



OUTCOMES REPORT

EPEAT VERIFICATION ROUND 2011-03

1. Summary and Details of Verification Round 2011-03

This report provides the detailed results of EPEAT Verification Round 2011-03. Round 2011-03 investigated one required criterion:

- Required criterion 4.6.1.1 – Provision of take-back service.

Required criterion 4.6.1.1 was investigated due to one subscriber suggesting that it was not possible to obtain adequate documentation of recycler certification to U.S. EPA Plug-In to eCycling Guidelines in one specific European country. The specific country in question was Switzerland. This Round was conducted under the revised IEEE 1680.1 standard. A total of 5 investigations were conducted; one for each Subscriber registered in Switzerland. Only the adequate documentation of recycler certification to U.S. EPA Plug-In to eCycling Guidelines requirement of the criterion was investigated. The investigation was performed using level one and level two investigations.

2. Outcomes of Round 2011-03

Criterion 4.6.1.1 is required.

Following are the specific highlights of Round 2011-03.

- 5 investigations were launched.
 - All 5 investigations looked at required criterion 4.6.1.1
- 5 investigations were completed.
- There were 5 decisions of Conformance for these investigations.
- The overall impact on the Registry was:
 - There was no impact to the registry.

3. Key Lessons of Round 2011-03

- Required criterion 4.6.1.1 -- Provision of take-back service.
 - The investigation began as a Level one investigation where our Technical Expert¹ contacted the 5 Subscriber contacts for information regarding how their Swiss recyclers met the U.S. EPA's Plug-In to eCycling Guidelines. Three of the five Subscribers indicated they used the same recycler. This prompted a further Level two investigation where the Technical Expert met with the Swiss recycler to review the recycler's audit of the Plug-In Guidelines.
 - The PVC found SWICO Recycling, (<http://www.swicorecycling.ch/e/entsorgen.asp>) to be functionally equivalent to the U.S. EPA's Plug-In to eCycling Guidelines.

¹ A technical expert is defined as a person with extensive knowledge or ability based on research, experience, or occupation in a particular area of study. EPEAT chose to use an expert in the European recycling system who had familiarity and common language in investigated country.

- Based on information gathered during the investigation, the PVC also found the EbfV, or Entsorgungsfachbetriebeverordnung, (<http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/efbv/>) to be functionally equivalent to the U.S. EPA’s Plug-In to eCycling Guidelines. This latter organization was used by one of the Subscribers.
- Other Key Lessons
 - *Message to Subscribers:*
 - *When you are contacted regarding your participation in a Verification Round, we request that you respond to the Qualified Verifier or Technical Expert quickly to let them know they are communicating with the correct person or to inform them who they should be communicating with. This also helps the Qualified Verifier know that they have a valid email address. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Erin Gately at erin.gately@greenelectronicscouncil.org.*

4. Looking Forward

1. **Plans for Future Verification Activities:** There were 6 verification rounds planned for 2011. Four verification rounds have been launched. Investigations have included Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 investigations.
2. **Training:** In September we sent out a training survey. The results indicated that a North American training would be desirable. Our plan is to build a North American training into the 2012 budget and schedule. A training session was held in Brussels, Belgium, EU in September. A training session will take place in Brazil from November 28 through December 1, 2011.
3. **Conformity Assessment Protocols:** This and all future rounds will be conducted according to the Conformity Assessment Protocols posted on www.epeat.net.

5. Investigation Tables

TABLE 1: Non-Conformance Findings

Criterion	Description	Total # of Investigations	# of completed investigations	# of NCs
4.6.1.1	Provision of product take-back service.	5	5	0
	Total	5	5	0

TABLE 2: Non-Conformance Findings: Corrective Actions Taken

No instances of Non-Conformance were found in this Verification Round.

6. Background

To assure the credibility of the EPEAT Registry, verification of the claims by participating manufacturers (called “Subscribers”) are rigorous, independent and transparent. Verification is conducted strictly according to policies and procedures described in the IEEE 1680 Standard and in documents provided on www.epeat.net. Subscribers are given no forewarning that their products will be verified and verification is performed based on the declarations as they are in the database at the time the round begins.

In level one verification investigations, subscribers are required to provide detailed and accurate information in a timely manner that demonstrates conformance, such as supply chain management records. In level two and three investigations EPEAT buys products without the Subscriber's knowledge, disassembles them, and conducts detailed analytical testing if needed. Level two investigations can also take the form of site visits. Investigations are performed by expert technical contractors who are free of conflicts of interest, and their recommended decisions are reviewed and finalized by a 3-person panel of independent technical experts (called the Product Verification Committee or PVC) who are also contractors free of conflicts of interest and are blind to the identity of the products and companies they are judging. This panel makes a conformance/non-conformance decision on each investigation, based on evidence collected and analyzed by Qualified Verifiers. A serious consequence of receiving a non-conformance is that it is published publicly in an Outcomes Report, for purchasers, competitors, and others to see.

Subscribers must correct findings of non-conformance, either by bringing the product into conformance or by un-declaring the criterion until conformance is achieved, and they must do so for all products that are similarly incorrectly declared, not only the product(s) that were investigated. If they correct the non-conformance by un-declaring the criterion and the criterion is an optional criterion, they lose a point, and possibly the product drops a tier. If it is a required criterion, they must archive the product. If it is a required corporate criterion, all their products must be archived.