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EPEAT Advisory Council Operating Rules

This document describes the operating rules of the GEC Advisory Council (AC).

1) Role

The Advisory Council's role is to provide advice, input, and perspective to GEC management and Board on the following matters:

- Implementing new standards on the EPEAT Registry
- Verification strategy and otherwise maintaining the credibility of the EPEAT System, including relationships with Conformity Assurance Bodies (CABs)
- Usability, features and operation of the EPEAT System
- Branding and communications related to EPEAT and EPEAT registered products
- Promotion of the Registry and EPEAT to purchasers and other key stakeholders
- High level work plan and budget
- Other matters of importance to stakeholders related to management of the EPEAT to fulfill its mission

The Advisory Council shall not influence specific product verification plans or decisions, interpretations or clarifications of standards implemented on the registry, or setting of subscriber fees.

The Advisory Council may provide unsolicited advice or may provide advice on request, and members may provide advice individually or collectively. The Advisory Council is not a fiduciary body.

2) Staff Support

The work of the AC is supported by GEC staff. The EPEAT Executive Director of Registry Services serves as the Chairperson of the AC. The Chairperson is not a member of the AC and carries no vote. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the following activities are supported: planning the meetings, facilitating meetings, arranging logistics for meetings, and taking notes of meetings.

The Chairperson should distribute the materials for meetings at least one week before meetings, either via email or by posting them to the AC collaborative worksite for download and notifying members.

AC members are invited to host the in-person meetings, or portions of meetings.

3) Membership

The following rules apply to membership of the Advisory Council.

a) Advisory Council Members

AC members are appointed and serve as individuals representing their organization. A large part of the value that members bring is that they understand and perhaps share the perspectives of the stakeholder group that they represent. However, members are expected to provide advice and counsel to support GEC's mission success rather than that which uniquely serves their own organization's interest.

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Similarly, a member's organizational affiliation is an important part of their role, but individuals within an organization are not interchangeable.

If a serving member changes their organizational affiliation during their term they must notify the Chairperson and the members. The AC will determine what action to take, if any.

b) Number of Members

The Advisory Council has between 12 and 15 members.

c) Balanced Representation of Stakeholders

Definition: "Stakeholder group" or "Stakeholder category" is any number of organizations whose activities may be impacted by, or who may have a direct interest in electronics and the environment.

The Advisory Council shall consist of a balanced representation of key stakeholders engaged in EPEAT. At a minimum, the following stakeholders should be represented:

- Purchasers of electronics who use EPEAT in their purchasing specs
- Environmental advocates and Non-Governmental Organizations active in issues related to electronics and the environment
- Participating Manufacturers
- Retailers and sellers of electronics
- Government agencies related to electronics and the environment
- U.S. Federal Government representation
- Participating Conformity Assurance Bodies
- Other stakeholders such as electronics recyclers, academic researchers, etc.

The AC may also include members-at-large who do not represent a specific stakeholder group but add value due to their individual perspective, knowledge or skills.

Representation on the AC should be representative of the diversity of the stakeholder group itself. For example, the Manufacturer representatives should include manufacturers of the range of product types on the registry, size of company, and geographic presence and location; Purchaser representatives should include representatives of the different types of organizations that specify EPEAT and from different countries and regions supported by EPEAT, etc.

"Balanced" means:

- The Advisory Council shall consist of members representing at least four stakeholder categories.
- No one stakeholder category shall have more than 3 members, nor more than 25 percent of membership, whichever is less.

If a member leaves the Advisory Council the stakeholder balance may be upset for a short interval. In this event the Chairperson and members cooperate to bring the Advisory Council back into balance as soon as possible.

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d) Member Responsibilities

Members have a responsibility to the other members to serve in good standing by attending at least 2/3 of the meetings and votes, either personally or by proxy. Members should read and consider the meeting materials before each meeting. Members should strive to be fully present during meetings, with the understanding that sometimes other things may impinge.

e) Appointment of Members

Outgoing members nominate their replacement. If they do not then the Chairperson and members nominate a replacement. Also, any member or the Chairperson may nominate a new member at any time.

Nominees are presented to the full AC for a consensus recommendation to the GEC Board of Directors. If a consensus recommendation is not achieved then the outgoing member, Chairperson, and the other members will work to resolve the issue.

The GEC Board of Directors appoints and possibly dismisses members, typically at the recommendation of the AC. The Chairperson may from time to time review the AC membership to assure that members are serving in good standing. At the recommendation of the Chairperson, or any member, the Advisory Council may vote a consensus recommendation to the Board of Directors to dismiss a member. In this event the Chairperson and the members will work to nominate a replacement.

Any member may resign at any time upon 30 days written notice to the Chairperson and the members.

If a member resigns before the end of their term, the company or organization which that member represents shall have the first option to nominate a qualified individual as a replacement to serve out the rest of the original member's term.

f) Member Terms

Members typically serve staggered three-year terms based on a calendar year.

In order to keep new perspectives coming to the Advisory Council, members are discouraged from serving consecutive terms. However, a member may serve consecutive terms if after a reasonable search a suitable replacement cannot be identified who is qualified and willing to serve.

In the event a member is appointed "out of cycle" due to an unplanned vacancy, the Board of Directors determines when their term expires, not to exceed a 4 year term.

g) Compensation

Members serve without compensation.

Members are generally expected to cover their own travel expense to attend meetings.

h) Liability for Members of the Advisory Council

Members do not hold fiduciary responsibility and are therefore not liable for any actions of GEC.

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4) Meetings

Regular meetings of the Advisory Council are held once per calendar quarter in March, June, September and December. In recent years the June and December meetings have been in- person, alternating between Portland and other hosted locations, and the March and September meetings were by teleconference.

Special meetings may also be scheduled at any time by the Chairperson on at least ten days advance notice provided to members. Any member of the Advisory Council may request a special meeting. AC members may attend meetings in person, by video conference (if available), or by telephone. The Chairperson is responsible for making the necessary arrangements.

Advisory Council meetings are open to non-members only at the invitation of the Chairperson. Unless otherwise noted in the agenda, the entire meeting is open to invited guests. When noted on the agenda the AC may be in executive session, at which time guests will be excused. The portions of meetings closed to non-AC members will be clearly communicated in advance. The Chairperson may also seek member input outside of organized meetings.

5) Notice of Meetings

Regular meetings of the AC are scheduled each year in advance. The schedule is posted on the website and provided to members annually. Members and invited guests are notified of special meetings by email.

6) Consensus Process

Consensus of the Advisory Council is not required, and minority opinions are welcome. However, consensus recommendations of the Advisory Council are especially important and will carry greater weight.

When the AC wishes to make a recommendation or otherwise act as a body it does so by achieving consensus. Consensus is defined as having at least 75 percent of the quorum in any EPEAT Advisory Council Operating Rules 5 12 March 2013 official meeting who “can live with the decision”. This means that though they may not totally agree with the decision, they are willing to move forward with it.

A quorum is 75% of the AC membership. Once a quorum is obtained in a meeting it is maintained until the meeting is adjourned.

Regardless whether consensus is achieved on a motion, additional opinions, recommendations or input are recorded by EPEAT staff.

Members may vote verbally in in-person or telecon meetings, or by email. In case of an email vote the Chairperson will formulate the matter being voted upon and will distribute the question to the members via email. All votes on the issue in question must be made via email by each member voting and copying the entire AC on their vote.

Vote by proxy is permitted only if explicit written delegation is given to the Chairperson and members at least one day in advance of a meeting.

7) Records of Meetings

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The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that notes are taken of Advisory Council meetings. The notes will record discussions, action items, and any votes taken and specific comments requested by an Advisor. Meeting notes will be distributed to members via email or posted to the AC collaborative work site and made available to the Board of Directors. Meeting notes will be approved at the subsequent Advisory Council meeting. Meeting notes are not intended to be made publicly available.

8) Committees

A subset of the membership, sometimes including non-members, may form committees to work on specific items in preparation to bringing them to the full AC for input and recommendation. It is not required that committees maintain stakeholder balance and they may operate informally because their products are not binding on the AC. Parties that participate in developing a recommendation to the AC are identified so that the AC can evaluate recommendations accordingly.

9) Change History

- The initial release of this document (Issue 1 Rev 0) was approved by the Advisory Council on March 12 2013.
- Issue 1 Rev1 was released on November 15, 2015. Updated naming conventions and other insignificant changes.