

# RDS International Working Group Call

Feb 15, 2018

## Agenda

1. Introductions, Announcements, and Housekeeping
2. Updates
3. Requirement Types
4. Reminders
  - a. Charter
5. Feedback collection

## Announcements

- New RDS team member: Cassie Kopecky
- If you need to contact:
  - [cassie@textileedchange.org](mailto:cassie@textileedchange.org)
  - [ashley@textileexchange.org](mailto:ashley@textileexchange.org)
  - [responsibledown@textileexchange.org](mailto:responsibledown@textileexchange.org)
- Textile Exchange discussed recording calls and came to the conclusion that we will be recording calls, however we will not be posting them publicly. We are going to keep the link to the recording and then send it via email to members of the International Working Group.
  - Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns regarding this.
- Most of you should have seen the Charter and you might still be waiting on company policy.
- The goal of these calls is to have a polite and honest discourse. We are not using this information to disparage any other companies and we are not using this Working Group to push forth our own agendas.

## Responsible Down Standard Requirement Types

LEVEL	% Compliance	Deadline
Critical Major	100%	Immediately
Major	100%	60 days after audit
Minor	50% per module	60 days after audit (to reach 50%)

Recommendation	0%	Not applicable
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All of the criteria related to the farm have been assigned a level:

- **Critical Major** – Live tolerance issues, sourcing animals from none certified farms.
  - If any evidence is found that a site is in violation of that then certification will not happen.
  - If a site is already certified and on their renewal, then certification is suspended.
- **Major** – If there is evidence of non-compliance the site has 60 days to provide documentation that they are in compliance following the audit.
  - This is not to say we are ok with the practice the violation is pertaining to but certification bodies require documentation which can be challenging and time consuming.
- **Minor** – If there is non-compliance then they have to show documentation that they are in compliance within 60 days after audit. Right now we are asking for 50% of the minors to be in compliance. This gives the farm the ability to choose where to set their priorities. So they can make strategic investments over time.
- **Recommendation** – These are a separate category. Meaning they are not audited or required to be certified. They are questions asked of the facility. We don't require they be met, but it is a way to show the site the criteria that may be added in the future.

The criteria within the farm, transport, slaughter, and small farmer group modules have each been assigned a level. The difference between all of these has to do with the deadline of when the criteria has to be met and also percentage of criteria that have to be met.

## Theory of Change

The distribution of practice throughout the down feather industry can be illustrated as a curve. With worst practices being on one side of the curve and best practices on the opposite end. Both are the lowest points of the curve. The highest point of the curve represents the average.

- We want to shift the industry towards better and best practices.
  - We are trying to set a meaningful benchmark and we are looking to how we can move the rest of the industry forward.
  - Over time we can move these criteria further toward best practices.
- Our strategy is going to have to come from industry engagement if we want to make the shift.
  - Heavy investment in industry education is the approach we will have to take.

The goal is to shift the industry toward recommendations.

## Q&A:

### Do these categories work?

### Do the percentages work?

### Do the deadlines work?

- Is this the best structure to **categorize** the requirements?
  - Should more minors be required?
    - We will be looking more at the specific minor criteria.
  - Should some minors move to majors?
    - We could do that through raising the percentage or shifting some criteria from minor to major.
  - After agreeing on the general approach, we will evaluate each criteria and whether it should be moved, and then take another look at the requirement types to make sure we are doing what we need to do.
  - Are we good with the percentages?
    - Look carefully at what we are basing that percentage on.
    - Perhaps raise the percentage of minor criteria that are met.
- Is there anyone that does not think these categories or structures are what we should use?
- Another way these standards can work is they need to meet minimum **percentage** of requirements in the first year.
  - Requiring farms to improve over time.
  - Maybe 50% is allowed and upon renewal they may be asked to reach 60%.
  - It is preferable to use a basic outline of requirements and recommendations, to ensure that all criteria are met. But can see the value of shifting the criteria over time.
  - This is the existing criteria for certification. Everyone that is currently certified is at 50%. There are some that are higher in percentage but that does not make them “more certified”.
    - We will look at if some major criteria should be moved into minor
- In the case of **deadlines** should we instead look at the Responsible Wool Standard where they have 30 days in the case of treatment of animals and 90 days in the case of record keeping and infrastructure.
  - We need feedback from certification bodies on how certified sites are currently performing.
  - In the case of food and water there may need to be a shorter deadline.
  - Other animal welfare standards use a 4 week minimum timeframe, and allow the sites to apply for an extension if needed. For example, structural issues.

## **Reminders**

- Watch for RDS IWG Charter to be signed.
- Submit feedback via the Feedback Form.
- Review Work Plan, sign up for task groups.

Please contact us if you have any questions.