

RESPONSIBLE WOOD LIMITED

Standards Development Policies & Procedures Manual

PROCEDURE 01

V 5.3 -Issue 2 /2023



[Australian Forestry Standard Limited (RW) has developed two Australian Standards® within the Australian Forest Certification Scheme which address wood production from sustainable forest management and the tracking of certified products in the wood and forest products supply chain by a chain of custody mechanism. These Australian Standards® were developed by and are maintained by RW Reference Bodies which comprise of representatives of nominating organisations/associations and individuals with a nominated Chair and secretariat support from RW.]

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This document outlines the policies and procedures that Responsible Wood operates on through the Standards development process. These policies and procedures are consistent with the SDAC document *SDAC Requirements for Accreditation of Standards Development Organisations*

This document is the result of the two merged key documents

1. The policy document SD-POL-03-Setting the Standard
2. Procedures document SD PROC-01 SDO Procedures Manual

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1 About this Procedure Manual

1.1 Purpose of Document

This document details Responsible Wood policies and procedures regarding the role that Responsible Wood has in developing and maintaining standards within its scope of accreditation.

1.2 Scope

This manual defines the policies and procedures for:

- I. Operation of Standards Reference Bodies (SRB) including terms of reference.
- II. Revising and amending the existing standards:
 - AS 4707 – Australian Standard for Chain of custody of wood and forest Products.
 - AS/NZS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management:
- III. Development of new standards development projects – noting that no such projects are currently envisaged.

A standards development project may be:

- To develop a new standard in areas that are not covered by an existing standard.
- To develop a new standard to complement or to support existing standards.
- To revise or amend an existing standard, where the content may not be current or appropriate.
- To adopt certain categories of Australian, industry, or international standards or guidelines.

Existing Responsible Wood policies and procedures will be referenced and will become part of this Policy and Procedures manual.

This manual addresses the relevant requirements as set out in:

- SDAC Requirements for the Accreditation of a Standards Development Organisation
- PEFC International Standard PEFC ST 1001:2017 Standard Setting Requirements.

1.3 Application of these Policies and Procedures

This manual incorporates the three previous documents.

- The policy document SD-POL-03-Setting the Standard
- Procedures document SD PROC-01 SDO Procedures Manual
- Procedures document SD PROC-02-SRBRepresentation (part)

A number of additional policies and procedures were also referenced in previous versions of the two documents above. The contents of these procedures have been included in this manual and the previously referenced procedures as indicated below have been removed.

- SD Policy 05 Records Management
- SD-PROC-06 SRB Public Comment Draft
- WI 09 SDP Review V1
- Standards Development Procedure 04 – Standards Reference Body – Procedures for the Committee Chair

- Standards Development Procedure 08 - Standard Reference Body Procedure for Achieving and Demonstrating Consensus.

The manual commences each section with the relevant standards development policy that Responsible Wood adheres to following by procedures as to how the policy objective is to be achieved.

This manual shall apply to:

- Board and staff (including contractors/consultants) of Responsible Wood
- Members of Standards Reference Bodies.
- Other people and organisations with an interest in the Australian Forestry Standards.

1.4 Distribution and Maintenance

The manual is maintained through a regular cycle of reviews, the document is controlled in accordance with the Responsible Wood document control policies.

The current released version is held on the Responsible Wood network and published to the Web Site.

1.5 Amending this procedure

The Responsible Wood Board may approve amendments to this or related Procedures. The CEO will:

- Consult the relevant Standards Reference Body on any proposed amendments, and
- Consult with the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) on any significant amendments to ensure they are consistent with the conditions of Responsible Wood’s accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation.

1.6 Definitions

All terms and abbreviations are defined in the Responsible Wood Glossary of Terms, Abbreviations and Definitions

1.7 References

1.7.1 Normative References

Relevant documentation	Responsible Wood document or link
SDAC Requirements for Accreditation of Standards Development Organisations	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/bed13c24-3b27-45c4-99a3-5172feebcf5c/SDAC-001_Requirements_for_Accreditation_of_SD_Organisations.pdf.aspx
PEFC ST 1001:2017 Standard Setting Requirements	https://sgec-pefc.jp/d/01ST011%20PEFC_ST_1001_2017.pdf
PEFC ST 1003:2018 ((and any subsequent revisions) Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements	https://cdn.pefc.org/pefc.org/media/2019-01/b296ddcb-5f6b-42d8-bc98-5db98f62203e/6c7c212a-c37c-59ee-a2ca-b8c91c8beb93.pdf
Responsible Wood Standards Development Procedure 02- SRB Procedures for Representation	https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SD-PROC-02-SRB-Representation.pdf

Relevant documentation	Responsible Wood document or link
Responsible Wood Standards Development Procedure 03 – Standard Reference Bodies – Members Code of Conduct	https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SD-PROC-03-SRC-Charter-and-Code-of-Conduct.pdf
Responsible Wood Standards Reference Bodies Nomination Form	
Responsible Wood Template Registration of new project with Standards Australia	
Responsible Wood -Work Instruction New Work Items – Registration	
Responsible Wood - Work Instruction New Development Plan	
RW Corporate Management Procedure 08 for Complaints and Grievances	https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CM-PROC-08-Complaints-and-Grievances-Procedure-mar-22.pdf
Style Manual for Accredited Standards Development Organisations	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/4a59d369-12c6-41b6-980b-3957d84bd94b/SDAC-004_Style_Manual_for_Accredited_SDOs.pdf.aspx

1.7.2 Informative References

Relevant documentation	Responsible Wood document or link
Australian Government Privacy Act	https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/the-privacy-act/
Standardisation Guide 001 Preparing Standards	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/8067250b-e8c3-4db5-a661-e1df043e6b3d/SG-001-Preparing-Standards.pdf.aspx
Standardisation Guide 002 Structure and Operation of Standardisation Committees	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/00a7a293-b416-4bb5-81f7-79e9a6cf2107/SG-002-Structure-and-Operation-of-Standardisation-Committees.pdf.aspx
Standardisation Guide 003 Standards and Other Publications	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/d9da035d-2fbc-4417-98c1-aa9e85ef625d/SG-003-Standards-and-Other-Publications.pdf.aspx
Standardisation Guide 004 Roles & Responsibilities of Standardisation	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/946ee46b-1fa3-482e-89ea-28cb7388e91d/SG-004-Roles-and-Responsibilities-in-Standardisation.pdf.aspx
Standardization Guide 005 Technical Governance and Advisory Structures for the Standards Development Process	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/b4c1ba9f-4121-4f1f-9ad3-16f3effaabec/SG-005-Technical-Governance-and-Advisory-Structures-for-the-Standards-Development-Process.pdf.aspx

Relevant documentation	Responsible Wood document or link
Standardisation Guide 006 Rules for the Structure and Drafting of Australian Standards	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/1bbbe709-5dd4-41f3-a5ff-521e4f0c2958/SG-006-Rules-for-the-Structure-and-Drafting-of-Australian-Standards.pdf.aspx
Standardisation Guide 007 Adoption Of International Standards	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/98dfe8c9-4d35-4b14-bcf3-1bfef35e935f/SG-007-Adoption-of-International-Standards.pdf.aspx
Standardisation Guide 008 Committee Dispute Avoidance and Resolution	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/3f455ec8-7df3-4280-90a6-20ab43ef4b91/SG-008-Committee-Dispute-Avoidance-and-Resolution.pdf.aspx
Standardization Guide 009 Preparation of Standards for Legislative Adoption	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/893351a3-00f5-405a-9e8c-3a169884f41e/SG-009-Preparation-of-Standards-for-Legislative-Adoption.pdf.aspx
Standardization Guide 015 Australian Involvement in International Standardisation	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/25db223b-7196-4369-b111-be43891f61f5/SG-015-Australian-Involvement-in-International-Standardisation.pdf.aspx
Standardization Guide 020 Participation by Consumers in Standardization	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/2da58ba0-46ed-4f18-a6da-ccf4bcd6234a/SG-020-Participation-by-consumers-in-standardisation.pdf.aspx
Responsible Wood Standards Development Procedure 05- Standards Reference Body - Travel Expenses	https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SD-PROC-05-Travel-Expenses-1.pdf
Guide to Nett Benefit	https://www.standards.org.au/getmedia/72d95833-2d77-4bae-bcbb-a189bb54a7ff/SDAC-007_Guide_to_Net_Benefit_for_Accredited_SDOs.pdf.aspx

1.8 Application of PEFC ST 1001:2017

PEFC ST 1001:2017 Standards Setting Requirements (and any subsequent revisions) is listed as a normative reference. PEFC ST 1001:2017 provides normative requirements which are mandatory and are to be applied in conjunction with, and as part of this procedure. PEFC ST 1001 provides additional requirements that must be applied in addition to those of the Standards Australia Standardization Guides and other Standards Australia normative documents.

All process requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 shall be applied and all records required by PEFC ST 1001:2017 shall be maintained. Where normative requirements of Standards Australia and PEFC conflict, it is the responsibility of the RW CEO to inform Standards Australia and PEFC and determine a resolution.

2 Background

Sustainable forest management (SFM) in the context of the standards managed and maintained by Responsible Wood, is synonymous with 'good' or 'sound' forest management and well-managed forests.

These terms are based on the premise that a forest production system is not sustainable unless the ecological components and processes on which the system depends are maintained. Forest managers and owners now accept that in managing forests for wood production other aspects must be considered, such as environmental, economic and social values, with the goal of achieving environmentally responsible, socially acceptable and economically viable forest management.

The Responsible Wood project was an initiative sponsored by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (through the Forestry and Forest Products Committee of its Primary Industries Standing Committee), the National Association of Forest Industries, the Plantation Timber Association of Australia and the Australian Forest Growers during the developmental phase from 2000 to mid-2003.

The development of the standards was supported initially by a steering committee containing representatives of the above sponsors, together with representatives of the Natural Resources Management Ministerial Council's Natural Resources Management Standing Committee and the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Both the Steering Committee and Responsible Wood were accredited by the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) to oversee the development of the forestry standards.

Australian Forestry Standard Ltd began trading as Responsible Wood in 2017

Australian Forestry Standards Limited (RW) remains as the registered entity.

2.1 *Responsible Wood scope of accreditation*

Responsible Wood shall develop standards within its scope of accreditation which is

To develop Australian Standards for forest management for wood production and Australian Standards that support the Australian Forest Certification Scheme

2.2 *The Australian Forest Certification Scheme*

The Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS)

- Provides Australian and overseas consumers with an independent, internationally recognised third-party certification scheme for forest management in Australia; and
- Promotes a culture of 'continuous improvement' of the sustainable forest management practices in Australia.

RW provides the structure and framework within which the Australian Forest Certification Scheme is implemented, maintained, reviewed and promoted to all stakeholders interested in forest certification and wood and wood products chain of custody.

2.3 *Standards Australia*

Standards Australia (Standards Australia, 2010) is the nation's peak non-government Standards organisation. It is charged by the Commonwealth Government to meet Australia's need for contemporary, internationally aligned Standards and related services.

The work of Standards Australia enhances the nation's economic efficiency, international competitiveness and contributes to community demand for a safe and sustainable environment.

It leads and promotes a respected and unbiased standards development process ensuring all competing interests are heard, their points of view considered, and consensus reached.

Standards Australia also recognises, rewards and promotes excellence in design and innovation through the Australian International Design Awards program and other design promotion initiatives.

2.4 Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC)

The primary objectives of the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) of the Board of Standards Australia Ltd (

- a) to assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities as Australia's peak national standards body and in the development of Australian Standards, which include joint Australian / New Zealand Standards, and related documents
- b) to perform the duties and responsibilities in accordance with the role and powers delegated by the Board in relation to the accreditation of Standards Development Organisations (SDOs) to develop and maintain Australian Standards

The primary role of the Committee is to assist the Board to:

- Exercise oversight of SA's processes, policies and procedures as a developer of Australian Standards and related documents
- Provide process governance for the development of Australian Standards by SA, and as agreed on a case by case basis for other accredited SDOs as required and to ensure compliance with appropriate processes for the development of Australian Standards
- Determine which projects are resourced by Standards Australia, with reference to published criteria
- Provide guidance on, and if necessary make decisions on, priorities for the development of Australian Standards and other documents in the public interest
- Provide the final point of process dispute resolution within SA as a developer of Australian Standards and related documents.

And, pursuant to the role and powers delegated by the Board, to

- Accredite Standards Development Organisations (SDOs) to develop and maintain Australian Standards in accordance with the rules and guidelines in force from time to time.

2.5 Benefits of standards

Standards make a sustained contribution to national wealth, improving quality of life, increasing employment, improving safety and health (at home, work and play) and using our resources more efficiently. Standards deliver these benefits in the following ways:

- Offer an alternative to regulation, with less red tape and business costs, while still providing security for families, business and consumers.
- Give businesses and consumers confidence that goods and services are safe, reliable and will do the job they were intended for.
- Help consumers make everyday choices between one product and another.

- Support Australian innovation by providing a platform on which to build new ideas.
- Reflect the latest technologies, innovations and community needs.
- Boost Australian production and productivity.
- Save businesses time and money and cut production costs.
- Help cut energy bills and foster new technologies.
- Enable small businesses to become more efficient and grow by using standards, guidelines and handbooks developed by industry experts.
- Make Australian businesses more competitive - products that comply with standards have a competitive edge over products that don't.
- Using international standards, provide exporters with a head start in overseas markets.
- Ensure products manufactured in one country can be sold and used in another.
- Reduce technical barriers to international trade, increase the size of potential markets and position Australian firms to compete in the world economy.
- Complement regulation and make markets work better.
- Help make laws and regulations consistent across Australia - by using a standard, a consumer law in one jurisdiction becomes consistent with a fair-trading regulation in another.

2.6 *Responsible Wood developed Australian Standards*

RW abides by the generally agreed description of a standard as:

- ‘a document, established by consensus and approved by a recognised body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context’

Responsible Wood currently has previously developed two approved Australian Standards

- AS 4707 – Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
- AS/NZS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management

2.6.1 **AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products**

Compliance with the Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products (CoC) will provide assurance that forest and wood products can be tracked through the supply chain from their origin in a certified forest through to end use by a consumer.

2.6.2 **AS/NZS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management**

The Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AFS) embodies forest management performance criteria and requirements that support continual improvement towards sustainable wood production in Australia's native forests and plantations.

2.7 *Schedule of Reviews of RW Standards*

Year	Status and Activity
2002	Original Version of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products

Year	Status and Activity
2003	Original Version of AS/NZS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2006	Review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Wood and Wood Products
2007	Review of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2012-13	Review of AS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2013-14	Review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of custody of wood and forest products
2019-20	Review of AS/NZS 4708 – Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2020	Review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of custody of wood and forest Products
2026	Scheduled review of AS/NZS 4708 – Australian/New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management
2026	Scheduled review of AS 4707 - Australian Standard for Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree-based Products

2.8 Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council

Responsible Wood is a member of the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council** one of 35 countries on the Council including seven non-European countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Malaysia and the USA) with endorsed schemes.

The PEFC Council oversees a global forest certification scheme which includes its own international standards and other relevant documentation and the PEFC Council encourages all its members to participate in the development of PEFC international standards and documentation.

Responsible Wood is committed to be an exemplar member within the PEFC Council and, to that effect, shall:

- Ensure that Responsible Wood staff effectively engage in PEFC Council International Standard development in a timely manner to provide an Australian perspective.
- Provide opportunities for Responsible Wood staff to engage with the PEFC Council and its members by suitable electronic media where attendance at International Standard development meetings is impractical.
- Seek the advice of relevant Responsible Wood standard reference bodies for PEFC International Standard development activities which are within the scope of the forest management and chain of custody standards.

- Collaborate with Standards Australia to further any development pathway for PEFC International Standards to be developed under an ISO International Standard development process where benefit can be demonstrated to all parties.

SECTION 1 – THE ORGANISATION and RESOURCES

3 Responsible Wood Standing in the Forestry Industry

3.1 Responsible Wood Industry Representation Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) shall:

1. Further the interests of its members.
2. Have credibility and repute within the forestry industry.
3. Have a knowledge of the interests and the issues impacting the forestry industry.
4. Achieve effective engagement with all key stakeholders in the forestry industry.
5. Be a registered legal entity.
6. If RW was to undertake certification, accreditation, or similar activities, RW shall maintain a clear separation of the policy making and governance functions of such activities from those of standards development.

3.2 About Responsible Wood

Responsible Wood is a national not-for-profit public company founded in July 2003 that is committed to promoting Sustainable Forest Management in Australia through independent third-party certification.

The vision of Responsible Wood is “To make the Australian Forest Certification Scheme the pre-eminent forest certification scheme of choice for the forest products supply chain from forest to consumer in Australia”.

The objects of Responsible Wood are to:

- Promote sustainable forest management in Australia's forests through an Australian Forestry Standard;
- Support and maintain the development of the AFS, and other related or complementary standards;
- Maintain accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation;
- Support and facilitate the use of the AFS, and any related standards, for forestry certification within Australia through the Australian Forest Certification Scheme; and
- Maintain mutual recognition for the AFS internationally.

RW Members	35
SFM & CoC Certificates:	354
Responsible Wood certified: Forests	19.3 million Ha

This represents 93% of the potential private and public certifiable forests in Australia.

Responsible Wood is the largest Australian forest certification system and one of the largest in the Southern Hemisphere.

Responsible Wood is a member of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes ([PEFC](#)) - one of 31 countries on the Council including seven non-European countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Malaysia and the USA) with 21 endorsed schemes.

The Responsible Wood Forest Management Standards fully comply with the PEFC requirements and will be revised every five years as per the PEFC Guidelines.

Responsible Wood maintains an accurate and up to date website which contains the most recent information relating to the organisation. See <https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/>)

3.3 Management of Responsible Wood

Responsible Wood is managed by a board who are representative of all sectors of the Australian forestry industry. The register of board members is testament to the broad representation in the management of Responsible Wood. ([Responsible Wood Website](#))

3.4 Membership of Responsible Wood

Membership of Responsible Wood is open to any individual or organisation that supports the objects of Responsible Wood. The four membership categories are:

1. Government,
2. Forest and Wood Products Sector,
3. Employee Representative Organisations,
4. General

All other stakeholders are included in the General membership category.

Members are invited to all general meetings of Responsible Wood and provide guidance on issues affecting the Australian forestry industry.

Further information is available at <https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/about-us/members/>)

3.5 Responsible Wood Stakeholder Engagement

RW maintains effective engagement with stakeholders through regular communications and face to face activities. (See the [Responsible Wood](#) website and <https://www.responsiblewood.org.au/news/>)

3.6 Capacity to engage with Interested Parties

Responsible Wood has procedures in place to achieve engagement with all key interested parties.

Responsible Wood will not however allow a group's refusal to engage to impact on its processes to effectively develop and manage its Standards.

Credible attempts will be made to involve significant interests and, as far as reasonably practicable, to achieve meaningful engagement. As a minimum, Responsible Wood will inform these parties about the Standards development activity and take pro-active steps to encourage their involvement.

3.7 Responsible Wood as a Registered Legal Entity

Responsible Wood (Australian Forestry Standard Limited) is a not-for-profit Company, limited by guarantee.

The Company was registered on 23 July 2003. (ABN [34 105 321 702](#))

Responsible Wood was registered on 27 February 2017 ([see ASIC Search](#))

For further information, see [Section 2 Background](#)

3.8 *Responsible Wood Role in Certification and Accreditation*

While RW does not have a direct role in certification, accreditation or similar activities, the two standards AS 4707 and AS/NZS 4708 are used as the basis for certification activities.

If Responsible Wood were to undertake certification, accreditation or similar activities, the Responsible Wood Board shall ensure there is a clear separation of the policy-making and governance functions of such activities from those of standards development through not directing the activities or decisions of the SRB. It may, however, be a participant in SRB deliberations.

4 Resources for Standards Development

4.1 *Responsible Wood Resources Policy*

Responsible Wood (RW) shall

1. Have a structure and resources to support and maintain its Standards development operations. Resources shall include adequate ongoing funding, facilities, and staff.
2. Demonstrate a commitment to, and information on, the future program for the development and maintenance of standards.
3. Have sufficient and competent staff to manage and support its Standards activities.
4. Appoint a person who is responsible for managing the development project for each standard being developed. This person shall be provided with the necessary authority and resources to enable the project to be completed within a reasonable timeframe.
5. Ensure that the Project Management role is clearly separated from any technical representation RW may have on the Standards Reference Body.
6. Notify the SDAC of any significant changes that could materially affect its capacity to be an accredited SDO.

4.2 *Responsible Wood Resources for Standards Development*

Responsible Wood maintains the capacity and resources to develop and to maintain standards within its scope of accreditation.

All Responsible Wood activities consume resources in the form of:

- Human resources.
- Financial resources; and
- Information.

These resources are managed effectively and efficiently to produce the best outcome for Responsible Wood’s Staff and the Forestry Industry.

4.2.1 Human Resources

Responsible Wood maintains a core staff and co-opts specialist staff as required on either a casual or a contractual arrangement.

Responsible Wood undertakes a selection process to ensure that specialist staff are involved in the development or ongoing management and review of standards within its area of accreditation.

All personnel working in areas affecting the quality of Responsible Wood's Standards Development and Management Operations shall be competent on the basis of appropriate education, training, skills and experience, or work under the close and direct supervision of a competent supervisor.

4.2.2 Financial Resources

Responsible Wood financial processes ensure that funds are available through the budget process. This includes staff costs as well as capital and recurrent costs.

The Chief Executive Officer ensures that financial records are retained including all financial forecasts, and progress reports showing actual budget against the forecast.

4.2.3 Information Resources

Responsible Wood develops and maintains information resources with the aim to

- Identify key knowledge for the organisation;
- Catalogue and store this knowledge and make it available to interested parties; and
- Communicate changes to interested parties who have a requirement to utilise the information.

Responsible Wood has developed an effective Web portal to make information available to interested stakeholders.

Responsible Wood engages with suitable organisations to ensure that information resources are protected.

4.3 RW Commitment to Standards Development and Maintenance

RW is committed to the ongoing maintenance of the two standards within its scope of accreditation through ongoing funding for the program as identified in [Schedule of Reviews of RW Standards](#) and [Maintain Standards](#)

4.4 Appointment of Project Manager

Responsible Wood will appoint a Project Manager for each project development activity who is responsible for managing the development project for each standard being developed.

The Project Manager shall be provided with the necessary authority and resources to enable the project to be completed within a reasonable timeframe.

Where the Project Manager is an employee of Responsible Wood, the Project Manager may provide advice but will not exert influence on the decisions of the SRB.

4.5 Responsible Wood Board Involvement in SD Activities

The Responsible Wood Board gives autonomy to the Standards Reference Body SRB to conduct the Standards Development activity. The Responsible Wood Board has to ensure that sufficient resources are provided to the SRB for standards development and maintenance activities.

The Responsible Wood Board has granted autonomy to the SRB and shall not influence, or direct, the SRB on the technical content of the final developed standard.

The Responsible Wood Board will consider the following resourcing activities for standards development and maintenance.

Activity	Reference
Give appropriate delegation to the SRB	RW Board Delegation of Authority
Approve the SDO Policies and Procedures under which the SRB will operate	RW Board Delegation of Authority
Appoint a person who is responsible for managing the development project for each standard being developed.	Appointment of Project Manager
Appoint the independent Chair of the SRB	Independent Chair of SRB
Approve or amend the Terms of Reference for the SRB for this activity	Approval and amendment to Terms of Reference
Approve the membership of the SRB and ensure that the SRB has a balanced membership	Balanced Representation of SRB
Ensure that appropriate secretariat support is available for the activity by either internal staffing or external service providers.	Responsible Wood Resources for Standards Development
Consider reports on the progress of the Standards Development activity throughout the project	
Consider and approve the final process approval to be forwarded to Standards Australia after a successful final SRB ballot on the standard	Process Approval
Consider a report on the review of the Standards Development activity after completion of the project	Continual Improvement of Standards Development process

4.6 *RW Board Delegation of Authority*

A clear separation of roles in relation to the maintenance of the two Australian Forestry Standards has been made between the Responsible Wood Board and the Standard Reference Bodies through a board resolution of 29 October 2013.

The Responsible Wood Board delegates authority to the Standard Reference Bodies:

- i. To act with independence and with authority on the review and maintenance of the standard and technical matters relating to the standard; and
- ii. To approve amendments to the Australian Forestry Standards subject to the bodies compliance with relevant policies, the bodies’ budgets, and procedures adopted by the Responsible Wood Board and the terms of Responsible Wood’s accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation.

The Responsible Wood Board, as the accredited Standards Development Organisation:

- i. Sets policies and the committees’ budgets, and procedures for the operation of the Standard Reference Bodies for the development and maintenance of the Australian Forestry Standards; and

- ii. Ratifies the Standard Reference Bodies decisions subject to the committees' compliance with the Board's policies and procedures and the terms of Responsible Wood's accreditation as a Standards Development Organisation.

4.7 Communication between governance structure and the SRB

Any communication concerning the content of a Standard between RW management and the Standards Reference Body is documented, open and available for audit.

Any communications arising from the Standard Reference Bodies are a standing item on all Responsible Wood Board agendas. The chair of each SRB provides a status report to each board meeting on progress and issues that may require a Board resolution.

4.8 Communication between Responsible Wood and Standards Australia/SDAC

Responsible Wood maintains communication with Standards Australia/. SDAC through the Chief Executive Officer.

(See [Cooperation with Standards Australia and SDAC](#))

5 Responsible Wood Accreditation Policy

In order to achieve and maintain accreditation Responsible Wood (RW) shall—

1. comply with the requirements set out in "[requirements for the Accreditation of a Standards Development Organisation SDAC-001](#)" as may change from time to time;
2. comply with any additional policies or procedures as required by SDAC from time to time.
3. facilitate auditing by SDAC to determine ongoing compliance.
4. submit to the SDAC's determination where there is a conflict in the scope of areas of accreditation; and
5. pay all relevant fees to the SDAC to achieve and maintain accreditation.

5.1 Cooperation with Standards Australia and SDAC

RW recognises that Standards Australia is responsible for the oversight, co-ordination, and governance of SDO Standards development and related activities.

RW co-operates and liaises with the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) and Standards Australia with the intent of enhancing communication and co-ordination of Standards development activities across industry and government.

The Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) operates to encourage and accredit Standards Development Organisations (SDO) in Australia to produce internationally aligned Australian Standards.

Accreditation ensures that Australian Standards retain the quality inherent in the rigorous, transparent and internationally aligned development process.

Responsible Wood fully cooperates with SDAC throughout the audit process and makes available all records required to demonstrate on-going compliance.

Responsible Wood will fully comply with the requirements of the SDAC document, Requirements for the Accreditation of a Standards Development Organisation as available on the SDAC website (see "[requirements for the Accreditation of a Standards Development Organisation SDAC-001](#)")

Responsible Wood specifically

- a) Registers all new Standards development projects with Standards Australia prior to commencing substantial work.
- b) Prepares and makes available to Standards Australia's Project Office an up-to-date Development Plan for each Standards development activity;
- c) Complies with all policies and procedures of the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee ('SDAC'), including for the determination and funding of appeals.
- d) Complies with Standards Australia's administrative procedures, including badging and the format of documents through adherence to the [Style Manual for Accredited Standards Development Organisations](#);
- e) Makes copies of draft and final documents available to Standards Australia via the SDAC Secretariat, as required.
- f) Notifies the SDAC of any significant changes in the organisation's Standards development procedures or significant changes that could materially affect RW's capacity to be an accredited SDO.
- g) Submits to the SDAC's determination where there is a conflict in the scope of areas of accreditation.
- h) Co-operates with Standards Australia and SDAC regarding hand-over of relevant information and records where an SDO's accreditation ceases.
- i) Co-operates with Standards Australia regarding activities of mutual interest.
- j) Facilitates auditing by SDAC to determine ongoing compliance.
- k) Provides a copy of all final published standards to Standards Australia.
- l) Complies with any additional policies and procedures as required by SDAC from time to time; and
- m) Pays all relevant fees to the SDAC to achieve and maintain accreditation.

SECTION 2 OPERATIONS

6 International Alignment

6.1 *Responsible Wood International Alignment Policy*

Responsible Wood (RW) shall ensure that:

1. All staff responsible for managing the standards development process shall be familiar with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (commonly referred to as the TBT Agreement) and particularly Annex 3.
2. The provisions of the TBT agreement are communicated to Standards Reference Bodies. Where appropriate, the development processes and content shall be adjusted accordingly to meet the requirements of the TBT.
3. Where an International Standard is being adopted as an AS, the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 21.1 Regional or national adoption of International Standards and other International Deliverables — Part 1: Adoption of International Standards shall be complied with.

6.2 *Responsible Wood Compliance with Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement*

RW recognises that Australia is a signatory to the WTO GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) which includes the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) agreement (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/tbt_e.htm)

RW will: comply with the provisions of the TBT through the following procedures:

1. At the Commencement meeting, ensure that the requirements and implications of the TBT agreement are discussed; (See [18.6 Commencement Meeting of SRB](#))
2. Ensure that RW Standards do not create unnecessary obstacles to international trade.
3. Not permit RW Standards to give a more favourable treatment of products of national origin when compared to like products originating in any other country.
4. Take steps to comply with the TBT agreement as outlined in the TBT agreement http://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/17-tbt.pdf imposes certain requirements on standards bodies (Annex 3), “Code Of Good Practice For The Preparation, Adoption And Application Of Standards”

Specific procedures that RW has in place are:

5. Make copies of the TBT available to affected RW staff and SRB Members.
6. Ensure staff and SRB Members involved in standards development are aware of the main provisions, particularly of Annex 3.

6.3 *Adoption of International Standard*

(NOTE: Currently not relevant)

If RW were to adopt an international standard as an Australian Standard, it would take all steps to ensure that

- The requirements of [ISO/IEC Guide 21.1 Regional or national adoption of International Standards and other International Deliverables — Part 1: Adoption of International Standards](#) shall be complied with.
- [Standards Australia Standardisation Guide 007: Adoption of International Standards](#) is consulted.

7 Impartial Facilitation

7.1 *Responsible Wood Impartial Facilitation Policy*

Responsible Wood (RW):

1. Shall maintain impartiality and neutrality throughout the Standards development process including safeguarding the objectivity and impartiality of the individuals or groups responsible for Standards development.
2. Shall not influence, or direct, the Standards Reference Body on the technical content of the final document

7.2 *Objectivity and impartiality*

Responsible Wood: (RW) through the Standards Development process:

- Safeguards the objectivity and impartiality of the individuals and groups responsible for Standards Development.
- respects the privacy of its members through adherence to the RW Privacy Policy; **(POL-04-Privacy)** and [RW Compliance with the Australian Privacy Provisions](#)
- Complies with the requirements of the [National Privacy Principles](#) which are contained in the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and subsequent amendments to the Act.
- Ensures that there is a balanced representation of all stakeholder groups on the Standards Reference Body in the Standards development process through adherence to **SD PROC-02-SRB Representation** Policy

7.3 *Project management independence*

Responsible Wood (RW) Management will not influence, or direct, the Standards Reference Body on the technical content of the final document

RW may give guidance to the SRB at the commencement of the standards development activity. After that, any involvement of RW management in the standards development activity will be through any direct representation on the SRB.

Special circumstances where the RW may overrule the decisions of the SRB include but are not limited to:

- RW is not satisfied that there has been adequate stakeholder consultation conducted;
- RW is not satisfied that consensus has been achieved in the final deliberations of the SRB;
- RW is concerned that a major stakeholder group has not had input to the development of the consultation draft.

Where RW is proposing to overrule the decisions of the SRB, RW shall communicate the changes to the SRB along with recommendations as to the steps that the SRB should take to remedy the concerns.

8 Processes and Procedures

8.1 *Responsible Wood Processes and Procedures Policy*

Responsible Wood (RW):

1. Shall have appropriately documented procedures to support its Standards management and development processes
2. Shall include as a minimum procedure for
 - a. the evaluation of new work items;
 - b. establishing a balanced Standards Reference Body;
 - c. public review, including reviews of stakeholder feedback;
 - d. achieving and demonstrating consensus; and
 - e. Final process/publishing approval.
3. Shall regularly review its standards management and development processes and any associated procedures and, if appropriate, update to ensure continuing effectiveness.
4. Shall incorporate suitable privacy protection measures in procedures, including maintaining confidentiality of SRB deliberations.
5. Shall make its standards development procedures freely available to any interested party.
6. Shall record any significant changes to its Standards development processes and make these available for audit.

8.2 *Evaluation of a new work item*

The inclusion of new standards development activities in Responsible Wood's work program is an important aspect of the process. Standards development activities can be triggered by requests from any of the following sources:

- The Board of Responsible Wood;
- An external source such as government, industry, trade association, professional body, business, consumer organisation, or individual;
- An existing Standards Reference Body (SRB);
- Standards Australia.

RW will assess the proposed standard against the following criteria:

- Consistent with Responsible Wood's objectives role and functions
- Within the Responsible Wood's scope of accreditation.
- There is genuine stakeholder support for the proposed standard
- Improve the economic efficiency of the Forestry industry
- More efficient use of resources
- Has political, social or commercial considerations
- There are special interests that support the development of such a standard
- Will deliver a net benefit (See [RW Project Proposals](#))
- Does not create any technical barriers to trade (See [Responsible Wood Compliance with Technical Barriers to Trade \(TBT\) Agreement](#))
- Does not duplicate an existing AS AS-NZS or International standard.

8.3 *Establishment of a Standards Reference Body*

RW will appoint Standard Reference Bodies to oversee the development or review of standards.

Each SRB will have a balanced membership representing a broad spectrum of relevant interests and will be supported by a Responsible Wood appointed Secretariat.

Depending on the nature and scope of the new project, consideration will need to be given to:

- Use of an existing Standards Reference Body in which case the structure of the SRB will need to be reconsidered.
- Creating a new SRB; or
- Disbanding the existing SRB and reforming a new SRB ensuring all stakeholder groups are represented.

See [Balanced Representation of SRB](#)

8.4 *Public review and stakeholder feedback*

RW recognises that it is essential that anyone who feels that they can contribute to a draft standard is provided with an opportunity to comment on its provisions.

RW will make draft standards publicly available via the Responsible Wood website and publicly announce the existence of draft standards;

See [Content Approval and Consensus](#)

8.5 *Achieving and Demonstrating Consensus*

RW acknowledges that there are two key processes in standards development – transparency and consensus – and that consensus shall be embodied in all Australian Standards.

RW ensures that all decisions on the technical content of Australian Standards® have been based on agreed and verifiable consensus.

The Responsible Wood Board arbitrates on whether the criteria for achieving a consensus have been met. Where the Responsible Wood Board deems that consensus has not been achieved it may recommend a process to resolve the impasse.

See [Content Approval and Consensus](#)

8.6 *Final Process Approval*

RW has been granted authority by SDAC to give final process approval to the standard without approval by the Standards Australia Standards Development and Accreditation Committee.

The RW Board will give final process approval provided the standards activity has been conducted in accordance with the Responsible Wood Board delegated authority and in compliance with the procedures outlined in this and other relevant documents.

See [Process Approval](#)

8.7 *Continual Improvement of Standards Development process*

RW is committed to continual improvement of its operations and services aimed at:

- Ensuring an energetic, continuing focus on the needs of RW's members and stakeholders.
- Meeting or exceeding the expectations of investors, members and customers.
- Achieving high levels of staff performance, satisfaction, health and safety.
- Ensuring RW personnel have the necessary skills to ensure continuous improvement.
- Providing important controls for corporate governance.

Responsible Wood seeks to continually improve its operations through:

- Improvement in performance;
- Improvement in the standard of its documentation;
- Improvement in its systems and resources.

RW monitors and improves its operational systems and resources through

- Internal and external audits
- Review of complaints and grievances

RW will document any changes made to its policies and procedures and make these changes available for audit as required.

8.7.1 Regular Review of Standards Development Process

RW will regularly review and continually improve its standards development process by internal audit:

- Prior to any standards development activity;
- Prior to an annual SDAC audit
- Following SDAC audits to address any issues or opportunities for improvement that have been identified as part of the audit.

8.8 Referencing other standards

References to other standards must be valid and relevant to the standard being prepared.

RW does not reference specific clauses as they may change in subsequent editions.

Only the current edition of another standard may be referenced.

The applicability of subsequent editions or amendments of referenced standards is a matter for determination by the users of the standard.

References must be dated unless it is accepted that it will be possible to use all future changes of the referenced document for the purposes of the referring document or for informative references.

8.9 Amending standards

After a standard has been published, new information may be presented or errors found in the printed document. When this occurs an amended issue of the standard may be issued.

Correction amendments may correct misprints or production faults in the document but not add new material or affect the application of the standard. Revised text amendments add new material or change existing requirements that affect the application of the standard.

Amendments must be approved by the RW Board prior to publication.

8.9.1 Time Critical Revisions

PEFC ST 1001:2017 describes a process where a revision can be fast-traced in exceptional circumstances. This process is outside of the process allowed by Standards Australia and may not be permitted. In circumstances where a time-critical revision is necessary, the RW CEO will discuss the circumstances with Standards Australia and PEFC and determine what options (if any) are available to progress a time-critical revision.

8.10 New editions of standards

When a SRB votes on the approval for publication of a standard, there is an implied rider that this approval is for a finite period and that the standard will be revised or withdrawn at some time in the future as circumstances and technologies change.

Once a new edition of a standard is published, the previous edition is deemed to be superseded in terms of representing current practice. Occasionally, copies of the superseded edition may be kept publicly available for special purposes, for instance during a phased implementation or for servicing of older equipment.

8.11 Automatic withdrawal of standards

To ensure that all standards represent current practice, even those in slow-moving areas of technology or ones that are not widely used any standard older than 15 years will be a candidate for automatic withdrawal.

The intention to withdraw these standards is announced well in advance of the proposed withdrawal date, so that users are afforded the opportunity to nominate those standards that they feel are still valid and should not be withdrawn. Where there is sufficient interest in retaining the standard it will be revised and reissued (revision may be simply updating references, the content remaining unchanged). Where there is no interest in retaining the standard, it will be withdrawn.

8.12 RW Compliance with the Australian Privacy Provisions

RW shall incorporate suitable privacy protection measures, including maintaining confidentiality of SRB deliberations. These steps are included in the SRB Members Code of Conduct. (Further details in Privacy Provisions Fact sheet at <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles/>)

RW staff shall take steps to protect the privacy of all parties and advise SRB members as to their responsibilities in protecting the privacy of individuals.

9 Records

9.1 Responsible Wood Records Policy

Responsible Wood (RW):

1. Shall keep and maintain adequate records of its standards development and management activities in order to demonstrate compliance with SDAC accreditation requirements
2. shall have a records management policy that specifies the records to be kept, by whom and for how long.
3. Standards development records for each published standard shall include, but not necessarily be limited to—
 - a) net benefit and project approval;

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Standards Reference Body (SRB) or work group composition (interest groups); c) public comment document; d) comments and their disposition; e) document approved by the SRB; f) SRB approval, including compliance with consensus procedures; and g) final process/publication approval. <p>4. Standards development records shall be retained for at least ten years from the date of publication of a Standard or two review cycles whichever is the greater</p> <p>5. Shall make the records relating to a standards development project available to industry, government and the community where requested.</p> |
|---|

9.2 *Responsible Wood Records Management*

Responsible Wood recognises its responsibilities to provide a framework to initiate and maintain record keeping practices to meet its needs and accountability requirements that are compatible with relevant standards and reflect prevailing community concern for best practice.

This policy supports the company's business in an efficient and accountable manner as well as to support and document decision-making processes be they enduring evidential or informational value for future reference.

RW will

- a) Create, capture, and maintain records to facilitate the effective functioning of RW and the protection and preservation of its corporate memory.
- b) Ensure that electronic data is not lost through a rigorous backup system;
- c) Retain information as evidence to demonstrate compliance for a minimum of 10 years and two standards review cycles from the date of publication of the Standard.
- d) Retain records where the absence of such information would reduce confidence in the quality of the product and/or service supplied by Responsible Wood;
- e) Maintain records/minutes of SRB meetings including the outcomes of considerations.
- f) Retain records to demonstrate compliance to SDAC and PEFC Requirements.

9.2.1 **Data and Records**

A record is defined as recorded information of any kind, and in any form, that has been created or received and maintained by RW as evidence in the business's transactions and the good conduct of its activities.

Information may be represented by, but not limited to, data in computer systems, paper, images, photographs, e-mail messages or registers and becomes a record when used as evidence of a transaction or activity.

RW has procedures in place to ensure that:

- Records are stored in a legible and identifiable format, clear in intention and are self-explanatory or supported by documentation that provides precise descriptions of the information contained.
- Records are stored and maintained in such a way that it is readily retrievable in facilities that provide a suitable environment to prevent damage or deterioration and to prevent loss.

- Records are made available for evaluation by the SDAC Auditor and other interested parties.

9.3 *Access to records by interested parties*

RW is committed to demonstrating the transparency and consensus of its standards development processes to other relevant stakeholders who have a genuine interest in the Australian Standards within its scope of accreditation.

RW shall

- Make all relevant Standards Development documentation available on the RW website.
- Make processes and records relating to a standards development project available to industry, government and the community subject to the RW Privacy Policy where requested.
- Consider the principles of openness and transparency when considering requests but recognise the needs of privacy and SRB confidentiality as outlined in the RW Code of Conduct
- Redact parts of records or make records unavailable to protect the privacy of individuals or organisations where appropriate

Based on these commitments and the importance of Australian Standards, RW as an accredited SDO will:

- Consider any formal application from a relevant stakeholder who has a genuine interest in the Australian Standards within RW's scope of accreditation to conduct an audit of RW standards development processes provided requests are in relation to compliance against SDAC criteria;

NOTE: A relevant stakeholder is one that uses or is influenced by the development and maintenance of Australian Standards AS-4707 and AS/NZS-4708.
- correspond with the relevant stakeholder to ensure that the terms of reference for the audit are well understood by both parties;
- advise the relevant stakeholder of the terms and conditions of such an audit
- make available records which pertain to the standards development, maintenance, and review processes for AS/NZS 4708 or AS 4707;
- make available appropriate RW staff to the appointed auditors of the relevant stakeholder for the duration of the audit
- respond to all communications with the relevant stakeholder in a prompt and timely manner
- provide this policy to relevant stakeholders upon request.

10 Maintain Standards

10.1 Standards Maintenance Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) will regularly review standards within its scope of accreditation to ensure that they are up-to-date and current.

This review period shall not be greater than seven years.

10.2 Regular review and maintenance of standards

RW is firmly committed to maintaining and reviewing current Australian Standards as well as any future Australian Standards which it develops within its scope of accreditation.

Responsible Wood:

- Regularly reviews the technical content its current Australian Standards, supplements or other documentation. This will include evaluating the Standards (performing a gap analysis) against PEFC International Standards, related Australian Standard (if any), relevant ISO Standards, laws and regulations, latest scientific knowledge and research to identify potential gaps in the Standards ;
 - Reviews will be undertaken at least every 5 years (See [2.7 Schedule of Reviews of RW Standards](#))
 - Initiates the review process for Australian Standards so that the revised version of the Australian Standards is available before the expiry of the current version;
 - Maintains the current Australian Standards by undertaking amendments to the Australian Standards where such a requirement is demonstrated to and approved by RW;
 - Continually monitors emerging issues that relate to Australian forests and react appropriately should these issues impact on the content of the standards;
 - Captures, records and considers feedback on Standards from all sources including feedback submitted through the RW website, complaints, feedback from auditors and certification bodies, feedback from the SRB or its members, from regulators, from meetings, from training courses and any other source.
 - Provides a formal rulings process of the requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards where the relevant standard Reference Body provides interpretation of the requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards or supplements to the Australian Standards and the ruling is made available to the public;
 - Undertakes any rulings process throughout the life of the Australian Standard;
- Note: Where feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need for revision, the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 for stakeholder/public consultation apply.*

10.3 Decision Making

Based upon the feedback received, the gap analysis, feedback from the SRB, any additional matters listed above and the outcome of stakeholder/public consultation, the RW Board shall determine either to reconfirm the Standards or undertake a revision. Where the decision is made to reconfirm the Standard, this decision will be justified and made publicly available. Where a decision is made to revise a standard, RW shall specify the type of revision e.g. major, minor or editorial.

11 Inquiries and Disputes

11.1 Inquiries and Disputes Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Maintain an inquiries and disputes policy to accept and respond to public enquires regarding the technical content of a published standard.
2. Maintain a documented procedure to hear complaints and handle appeals arising out of the Standards development process. The complaints and appeals procedure shall—
 - a) be fair and unbiased;
 - b) not impose an undue burden on any party;
 - c) provide for the timely hearing of complaints, and
 - d) ensure each complaint is fully addressed.
3. Maintain Records of each complaint or appeal, and the outcome.
4. Regularly review and update where necessary the procedure for hearing complaints and appeals

11.2 Inquiries and complaints procedure

(See also [CM 08 Complaints Procedure](#))

RW recognises that disagreements may arise against the organisation or against the standards development process.

Inquiries concerning the interpretation of specific requirements/clauses of the Australian Standards may fall into one of the following groups:

- *Opinion* – a response to a query which is supplied by RW and is based on experience with the workings of the relevant Standard Reference Body;
- *Interpretation* – when a response to a query is agreed upon and supplied by the relevant Standard Reference Body on a one-off basis on matters which are not regarded as having a wide area of application; and
- *Ruling* – when the relevant Standard Reference Body provides an interpretation on a matter which has a wide area of application, but generally, does not contain specific requirements suitable for inclusion in the relevant Australian Standard.

The CEO will respond to inquiries regarding the technical content of standards within Responsible Wood's scope of accreditation in a timely manner in accordance with the [RW Complaints Procedure](#).

RW will ensure that all complaints, appeals and grievances are

- Investigated in a fair and unbiased manner
- Handled so as to not place an undue burden on the party;
- Addressed in a timely manner.
- Are fully addressed and tracked as per the [Responsible Wood Complaints Procedure](#) which outlines the type of grievances and complaints which may occur and the steps taken to resolve them. [CM 08 Complaints Procedure](#)
- Recorded in the register of complaints and make the register available for audit and to any interested parties.

12 IP and Copyright

12.1 IP and Copyright Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Shall ensure that it owns all intellectual property rights in, or is duly licensed to incorporate any third party material into, the Standard(s) developed by it.
2. Shall have a patent policy that restricts the inclusion of patented items in a standard unless the use of a patented item is justifiable for technical reasons and the rights holder agrees to negotiate licenses with interested applicants, wherever located, on reasonable terms and conditions.
3. When assuming responsibility for standards developed by another Organisation (including an SDO), RW shall ensure all existing rights and obligations related to these Standards have been negotiated and agreed with the Organisation.

12.2 Intellectual Property

RW will

- a) Determine if there are any IP issues at the commencement meeting (See [18.6 Commencement Meeting of SRB](#))
- b) Ensure that all intellectual property rights created by Responsible Wood are owned by Responsible Wood (unless otherwise agreed between parties).
- c) Ensure that all RW developed Standard(s) do not infringe the rights of any third party (including without limitation any intellectual property rights).

12.3 Patents

A standard does not confer a monopoly on one section of industry to the detriment of another that can provide an equally satisfactory article. Nonetheless, on exceptional occasions, technical reasons may justify inclusion in the standard of items or services covered by patent rights. There is no objection in principle to this, provided that certain rules are adhered to. The rules governing patented items in standards are those adopted by ISO and IEC.

RW recognises that it is highly desirable not to specify patented items as a requirement in a standard. To do so may inhibit use of the standard and/or provide the owner of a patent an unfair advantage. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where inclusion of a patented item is essential.

RW will not include any patented item or material in a standard unless the use of a patented item is justifiable for technical reasons.

Where patented items or material is included in a RW developed standard, RW will negotiate appropriate licenses with the rights holder.

12.4 Copyright

The copyright of all Responsible Wood developed standards is negotiated prior to the standard being published. In the absence of an agreement the copyright is normally vested in Responsible Wood.

It is the responsibility of SRB members to ensure that any material put forward for inclusion in a standard does not infringe a third party’s copyright. Material covered by a third party’s copyright may be included in a standard only after permission has been obtained from the copyright holder.

Where SRB members submit material that they, their employers or nominating organizations have originated, and where such material is subsequently included in a standard, the right of the originator of the material to continue to reproduce that material in the form in which it was originally submitted is recognised.

12.5 Existing Rights and Obligations

NOTE Currently not relevant to Responsible Wood

If Responsible Wood were to accept responsibility for standards developed by another Organisation (including an SDO), Responsible Wood will ensure that

- a) All existing rights and obligations related to these Standards have been negotiated and agreed with the Organisation.
- b) All copyright has been transferred from the organisation to Responsible Wood
- c) Any licensing agreements that had been entered into with third parties have been transferred to Responsible Wood.

13 Trademark Licence

13.1 Trademark Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Shall enter into a licensing agreement with Standards Australia regarding the use of the ‘Australian Standard®’ trademark, logo and any associated graphics.
2. Shall comply with the [Accredited SDO style manual](#) including any requirements relating to the use of the word mark, logo and text required to be included in published standards.

13.2 Trademarks

RW will register with IP Australia all trademarks developed and owned by Responsible Wood. The Responsible Wood trade mark is registered for the following goods and services: (Trade Mark Registration Number 1886864)

- Paper, cardboard and goods made from these materials including packaging and wrapping material printed matter, stationery being goods in class 16
- Building materials (non-metallic) especially derived from wood either in solid or composite form being goods in class 19
- Forestry products not included in other classes being goods in class 31
- Forestry services being services in class 44

13.3 Trademark Licence

While Responsible Wood retains copyright on Responsible Wood developed standards, Responsible Wood is required to enter into an agreement with Standards Australia to provide to Standards Australia an exclusive worldwide licence to publish, distribute, market and sell each Australian Standard® brand standard developed by Responsible Wood.

Responsible Wood will

- Enter into a licensing agreement with Standards Australia regarding the use of the 'Australian Standard®' trademark, logo and any associated graphics.
- Comply with the [Style Manual For Accredited SDO's](#) including any requirements relating to the use of the word mark, logo and text required to be included in published standards.
- May enter into other agreements with Standards Australia regarding sale and distribution of Responsible Wood developed standards.

14 International Participation

14.1 International Participation Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Recognises that Standards Australia is the Australian member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). Participation in the standardisation activities of these two bodies shall be through SA.
2. Shall comply with the appropriate SDAC procedures and any necessary directions from the SDAC secretary if participating in IEC or ISO activities

14.2 International Participation Procedure

Responsible Wood (RW)

- Recognises that Standards Australia is the Australian member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).
- Engages in relevant international standards development which may be initiated by Standards Australia or Responsible Wood.
- Ensures that appropriate funding for travel and accommodation costs for Responsible Wood staff to attend relevant International Standard development activities is available in the Responsible Wood budget.

Where RW participates in International Standards development, which is aligned with its scope of accreditation, RW will:

- Comply with the appropriate SDAC procedures relating to international involvement as outlined in [SDAC Procedure 02 Participation in International Committees](#)
- Liaise with Standards Australia on the schedule of International Standard development opportunities which would be within the scope of Responsible Wood as an accredited SDO;
- Provide New Work Items (NWI) for international Standards where such NWIs would be within its scope of accreditation from SDAC;
- Consider requests from Standards Australia to provide suitably qualified delegates for International Standard development work which is within its scope of accreditation;
- Consider requests from Standards Australia to provide secretariat for international technical committees Standards where the international Standards activity would be within its scope of accreditation;

- Ensure that any nominated delegate has the backing and support of Responsible Wood for international Standards development work;
- Ensure that the nominated delegate has technical support of one of Responsible Wood’s SRB’s or the support of a balanced group of Australian interested parties as agreed between Responsible Wood and Standards Australia;
- Agree to utilise Standards Australia Standards Development – [SG-015 – Australian Involvement in International Standardisation](#) to facilitate the delegate’s nomination and work activity;
- Seek the advice, expertise and experience of Standards Australia in preparing the nominated delegate for international Standard development work;

14.3 Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council

Responsible Wood is a member of the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council** one of 35 countries on the Council including seven non-European countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Gabon, Malaysia and the USA) with endorsed schemes.

See [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes \(PEFC\) Council](#)

15 Co-operation and Liaison

15.1 Co-operation and Liaison Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Shall where appropriate, cooperate with other SDOs, including Standards Australia, regarding activities of mutual interest and with the intent of enhancing communication and co-ordination of Standards development activities across industry and government.

15.2 Co-operation and Liaison Procedure

Responsible Wood (RW):

- Participates in joint SDO forums and shares information as appropriate with other SDO’s
- Makes standards documentation available on the website for other SDO’s as required
- Liaises with other SDO’s including Standards Australia on request.

16 Termination

16.1 Termination Policy

Responsible Wood (RW)

1. Has a documented procedure(s) covering the eventuality of RW either becoming insolvent and winding up, or deciding to no longer retain its accreditation.
2. This procedure(s) shall relate to the standards development and management activities of the SDO (not financial or legal) and documents
 - a) Initial and ongoing advice to SDAC.
 - b) Notification of stakeholders and particularly members of the Standards Reference Body(s).

- c) Transfer of the ownership and licensing of the copyright in published standards.
- d) Handover to SDAC of relevant information and records where an SDO's accreditation ceases, subject to compliance with relevant privacy requirements.

16.2 Termination Procedure

If Responsible Wood ceases to be accredited as an SDO, the IP attached to Responsible Wood developed standards within its scope of accreditation will be transferred to another like-minded accredited SDO or to Standards Australia.

Where there is an intention for Responsible Wood to cease being accredited, key stakeholders, including SDAC and SRB members, will be notified as soon as practicable.

When Responsible Wood is considering ceasing accreditation, either by voluntarily withdrawing or forced through organisational changes, the following steps will be taken.

1. Prior to confirmation of the decision to cease accreditation.
 - a) Advise the Responsible Wood Board of the current status relating to accreditation including the steps that need to be taken when terminating accreditation;
 - b) Advise the SDAC secretary that accreditation may cease;
 - c) Advise the Standard Reference Body chairs and members to cease all standards development activities;
 - d) Advise all affected stakeholders and stakeholder groups of the possibility of accreditation ceasing;
2. Following the decision to cease accreditation
 - a) Advise the SDAC secretary that Responsible Wood has formally withdrawn from accreditation and the steps being taken with respect to the transfer of the IP;
 - b) Negotiate the transfer of ownership and IP of the standards to either another accredited SDO with a similar scope, or to Standards Australia;
 - c) Develop a deed to transfer the ownership and licensing of the copyright in published standards to the replacement SDO or to Standards Australia
 - d) Advise SAI Global of the termination of accreditation and the arrangements for transfer of the IP and copyright ownership.
 - e) At the request of SDAC, handover to SDAC relevant information and records, subject to compliance with relevant privacy requirements.
 - f) Remove from any website and printed material the AS Logo, the trademark Australian Standard; and inferences or statements that imply <SDO> is still accredited.

SECTION 3 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

17 General Requirements

17.1 Standards Development – General Requirements Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) shall ensure that:

1. All Standard it is responsible for shall be within its scope of accreditation.
2. A Standard shall not duplicate an existing Australian Standard. Where such duplication occurs, justification or explanation shall be included in the standard.
3. Standards developed for conformance assessment purposes (i.e. the basis of a certification scheme) shall comply with the principles in ISO/IEC 17007, Conformity assessment - Guidance for drafting normative documents suitable for use for conformity assessment.
4. All reasonable efforts shall be made to avoid the creation of conflicting requirements between Standards on the same or similar subjects.
5. A copy of the final published standard is supplied to Standards Australia.
6. Responsible Wood (RW) shall not overrule the decisions of the SRB or change the standard unless there are special circumstances. The circumstances where such occurrences may apply shall be documented.
7. If RW was proposing to overrule or change the decisions of the SRB, it shall be done in consultation with the SRB. Communication between RW and the SRB concerning the changes shall be documented.

17.2 RW Project Proposals

See also [Section 20 Standards Development Project Proposal](#)

Responsible Wood shall develop Australian Standards which:

- Have a high level of integrity and credibility;
- Have the support of the industry and stakeholders;
- Are developed in an open and transparent manner.

A new project proposal may be:

- To develop a new standard in areas that are not covered by an existing standard;
- To develop a new standard to complement or to support existing standards;
- To revise or amend an existing standard, where the content may not be current or appropriate;
- To adopt certain categories of Australian, industry, or international standards or guidelines.

Responsible Wood will develop a project proposal for each standards development activity.

This proposal shall cover

- the scope and objective of the proposed standard;
- the need for the proposed Standard;
- a broad base of support for the development of the proposed Standard;

- the Net Benefit of the standard including:
- the benefits of the proposed standard in terms of one or more of the following:
- Support for innovation, trade and economic benefit.
- Advancement of the health, safety and wellbeing of the community.
- Protection of the natural environment.
- International competitiveness.
- potential or actual impacts of implementing the Standard;
- Where a Net Benefit is required to be developed, guidance is available from SDAC (see [Standards Australia Guide to Nett Benefit](#))
- whether there are any International Standards on the same subject and the reasons why such International Standards were not being adopted or used as the basis for the proposed standard;
- If appropriate, the nature of any likely conformity assessment activities (such as testing, inspection, and certification) that may be undertaken once the Standard is published, and the likely bodies that will undertake such activities.

17.3 Evaluation of a Standards Development Activity

The RW Board will assess the proposed standard proposal against the following criteria:

1. Consistent with Responsible Wood's objectives role and functions;
2. Within the Responsible Wood's scope of accreditation;
3. Has genuine and demonstrated stakeholder support;
4. Will improve the economic efficiency of the Forestry industry
5. Will result in more efficient use of resources
6. Has political, social or commercial considerations
7. There are special interests that support the development of such a standard
8. Will deliver a net benefit
9. Does not create any technical barriers to trade
10. Does not duplicate an existing Australian Standard. Where such duplication occurs, justification or explanation shall be included in the standard.
11. Does not create conflicting requirements between RW Standards and other existing standards on the same or similar subjects.
12. If developed for conformance assessment purposes (i.e. the basis of a certification scheme) the standard shall comply with the principles in **ISO/IEC 17007, Conformity assessment - Guidance** for drafting normative documents suitable for use for conformity assessment.
13. If developed as the basis for certification (or with the potential for certification) the SRB, and particularly those drafting the document, will need to be familiar with its requirements and recommendations.

17.4 Independence of Standards Reference Body

Responsible Wood (RW)

- will not influence, or direct, the Standards Reference Body on the technical content of the final document

- May give guidance to the SRB at the commencement of the standards development activity. After that, any involvement of Responsible Wood management in the standards development activity will be through any direct representation on the SRB.
- Where RW is proposing to overrule the decisions of the SRB, it shall communicate the changes to the SRB along with recommendations as to the steps that the SRB should take to remedy the concerns.
- Special circumstances where RW may overrule the decisions of the SRB include but are not limited to:
 - The RW Board is not satisfied that there has been adequate stakeholder consultation conducted;
 - The RW Board is not satisfied that consensus has been achieved in the final deliberations of the SRB;
 - The RW Board is concerned that a major stakeholder group has not had input to the development of the consultation draft.
- RW will communicate its decision by email through the SRB Chair, by direct representation to the next SRB Meeting, or by email to all SRB Members.

18 Standards Reference Body - Openness

18.1 Standards Development –Openness Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) shall

1. Appoint a Standards Reference Body (SRB). for the development, and technical content, of each standard activity;
2. Identify all stakeholders who are directly and materially affected by the proposed standard to participate on the SRB
3. Invite significant interests to participate in a Standards development project and become a member of the appropriate SRB.
4. Ensure that no relevant interest group with a bona fide desire to participate is excluded from the SRB.
5. Ensure that there are no undue financial barriers to participation.
6. Membership of the SRB shall not be conditional upon membership in any Organisation, nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements.
7. Where a major sector does not accept the invitation to participate, RD shall determine and document the reason(s) why.
8. Where consumer or public interest representation would provide the needed balance of interests, RW shall identify and make efforts to secure support for equal access and effective participation of such interests.

18.2 Independent Chair of SRB

The RW Board will appoint an Independent Chair within the relevant Standards Reference Body, or independently.

Responsible Wood will base its appointment of the Chair on an assessment of the following attributes:

- demonstrated leadership ability at a committee level;
- demonstrated negotiation skills with various stakeholders;
- ability to remain neutral in Responsible Wood Standards Reference Body meetings to ensure all views are considered;
- capacity to summarise discussion for consensus.

The selected Chair will be required to acknowledge, accept and comply with Responsible Wood's policies and procedures related to standards development.

In the event of the absence of the Chair from a SRB meeting, SRB representatives will appoint a substitute Chair from the floor.

18.2.1 Role and Responsibilities of Chair

The role of the Chair is

1. Facilitate meetings of Responsible Wood Standards Reference Bodies, and remain impartial at all times and ensure that the opinions of Responsible Wood Standard Reference Body representatives are heard in meetings.
2. Be available to attend all Responsible Wood Standards Reference Body meetings.
3. Liaise with the Responsible Wood Secretariat and ensure that the program of work and target dates for the standard development stages are met.

Prior to meetings of the SRB, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that;

- Notices and items for Responsible Wood Standards Reference Body meetings are circulated four weeks prior to meetings of the SRB
- Agendas and associated drafts and correspondence are circulated within two weeks of meetings of the SRB
- Agenda items are time bound;
- Any SRB representatives absent from key decision items have the opportunity to submit their views in writing prior to the meeting.

During meetings of the Standards Reference Body the Chair is expected to

- Ensure that the objectives and outcomes of the meeting clearly define what is to be achieved;
- Abide by the Code of Conduct for SRB Members; and
- Ensure that all SRB members are aware of their responsibilities to abide by the Code of Conduct for SRB Members
- Attempt at all times to attain consensus in decisions made ([see Content Approval and Consensus](#))
- Ensure that differences between members are resolved.

After meetings of the Standards Reference Body, the Chair is responsible for ensuring that:

- Minutes, decisions etc. of the meeting are distributed as appropriate.
- Individual representatives do not criticise the SRB work or findings in public.

18.2.2 Performance

The Chair will:

- Ensure that monitoring/priorities and target dates are updated regularly and reviewed at least every six months;

- Monitor performance to ensure that standards development processes remain within defined timelines; and constraints for the duration of the standards development process.

18.3 Formation of a Standards Reference Body

- a) RW will appoint Standard Reference Bodies to oversee the development or review of standards.
- b) Each SRB will have a balanced membership representing a broad spectrum of relevant interests and will be supported by a Responsible Wood appointed Secretariat. (See [19.2Balanced Representation of SRB](#))
- c) RW will consider the inclusion of any interest group who has a bona fide interest to participate in the standards development process.
- d) The interest categories relevant to the Standard are defined in SD Procedure SRB Representation. The balance between these interests is clearly defined.
- e) Where a major stakeholder interest group does not accept the invitation to participate, RW shall determine whether the obstacle is due to:
 - Lack of resources;
 - Lack of finances;
 - Lack of interest in the subject; or
 - Lack of confidence in the structural or procedural aspects of the process.
- f) Where one of these issues is the obstacle, RW shall make reasonable efforts to address the obstacle. RW will document all attempts to engage the stakeholder group.
- g) Membership of the SRB shall not be conditional upon membership in any Organisation, nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements.
- h) Where a consumer or public interest representation would provide the needed balance of interests, Responsible Wood shall identify and make efforts to secure support for equal access and effective participation of such interests.
- i) The defined interest categories and their representation on the SRB shall be available on the RW website.
- j) RW will maintain a record of all contacted/invited stakeholder interest groups.

18.4 SRB Meeting Management

The Chair will:

- Remind the SRB representatives that they exercise representative roles when discussing the content of the Standards in meetings;
- Remind SRB representatives to express the views of the sectional interests they represent and not their own personal or their company's or department's opinion;
- Ensure discussions on points that have previously received thorough consideration do not get reopened, unless a very good reason exists;
- Control private discussions and disagreements between committee representatives;
- Manage trivial objections effectively;
- Limit discussions to the point under consideration;
- Summarise the consensus view when a consensus of opinion has been reached,
- Summarise the key points of difference when an agreement cannot be reached and propose an action(s) to be taken to resolve any differences or deadlocks.

18.4.1 Frequency and Format of Meetings

The SRBs will meet in various locations. Where possible, meetings will be held face-to-face, however teleconference or videoconference meetings may be held as the need arises. Bodies will also interact via email and other electronic means

The SRB may make decisions out of session via email where all members receive the same documentation and are asked to respond to the same question(s) by a deadline with adequate notice and the outcome is communicated to all members in an appropriate time frame. A resolution included in a flying minute is passed if consensus is achieved.

18.4.2 Conduct of meetings using Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The security and integrity of the decisions making process and the privacy of individual members of the SRB need to be protected, particularly when meetings are being held by remote conferencing technologies.

RW will use Zoom conferencing software to conduct standards development activities when face to face meetings are impractical.

RW will protect members privacy by ensuring that meetings are not recorded.

RW will specifically:

1. Prior to the meeting
 - Upload required documents that will be used during the meeting to a shared secure Dropbox folder
 - Require all intending participants to register as attendees before the meetings, whereby a protected zoom link will be provided prior to the meeting.
2. During the meeting:
 - Require all participants to name / rename their profiles so that the 'zoom screen' reflects the name of the participants.
 - Require all participants to turn their 'cameras on' to know who they were interacting with
3. After the meeting
 - Upload amended documents, minutes etc to the shared Dropbox folder.

18.4.3 Decision Making

- SRB decisions to amend or approve the Standard: shall be determined by a vote of all members eligible to vote at the meeting, and
- A resolution is carried if a consensus is achieved in accordance with the Standards Australia definition of consensus, and
- A member who is unable to attend a meeting at which the vote is being taken and who is not represented by an alternate member may vote by voting form, and
- the minutes of the meeting will record how each individual member voted, and if a member failed to vote the minutes will record the reasons why (e.g., direct interest, abstain, did not submit a voting form, etc.).
- All other decisions are resolved by the agreement of the majority of voting members.

18.4.4 Conflict of Interest

When necessary the Chair may need to stand down from chairing discussions on subjects where there could be a real or perceived conflict of interest.

The Chair needs to reiterate to Responsible Wood Standards Reference Body representatives that they do not make statements on behalf of or indicate that they represent Standards Australia or the Responsible Wood Standard Reference Committee unless the matter has been previously discussed within an Responsible Wood Standard Reference Committee meeting or referred to Standards Australia by the Chair.

18.5 Administration and Financial Management

18.5.1 Financial and administrative support

RW provides secretarial and administrative support for the SRB. The SRB provides funding for:

- SRB operating costs within the RW budget;
- Additional SRB costs that may be approved by the Responsible Wood CEO from time to time, and
- Venue, catering and miscellaneous costs associated with SRB meetings, and
- Cost of advertising and promotion of proposed amendments to the Standard.

18.5.2 SRB Members Expenses

SRB members will be expected to meet their own costs to attend meetings.

In special cases, SRB members can obtain funding to attend SRB meetings as outlined in [Standards Development Procedure 03 Standards Reference Body Travel Expenses.](#)

18.6 Commencement Meeting of SRB

The initial meeting of the Standards Reference Body where a new project (or work program) is introduced is of considerable importance. The following issues are confirmed at this meeting:

1. Scope and project objectives.
2. Project benefits.
3. Project timelines especially key target dates of public comment, ballot, and publication.
4. Specific roles and responsibilities of individual members e.g. drafting, research.
5. Declaration of interests of SRB members.
6. Adoption of Code of Conduct of SRB members.
7. Resource and financial arrangements for the project.
8. Issues and risks facing the project.
9. Interdependencies including direct dependencies between project progress or work activities that are being undertaken.
10. Identification of any “big picture” issues, existing international standards, or external issues that the SRB should be aware of e.g. an environmental scan to identify what other documents or external issues have an effect or are affected.
11. Identification of any possible IP issues that will need to be addressed through the contents of the standard.

12. Provision of the Technical Barriers to Trade document and advise SRB members of the obligation on standards bodies to comply, as far as practical, with the provisions of the TBT. (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tbt_e/tbt_e.htm)
13. Determine how privacy protection measures, including maintaining confidentiality of SRB deliberations. Are to be implemented and achieved {Reference <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-resources/privacy-fact-sheets/other/privacy-fact-sheet-17-australian-privacy-principles>}

19 Standards Reference Body - Balance

19.1 Standards Development –Balance Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) shall ensure that:

1. The SRB has a balanced representation from all major interest categories relevant to the Standard.
2. The interest categories shall be at least producer, user, and general interest.
3. No one interest (category or Organisation) shall have a disproportionate representation on the SRB.
4. The defined interest categories and their representation on the SRB shall be available on request.
5. Where RW is a participant on the SRB, its contribution shall be impartial, free from bias and avoid a conflict of interest between its role as a facilitator of the Standards Development process and as a participant in the process.
6. Any changes to the constitution of the SRB shall be recorded, including the rationale for the change and that any change shall maintain a balanced representation.

19.2 Balanced Representation of SRB

The Australian Standards within the Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS) are developed and maintained/reviewed by Responsible Wood Standards Reference Bodies (SRB) composed of representatives of nominating organisations or individuals that are interested in or affected by the subject matter of the relevant Standard.

There are two Standards Reference Bodies, one for the maintenance and review of each standard.

- AS-4708 Standards Reference Body Forest Management (SRB-FM)
 - AS-4707 Standards Reference Body Chain of Custody (SRB-CoC)
1. Before the commencement of each Standards Development Activity, Responsible Wood will identify key stakeholders and interested parties affected by the standard and determine the structural representation of the SRB.
 2. The SRB will include representatives from interest categories which shall at least include but not be limited to:
 - Producers
 - Users
 - General interest
 3. Each interest category may cover a number of organisations or interest groups.
 4. The SRB will be constituted to ensure that no one interest (category or Organisation) shall have a disproportionate representation.

5. If RW was to be directly represented on the SRB, its contribution shall be impartial, free from bias and avoid a conflict of interest between its role as a facilitator of the Standards Development process and as a participant in the process.
6. The defined interest categories and their representation on the SRB shall be available on request and published on the Responsible Wood website;
7. Any changes to the constitution of the SRB shall be recorded in the SRB Membership Register, including the rationale for the change.
8. Any change shall ensure that a balanced representation on the SRB is maintained.

19.2.1 SRB Appointment Process

RW shall call for expressions of interest to serve on the SRB by:

- Information on the RW website
- Advertisement in publications appropriate and relevant to the sectors concerned
- Direct e-mail and letters to key stakeholders and interested parties.

RW shall publish key documents on the RW website including;

- SRB Procedures for Representation
- SRB Charter and Code of Conduct
- SRB Nomination form.

After receiving nominations, appointments to the SRB members shall be made by the RW Board or a delegation of the Board.

19.2.2 Nominating Organisations

Representatives nominated by organisations should:

- Have capacity and authority to represent the interests of their Organisational stakeholder interests and;
- Be available to participate in all communications and activities of the Body in a timely manner.

Further guidance for nominating organisations is included in Standards Australia [Standardisation Guide 004: Roles and Responsibilities in Standardisation](#)

19.2.3 Vacancies on SRB

Vacant positions on the SRB's shall be filled in accordance with Responsible Wood Standards Development Procedure SRB Procedures for Representation.

A vacancy arises if:

- A member resigns.
- A member fails to attend three consecutive meetings without seeking and receiving approved leave of absence from the relevant SRB Chair.
- A member's tenure expires.

19.2.4 Approval and amendment to Terms of Reference

The RW Board will consider the Terms of Reference for the SRB prior to each standards development activity.

19.2.5 Terms of References of SRB's

The SRB's play the primary role in the development, maintenance and update of the Standards, AS/NZS 4708 and AS 4707, as they:

1. Provide stakeholder views throughout the development, drafting and review of the Standard and act with independence and authority on technical matters relating to the Standards and to approve amendments to the Standards and also advise RW on matters relating to implementation of the Standards.
2. Consider comments received through public consultation periods, including in response to Public Comment drafts of the Standards
3. Work towards consensus on the performance elements to be embodied in the Standards.
4. Determine through ballot Standards that reflects a consensus among the stakeholder groups. Where there are negative votes relating to the technical content of the standard and some likelihood of successful resolution of the issue, further committee consideration will be undertaken.

19.2.6 SRB Membership register

RW will maintain a register of SRB members that includes the members' names, organisations they represent, contact details, and date of appointment.

The register will be included on the agenda of the meetings of each SRB so that members can check and update their details.

Any changes to the constitution of the SRB shall be recorded in the membership register, including the rationale for the change.

Any change shall ensure that a balanced representation on the SRB is maintained.

19.2.7 SRB Tenure

Members of SRBs will normally be appointed for tenure of three years.

19.2.8 Conduct of members on SRB

SRB members are expected to abide by the SRB Members Code of Conduct while undertaking their SRB duties.

Each member will be required to sign the SRB Nomination Form and statement indicating their acceptance of the terms of the code.

Further guidance is available in the Standards Australia document, [Standardisation Guide 002: Structure and Operation of Standardisation Committees](#)

20 Standards Development Project Proposal

20.1 Standards Development Project Proposal Policy

1. Responsible Wood (RW) shall ensure that for each new or revised standard a Project Proposal shall be developed that shall cover
 - a) the scope and objective of the proposed standard;
 - b) the need for the proposed Standard;
 - c) a broad base of support for the development of the proposed Standard;
 - d) the Net Benefit of the standard including:

- I. the benefits of the proposed standard in terms of one or more of the following:
 - i. Support for innovation, trade and economic benefit.
 - ii. Advancement of the health, safety and wellbeing of the community.
 - iii. Protection of the natural environment.
 - iv. International competitiveness.
 - II. potential or actual impacts of implementing the Standard.
2. The project proposal shall address whether there are any International Standards on the same subject and the reasons why such International Standards were not being adopted or used as the basis for the proposed standard.
 3. The proposal shall indicate, if appropriate, the nature of any likely conformity assessment activities (such as testing, inspection, and certification) that may be undertaken once the Standard is published, and the likely bodies that will undertake such activities.

20.2 *New Project Proposal*

Responsible Wood will develop a project proposal for each new standards development activity.

See [Section 17.2 RW Project Proposals](#)

21 Standards Development Project Approval

21.1 *Standards Development Project Approval Policy*

1. Responsible Wood (RW) shall approve (or otherwise) any proposed new project. Prior to approving any new project, RW shall review each project proposal to ensure
 - a) the Standard is consistent with the national interest and demonstrates a net public benefit;
 - b) reasonable attempts have been made to achieve harmonization with existing national Standards; and
 - c) there has been adequate consideration of possible International Standards.

21.2 *RW Board Approval of Standards Development Projects*

The authority to approve a development project lies with the RW Board.

RW shall review each project proposal to ensure

- the Standard is consistent with the national interest and demonstrates a net public benefit;
- reasonable attempts have been made to achieve harmonization with existing national Standards; and
- there has been adequate consideration of possible International Standards.

RW will evaluate plan, and determine resources for all standards development activities based on the following criteria:

- Is the standard within the scope of an existing SRB
- Does the standard development activity require the establishment of a new SRB
- Are the resources required to ensure effective and timely completion of the work available, considering the likely benefits?

- Has the funding to cover the costs of developing the standard been secured
- Does the project necessitate a routine, high, critical or accelerated priority - where major benefits are identified then the project may be accelerated?

The RW Board will also:

- Approve the establishment a Standards Reference Body (SRB) as soon as practicable, unless the work fits within the scope of an existing SRB; ([See Section 18.3 Formation of a Standards Reference Body](#))
- Approve terms of reference for the SRB; (See [Section 19.2.5 Terms of References of SRB's](#))
- Approve the allocation of resources required for the SRB to undertake its work program;
- Determine a priority ranking for the standards project;
- Set reasonable target dates for achieving the milestones of draft for public comment and committee agreement on the final content of the document

22 Standards Development Plan

22.1 Standards Development Plan Policy

1. Responsible Wood (RW) shall prepare a development plan that includes
 - a) the document being developed;
 - b) the SRB responsible for the project;
 - c) the person in Responsible Wood with responsibility for the project;
 - d) the type of project i.e. new Standard, revision of an existing standard(s), or an amendment to an existing standard;
 - e) the anticipated timeframe for completion of the proposed Standard including key milestone dates such as commencement, public comment and ballot; and
 - f) any key factors that may impinge on completion of the project.
2. RW shall monitor the development plan and, if appropriate, update at regular intervals throughout the development of the standard.

22.2 Standards Development Plan

RW will prepare a Project Development Plan which will include the following information

- a) the document being developed;
- b) the SRB responsible for the project;
- c) the person at Responsible Wood responsible for the project including the project officer;
- d) the type of project i.e. new Standard, revision of an existing standard(s), or an amendment to an existing standard;
- e) the anticipated timeframe for completion of the proposed Standard including key milestone dates such as commencement, public comment and ballot; and
- f) any key factors that may impinge on completion of the project.

RW shall monitor and update the standards development plan at regular intervals throughout the development of the standard.

The Standards Development Plan shall be made available on the Responsible Wood website.

Note: For new Standards the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017 for a second round of public comment and pilot testing apply.

22.3 Submission of project documentation to SDAC

Once Responsible Wood has approved a standards development project, Responsible Wood will submit a project proposal and a Standards Development Plan to SDAC.

23 Transparency

23.1 Transparency Policy

Responsible Wood (RW) shall

1. For each new project make publicly available details of the Standard being developed. This information shall be readily accessible and shall include the work to be undertaken and the formation of any new Standards Reference Bodies. There shall be a process for receiving and, if appropriate, acting on, input from those with an interest in either the content of the proposed standard or in the constitution of the SRB.
2. Make a draft of the Standard available for public comment. This draft shall be as complete as possible and its release is to have the objective of gaining feedback from potential users of the standard on the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the requirements. Release of the draft shall be agreed to by the SRB. Availability of the draft shall be advised in suitable media. A reasonable period shall be allowed for the receipt of feedback.
3. receive, and forward to the SRB all comments received for review, including the disposition of all public comment.

23.2 Announcing a standards development project proposal

RW will announce requests for standards development projects and seek expressions of interest from potential stakeholders to the proposed standards development project.

RW will specifically provide information about:

- The standards development process;
- Objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-development activity and anticipated timetable
- Opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process
- How stakeholders can comment on the draft standard.

RW will announce the Standards Development activity through the following mechanisms:

- E-mail to members of the RW Board and the existing Standards Reference Bodies;
- E-mail and electronic newsletters to industry e-mail lists;
- Announcement on the RW website;
- Advertisement in publications appropriate and relevant to the sectors concerned.

Invitations will be sent to key stakeholders with a request to nominate a representative(s) to the SRB. The invitation to disadvantaged and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is understandable. RW will record all feedback received in response to the announcement and where applicable, use this feedback to review standards setting processes.

23.3 Public Consultation Procedure

Public consultation is an essential stage in the development process for Australian Standards

The *Public Comment draft* represents the relevant Standards Reference Body's consensus recommendations for the Standard and has been approved for release for public comment only. The *Public Comment draft* is made available to the public for their views or comments for a period as determined by Responsible Wood and is promoted via various media vehicles to provide as wide coverage as possible for those interested in commenting on the Standard.

The following process is essential to assist the Standards Reference Body in its consideration of the technical content but also to ensure acceptance of the Australian Standard® by stakeholders.

1. The secretariat distributes the Public Comment draft standard to community stakeholders through appropriate forms of media including the RW website.
2. A public consultation period of at least 60 days is required for consideration by stakeholders.
3. The following information is to be included:
 - a. Copy of new standard
 - b. Preamble of why changes necessary
 - c. Details of sections changed in Standard
4. The Secretariat will receive and register all submissions received during the public comment period.
5. The SRB will review all comments received and make a decision as to their relevance and whether to include or reject.
6. The secretariat shall retain a record of actions made for comments received;
7. Resolution of Public Comment & ballot will be completed by the Secretariat
8. The revised Standard(s) will be reviewed by the Standards Reference Body. This will include editorial checking & proof reading.
9. The Standards Reference Body will conduct final ballot.
10. The revised standard will be sent to the Responsible Wood Board for process approval as per **Error! Reference source not found.****Error! Reference source not found.**

23.3.1 Mechanisms used for Public Comment

RW will announce draft standards and invite comment through the following mechanisms:

- Advertisement in publications appropriate and relevant to the sectors concerned
- E-mail to members of the Responsible Wood Board and the Standards Reference Bodies;
- E-mail to industry e-mail lists
- Via the Responsible Wood website.

23.3.2 Recording comments from feedback

All comments received as part of the public consultation will be recorded, referenced and given due consideration (i.e. even if the appropriate response is "no action to be taken", this should be documented).

Feedback and comments received along with actions taken will be recorded on a Summary Sheet which will be posted on the RW website, distributed to all SRB members and to stakeholders who have submitted comment.

24 Content Approval and Consensus

24.1 Content Approval and Consensus Policy

1. Procedures for standards development, as well as the technical content of the standard, shall be based on consensus.
2. The final technical content of the document shall be the result of a consensus agreement between members of the SRB. Evidence of consensus shall be a formal vote, with all members of the SRB being given the opportunity to vote.
3. If there is not a unanimous vote, and if the SRB has made all reasonable efforts but is still unable to resolve one or more negative votes, consensus shall be deemed to have been achieved if:
 - a) a minimum 67% of those eligible to vote have voted affirmatively; and
 - b) a minimum 80% of votes received are affirmative; and
 - c) no major interest involved with the subject of the Standard has collectively maintained a negative vote.

24.2 Working Draft of proposed standard

All SRB members will be given the opportunity to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts.

The PM will consider comments raised from SRB members and develop new working drafts for distribution and consideration by the SRB.

Comments and views submitted by any SRB member shall be considered in an open and transparent manner and their resolution and proposed changes shall be recorded.

When all issues have been resolved by the SRB, a Public Consultation Draft will be developed by the PM.

24.3 Consensus within Standard Reference Bodies

The SRB chair will attempt to gain a consensus decision at all stages of the standards development or review process.

SRB members shall work towards and contribute to reaching committee consensus on the technical content of Australian Standards or other documents which require similar status.

SRB member shall commit to providing expert opinion for the technical content which contributes to genuine consensus within the SRB.

The decisions made within SRB meetings shall be by way of consensus without the need for voting by voice or by hand as it is expected that the SRB work 'within committee' to overcome areas of disagreement.

SRB members shall accept a consensus decision which has followed the internationally recognised principles of consensus.

The SRB shall establish evidence of the formal approval of the technical content of Australian Standards® or other documents which require similar status by a postal ballot of all committee members.

24.4 Consensus in SRB Meetings

RW acknowledges that there are two key processes in standards development – transparency and consensus – and that consensus shall be embodied in all Australian Standards.

RW uses the definition of consensus from ISO/IEC Guide 2 – Standardization and related activities – General vocabulary.

"General agreement, characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

Note: Consensus need not imply unanimity."

RW, as an accredited SDO, shall ensure that all decisions on the technical content of Australian Standards® have been based on agreed and verifiable consensus.

SRB representation is covered by Procedure SD-PROC-SRB Representation, and in the context of consensus within the SRB, no single concerned interest shall be allowed to dominate the standard setting process from those participating interests.

Each SRB member shall work towards and contribute to reaching committee consensus on the technical content of Australian Standards or other documents which require similar status.

The SRB member shall commit to providing expert opinion for the technical content which contributes to genuine consensus within the SRB.

The decisions made within meetings of the SRB shall be by way of consensus without the need for voting by voice or by hand as it is expected that the SRB work 'within committee' to overcome areas of disagreement.

SRB members shall accept a consensus decision which has followed the internationally recognised principles of consensus.

The SRB shall establish evidence of the formal approval of the technical content of Australian Standards or other documents which require similar status by a postal ballot of all committee members.

A positive vote from the SRB shall constitute formal approval and the Australian Standards or other documents which require similar status shall be provided to Standards Australia for process approval.

Where there is a negative vote(s) relating to the technical content of the Australian Standards or other documents which require similar status and there is the likelihood of successful resolution of the issue, the SRB shall undertake further consideration with the aim to resolve the negative vote so as to achieve consensus on the technical content.

In any case of one or more negative votes which represents sustained opposition of any important part of the concerned interests to a substantive issue, every effort shall be made to resolve the issue using the following mechanisms:

- Discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the SRB in order to find a compromise;
- Electronic distribution of key documents and teleconferencing outside of the SRB to attempt to gain a resolution

- Direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different view on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise; or
- Undertaking additional public consultation in an effort to obtain further stakeholder feedback.
- Dispute resolution process where actions above have failed to deliver consensus.

24.5 Interpretation of Consensus

A positive vote from the SRB shall constitute formal approval and the Australian Standards® or other documents which require similar status shall be provided to Standards Australia for process approval.

To achieve consensus, the following outcomes must be achieved:

- at least two-thirds (67 per cent) of those eligible to vote have voted affirmatively;
- of the votes received, a minimum of 80 per cent must be “yes”; and
- no major interest maintains a negative vote which is supported by valid technical reasons.

25 Process Approval

25.1 Process Approval Policy

1. Once the SRB has achieved consensus and the technical content of the standard is finalised, Responsible Wood shall finally approve the standard for publication. In giving this approval the RW Management shall satisfy itself that the standard has been through and complied with.

25.2 Final Process Approval Procedure

Once consensus is achieved, the Chief Executive Officer will prepare a submission that shall address Section 3 (Clauses 15 to 22; and Clause 5.2) of the Standards Australia document, [Requirements for the Accreditation of a Standards Development Organisation \(SDAC 001\)](#)

This document will provide.

- Evidence that the revision was advertised for Public Comment
- Length of time the document was open for Public Comment
- The summary of the Public Comment and how each comment was addressed
- Ballot report (including organisations and their vote; and if any major interest voted negatively how this was resolved).

The RW Board will give final process approval provided the standards activity has been conducted in accordance with the Responsible Wood Board delegated authority and in compliance with the procedures outlined in this and other relevant documents.

RW has been granted authority by SDAC to give final process approval to the standard without approval by the Standards Australia Standards Development and Accreditation Committee.

Following final process approval RW will advise the SDAC Secretary who may provide an ISBN on request.

Once process approval is given by the Responsible Wood Board, RW will commence steps to publishing of the standard.

25.2.1 Documents to Standards Australia

Once final process approval has been given and ISBN's assigned, Responsible Wood will need to provide certain documents to Standards Australia for publishing.

Standards Australia will provide details of requirements for the printing of the new Australian Standard.

The essential requirements are:

<p>SDO Production Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes name of standard, ISBN, Contact details, etc. • Publication Date • Name of Standards Reference Body • Project Number • Additional information about the standard, what it replaces, etc.
<p>Print ready version of the Standard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF Format • PDF download from SAI Global Info Store is only available for files that are 30mb or less. • All PDFs supplied are to be suitable for Web Download and Hardcopy Printing (Unrestricted and Unprotected). • Output with Outline Fonts. (In the Print Properties – Advanced - PostScript Options – TrueType Font Download Option – ensure that Outline is selected). • PDFs are not to be in Acrobat Distiller 9 as this is not currently supported by SAI Global. SAI Global prefers that the PDF Version is 7.x using Acrobat Distiller 8.x. • PDFs are to include Bookmarks. • PDF Document Properties to be completed by author, ensure that the following is included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description - Title – Full Title • Author – SDO name • Initial view – Show - Bookmarks panel and page • Page Layout – Default • Magnification – Default

<p>Metadata</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metadata to include: • Designation • Title • Supersedes • Standard No • Supersedes Draft No • Standards Reference Body • Project Manager’s name • Project number • Date approved • Publication date YYYY-MM-DD ISBN (for all versions) • International Classification System (ICS) Code • History Block and • Synopsis/Abstract)
<p>Printing Instructions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colour Cover: Yes or No • Colour Content: Yes or No • Colour Cover requirements - All Colour Covers for A4 size products are to be in Oversize A3 size (18 in x 12 in /45.71 cm x 30.48 cm). • Other (please detail all requirements in full) (I.E. Product size if not A4)
<p>Other Relevant Information</p>	

Standards Australia will provide a proof and upon acceptance of the proof, the approved Australian standard will be made available for distribution.

RW will provide a copy of the published standard to Standards Australia. RW will provide copies free of charge on the RW website and provide printed copies at the cost of printing, handling and postage.

25.2.2 Application and Transition Dates

Australian Standards become applicable on the day of publication. However, where Standards are used in regulation and/or certification, the regulator or certification scheme may determine the date when superseded versions are no longer recognized and transition processes and time-frames to comply with updated versions.

For Standards used in the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme, the Responsible Wood Board will determine a transition policy. The transition period should not exceed one year except in justified exceptional circumstances e.g. to comply with time frames recommended by the local accreditation body.

26 Internal Audit of Standards Development Activities

26.1 Procedure for Internal Audit

Responsible Wood has well documented procedures for the development and ongoing maintenance of standards within its area of responsibility.

Internal audit will be the responsibility of:

- The Responsible Wood CEO;
- Standards Development Quality Control & Assurance;
- Standards Revision Project Manager.

These persons will meet regularly to ensure the following

1. Compliance with internal procedures;
2. Provision and documentation of evidentiary materials; and
3. Filing procedures.

In the event that internal party activities demonstrate that the documented procedures have not been followed; actions will be taken to:

- Rectify the situation immediately;
- Take actions as per System Management Procedure 05 - Corrective, Preventive and Improvement Action.

Document History

Version	Date	Change Details
4.0	1 April 2020	Major rewrite incorporating the policies and the procedures into one manual. The contents of other documents have been incorporated for simplicity and removal of duplication
4.1	18 November 2020	New section 18.4.2 - Conduct of meetings using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) written to document actions taken to protect privacy
5.0	July 2022	Minor amendments to several sections to meet PEFC requirements
5.1	1 December 2022	Changed reference to AS-4708 to AS/NZS-4708
5.2	February 2023	Minor amendment to include Standards Review dates.
5.3	1 October 2023	Minor amendments to fix typographical errors and references