

IOAS Inc.



# **IOAS Operating Manual**

**information and requirements specific to  
assessment against procedures and  
requirements of**

## **Textile Exchange**



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### **1. Introduction**

This operating manual contains specific information and requirements of the Textile Exchange Accreditation programme implemented by the IOAS on behalf of the scheme owner, Textile Exchange. It should always be read in conjunction with the IOAS General Operating Manual which contains a full description of the IOAS and its overall approach to its work conducting accreditation and surveillance of certification bodies working in the field of organic and sustainable agriculture and related fields which is performed in line with ISO/IEC17011.

It is the IOAS' approach to harmonise the assessment process for the increasing range of schemes offered so as to reduce the burden of accreditation to all certification bodies. We are also continually working to gain recognition or equivalence of our work with scheme owners and government authorities such that we can offer 'one assessment, many accreditations'.

### **2. Scheme owner**

2.1 Textile Exchange (TE) (formerly known as Organic Exchange) is a non-profit company formally incorporated in 2002 and is committed to the responsible expansion of textile sustainability across the global textile value chain. TE has its headquarters in the USA with staff and contractors in 8 countries.

2.2 TE has developed several standards primarily for the textile industry to support specific claims.

2.3 **Content Claim Standard (CCS)** - The Content Claim Standard is a chain of custody standard that provides companies with a tool to verify that one or more specific input materials are in a final product. It requires that each organisation along the supply chain take sufficient steps to ensure that the integrity and identity of the input material is preserved. It does not validate any claims about a product beyond the amount of a specific material that is in it. The standard does not limit which type of input material may be claimed, and therefore has broad application potential.

2.4 All TE accreditations are based upon the CCS with the additional requirements of the other standards (OCS, RCS, GRS, RDS) being applied where relevant.

2.5 Although the CCS may be applied on its own, this certification is valid only for business-to-business relations. Also, the IOAS reserves the right to reject an application should that industry be deemed incompatible with the mission of the IOAS.

**2.6 Organic Content Standard (OCS)** - In 2007 Organic Exchange developed the OE 100 and OE Blended standards to verify the organic cotton content claims on products. The standards established a system for tracking and documenting the purchase, handling and use of certified organic cotton fibre. Since then there has been a need for a broader organic standard that would support content claims for all organic inputs, not just cotton. To meet this need, Textile Exchange has developed the Organic Content Standard, based on the generic chain of custody requirements of the Content Claim Standard mentioned above.

2.7 The Organic Content Standard (OCS) applies to any non-food product containing 5-100% organic material. It verifies the presence and amount of organic material in a final product. It tracks the flow of a raw material from the source to the final product and this process is certified by an accredited third party. The Standard does not cover the certification of the raw material itself, nor does it address other inputs, environmental aspects of processing (such as energy, water or chemical use), any social issues or legal compliance.

2.8 There are three possible ways to label product certified under the OCS standard:

- 'Made with/Contains 100% Organically Grown Material' only for products that contain 100% Organic Material. The OCS 100 logo may be used;
- 'Made with/Contains Organically Grown Material' for products that contain 95% or more Organic Material, as long as the remaining content is not of the same type as the Organic Material. The OCS 100 logo may be used.
- 'Made with/Contains X% Organically Grown Material' for products that contain 5-95% Organic Material. There are no restrictions on the remaining content. The OCS Blended logo may be used.

**2.9 Recycled Claim Standard** – The goal of the RCS is to give credibility to recycled content claims on products. By protecting the trust of consumers as they choose products made of recycled materials, TE hope to contribute to the increased use of recycled materials, and a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfills or incineration. The TE Recycled Claim Standard verifies the presence and amount of recycled material in a final product through input and chain-of-custody verification from a third party. It allows for transparent, consistent and comprehensive independent evaluation and verification of recycled material content claims on

products. It can be used as a business-to-business tool to give companies the means to ensure that they are getting what they are paying for and selling, or as a way to ensure accurate and honest communication with consumers.

2.9.1 As the RCS can apply to any material and industry, the IOAS reserves the right to reject an application should that industry be deemed incompatible with the mission of the IOAS.

**2.10 Global Recycled Standard** - The GRS is intended for companies that are making and/or selling products with recycled content. The standard applies to the full supply chain and addresses traceability, environmental principles, chemical restrictions, social requirements, and labelling. Developed with the textile industry in mind, the GRS may also be applied to products from any industry.

2.10.1 As the GRS can apply to any material and industry, the IOAS reserves the right to reject an application should that industry be deemed incompatible with the mission of the IOAS.

**2.11 Responsible Down Standard** – the RDS is intended for companies manufacturing and/trading products containing down and/or feathers, applying to the full supply chain of waterfowl down, from hatchling through to the assemblers producing the final products. The standard addresses traceability and animal welfare requirements, and applies to both blended and 100% certified products; however, final products may only be labeled as RDS if the 100% of the down or feathers in them are certified.

**2.11 Responsible Wool Standard** – the RWS was published in June 2016 and is a tool to ensure that wool comes from sheep that have been raised with respect to their ‘Five Freedoms’, that the land has been managed responsibly, and to provide a robust chain of custody system to validate the source of the material for all product claims. The new standard is a global benchmark for animal welfare and land management practices in sheep farming. Certification to the RWS is divided into two scopes: farm and supply chain. For an initial period Textile Exchange are performing their own approval for CBs for the farm level scope so IOAS is only offering CBs accreditation according to the supply chain scope, whilst TE develop training materials for the farm level.

### **3. Textile Exchange Accreditations**

3.1 The TE Accreditation programme is a voluntary accreditation programme which has been implemented by the IOAS since 2010. TE has reformulated their various standards in 2012-13 such that all standards are based on the CCS.

3.2 The TE Accreditation programme is open to any certification body (CB) which meets the requirements of the programme and has been pre-approved by the scheme

owner. Forms for application for pre-approval by TE can be obtained from [lee@textileexchange.org](mailto:lee@textileexchange.org)

3.3 Certification bodies accredited under the TE scheme are required to certify against the relevant standard and abide by the interpretations and guidance contained in the CCS Implementation Manual, Logo Use Guide and other guidelines developed by TE, all of which can be downloaded from the TE web site.

#### **4. Requirements for accreditation**

4.1 Applicant CBs must first apply to the scheme owner by completing the application form indicating that IOAS will be the Accreditation Body (AB) and paying the application fee. This applies to each individual TE standard – i.e. to add on standards to the already existing TE accreditation scope, the application must first be approved by TE.

4.2 IOAS will send the applicant CB a standard application form.

4.3 TE, upon consultation with the AB reserves the right to issue a pre-accreditation grace period of a maximum of 18 months counting from the moment the AB accepts the application during which a limited number of certificates can be issued. The agreement signed with TE includes the CB's commitment to complete the accreditation process successfully or transfer clients to an accredited CB before the grace period expires. The requirements and actions which must be met in order to qualify for a grace period are described in the following documents: TE Standard Certification Grace period for OCS ad RCS (2013) and TE Standard Certification Grace Period RCS (2014).

4.4 The requirements against which a certification body is assessed are the TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures which can be downloaded from the TE web site. These requirements are based upon and in addition to ISO/IEC 17065.

4.5 The TE Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification demand of the IOAS that the assessment and surveillance service is conducted in line with ISO/IEC 17011 and the assessment of CBs includes the following elements:

- a) Accreditation audit to the headquarters/main office of the CB;
- b) Witness audit performed at a unit certified by the CB (to verify chain of custody, protective measures against commingling etc.);
- c) Continuous monitoring of approved TE CBs including performing at least one update accreditation visit to the/an office conducting TE certification and at least one witness or review audit of granted accreditation every year;

d) A minimum of 5 operator files or 1.5% of the files of operators contracted by the CB should be checked on each update accreditation visit;

4.6 In cases where the CB has no or few operators at the time of initial assessment the witness audit at the initial on-site visit may be a mock inspection.

4.7 The IOAS reserves the right to require assistance from a technical expert as it deems necessary and depending on the application of the standard. The cost of such experts at on-site visits is borne by the certification body. Such a need and a cost estimation will be communicated before the application proceeds or before proceeding with the visit.

4.8 Under IOAS procedures, assessment of the CB can be combined with assessment against other schemes.

4.9 Applicant CBs that are already IOAS clients may apply at any time in their accreditation cycle (but first applying to TE) and the IOAS will endeavour to conduct the assessment linked to on-going surveillance procedures. However, if the timing of the application does not fit with existing schedules, additional visits may be required and corresponding fees will be charged. The duration of the initial accreditation contract in such circumstances will be synchronised with all other programmes which means that the initial TE accreditation cycle may be shorter than five years.

4.10 The IOAS is responsible for granting accreditation in line with its normal procedures. The accreditation decision is notified to TE which will in turn conclude a 'certifier's contract' with the CB. TE reserves the right to withdraw or terminate the contract and to call on the IOAS to investigate problems. Applicants are informed that Textile Exchange has the right to accompany the IOAS assessors on site visits. For further details, see the certifier's contract.

## **5. Reference to TE accreditation and the scheme owner**

5.1 The accredited certification body may make reference to being accredited by the IOAS in accordance with the requirements described and referred to in the General Operating Manual.

5.2 On being accredited, the certification body will sign a contract with the IOAS which sets out the rights and obligations of both parties. This contract includes a date by which the CB must submit itself for re-assessment which is 18 months before contract expiry. A sample copy of this contract is available on the IOAS web site and should be consulted before application.

5.3 On being accredited the CB will also receive a formal accreditation certificate which states that the organisation has been found to be 'in compliance with the TE Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification Bodies'. The relevant standard scope(s) and applicable materials/industries will be indicated. The IOAS will also publish the name of the CB on a public list indicating full details of the accreditation, the current scope and countries of activity. It is this list which takes precedence over any other source.

5.4 The TE web site also maintains information on accredited CBs.

5.5 No reference to approval by TE or use of the TE or scheme logo may be made until a 'certifier's contract' is concluded with TE.

5.6 The accredited certification body may make suitable claims on promotional material (brochures, web sites etc.) that the specified programme operates in compliance with the TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures.

## **6. Fees**

6.1 The IOAS fee schedule is available at <http://www.ioas.org/assessment/application/>. The IOAS is able to provide a quotation of fees for the requested services but due to the many variables involved, these can only be used for orientation.

6.2 Certifiers applying for accreditation to implement more than one TE standard will be charged for an additional standard scope according to the current fee schedule. Unless applied alone the CCS is not considered a standard scope in its own right i.e. TE accreditation to OCS is considered one standard even though it incorporates the CCS.

6.3 Under the certifier's contract signed with the TE and as specified in the TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures, the CB is required to pay to TE an annual fee for each site certified.

For any specific questions on the TE programme please contact your assigned Client Manager or Jennyfer Karall on [karall@ioas.org](mailto:karall@ioas.org)

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## **Contact details**

Textile Exchange  
822 Baldrige Street,  
O'Donnell,

IOAS Inc.

TX 79351

USA

T: +1 806 428 3411

F: +1 806 428 3475

E: [lee@textileexchange.org](mailto:lee@textileexchange.org)

W: [www.textileexchange.org](http://www.textileexchange.org)

IOAS Inc.

122 1/2 Broadway N Ste 100 #45853

Fargo, ND 58102-5082

USA

T: +701-353-3353

E: [info@ioas.org](mailto:info@ioas.org)

W: [www.ioas.org](http://www.ioas.org)