

# The Australian Ecolabel Program

## Good Environmental Choice Australia Standard

# Toys and Childcare Products

DRAFT STANDARD for public comment



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## Use of GECA Standards

This voluntary environmental labelling standard may be used by competent environmental assessors to establish product compliance to the Australian Ecolabel Program. Products that are certified with the mark of conformity, the "Good Environmental Choice Label" have been independently tested and demonstrate compliance to the environmental and social performance criteria detailed in this standard. The overall goal of environmental labels and declarations is the communication of verifiable and accurate information, which is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services. This encourages the demand for, and supply of, those products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement.

This standard identifies environmental, quality, regulatory and social performance criteria that products sold on the Australian market can meet in order to be considered as good "environment practice". Products that have been certified as complying to this standard may gain greater market recognition and a marketing advantage in government and business procurement programs, as well as broad consumer preference.

This standard can be used by Australian producers to guide their designs for environment programs by using the environmental criteria as key performance benchmarks to reduce the environmental loads of their product. The standard is necessarily restricted in its identification of environmental loads from the product life-cycle. Producers should consider other environmental measures along the product cycle, which are not included in this standard, in their environment program designs for and aim for even higher levels of environmental performance where technically possible.

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PO Box 4140, Weston Creek ACT, 2611, Australia.  
Printed in Australia

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**GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE AUSTRALIA STANDARD**


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# Toys and Childcare Products

Current Status: Draft Standard Version 0.2

Date Published: 1 November 2007

## Abstract

This Standard specifies environmental performance requirements of toys and childcare products for the Australian Ecolabel Program. The Australian Ecolabel Program complies with ISO 14024: "Environmental labels and declarations - Guiding principles" which requires environmental labelling specifications to include criteria that are objective, reasonable and verifiable.

## Definitions

**Alloy:** A combination of two or more elements, at least one of which is a metal. This includes binary, tertiary and quaternary alloys (two, three and four elements, respectively). The result is a metallic substance with properties different from those of its components.

**COD** is the Chemical Oxidation Demand, the equivalent mass of oxygen required to oxidise dissolved and suspended organic matter under defined conditions, typically using dichromate or permanganate as the oxidising agent.

**Edge Glued Panels:** Glued processed timbers, such as small lumbered wood or wood layers, that are formed and pressed into sheet form in the direction of fibre, paralleled each other and bonded with resin. These panels are often known as veneer panels.

**EPBC** is an acronym for the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

**Fibre Boards:** Boards composed of plant fibres, such as timbers or chaffs. According to the density, they are categorized 'into insulation boards (IB)', 'medium density fibre boards (MDF)' and 'hard boards (HB)'.

**IARC** is an acronym for the International Agency for Research on Cancer

**Label** means the Environmental Choice Australia Label.

**Organic Tin Catalysts (OTC):** Organic Tin Catalysts are an ingredient in the production of flexible polyurethane foam in Australia. The tin catalyst gives the polyurethane foam its flexible characteristics including shape memory and density. The two principle OTCs in common use are;

- Dibutyl Tin Dilaurate – DBTDL  $(C_4H_9)_2Sn(OOC(CH_2)_{10}CH_3)_2/C_{32}H_{64}O_4Sn$
- Stannous Octoate - Tin 2-Ethylhexanoate  $[CH_3(CH_2)_3CH(C_2H_5)COO]_2Sn$

**Particle Boards:** Boards made from wood fragments (chips or shavings) which are formed and pressed into sheet form and bonded together with resin.

**Recycled Content** includes both pre- and post-consumer recycled content. Post-Consumer is defined as material generated by households, or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the

product, which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain. Pre-Consumer is defined as material diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilisation of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it.

**Timber / Wood:** Includes wood sourced from raw (virgin) forest timbers, timbers sourced from sustainable forestry, or waste wood materials including particle boards, fibre boards and edge-glued panels. Also includes used timber/wood.

**TOC** is the Total Organic Content, defined as the total amount of organic substances dissolved in a water sample.

**Used Timber / Wood:** Also known as salvaged or reclaimed timber/wood. Includes materials sourced from old (pre-loved) furniture, demolitions, and other relevant sources.

**Veneer Panels:** *See Edge-Glued Panels.*

**VOC** means any organic compound having a vapour pressure of 0.01 kPa or more, at 20 °C, or having a corresponding volatility under the particular conditions of use.

**Waste Wood:** Residual products generated by thinning out timbers, cutting out branches and processing timber and to withdrawn timbers after use, excluding withered or dead trees.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose

This Standard seeks to define good environmental performance benchmarks for toys and childcare products. The voluntary environmental labelling standard implemented by Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) as part of the Australian Ecolabel Program specifies environmental performance criteria for products designed for childcare use including toys, play equipment, pacifiers, protective barriers and cots. This standard stipulates the environmental load of such products throughout the major aspects of their life cycle.

### 1.2 Background

Childcare products can pose a significant environmental burden during their manufacture, use and disposal. These environmental impacts include but are not limited to the raw materials used for their manufacture, coatings (paints, lacquers, and varnishes), textiles, fillers, padding materials, adhesives, joinery, hazardous treatments, energy and water use during production and their disposal, among others. Advances in recycling technologies have encouraged innovation in design and manufacture, encouraging the production of products that both readily incorporate recycled materials, and those with constituents that can be recycled into new products at end of life. These products often equal or surpass traditional products in all aspects of strength, durability and consumer expectation.

The primary purpose of this standard is to define environmental performance criteria for products specifically designed for childcare use. Childcare products made from recycled materials or those sourced from sustainable resources are environmentally preferable because they reduce the demand for virgin timber, virgin metals such as steel or aluminium and virgin plastics. When recycled, such products reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

This Standard refers to the manufacturing of products, their constituent materials, the period of use, disposal and packaging materials used for their transport. This Standard also specifies requirements for treatments or coatings that would restrict further recycling and requires the provision of plastic recycling information to encourage further post-consumer recycling. Finally, this Standard also recognises the need for childcare products to be suitably designed for chemical and environmental safety during the use phase, and includes strict hazardous material and emissions requirements.

## 2 STANDARD CATEGORY SCOPE

This standard is applicable to the following categories of childcare products:

### 2.1 Toys

This includes all categories of toys that may come in contact with children.

### 2.2 Domestic Childcare Products

This includes children's furniture such as cots, nappy changing tables and protective barriers. Prams are included in this category.

### 2.3 Commercial Childcare Products

This category includes furniture and other items for use in childcare centres such as play desks, chairs, protective barriers, fencing and playground equipment.

### 2.4 Other Childcare Products

This category includes other products that may come in to frequent contact with children such as pacifiers and bibs.

Other environmentally innovative childcare products that do not fit the above categories may be considered for certification provided the product fulfils the requirements of any relevant sections of this Standard. Other categories may be added at a later date.

This Standard excludes mattresses, toys involving the burning of fuels or the firing of projectiles, and functional structures such as pet dwellings, tanks or cages.

### *How this Standard relates to Australian Standards*

This is a voluntary environmental labelling standard only.

All GECA voluntary ecolabelling standards require that products satisfy the relevant Australian or International Standard as a prerequisite for GECA certification.

Australian Standards typically define "fit-for-purpose" criteria but do not provide assurance of environmental preferability. This Standard seeks to define environmental performance benchmarks above and beyond the AS.

### 3 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

#### 3.1 Fitness for Purpose

Certified products should be good performers in their intended application. Certain standards of quality and durability are implicit in the Label. The manufacturer must ensure that the product is fit for its intended purpose and:

##### 3.1.1 Applicable Standards

The product meets or exceeds the requirements of the relevant Australian Standard, or the product meets the applicable and accepted standard in its target market if it is to be exported, or

##### 3.1.2 Demonstrated Performance

If there is no relevant Australian Standard, the product can demonstrate sufficient quality by providing testing reports from an independent organisation or case studies from installations demonstrating market suitability and quality, and

##### 3.1.3 Warranty

Products in category 2.1 are supplied to the consumer with a minimum warranty period of 1 year.

Products in category 2.2 are supplied to the consumer with a minimum warranty period of 2 years.

Products in category 2.3 are supplied to the consumer with a minimum warranty period of 5 years.

#### 3.2 Material Requirements

The requirements in this section apply to each type of material contained in the finished product.

##### 3.2.1 Timber and Other Natural Materials

###### 3.2.1.1 Fibre Sources

The geographical origin of pre-consumer recycled and virgin fibre material must be documented, allowing confirmation of origin throughout the supply chain.

Fibre may be sourced from any combination of FSC or AFS 2007 (according to AS 4708-2007) certified fibre, plantation wood fibre, cellulose fibre, return fibre, cotton fibre, crop residue or other waste fibre. Any sources that are not certified under a recognised certification scheme (e.g. FSC) as being sustainably managed shall not originate from:

- a. *Illegal harvesting*  
Illegally harvested wood and natural materials are those that are harvested, traded or transported in a way that is in breach with applicable national regulations (such regulations can for example address CITES species, money laundering, corruption and bribery, and other relevant national regulations).
- b. *Genetically modified organisms*  
Wood and natural materials from genetically modified organisms are those which have been induced by various means to include genetic structural changes (for a definition of genetically modified, please refer

to the European Union Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms in the environment). Traditional breeding programs do not constitute genetic modification.

c. *Uncertified high conservation value communities*

High Conservation Value communities are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:

- Communities containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level communities, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.
- Communities that are in [constitute] or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.
- Communities fundamental to meeting basic needs of locally indigenous human populations (e.g. subsistence, health) and/or critical to these people's traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

For materials sourced from within Australia, please refer to the following:

The EPBC Act List of Threatened Fauna at

<http://www.deh.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicthreatenedlist.pl?wanted=fauna>

The EPBC Act List of Threatened Flora at

<http://www.deh.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicthreatenedlist.pl?wanted=flora>

The EPBC Act List of Threatened Ecological Communities

<http://www.deh.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publiclookupcommunities.pl>

The Australian Heritage Database (for listings of areas of cultural significance) at

<http://www.deh.gov.au/cgi-bin/ahdb/search.pl>

For materials sourced from outside Australia, please refer to credible lists detailing threatened species, threatened communities and areas of cultural significance in the respective countries.

### 3.2.1.2 Salvaged & Reclaimed Timbers

Salvaged or reclaimed timbers may be used in certified products. Salvaged and reclaimed timbers include timbers legally sourced as pre-cut waste timber or deadwood from cityscape, urban and rural gardens, demolition sites, and waste wood from certified tree loppers / doctors.

Salvaged and reclaimed timbers must be certified under, or satisfy the requirements of, GECA Standard 32 – Recycled and Reclaimed Timber.

### 3.2.1.3 Treatment

Wood preservatives must be approved and registered for use by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority for the intended purpose of the product.

Wood and natural materials must not be treated or impregnated with fungicides and insecticides that are classified by the IARC as Type 1 or 2a. Refer to:

<http://monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Classification/index.php>

For indoor applications, wood preservatives must not contain more than 5 % organic solvents by weight, unless the solvent polymerises or adsorbs to the wood and the product has zero solvent emissions.

For outdoor applications, preserved wood must not contain more than 5 % organic solvents by weight, unless the solvent polymerises or adsorbs to the wood and the product has zero solvent emissions. Manufacturers must be able to demonstrate measures to maximise solvent recovery, minimise solvent emissions (including evaporation) and minimise residual solvent contact with end-users (e.g., via controlled storage).

Wooden products or parts must not contain more than 0.1 % by weight of any substance carrying the following risk phrases:

R50: Very toxic to aquatic organisms

R51: Toxic to aquatic organisms

R52: Harmful to aquatic organisms

- R53: May cause long-term adverse effects in the aquatic environment  
 R56: Toxic to soil organisms  
 R58: May cause long-term adverse effects in the environment

Certified products must not contain CCA treated timber or creosote.

### 3.2.1.4 Glues in Plywood and Other Engineered Wood Products

The content of free formaldehyde in glues for plywood or laminated wood or other natural material panels or products must not exceed 1% w/w.

### 3.2.1.5 Formaldehyde Emissions

Engineered wood products, (e.g., particleboard, MDF, decorative overlaid wood panels) must conform to formaldehyde testing outlined in Australian Standard – 4266.16 (2004) "Method 16: Formaldehyde emission-Desiccator method", or equivalent as defined in Table 1. Panels shall demonstrate a level below that shown in Table 1 for the intended purpose.

Veneer and plywood must conform to formaldehyde testing outlined in Australian Standard – AS/NZS 2098.11 (2005) "Method 11: Methods of test for veneer and plywood – Determination of formaldehyde emissions for plywood", or equivalent as defined in Table 1. Panels shall demonstrate a level below that shown in Table 1 for the intended purpose.

**Table 1:** Limit values for testing of formaldehyde-containing engineered wood products. Where an outdoor product is mobile and may be moved or stored indoors (e.g., winter storage), the "indoor applications" limit values shall apply.

	Indoor Applications	Outdoor Applications
Japanese classification	F***	
European classification	E0	E1
<b>Test method</b>	<b>Limit Value</b>	<b>Limit Value</b>
<b>AS 2098.11</b> for plywood	< 0.5 mg / L	< 1.0 mg / L
<b>AS 4266.16</b> for particle board <b>AS 4266.16</b> for MDF	< 0.5 mg / L	< 1.0 mg / L <1.0 mg / L
<b>JIS A 1460</b> not applicable to plywood	< 0.5 mg / L	< 1.0 mg / L
<b>JAS 233</b> for plywood	< 0.5 mg / L	< 1.0 mg / L
<b>EN 120</b> for PB / MDF <b>EN 120</b> for plywood	< 6 mg / (100g) < 4 mg / (100g)	< 9 mg / (100g) < 6 mg / (100g)
<b>DIN EN 717-1</b>	< 0.08 mg / m <sup>3</sup> h	< 0.12 mg / m <sup>3</sup> h
<b>DIN EN 717-2</b> not applicable to MDF	< 0.08 mg / m <sup>3</sup> h	< 0.12 mg / m <sup>3</sup> h

Compliance to this criterion can be demonstrated in one of two ways: either by testing the overall emissions of the final product using the Air Chamber, Desiccator or Perforator test methods, or by testing the emissions of each component material and calculating the total emissions of the final product based on the quantity of individual components in the respective product. If the latter option is selected, testing should be conducted based on methods outlined in ASTM-D5116: Small Scale Environment Chamber determination of organic emissions from indoor materials/products is recommended.

### 3.2.1.6 Paper Processing

Paper must not be bleached with any compounds containing or giving rise to elemental chlorine (including in-situ generation from NaCl) during the manufacturing process. This includes the in-situ generation of chlorine from chloride.

Optical brightening agents must not be added to paper.

Where surfactants are used in the paper manufacturing process, these surfactants must be readily biodegradable in accordance with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines for the testing of chemicals.

Exceptions may be made for laminating paper.

## 3.2.2 Plastics and Paddings

### 3.2.2.1 Resin Identification Codes

Certified products must mark each individual plastic product or component weighing greater than 50g with an appropriate resin identification code promulgated by the Plastics and Chemical Industry Association (<http://www.pacia.org.au>) or in accordance with ISO 11469.

Exemptions may be made for products where the nature of the manufacturing process or the size and shape of the product restrict the application of the plastics resin identification code on the product. Exempt products will ensure that appropriate information describing disposal methods for the product, including the relevant resin identification code, are provided at the time of sale of the product to encourage further recycling.

### 3.2.2.2 Additives

- a. CFC, HCFC, HFC, Methylene Chloride or other halogenated organic substances shall not be used in the production of any plastic or foam or the cleaning of production equipment.

It is accepted that recycled content may have been treated or produced with the above substances during its previous lifecycle. This exception does not apply to the following substances in this section.

- b. Aniline based amines, and pigments and catalysts containing mercury, lead, cadmium, tin or chromium must not be added to any plastic component.
- c. 1,3 butadiene shall not be used in the production of rubber or foams.
- d. The total amount of discharges (measured as COD or TOC) from the production of foam rubber shall be treated and decreased by 90% in on-site or external sewage treatment works prior to emissions into waterways.

### 3.2.2.3 Residual Monomer Content

Monomers classified as IARC Class 1 or 2A, or that carry the risk phrases R42 or R43, must not be used in the production of certified products. Plastics must not contain more than 50 ppm of residual monomers (measured on the newly produced polymer dispersion) if the monomers are classified as IARC class 2B.

## 3.2.3 Fabrics

All fabric must be certified by, or satisfy the requirements of, the Good Environmental Choice Label or carry another ISO 14 024 based ecolabel acceptable to GECA.

### 3.2.4 Glass

Lead glazing, crystal glass, mirror glass, wire reinforced glass or laminated glass must not be used in certified products. Colouring agents or other additives containing lead, cadmium, mercury, chromium, arsenic or selenium must not be used. If the manufacturer of the glass cannot confirm the content of these metals, the concentration of each shall be less than 1 ppm (measured by ICP AAS or similar).

### 3.2.5 Rubber

All rubber used in certified products shall also satisfy the materials requirements of GECA Standard 03 – Recycled Rubber Products.

### 3.2.6 Adhesives

With the exception of Section 3.2.1.4, adhesives must be certified by, or satisfy the requirements of, the Good Environmental Choice Label or carry another ISO 14 024 based ecolabel acceptable to GECA.

### 3.2.7 Metals and Alloys

Coatings applied to metals or alloys must not contain cadmium, nickel, tin, lead, mercury, chromium.

Metal parts and fittings, such as bolts and screws, must not be excluded from the warranty.

No metal part may be accessible for mouthing during the course of normal or extended use. Note: Persistent chewing of corners, joints and poles may be considered normal use for toddlers.

### 3.2.8 Coatings and Waterproofing Treatments

No product or component may be impregnated, labelled, coated or otherwise treated in a manner which would prevent post consumer recycling. Exemptions may be made for products with a long product life where a coating or treatment would further extend the useful life of the product.

Paints and waterproofing treatments used in certified products must be certified by, or satisfy the requirements of, the Good Environmental Choice Label or carry another ISO 14 024 based ecolabel acceptable to GECA.

## 3.3 Hazardous Materials

The requirements in this section apply to all materials in the finished product.

### 3.3.1 Overall Loads

In order to promote the reduction of pollutant hazards and minimise exposure routes for children, the following substances shall not be added to eco-labelled products during manufacture:

- Arsenic
- Cadmium
- Copper
- Lead
- Mercury

Pentachlorophenol (PCP)  
 Tar oils (benzo ( $\alpha$ ) pyrene)  
 Creosote

Copper may be used in timber treatments that are approved and registered for use by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, provided that the treatment also fulfils the requirements of Section 3.2.1.3 and the product is specifically designed to be permanently installed outdoors.

### 3.3.2 Prohibited Substances

The following compounds, their functional derivatives or in-situ precursors shall not be added to finished products, their component parts or be used at any stage of the manufacturing process, including as preparatory agents, cleaners or degreasers in the production facility:

Halogenated organic solvents or binding agents.  
 Elemental halogens (e.g., fluorine, chlorine, including in-situ precursors from halide salts).  
 Fluoropolymer additives.  
 Aniline based amines, or AZO based dyes.  
 The phthalates DEHP, DBP, DAP, BBP, DMP, DMT, DEP, DMEP and DIBP.  
 Alkylphenoethoxylates (APEO), their derivatives (APDs), or linear alkylbenzene sulphonates (LAS).  
 Aziridine or polyaziridines.  
 Pigments and additives that contain lead, tin, arsenic, cadmium, mercury or their compounds.  
 Halogenated flame retardants (e.g., polybrominated diphenyl ethers, chlorinated or brominated paraffins).  
 Boric acid, borates and perborates.  
 Fragrances  
 Antibacterial agents (e.g., benzalkonium chloride, triclosan, etc).  
 Any preservative or other agent that may be assigned the risk phases R42 or R43

No additive may be used that can be assigned any of the following risk phrases, either at the time of application or final use:

R33: Danger of cumulative effects.  
 R39: Danger of very serious irreversible effects.  
 R46: May cause heritable genetic damage.  
 R47: May cause birth defects  
 R48: Danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure.  
 R58: May cause long-term adverse effects in the environment.  
 R60: May impair fertility.  
 R61: May cause harm to the unborn child.  
 R62: Risk of impaired fertility.  
 R63: Possible risk of harm to the unborn child.  
 R64: May cause harm to breastfed babies.  
 R68: Possible risk of irreversible effects.

## 3.4 Volatile Organic Compound Emission Requirements

### 3.4.1 Volatile Organic Compound Emissions

Products must not produce a total VOC concentration greater than that specified in Table 2 at the time of unpackaging, when measured with the following Standard Test Methods, or similar:

ASTM D5116-06 Standard Guide for Small-Scale Environmental Chamber Determinations of Organic Emissions from Indoor Materials/Products

ASTM D6670-01(2007) Standard Practice for Full-Scale Chamber Determination of Volatile Organic Emissions from Indoor Materials/Products

**Table 2: Maximum total VOC emissions for each class of childcare product**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Max VOC (mg/m<sup>3</sup>)</b>
2.1	Toys with surface area > 250 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.3
	Toys with surface area < 250 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.2
	Mouthable toys	0.0
2.2	Domestic childcare products	0.3
2.3	Commercial childcare products	0.3
2.4	Other, frequent mouthing	0.0
	Other, frequent contact	0.2

Certification under the USA GreenGuard Childcare standards may be used as streamlined evidence of compliance with this criterion.

### 3.5 Post Consumption Recycling and Labelling

#### 3.5.1 Product Custodianship

This section applies to categories 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the scope.

If the product is not recyclable (or separable into recyclable parts) in mainstream local recycling systems, the manufacturer shall accept their product without additional cost (excluding transportation costs) for further recycling, or have arrangements with a local recycler to accept the product, or have an established product stewardship program that will divert the majority of recovered material from landfill. Exceptions may apply to material contaminated by the user (e.g., medical, nuclear). Normal dust and other environmental accumulations do not qualify for this exemption.

#### 3.5.2 Replacement Parts

This section applies to categories 2.2 and 2.3 of the scope.

For those parts of a product which are subject to wear (e.g., hinges, locks, connectors, wheels), functionally compatible replacements shall be guaranteed for a period of at least five years. The manufacturer must make individual replacement parts available to consumers.

#### 3.5.3 Recycled and Recyclable Content Requirements

Certified products containing the following materials shall meet the following minimum resource efficiency requirements:

##### 3.5.3.1 Aluminium

All aluminium products and parts shall contain at least 35 % recycled content.

### **3.5.3.2 Stainless Steel**

Stainless steel comprising greater than 5 % of the total weight of the product shall contain at least 20 % recycled content.

### **3.5.3.3 Plastics**

Plastics shall be 100 % recyclable. To facilitate recycling, different types of plastics with different resin codes must not be inseparably joined. No more than three different types of plastic (including polymer alloys) may be used in any one certified product.

## **3.5.4 Packaging Requirements**

Chlorinated or halogenated plastics must not be used in product packaging.

Used packaging shall be able to be recycled by local recycling systems.

## **3.5.5 Product Information**

The manufacturer must provide written information to the consumer clearly stating:

- The intended use of the product.
- Instructions for correct use and storage so as to maximise the product lifetime and minimise safety hazards.
- Maintenance instructions, if required. Maintenance instructions must not specify nor require the use of any chemical or coating limited by any part of this standard.
- Recycling instructions for the product end-of-life, or details of the product stewardship offer if applicable.

#### 4 COMPLIANCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

The applicant is required to comply with relevant environmental legislation and government orders at the Local, State, and Commonwealth levels, if these have been issued. An applicant's compliance with these criteria may be established by undertaking a series of random checks; and/or by gathering samples of applicant operational procedures and documents from approved assessors as evidence to support compliance during the verification. Where an applicant is from an overseas jurisdiction, that jurisdiction's environmental regulations apply. Where the applicant is subject to a guilty verdict by a legally constituted court in the last 24 months on the basis of a breach of any environmental legislation or permits, there must be evidence of corrective action.

#### 5 COMPLIANCE TO LABOUR, ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

An applicant shall demonstrate that all employees are covered by a Federal or State award or a certified industrial agreement or a registered workplace agreement as determined by the Industrial Relations Commission, the Employment Advocate or a State or Territory Workplace Relations Agency or a workplace agreement in compliance with Workplace Relations Act 1996 Part 7 – The Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standard.

An applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to the terms of State or Territory Legislation concerning Occupational, Health and Safety and/or the *Commonwealth Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, where applicable. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency, or a guilty verdict by an Australian Court within the last 24 months, on the basis of a breach of State, Territory or Commonwealth Occupational, Health and Safety Legislation, there must be evidence of corrective action.

The applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to the requirements of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999, and complementary State Legislation. Applicants cannot be in the list of 'named' or non-compliant employers under the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency, or a guilty verdict by an Australian Court in the last 24 months on the basis of a breach of these Acts, there must be evidence of corrective action.

Where an applicant is from an overseas jurisdiction, the applicant shall demonstrate general compliance to that jurisdiction's anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety, and workers' compensations regulations. Where the applicant is subject to a breach order by a government agency, or a guilty verdict by a legal court in their respective country within the last 24 months on the basis of a the breach of anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety, and workers' compensation regulations, there must be evidence of corrective action.

An applicant's compliance with these criteria may be established by undertaking a series of random checks; gathering samples of applicant operational procedures and documents from approved assessors; and/or by providing a self-declaration document signed by an executive officer of the applicant organisation as evidence to support compliance during verification.

## 6 EVIDENCE OF CONFORMANCE

### 6.1 Audit Methodology

Conformance with this standard shall be demonstrated by undertaking an assessment under the above criteria by an approved assessor, following the certification and verification procedures detailed in the Good Environmental Choice Australia Ltd Documented Quality Management System, which generally follows the environmental auditing requirements of ISO 14 011 and 14 012.

### 6.2 Assessor Competency

The Australian Ecolabel Program classifies approved assessors as:

- a. Assessors registered by Good Environmental Choice Australia Ltd as environmental professionals that hold expertise relevant for an assessment, and who have undertaken training in the procedures of the Australian Ecolabel Program; or
- b. Environmental auditors accredited with the RABQSA.
- c. Auditors from overseas ecolabelling bodies that GECA has established Mutual Recognition Arrangement with.

### 6.3 Suitable Sources

Audit evidence should be of such a quality and quantity that competent environmental auditors, working independently of each other, will reach similar audit findings from evaluation of the same audit evidence against the same audit criteria.

Suitable sources of information to establish compliance may be, but are not limited to:

- a. Technical specification of the product.
- b. Obvious characteristics of the product under examination.
- c. Scientific test results and reports.
- d. Environmental management system and audit reports and results.
- e. Life-cycle assessment of each stage of the product life-cycle via a physical audit and examination.
- f. Life-cycle assessment via scientific testing.
- g. A statement of confirmation by an executive officer.
- h. An assessment of company or government records.
- i. Other material that can be considered objective evidence.

### 6.4 Laboratory Testing

New testing shall be undertaken by a laboratory accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), or similar overseas accreditation agents who can conduct the relevant tests and/or provide documentation detailing environmental performance against the criteria of this standard. The test results should be presented on NATA-endorsed reports or from a laboratory acceptable to Good Environmental Choice Australia Ltd.

If test results or environmental auditing results are not available, and/or there is insufficient data to establish full compliance with the criteria required by this standard, then certification cannot be awarded.