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To Whom It May Concern:

Following a request by a Brazilian purchaser, EPEAT has investigated claims made by a computer manufacturer– Arquimedes Automacao e Informatica Ltda --about their Fortress Gold desktop on the EPEAT registry. All available evidence indicates that the company misrepresented the rating of the product in EPEAT to a Brazilian governmental purchaser. This email is intended to bring this possible misrepresentation to your attention so that you can exercise due caution regarding this supplier's EPEAT claims in the future.

The details of this apparent misrepresentation are as follows: Arquimedes registered the Fortress Gold product on EPEAT's web-based environmentally preferable product registry on June 11, 2008. The product declaration claimed sufficient criteria for the product to be rated Bronze – the lowest rating level. This declaration appears to be substantiated.

However, it appears that Arquimedes took advantage of the dynamic nature of the EPEAT system to alter the product's registration at a later date to claim additional criteria, such that the product showed a Gold rating for a very short period of time.

Arquimedes responded to an August 2009 bid solicitation from a municipal government which required EPEAT Gold status for products provided on the contract. On the day that Arquimedes submitted information to the purchaser regarding the product, they claimed several optional criteria and the product rating changed from Bronze to Silver to Gold. (These changes can be seen by EPEAT staff through the date-stamped records created each time product records are changed.) The additional criteria claimed included the elimination of additional hazardous materials, new elements of product design for recyclability and upgradeability, and the use of recycled materials in packaging.

Arquimedes staff printed out a screenshot of the registration showing the product to be Gold and submitted that to the purchaser. Then, later the same day, the manufacturer undeclared the criteria and the product returned to Bronze status, where it remains today.

The purchaser asked EPEAT to investigate the status of the product when, during the course of their procurement review, they looked at the EPEAT Registry and found the product rated Bronze, rather than Gold, as it had been represented to them. Our investigation found Arquimedes' explanation of the discrepancy not to be credible.

This notification of Brazilian purchasers, and an accompanying note on the EPEAT Registry, are actions being taken by EPEAT in response to this apparent misrepresentation.

PLEASE NOTE: Purchasers are encouraged to solicit assistance from EPEAT staff to investigate any questionable EPEAT product declarations provided in a procurement process. We will examine any such questions carefully and publicly report any findings of nonconformance or false claims. Such assistance from purchasers, who are best situated to uncover discrepancies in product declarations, is important to our efforts to continually monitor and prevent nonconforming EPEAT declarations.