard's certification.

Potential high-risk situations and related measures include:

- a) Parallel processing of certified and non-certified products: in order to prevent co-mingling or confusion of certified products with other products that do not meet the standards, the Certification Body should verify whether handling and documentation regarding processing, storage and sales is well managed through trained personnel and makes clear distinctions between certified and non-certified products. In cases where products are not visibly distinguishable, specified measures should be applied to reduce the risk.
- b) Where an operator is certified by other Certification Bodies for a standard that shares the same scope (e.g.: organic cotton for the Global Organic Textile Standard and OCS), the Certification Body should seek information exchange with the other Certification Bodies involved to prevent misuse of certificates.

### **Reporting**

The Certification Body shall report all evaluation findings according to their documented reporting procedures.

- a) Inspection reports shall follow a format appropriate to the type of operation inspected, and facilitate a non-discriminatory, objective and comprehensive analysis of the respective processing system.
- b) The inspection report shall cover all relevant aspects of the standards, and adequately validate the information provided by the operator. It shall include:
  1. A statement of any observations relating to conformity with the certification requirements;
  2. Date and duration of the inspection, persons interviewed, facilities visited; and
  3. Type of documents reviewed.
  4. Explanation of inspector's rationale for their choice of samples taken.
- c) The inspector must submit the inspection reports promptly, providing sufficient time for review and the final certification decision to be made.
- d) The Certification Body shall document and apply measures to verify effectiveness of corrective actions taken by operators to meet the requirements.

**In addition to 7.4.1:**

The evaluation shall consist of a review of documents and an on-site inspection visit. See "B2 – Auditing Requirements" of the CCS for more detail.

**In addition to 7.4.6:**

See "Dealing with non-conformities" in section 7.11 for more detail.

**In addition to 7.6:**

NOTE: Certification decisions must be made within two months of the inspection.

**Exceptions to certification requirements**

- a) The Certification Body shall have clear criteria and procedures for granting exceptions to requirements for certification.
- b) The Certification Body must receive prior approval from its Accreditation Body for each exception. If approved, the Certification Body must notify TE.
- c) Exceptions shall be of limited duration, and not be granted permanently. After one year, an exception must be resubmitted for approval.
- d) The documentation of any exception shall include the basis on which the exception is granted.
- e) The certifier may also decide on exceptions from the annual onsite inspection cycle for sub-contractors with a low risk potential for compromising the integrity of products subject to standard compliance. Such units must be clearly identified, and ownership of the goods must remain with the certified entity, and the subcontractor may be subject to inspection at the discretion of the certifier. Note that the certified entity will have responsibility for the integrity of the goods subject to standard compliance being subcontracted. Core production operations may not be exempt from inspection/certification.

NOTE: Subcontractor exceptions under this basis do not need to be pre-approved by the Accreditation Body.

- f) Requirements within a standard that are not applicable to a particular client are not considered exceptions.

### **In addition to 7.8:**

- d) country location of the client;
- e) effective date of certification and expiry date.

NOTE: See 4.6 on Publicly Available Information

### **In addition to 7.9:**

NOTE See "D2 – Sample Documents" of the CCS for information on Scope Certificate and Transaction Certificate requirements.

NOTE 2 The Certification Body is responsible for responding to tips and complaints about fraudulent products or services with appropriate action and due diligence. See *CCS Implementation Manual* for more details.

If fraud or other misrepresentation is found to exist, the Certification Body will take appropriate action. See 7.11.

### **In addition to 7.10:**

#### **Notification of changes made by the operator**

- a) The Certification Body shall require clients to inform them about changes cited in the application (see 7.2).
- b) The Certification Body shall determine whether the announced changes require further investigations. If such is the case, the operator shall not be allowed to release certified products produced under the changed conditions until the Certification Body has notified the operator accordingly.
- c) In response to an application for amendment to the scope of a certificate already granted, the Certification Body shall decide what evaluation procedure, if any, is appropriate, in order to determine whether or not the amendment should be made, and shall act accordingly.

### **In addition to 7.11.1:**

#### **Dealing with non-conformities**

- a) Non-conformities found during inspection must be corrected within two months of the physical inspection or the scope certificate shall be suspended or withdrawn.
- b) Certification decisions may include requests for the correction of minor non-conformities\* within a specified time period. In case of major non-conformities\*\*, a

certificate shall be withheld or suspended until implementation of corrective actions can be demonstrated. In serious cases, when certification shall be denied or withdrawn, TE is to be notified immediately.

*\*Minor non-conformities occur when a single observed lapse has been identified in a procedure required as part of the client's management system. A non-conformity may be considered minor if it is a temporary lapse; it is unusual / non-systematic; the impacts of the non-conformity are limited in their temporal and spatial scale; or prompt corrective action has been put in place to ensure that it will not be repeated.*

*\*\* Major Non-Conformities occur if, either alone or in combination with further non-conformities of other requirements, it results in, or is likely to result in, a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the standards system. Such fundamental failure may be indicated by non-conformities which continue over a long period of time, are repeated or systematic, affect a wide area, or are not corrected or adequately responded to by the client once they have been identified.*

- c) Reasons for denial, withdrawal or suspension of certification shall be stated with clear reference to the standard's criteria or other certification requirement violated.
- d) If it is found that the client is knowingly and/or repeatedly operating with non-conformities or purposely violates the requirements of the standard, the Certification Body must suspend the client's certification status and inform TE. The client will be allowed to re-apply for certification two years after the date of the suspension.

NOTE: See *CCS Implementation Manual* for more detail.

### **In addition to 7.12:**

#### **Maintaining and managing records**

- a) The Certification Body shall maintain a system of records (either electronic or paper documents) to demonstrate that the certification procedures have been effectively fulfilled, particularly with respect to application forms, evaluation or re-evaluation reports, and other documents relating to granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification.
- b) The records shall be identified, managed and disposed of in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of the information.
- c) Operator records shall be up to date and contain all relevant information, including inspection reports and certification history.
- d) Records shall also be kept on exceptions granted, appeals and subsequent actions.
- e) Records shall be kept for at least five years, or as required by law, in order to be able to demonstrate how certification procedures have been applied.

**In addition to 8.2.1:****Management System Manual**

- a) The Certification Body shall address and document all applicable procedures, either in a manual or in associated documents, in order to ensure uniform and consistent application.
- b) The manual and associated documents, as appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed, and considering the number of personnel involved in the process, shall contain:
  1. A description of procedures applied by the Certification Body in the course of performing certification, including granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, suspending and withdrawing of certification;
  2. Procedures for the recruitment, selection, training and assignment of the Certification Body's personnel as outlined under 6.1.2;
  3. Policy and procedures for appeal against certification decisions and other complaints; and
  4. Policy and procedures for reviewing quality (e.g. internal audits, management review).
- c) The Certification Body shall ensure that the manual and relevant associated documents are accessible to all relevant personnel.

**Abbreviations/References**

- TE: Textile Exchange – [www.textileexchange.org](http://www.textileexchange.org)
- ISO: International Organization for Standardization – [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)
- ISEAL: International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance - [www.isealliance.org](http://www.isealliance.org)