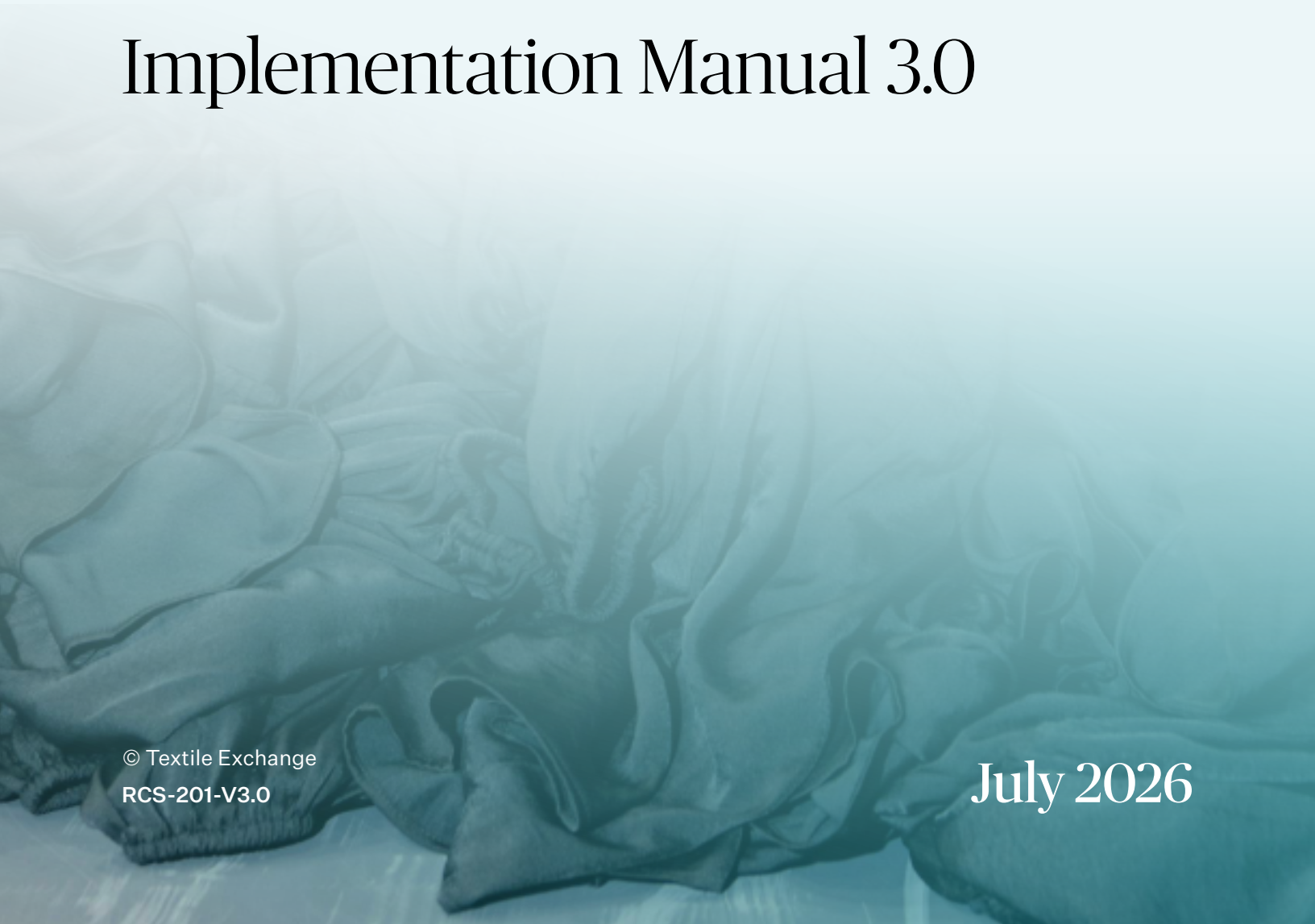
Textile Exchange

Recycled Claim Standard

Implementation Manual 3.0



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Textile Exchange Recycled Claim Standard Implementation Manual

Original Release Date: July 1, 2017

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The RCS Implementation Manual 3.0 replaces RCS Implementation Manual 2.2 and is effective as of December 31, 2026.

English is the official language of the Recycled Claim Standard. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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Urgent substantive revision to the Recycled Claim Standard

This urgent substantive revision (RCS 3.0) is necessary to support accurate tracking of reclaimed material data. The introduction of the revised Reclaimed Material Declaration Form (RMDF) required corresponding updates to the standard. The revised RMDF helps document reclaimed materials entering the certified recycling supply chain by collecting key information in a structured format, improving consistency, and supporting the tracking of reclaimed materials from source to final products. As the current RMDF did not serve this purpose, it was important to replace it with the revised RMDF in order to mitigate risks of fraudulent activity related to reclaimed volumes.

While "reclaimed material" has, by default, been considered as claimed material, the standard now explicitly includes "reclaimed material" within its scope as a type of claimed material. This clarification ensures alignment with the updated RMDF and directly supports tracking of the reclaimed material. The updated Recycled Claim Standard 3.0 does not constitute a broad revision of the Recycled Claim Standard and is limited to the specific changes presented in the change log table below.

Given the multi-year phase-out timeline of Recycled Claims Standard and transition to Materials Matter Standard, this revision requires the use of the revised RMDF from December 31, 2026.

Change Log from RCS Implementation Manual 2.2 to RCS Implementation Manual 3.0

Section	Subject	Change
	Foreword, Introduction and How to use the Document	Minor language changes such as change in Textile Exchange contact email and others
A1	Definitions	Change of the Textile Exchange contact email
A3.1b	Scope	Inclusion of the term "reclaimed material"
A4	Desired Outcome	'Reclaimed material' is included for clarity as it qualifies as claimed material along with other minor language changes
A4.1a	Material Recycling	Inclusion of the term "reclaimed material", along with other minor language changes
A4.1b	Material Recycling	Inclusion of the term "first certified entity"
A4.1biii	Material Recycling	Inclusion of reference to the revised Reclaimed Material Declaration Form (TE-MM-TEM 105), with other minor language changes

Section	Subject	Change
A4.1c	Material Recycling	Reference to the revised Reclaimed Material Declaration Form
Appendix A	Tools and Resources	Change of the Textile Exchange contact email
Appendix B	Reclaimed Material Supplier Agreement	Updated reference to Section A1 - Definitions
Appendix C	Reclaimed Material Supplier Form	Removed

Foreword

The *Recycled Claim Standard* (RCS) was originally developed in partnership with Outdoor Industry Association's Sustainability Working Group's Materials Traceability Task Force in 2013.

Textile Exchange also owns and administrates the *Content Claim Standard* (CCS), the *Organic Content Standard* (OCS), the *Global Recycled Standard* (GRS), and the *Responsible Down Standard* (RDS), the *Responsible Wool Standard* (RWS), among others. These standards are designed to ensure chain of custody for preferred materials, and to provide labeling tools for final product claims.

Textile Exchange's mission is to accelerate sustainable practices in the textile industry. This acceleration only happens when steps have been taken to ensure that actions taken toward sustainability result in real and meaningful change. This requires a strong understanding of the issues and a plan to substantiate the claims being made. Certification to a third-party standard accomplishes this.

Introduction

The *Recycled Claim Standard* (RCS) is an international, voluntary standard that sets requirements for third-party certification of Recycled input and chain of custody. The goal of the RCS is to increase the use of Recycled materials.

The objectives of the RCS are:

- Alignment of Recycled definitions across multiple applications.
- Track and trace Recycled input materials.
- Provide consumers (brands and end consumers) with a tool to make informed decisions.
- Provide assurance that materials are actually Recycled and in a final product.

The Recycled Claim Standard is intended for use with any product that contains at least 5% Recycled Material. Each stage of production is required to be certified, beginning at the recycling stage and ending at the last seller in the final business-to-business transaction. Material Collection and Material Concentration sites are subject to self-declaration, document collection, and on-site visits.

The RCS does not address social or environmental aspects of processing and manufacturing, quality, or legal compliance.

The RCS uses the ISO 14021 definition of Recycled Content, with interpretations based on the US Federal Trade Commission Green Guides; the intention is to comply with the most widely recognized and stringent definitions.

This is a voluntary standard that is not intended to replace the legal or regulatory requirements of any country. It is the responsibility of each operation to demonstrate compliance with all applicable laws and regulations related to marketing, labor, and business practices. Sellers of RCS products are advised to reference the allowed Recycled Content claims in the countries of sale, to ensure that they are meeting all legal product claim requirements.

You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to standards@textileexchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into the RCS Implementation Manual at any time.

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How to use this Document

This document sets forth the overall requirements for compliance with the RCS. Guidance and clarifications are available in the *RCS Implementation Manual*.

In the RCS, the following verbal forms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or capabilities:

- "shall" indicates a requirement
- "should" indicates a recommendation
- "may" indicates a permission
- "can" indicates a possibility or capability

"Desired Outcomes" have been included to detail the intent of requirements, but they are not requirements themselves. They are designated by an icon before each module, see the following example:

DESIRED OUTCOME*:*
Example text. Why does this requirement exist?

Guidance Documents

The following guidance documents were used in the development and/or revision of this standard:

- ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2: Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards
- ISO/IEC Guide 59: Code of Good Practice for Standardization
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards

Implementation Guidance

Guidance has been included following selected criteria of the standard. The guidance may provide clarification, interpretation guidance, or verification requirements for Certification Bodies.

Example:

> ***GUIDANCE**: Proof of "legal authorization to operate" is for example, a government-issued business license number or non-profit registration document. This ensures that there is a valid organization behind the declaration form, and to give an added measure of protection against the possible trading of stolen products. Where legal authorization is required to process waste, there shall be proof that this is in place.*

Section A – General Information

A1 – Definitions

The Content Claim Standard has a complete set of the terms used in the TE standards. The following are specific to the RCS, and are important in defining the verification requirements for the input materials for recycling:

Material Collection

Material Collection refers to the point in the recycling lifecycle when a Reclaimed Material is collected after its original use has ended (i.e., it would have otherwise gone into the waste stream).

Entities involved in Material Collection may include, but are not limited to:

- Individuals who collect Post-Consumer Materials for sale to brokers
- Government organizations (e.g., municipalities) that offer curbside recycling or operate transfer stations
- Brokers that purchase Pre/Post-Consumer Material from individuals, municipalities, or commercial operations for re-sale
- Commercial operations that collect their own Pre-Consumer Material from manufacturing operations
- Commercial operations that collect Post-Consumer Material (e.g., retail stores)

Material Concentration

Material Concentration refers to the point in the recycling lifecycle when a waste material receives primary handling. This may include, but is not limited to, sorting, screening, basic contaminant removal, or baling. Material is still unprocessed at this stage, meaning it has not been physically or chemically altered beyond basic handling (e.g., screening, crushing, or washing). Examples include:

- Government organization (e.g., municipality)
- Non-profit organization
- Business entity (e.g., brokers)

***GUIDANCE**: Proof of "legal authorization to operate" is for example, a government-issued business license number or non-profit registration document. This ensures that there is a valid organization behind the declaration form, and to give an added measure of protection against the possible trading of stolen products. Where legal authorization is required to process waste, there shall be proof that this is in place.*

The Implementation Manual includes an additional section: Approved Recycled Content following Appendix C (see page 26). To suggest additional materials or inquire about guidance, Certification Bodies may contact standards@textileexchange.org.

Material Recycling

Material Recycling refers to the point in the recycling lifecycle when a Reclaimed Material is processed into a Recycled Material.

Post-Consumer Material

Material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of materials from the distribution chain.[1]

[1] This excerpt is taken from ISO 14021:1999, section 7.8.1.1, subsection a.2 on page 14, with the permission of ANSI on behalf of ISO. © ISO 2013 – All rights reserved.

***GUIDANCE**: Examples of accepted Post-Consumer Material:*

- *Down from a previously owned down jacket or comforter.*
- *Garments collected and shredded into raw fiber.*

Reclaimed Materials collected from products that were returned without being used should be categorized as Pre-Consumer Material.

Pre-Consumer Material

Material diverted from the waste stream during the manufacturing process. Excluded is the reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it.[2]

***GUIDANCE**: Examples of accepted Pre-Consumer Material:*

- *A vertical mill collects cutting room waste, shreds the fabric, and respins the resulting fiber into yarn.*
- *A manufacturer produces carpet fibers from an extrusion process. During the manufacturing process, a defective carpet fiber is extruded. The defective fiber is collected, melted down, re-pelletized, and reused in the original manufacturing process as a raw material to produce the same carpet product.*
- *An auto manufacturer may scrap metal components such as door panels, underbody parts or an entire car if the product is defective. The metal*

[2] This excerpt is taken from ISO 14021:1999, section 7.8.1.1, subsection a.1 on page 14, with the permission of ANSI on behalf of ISO. © ISO 2013 – All rights reserved.

scraps are collected and shipped to a local recycling group. The recycler then reprocesses the metal and uses it to produce different metal products.

- *Any material collected as waste or byproduct from the processing of 100% Recycled Material may continue to be considered Recycled Material.*

Contact Textile Exchange (standards@textileexchange.org) if you would like to add examples to this list.

Pre-Consumer may sometimes be referred to as "post-industrial". UL has released a document titled: Interpreting Pre-Consumer Recycled Content Claims that provides helpful interpretation of Pre-Consumer Recycled Content. The FTC Green Guides[3] also includes helpful guidelines for understanding claims.

Reclaimed Material

Material that would have otherwise been disposed of as waste or used for energy recovery, but has instead been collected and reclaimed as a material input, in lieu of new primary material, for a recycling process.[4]

***GUIDANCE**: The expressions "Recovered Material" and "Reclaimed Material" are treated as synonyms; however, it is recognized that, in some countries, one or other of these expressions may be preferred for this application. If your industry or your country uses different terminology, please contact standards@textileexchange.org for further clarification.*

We also recognize that it is difficult to substantiate that a material would have 'otherwise been disposed of as waste or used for energy recovery', as once a recycling process is established, the material is no longer being directed into a waste stream. See "Pre-Consumer Material" for further clarification.

[3] Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims ("Green Guides"); Federal Trade Commission; October 12, 2012. http://www.ftc.gov.
[4] This excerpt is taken from ISO 14021:1999, section 7.8.1.1, subsection c on page 14, with the permission of ANSI on behalf of ISO. © ISO 2013 – All rights reserved.

Recycled Content

Proportion, by mass, of Recycled Material in products or packaging. Only Pre- Consumer and Post-Consumer Materials shall be considered as Recycled Content.

> ***GUIDANCE**: Packaging is exempted from the requirements of the standard, unless the Recycled Material being claimed is part of the packaging.*

Recycled Material

Material that has been reprocessed from Reclaimed Material by means of a manufacturing process and made into a final product or into a component for incorporation into a product.[5]

> ***GUIDANCE**: A Recycled Content claim may be made only for materials that have been recovered or otherwise diverted from the solid waste stream, either during the manufacturing process (Pre-Consumer), or after consumer use (Post-Consumer). Certification Bodies shall evaluate all materials listed on Reclaimed Material Declaration Forms or otherwise claimed as Recycled Material input to ensure that they meet the definition of Recycled Material. Any material that does not meet the definition for any reason shall not be certified by the RCS.*
>
> *In the above definition, "manufacturing process" shall refer to all steps related to a specific production stage. Waste collected from one step of a production stage that is put back into the same production stage shall not be considered Recycled Material.*
>
> - ***Example:** Waste from spinning may not be combed and then respun and considered Recycled, since it was collected within the same production stage. Down filling material collected from a Post-Consumer duvet, may be accepted since the washing and sorting required is a separate production*

[5] This excerpt is taken from ISO 14021:1999, section 7.8.1.1, subsection b on page 14, with the permission of ANSI on behalf of ISO. © ISO 2013 – All rights reserved.

stage.

To the extent that the source of Recycled Content includes Pre-Consumer Material, the Material Recycler of the Recycled Material shall be able to justify that the Pre-Consumer Material would otherwise have entered the solid waste stream and/or meets the qualification for by-products listed in the definition for "Pre-Consumer Material". Both chemically and mechanically Recycled Material qualify for RCS certification.

In the US, the Federal Trade Commission, "Recycled Content includes Recycled raw material, as well as used, reconditioned, and re-manufactured components." (FTC 2012 Green Guide, 260.13.a) While materials that meet this definition may be considered as Recycled in the US, the narrower definition of "Recycled Material" listed above is used for the RCS.

Some material that has been collected from the waste stream may not qualify as Recycled Material due to the way it is used. ***Remake*** *or* ***Reuse*** *is Reclaimed Material that does not undergo an additional step before being used again. For example, fabric is collected from Post-Consumer garments and is sewn into new garments. This type of material may be identified and tracked within Certification to the RCS, but may not be identified or labeled as "Recycled" or with any reference to the RCS.*

The acronyms in the following table are used throughout the Standard:

CCS: Content Claim Standard
RCS: Recycled Claim Standard
CB: Certification Body
SC: Scope Certificate
TC: Transaction Certificate

A2 – References

A2.1 Accompanying Documents

The following additional documents are considered part of the Recycled Claim Standard, and are fully binding:

- Content Claim Standard
- Content Claim Standard Implementation Manual
- Recycled Claim Standard
- RCS Logo Use and Claims Guide
- Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards
- Policy and Template for Issuing Certificates of Compliance (Scope Certificates, SCs)
- Scope Certificate Template
- Policy and Template for Issuing Transaction Certificates (TCs)
- Transaction Certificate Template
- Textile Exchange Accepted Equivalent Standards

All documents can be found at http://Recycledclaim.org.

A2.2 Referenced Documents

The following referenced documents were used in the development of this standard:

- Textile Exchange Recycled Claim Standard
- Global Recycled Standard 2.1
- ISO 14021:1999: Environmental labels and declarations
- ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2: Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards
- ISO/IEC Guide 59: Code of Good Practice for Standardization
- Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims (“Green Guides”); Federal Trade Commission

A3 – Principles of RCS Certification

A3.1 Scope

A3.1a The Standard applies to products that contain 5% or more Recycled Content. Some exceptions may apply, see *TE Accreditation and Certification Procedures* for the derogation process.

***GUIDANCE**: When 100% of a Reclaimed Material in an RCS product is recycled, but is lower than the 5% minimum in overall volume percentage – then the RCS can still be used to certify the product (e.g. 2% recycled elastane/spandex).*

A3.1b The Standard applies to any verified Reclaimed Material and Recycled Material and may apply to any supply chain.

***GUIDANCE**: The Certification Body shall assess Claimed Material to ensure it qualifies as Reclaimed Material and Recycled Material, per A1 – Definitions. When compared with Post-Consumer Recycled Material, it is more difficult to determine whether a Reclaimed Material is Pre-Consumer Recycled Material, or simply resource efficiency.*

In the case of Pre-Consumer Recycled Material claims, Certification Bodies should understand the following to make their determination:

- *What is the process that generated the Material?*
- *In to what process is the Material now being used as input?*
- *What re-processing was required to allow the Reclaimed Material to be again used an input material?*

Certification Bodies shall evaluate the material against the definition of Recycled Material to verify the accuracy of material identification. Certification bodies shall use the following guidelines to determine whether the material is Recycled Material, or simply resource efficiency:

- *Reclaimed Material that is collected from a virgin manufacturing process and put back into the same process that generated it shall not be considered Recycled Material.*
- *Reclaimed Material that may be used in another supply stream with minimal processing should not be considered as Recycled Material since it is not "diverted from a waste stream."*
    - ***Example:** A byproduct generated from nylon spinning has long been used to make nylon buckles. Now, with increased demand for Recycled nylon, the material is now being re-melted and used to make nylon yarn. This may not be considered Recycled Material since it is not truly being diverted from the waste stream.*
- *Check the waste rates of the manufacturing process that generated the Reclaimed Material. If the waste rate is higher than industry averages, it may be a sign that the Reclaimed Material has been produced intentionally, and would therefore not qualify as Pre-Consumer Recycled Material.*
    - ***Example:** A spinning mill should not have a 50% waste rate.*

In the case that the auditor or certifier is unsure of whether a material qualifies as Recycled Material, they should contact Textile Exchange for a determination. Textile Exchange will consult with industry experts for decision-making in difficult cases, and will keep a log of past decisions. Certified Organizations and Certification Bodies are both free to appeal a decision of Textile Exchange; please read the TE Standards Complaint Procedures, available online: https://textileexchange.org/complaint-form/.

A3.2 Scope

A3.2a The Standard provides verification of chain of custody for Recycled Material, in accordance with the Content Claim Standard.

A3.2b The Standard includes consumer-facing labeling; only products that have been certified up to the seller in the last business-to-business transaction are eligible. See *RCS Logo Use and Claims Guide* for labeling guidelines.

A4 – Recycled Material Requirements

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Claimed Material accepted for the standard meets the established definition of Reclaimed Material before recycling and Recycled Material during and after recycling.

GUIDANCE: *It is the responsibility of the Material Recycler to collect any required documentation from their direct suppliers, either Material Collector or Material Concentrator. Material Collectors or Material Concentrators may apply for RCS certification if desired, but they are not required.*

Verification of Reclaimed Material Suppliers

Material Collectors and/or Material Concentrators that supply directly to Certified Organizations are subject to additional verification by the Certification Body.

Certification Bodies shall conduct a risk assessment of all direct suppliers that conduct Material Collection or Concentration.

- *Certification bodies shall keep a list of all collectors and concentrators that supply to recycling clients. 10% of this total shall be chosen for additional verification, with 2% chosen for physical inspection.*
- *Certification Bodies should make an effort to avoid inspection of the same sites from one year to the next, if possible.*

Direct verification of Material Collectors and Material Concentrators should seek to verify the authenticity of the Reclaimed Material Declaration Form as well as the following information:

- *That all Claimed Material meets the definition of Reclaimed Material (A1).*
- *That all Claimed Material is properly identified as Pre-Consumer or Post-Consumer Material (A1).*
- *That the source of all Claimed Material is reviewed.*

Textile Exchange will not collect fees from inspections of Material Collectors or Material Concentrators.

The 10% additional verification could include the following:

- *Additional Material Declaration Form review remotely in communication with Material Collectors and Concentrators.*
- *Research the supplier online to verify they are a legal business supplying the reclaimed material.*
- *Communicate directly with the Material Collectors and Concentrators (e.g. email, phone).*
- *On-site visit of Material Collectors and Concentrators (the 2% is included within the 10%).*
    - *Ask for a basic tour of operations, interview for confirmation of material sources. We are looking for reasonable confirmation that the MDF is accurate.*

Risk factors should include, but are not limited to

- *Use of Pre-Consumer Material as input*
- *Facilities with high volumes of input material into GRS Material Recycling facilities*
- *Inconsistencies in documentation.*

***EXEMPTION**: CBs may exempt government owned/operated collector or concentrator entities (i.e. municipality) or donation-only collector or concentrator from the requirement of Reclaimed Materials Supplier Agreement.*

A4.1 Material Recycling

A4.1a Entities involved in Material Recycling (as defined in A1) are subject to RCS certification. The RCS requires compliance with the requirements of the Content Claim Standard, whereby the 'Claimed Material' is replaced with 'Reclaimed Material' before recycling and 'Recycled Material' during and after recycling as defined in section A1.

A4.1b In addition, the first certified entity in a recycling supply chain (collector, concentrator, or recycler), shall:

i. Verify that all sources of Reclaimed Material have legal authorization to operate for the relevant function, and hold copies of the relevant documents.

***GUIDANCE**: Prior to the initial audit, the Material Recycler should submit a list of all sources of Reclaimed Material to their CB. This allows the CBs time to verify legal authorization of the entities involved in Material Collection and Concentration to operate as well as to assess any areas of risk.*

The reference to "all sources of Reclaimed Material" does not include Material Collection from individuals.

ii. Hold valid Reclaimed Material Supplier Agreements (see Appendix B) for all suppliers of Reclaimed Material (entities involved in Material Collection and/or Material Concentration).

iii. Collect and retain completed Reclaimed Material Declaration Forms from their suppliers for all Reclaimed Material inputs. For more details on the Reclaimed Material Declaration Forms collection timeline, please refer to the Introduction & Instructions section of the *TE-MM-TEM-105 Reclaimed Material Declaration Form*.

***GUIDANCE**: If the Reclaimed Materials have been verified through an approved equivalent standard, then those Reclaimed Materials will be accepted for the RCS, as long as all related documentation is submitted to the Material Recycling facility and the Certification Body.*

Accepted equivalent standards are those that have been approved by Textile Exchange and meet or exceed the requirements of the RCS for verification of Reclaimed Materials (i.e. verification that they would have otherwise gone into the waste stream). See Textile Exchange Accepted Equivalent Standards. To be considered for equivalency, standards may be submitted to Textile Exchange at standards@textileexchange.org.

iv. Inspect all incoming shipments of Reclaimed Material to confirm that they are not virgin material; confirm the correct identification as Pre- or Post-Consumer Recycled Material. Retain records of inspections.

***GUIDANCE**: Virgin material shall be defined as any material that does not meet the definition of "Recycled Material" given in A1. Staff receiving Reclaimed Materials shall be trained and directed to identify any material that is or could be virgin material.*

In the case that virgin material is identified or incorrectly labeled as Pre- or Post-Consumer, increased control measures shall be applied for all incoming products from the supplier involved, and the supplier of the material and the Certification Body shall be notified.

If virgin material is suspected or identified, it shall be immediately removed from the Reclaimed Materials stock until further investigation confirms its identity. In all cases of virgin material, the CB shall be informed, and it will be at their discretion to conduct further investigation with the supplier.

v. Request Transaction Certificates for all outgoing RCS certified products.

A4.1c Material Recyclers who collect Reclaimed Material from their own processing shall retain the following records to verify their volume of recycling:

i. Records of all materials entering the recycling process.
ii. Description of Reclaimed Material and the stage where the waste was collected.
iii. Any other relevant transfer notes.
iv. The TE-MM-TEM-105 Reclaimed Material Declaration Forms may be used in lieu of the records listed above.

***GUIDANCE**: Material Recyclers that process and recycle Reclaimed Material from their own processes may present higher risk for fraudulent or inaccurate identification of material as Recycled. Certification Bodies shall evaluate the material against the definition of Recycled Material to verify the accuracy of material identification. (See A1 – Definitions "Pre-Consumer Recycled Material" for additional guidance).*

A5 – Supply Chain Requirements

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Claimed Recycled Material follows a complete, verified chain of custody from input to final product.

A5.1 Application of Production Requirements

Organizations involved in production and trade of RCS products are subject to RCS certification. The Recycled Claim Standard requires compliance with the requirements of the Content Claim Standard, whereby the 'Claimed Material' is replaced with 'RCS Material'.

A5.2 Production and Trade

In addition to the requirements of the CCS, all organizations involved in the production or trade of RCS products shall meet the following requirements:

A5.2a All Recycled Materials entering the supply chain shall have a valid Transaction Certificate (TC) issued by an approved CB.

A5.2b Pre-Consumer and Post-Consumer Recycled Material Content percentage shall be recorded separately for each batch at every certified site and recorded on the transaction certificate.

***GUIDANCE**: While the labeling requirements of the RCS do not require pre- and Post-Consumer amounts to be identified separately (in accordance with the FTC Green Guides), it is often not possible for the companies involved in the production of RCS products to know how the final product will be labeled, or if they will want the information for their own use.*

A5.2c Traders with an annual turnover of less than $10,000 of RCS products, and retailers selling to end consumers only, are exempt from the certification obligation; provided that they do not (re-) pack or (re-) label RCS products. Exempted traders with less than $10,000 annual turnover of RCS products shall register with an approved Certification Body and shall inform the Certification Body immediately once their annual turnover exceeds $10,000, or once they plan to (re-) pack or (re-) label RCS products.

***GUIDANCE**: A trader is any entity that takes ownership of the certified products, regardless of whether they take physical possession of the products.*

A5.2d In cases where there is the possibility of differential rates of production loss between Recycled and virgin inputs, Certified Organizations shall address this through their mass balance formula for each material to show that calculations were done to account for the differences.

***GUIDANCE**: In most cases the percentage loss of Recycled and virgin inputs will be very close, and no adjustments to the mass balance formula are needed. However, in some cases the loss rates are different enough to impact the final content claims, for example:*

- *If Recycled cotton is being used as an input, and the staple length is shorter than the virgin fiber, then during the combing process it is likely that most*

of the shorter fibers that are combed out will be the Recycled cotton. This would mean that the percentage of Recycled fiber in the output is less than the amount used in the input, and for low ratio claims, this can lead to inaccurate product claims. To address this, companies shall:

- *Add more Recycled fiber to their inputs, to account for the expected loss (e.g.: use 55kg of Recycled cotton fiber and 45 kg of virgin cotton fiber to create a 50% Recycled yarn), OR*
- *Adjust the final amount being claimed to reflect the actual amount of Recycled Material in the output.*

A5.2e Buyers of the RCS product will be responsible to set any further requirements on the specific standards or requirements to which the input material shall be certified. These additional requirements are separate from the RCS and its certification process.

***GUIDANCE**: Any additional requirements set by a buyer do not fall under the RCS certification. However, it might be advantageous to have the additional requirements checked during the RCS audit process. All such arrangements will be strictly between the buyer and the CB.*

Some brands might wish to identify the original source material prior to recycling. This is outside the scope of certification to the RCS, but may be added to the Transaction Certificates if requested by the brand. The arrangements should be made through the Certification Body.

Appendices

Appendix A – Tools and Resources

Textile Exchange Certification Toolkit - Essential Series

The *Certification Toolkit* has been developed to provide increased clarity for brands and retailers trying to understand how to most accurately certify their products. This tool helps to address issues around why certification is important, the essential steps, understanding certificates, pricing and labeling.

The guide is free to members of Textile Exchange, or can be purchased on its own by non-members. For more information please visit http://www.textileexchange.org/content/certification-toolkit.

Questions and Additional Information

For questions or additional information about the GRS please contact: standards@textileexchange.org.

Appendix B – Reclaimed Material Supplier Agreement

This document acts as a guarantee that all of the materials listed below and being sold to [*Certified Organization]* ____ are Reclaimed Materials* that would have otherwise gone into the waste stream. It is valid for one year, effective _____.

** see Section A1 for definitions*

By signing this document, we give permission to *[Certification Body]* to visit our facility with a minimum notice of 3 days. The inspection will relate only to verification of our status as a legal organization and to confirm the description of materials as Recycled, including the designation of pre- or Post-Consumer streams.

Signed by:

Title:

Email Address:

Phone:

On behalf of: (*Company name*)

_____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

Appendix C – **Approved Recycled Content**

Cotton linters and other manufacturing by-products that are converted into a man-made cellulosic fiber may be considered pre-consumer recycled.

Yarn spinning waste is considered recycled if it:

1. *Cannot be directly used in the spinning cycle and*
2. *Must be reprocessed (e.g. re-opened) before it can re-enter the spinning process.*

Example: Waste from the blowroom, carding, comber, roving, and ring processing steps that is collected and put back into spinning is not considered pre-consumer recycled content.

Down collected as waste from the production stage does not qualify for certification under the GRS. Recycled down is accepted only if it is collected from the post-consumer stage.

Bonded leather is allowed to be called recycled, as long as the percentage of leather is accurate, taking into account how much of the mass is bonding agent.