



Product Verification Committee Clarifications Report Number 3

I. BACKGROUND

See Clarification Report number one for the background on the authority of the Product Verification Committee (PVC) and the context for PVC Clarifications.

II. PVC CLARIFICATIONS

Clarification 3-1. Regarding 4.5.2.1 – Optional criterion: Renewable energy accessory available

Product Criterion: Accessory for powering product using renewable energy shall be commercially available for purchase with the product.

Applies to: All covered products.

Verification Requirements:

- a) Declaration from manufacturer
- b) Commercial documentation of product availability

Background: The following issue arose in Verification Round Two:

In meeting this criterion, different subscribers have made renewable energy (RE) accessories available in very different ways. For the purpose of verifying conformance for this criterion it is necessary for subscribers to understand how the PVC will interpret the terms “commercially available for purchase with the product”.

What does “available for purchase” mean? Does the RE accessory need to be provided by the subscriber? Can it be provided by a third-party? Is it necessary that it be purchased from the subscriber “with the product”, or can a purchase request be referred to a third-party? Does it need to be advertised and promoted by the subscriber?

The IEEE Interpretations group decided on the following interpretation of this criterion:

Furthermore, the terms “available for purchase with the product” means that the purchaser must be able to buy the accessory from the subscriber along with the product, though the product may be provided by a third-party.

PVC Clarification: For conformance with criterion 4.5.2.1 the renewable energy accessory must be available for purchase with the purchase of the product. When the customer orders the product from the subscriber, they may also order the accessory from the subscriber. However, the supplier of the accessory need not be the subscriber. The availability of the accessory must be made evident to all potential institutional purchasers through the subscriber’s commercial documentation, such as identification on the subscriber’s web site or inclusion in product literature provided at the time of consideration of purchase. Declaration on the EPEAT Registry is not of itself adequate commercial documentation.

Clarification 3-2. Regarding temporal conditions for conformance

This Clarification relates to the conditions of conformance of all criteria. The relevant language is from section 1.4 of the 1680 standard, and reads as follows:

Conformance with this Standard shall be demonstrated by the following process:

- a) Before declaring the conformance of products to this Standard, the manufacturer will sign a legally binding Agreement with a Product Registration Entity. This Agreement shall commit the manufacturer to providing accurate product and company information and shall provide for remedies should inaccuracies be discovered.

The Agreement shall provide that all units sold of a product that is declared to this Standard shall conform to the product declaration submitted by the manufacturer....

Background: The following issue arose in Verification Round Two:

Some investigations revealed, through evidence of dated documents, that the conditions of a criterion were met well after the criterion was declared to by the subscriber, and in some cases after the Verification Round began and the subscriber was notified that the criterion in question would be investigated.

In some of those cases the declared product, and its attributes relevant to conformance with 1680, was designed especially for an institutional procurement that had not yet been completed. The declaration to criteria and the status of the product on the Registry were relevant to product selection in the procurement. However, subscribers claimed that since none of the products being verified had yet been sold, they did not need to be in conformance.

PVC Clarification: The effective language from the 1680 standard is “This Agreement shall commit the manufacturer to providing accurate product and company information....” This can only mean that when a subscriber declares that a product meets the terms of a criterion, it does in fact meet those terms. Therefore, the product must meet all the requirements of a criterion when the subscriber declares to that criterion, and it would be a non-conformance to declare to a criterion, and then later to bring the product into conformance. The reference in the standard to “all units sold...shall conform” does not provide a condition for when the declaration must be accurate.

Special Circumstance: One criterion that is being verified in Round Two will be given special treatment due to the unique language in the criterion.

Criterion 4.7.3.2 Optional – Corporate report based on GRI

Annual Report Criterion: Manufacturer shall produce an annual public report that is based on, but not limited to, certain elements of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. An index shall be provided to indicate which portions of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines are covered and not covered in the report.

Applies to: All manufacturers with products that are declared to conform to this Standard.

Verification Requirements:

- a) Declaration from manufacturer
- b) Copy of annual report
- c) Index to report showing how report is based on GRI

The special treatment results from the unique phrase in this criterion: “shall produce”. The tense of this phrase has created confusion as to whether the annual report must have been produced prior to declaration to the criterion.

1. In the future, before the subscriber declares to this criterion a corporate report that meets this criterion shall have been produced. That is, such report shall exist so that a “copy of annual report” can be provided to the verifier. It shall also be demonstrated that the subscriber intends to produce the report annually.
2. For Round Two only, however, due to the ambiguity of the phrase “shall produce”, the pre-existence of the annual report shall not be required for conformance. However, the subscriber must be able to provide evidence that an annual report that meets the criterion is explicitly planned for production, or is currently in production.