

RWS Licensing Requirements for Certification Bodies

Introduction

These procedures detail the requirements that Certification Bodies (CB) shall adhere to in order to be able to certify against the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS). These requirements are in addition to the *TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures* and *ISO 17065*.

Once the RWS is released a CB may apply for authorization to certify against the RWS directly with Textile Exchange (TE). A licensing contract may be made between TE and the CB when TE has verified adherence to these requirements. The longer-term objective of Textile Exchange is to qualify Accreditation Bodies to accredit CBs to the RWS.

CB licensing to the RWS consists of both a Farm Scope and a Supply Chain Scope. The Farm Scope focuses on animal welfare and land management at the farm level while Supply Chain scope focuses on chain of custody after the wool leaves the farm or responsibility of the farm group certification through to a finished, labeled product. A CB may apply for one or both scopes.

A. License Application Procedure

To apply for a license to certify against the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS,) a CB shall take the following steps:

- A) Contact Textile Exchange to request permission to certify against RWS.
- B) Complete and submit TE's *Application Form for Certification Bodies* and pay the \$1,000 application fee.
- C) Submit proof of accreditation to an ISO17065-based standard.
- D) Submit CVs of all auditors and certifiers that will be working with the RWS.
- E) Provide Textile Exchange (TE) with a fee structure for clients being certified to the RWS.
- F) Sign a declaration to meet these RWS License requirements and the *TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures*.

Once the application is formally accepted by TE, a Grace Period contract -that allows a limited number of certifications to occur prior to full licensing- may be granted.

B. License Requirements

B1 Before TE grants a full license to certify against the RWS, the Certification Body shall agree to:

- A) Comply with all requirements of the *TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures*.
- B) Submit the Standard Operating Procedures, audit plan, staff training manuals, client contract, fee schedule, and any RWS-specific documents that CB staff will use to assess sites in accordance with the RWS.
- C) Designate one internal representative to be responsible for the RWS Scheme and act as the primary contact with TE.
- D) For RWS Farm Scope:
 1. Submit and attain TE approval of an internal CB Staff Training Program for all auditors working with the RWS, to be led by the internal representative.
 2. Have each auditor complete the TE-mandated training program.
 3. Successfully perform at least two farm audits with a TE-nominated RWS representative.

- E) Complete all Licensing requirements within 12 months of the application submission date.
- F) Provide the requested certification or renewal information of each company (see B3) on a monthly basis.
- G) Send information for all certified farm sites (see B4) to TE immediately upon issuance of the scope certificate.
- H) Be responsible for the accuracy of their reporting data.
- I) To make their name and contact information publicly available through the TE website's list of certifiers licensed to the RWS.
- J) Publish the fee schedule for inspection and certification or state that it is "available upon request" in a publicly available and easily accessible location on its website with a valid email address to make the request.
- K) Ensure that all companies undergoing certification understand that this information will be made public on the RWS website, and that they shall advise if they do not want to be listed.
- L) Advise TE of any issues that may affect their validity to certify (eg: suspension or cancellation of accreditation or license for other standards).
- M) Advise TE of any changes to their certification procedures.
- N) Issue RWS logos to companies holding valid certification.
- O) Require logo artwork approval prior to public use through a Label Release.
- P) Pay all fees promptly.

B2 RWS Farm Scope Personnel Qualifications:

Certain expertise is required for auditing an RWS farm or farm group. The following personnel qualifications supersede those relevant in the *TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures* and *ISO 17065*:

- A. The internal representative for the farm scope of the RWS shall:
 - 1) Have a university or bachelor degree and/or 3 years professional experience in the field of agriculture
 - 2) Have 2 years professional experience in inspection and/or certification
 - 3) Attend all TE mandated training courses.
 - 4) Successfully perform two TE-shadowed audits.
- B. All auditors shall have experience with shearing: a minimum of 5 days (40 hours) of viewing shearing at 2 or more sites
- C. For each standard certification decision, all involved 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.
- D. For each standard certification decision, all personnel have knowledge of business management practices; audit principles, practices and techniques; and the Certification Body's procedures.
- E. Each auditor is able to demonstrate an understanding of the principles and criteria of the standard and other normative documents.
- F. Each auditor is able to demonstrate the ability to interview stakeholders without compromising the source of information.
- G. Each auditor is able to produce written reports that are clear, accurate, and articulate the audit findings in relation to the standard and regional legal requirements.

B3 Certification Information on sites being certified:

Certification bodies are required to supply the following information to TE on each of the companies they have certified by the end of the following month after a completed certification for each TE Standard:

1. Company name
2. Certification Body issued Licensing Number
3. Company address
4. Primary company contact: name, e-mail, and phone number
5. Total number of units certified
6. Processing Steps that have been certified using the terms in Annex 2 of the *Policy and Template for Issuing Certificates of Compliance*.
7. Products/categories that have been certified
8. Materials that are being claimed under the RWS
9. Date of original certification
10. Date of most recent certification
11. Expiry date of current certification
12. Names and addresses of subcontractors producing to the RWS
13. Processes/activities of subcontractors
14. Number of days spent inspecting farms and number of farms (if applicable)
15. Notice if the company does not want their information published on the TE website.

B4 Farm data collection requirements

Data collection is an important part of the RWS, as it will help set regional and global benchmarks, and inform the future development of the standard. CBs are required to:

- Collect the data listed in the *RWS Data Collection Spreadsheet* and submit it to TE immediately after each scope certificate is issued.
- Verify farmer questionnaire responses and send to TE.
- Submit a report of non-conformances –types and number of each type- for analysis to improve the standard and identify training needs. These need not be farm specific, but region specific is required.

B5 Group certification

Certifiers shall work with Textile Exchange to determine level of auditing required for group certification. The CB shall submit a description of the farm group, along with the risk assessment and the proposed number of sample audits prior to beginning the auditing process. TE will approve the number of sample audits.

B6 Fees and Costs for Certifiers

Certification Bodies are required to pay the following fees to Textile Exchange:

- License application fee: \$1000 US (to be paid with application submission)
- Farm Scope annual license fee: \$5000 US (to be paid when license contract is signed). The license fee includes two days of TE time for shadow audits.
 - Shadow audit expenses including travel, subsistence costs, TE time.
- RWS license fees are:
 - \$250 per unit for Supply Chain or individual farm site certification.
 - For group farm certification, a \$250 group scope certificate fee plus \$200 per auditing day.
 - To be paid monthly when certification updates are given.



Note that TE does not determine what certifiers charge companies, although we may choose to publish this information.

C. Final Notes

TE reserves the right to deny, suspend or revoke the license under the following circumstances:

- a) When the Certification body is suspended or revoked by other accreditor or other licensing body in the country where accreditation applies.
- b) Failure to maintain ISO 17065 accreditation.
- c) Failure to meet one or more of these License Requirements.

For further information, please contact Textile Exchange at Integrity@TextileExchange.org.