



# ***Information Kit on AFRDI Green Tick Sustainability Assessments***

## **Introduction**

This kit aims to provide background information for those applicants interested in having their products assessed against the requirements of the AFRDI 150 Sustainability Standard. Adoption of the AFRDI Green Tick enables furniture manufacturers to positively differentiate themselves in a marketplace where, for the most part, products are untested and not certified. The AFRDI Green Tick is more than certification for sustainability and longevity: before it is awarded, products must first be AFRDI Blue Tick or equivalently tested and certified, as an indicator of their strength, durability, suitability for purpose and ergonomic qualities.

Furntech-AFRDI's "AFRDI Green Tick" certification program specifically covers items intended for use as commercial furniture, and should lead to end-user/consumer confidence through independent third-party endorsement of products. Any additional information, which is not included within this kit, is available from the Institute upon request.

## **Background**

Following a development and refinement process that spanned over three years, AFRDI Standard 150 – Sustainability Standard Commercial Furniture was initially released, in draft form, in May 2009. Assessments against the Standard's performance requirements commenced in September 2009 after considering, synthesising and acting upon all feedback received from the thirty day public comment period offered.

The scope of the AFRDI 150 Sustainability Standard presently addresses matters relating to operational energy, water and waste, corporate social responsibility, stewardship, compliance with laws and regulations, transport and packaging, fitness for purpose, materials selection – including consideration of chain of custody procedures for raw materials – particularly wood, toxic and hazardous substances, indoor environment quality and design for disassembly, recycling, re-use and product refurbishment.

## **Levels of Certification**

The AFRDI 150 Standard seeks to engage the commercial furniture sector at multiple levels, and foster continuous improvement, by offering **three different levels** of certification, each with increasing commitment to the broad principles of sustainability:

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Published by Furntech-AFRDI, the Australasian Furnishing Research and Development Institute, an independent not-for-profit technical organisation serving furniture buyers and sellers in Australia and New Zealand.

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**Level C (Silver)** – the *entry level*, seeks to engage applicants who are in the early stages of addressing sustainability objectives.

**Level B (Gold)** – the *good practice level*, seeks to engage applicants who are already well established in addressing sustainability objectives.

**Level A (Platinum)** – the *best practice level*, seeks to engage applicants who go beyond implementing the measures currently regarded as good environmental practice.

AFRDI Standard 150 (issued March 2012) certification, which is recognised by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), is applicable to commercial furniture and corresponds with furniture and assemblies related Material Calculators in Green Star rating tools (chairs, tables, workstations, storage, joinery and loose furniture).

**Note:** The previously recognised **June 2011 and September 2011** versions of the standard were replaced in March 2012. Products certified to either of these older versions of the standard will continue to be rewarded until the expiry date of the certificate.

### Performance of AFRDI 150 Assessments

The product certification process involves both assessing the applicant's production systems and facilities, and selecting representative samples of finished product for sustainability assessment:

- **Part A – Gold & Silver Assessment**

All products must comply with the applicable mandatory Part A performance criteria. To achieve compliance with either Level B (Gold) or C (Silver), the product must meet i) a minimum percentage of points for each section, and also ii) a minimum percentage of total points, as defined in Table 1 of the AFRDI 150 Standard.

Reassessment will be required to be repeated three (3) years after the original certification date, unless the applicant – in line with continuous improvement principles – seeks certification to a higher level prior to that point in time, or Furntech deems it necessary to perform earlier reassessment.

- **Part B – Platinum Assessment**

Those applicants seeking AFRDI 150 Level A (Platinum) must satisfy all Part B performance criteria, as well as Part A, for each manufacturing site.

**NOTE:** those applicants seeking either AFRDI 150 Level B (Gold) or A (Platinum) certification will be subject to an on-site inspection of their Australian premises by Furntech. Where no premises exist within Australia, inspection will be performed at the discretion of Furntech.

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### **AFRDI Green Tick Certification Agreement & Obligations**

AFRDI Green Tick certification is open to suppliers whose products meet the requirements of the AFRDI 150 standard. The concept is that for Furntech-AFRDI to endorse a product, the Institute needs to have an ongoing contractual relationship with the supplier that ensures purchasers can rely on certificates of endorsement.

Under the AFRDI Green Tick certification scheme the supplier agrees to be subject to random auditing of facilities throughout the issued period of certification. Furthermore, products will be subject to ongoing batch testing/assessment to ensure that the relevant environmental system(s) continue to be truly effective. Any reasonable complaints arising from the sale of endorsed products will also be investigated.

Under the AFRDI Green Tick product certification program, suppliers agree to:

- Maintain quality of production to at least that of the sample assessed;
- Advise Furntech-AFRDI of any changes in the product, including changes in materials, components, manufacturing methodologies, and place of manufacturer;
- Not use (nor permit its agents to use) the AFRDI Green Tick logo to promote goods which are not covered by the Agreement or to misrepresent the nature of Furntech-AFRDI's endorsement. Further, the AFRDI Green Tick logo may not be used on goods not previously having been awarded AFRDI Blue Tick or equivalent certification;
- Keep and make available a register of complaints arising from the sale of goods covered by the Agreement;
- Submit goods for reassessment every three years;
- Agree to random checks of the quality of products covered by the Agreement if required or requested;
- Maintain an adequate product liability insurance cover; and
- Pay a certification fee.

In return, Furntech-AFRDI agrees to:

- Permit the use of the AFRDI Green Tick logo to promote goods covered by the Agreement;
- Offer complimentary Associate Membership of AFRDI when AFRDI Green Tick certification is initially achieved for twelve months;
- Commend goods covered by the Agreement in a list on the Institute's Website; and
- Provide a compliance certificate.

A copy of the Agreement is available on request.

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### Costs

The Certification Program includes two chargeable parts

- a) An Assessment fee; and
- b) A Certification fee.

#### a) **Assessment**

Contact the Institute and provide a completed [Assessment Request Form](#) to receive a formal quote for the desired product assessment(s).

**We are prepared to visit – at no additional charge – your Australian premises on one occasion for the specific purpose of briefing you on the requirements of AFRDI 150, and the related Assessment Questionnaire. We will also visit you on a separate occasion for audit purposes.** Should a site visit outside of Australia be required (specifically for the purpose of Level A/Platinum certification) then you will be required to meet our costs.

Any subsequent re-assessment duties and/or onsite inspection(s) relevant to this work will incur additional charges and be invoiced separately.

#### b) **Certification**

The cost of certification per product is \$980 – less AFRDI or FIAA membership discounts – plus GST. Certification is awarded for **three years** and grants acceptance to the list of AFRDI-endorsed products accessible on the Institute's Website at [www.furntech.org.au](http://www.furntech.org.au) for the duration a certificate remains valid. A renewal fee (less membership discounts plus GST) is applicable after three years of certification has transpired.

**Under the proviso no reassessment is sought/performed during a certificate's (three year) period of validity no other certification fee(s) will be incurred.**

Information on membership is available from the Institute or our Website.

### Payment

Furntech-AFRDI policy is that **PAYMENT MUST BE MADE BEFORE ASSESSMENT COMMENCES**. Please phone (03) 6326 6155 to request an invoice if this will help to facilitate payment. Facilities are available for payment to be made by Visa and MasterCard.

### Timing

A copy of the AFRDI 150 Assessment Questionnaire is freely available upon request at any time.

When i) a completed Assessment Request form and ii) payment is received, the most current version of the questionnaire will (again if necessary) be provided to the applicant's primary contact. Once the questionnaire is completed and returned to Furntech-AFRDI the assessment process will begin within one working week and a formal response will be made within two working weeks.

### Freight

At least one complete and representative sample of the product must be inspected by Furntech-AFRDI for assessment (unless a sample/samples have already been supplied for concurrent AFRDI Blue Tick testing, in which case the same sample/samples can be used for both).

Refer to the Institute's [Information Kit on Freight to Furntech-AFRDI](#). Distribution of this kit in hardcopy form will include the freight-related information as a supplementary sheet.

### What You Get

Assuming that the product complies and that the applicant is prepared to sign an AFRDI Green Tick product certification Agreement, at the end of the process Furntech will:

- Issue an Assessment Report and a product certification certificate;
- Enter into a product certification Agreement with the supplier of the product or add the product to an existing product certification Agreement;
- Offer complimentary Associate Membership of AFRDI when AFRDI Green Tick certification is initially achieved for twelve months; and
- Add the product to the Furntech-AFRDI list of endorsed products under the AFRDI Green Tick Product Certification Scheme.

### Confidentiality

All testing and assessment conducted at Furntech-AFRDI is confidential. The Institute's procedures prohibit the disclosure of i) the fact that an item is being tested or assessed and ii) the results of any such testing or assessment without the written permission of the client.

To assist us to preserve the confidentiality of other customers, we request three working days notice of an intended visit to the Institute's laboratory.

### The Next Step

If you wish to proceed with an assessment, please follow these steps:

- 1 Complete an [Assessment Request Form](#) for each product you wish to submit, email or fax one copy of this form to Furntech-AFRDI on (03) 6326 3090;
- 2 Clearly mark the name of the company and the name/number on each product intended for submission; and
- 3 Phone (03) 6326 6155 to request an invoice to help facilitate payment.

### Queries

If you have any questions please contact Furntech-AFRDI direct on (03) 6326 6155 or [info@furntech.org.au](mailto:info@furntech.org.au)