



TRUSTED MARK® CERTIFICATION SCHEME

Trust 100 – Scheme Manual

In accordance with ISO/IEC 17067:2013 and ISO/IEC 17065:2012

Scheme Owner:
IRF Trusted Mark LLP

Trusted Mark Secretariat

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Foreword

The **IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme** has been developed to establish internationally recognised, customer-centric standards for retailers and shopping centres. The Scheme seeks to encourage excellence in customer experience, service quality, operational practices, statutory compliance and business governance through an independent third-party certification process.

Owned and administered by **IRF Trusted Mark LLP**, the Scheme provides consumers with greater confidence in certified organisations while enabling retailers and shopping centres to benchmark themselves against recognised best practices.

The Scheme has been developed with active participation from retail professionals, shopping centre experts, consumer representatives, technical specialists, Certification Bodies and other stakeholders. It is intended to be transparent, impartial and continuously improved in line with evolving industry practices and international conformity assessment standards.

Introduction

The **IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme** provides a structured framework for evaluating and certifying retailers and shopping centres against defined customer-centric standards.

The Scheme has been developed in accordance with the principles of **ISO/IEC 17067 – Conformity Assessment – Fundamentals of Product Certification and Guidelines for Product Certification Schemes**, while certification activities under the Scheme shall be carried out by independent Certification Bodies operating in accordance with **ISO/IEC 17065**.

Certification under the Scheme provides independent assurance that the certified organisation has implemented systems, processes and operational practices that consistently meet the requirements prescribed under the applicable Trusted Mark Standards.

The Scheme Owner is responsible for developing, maintaining and improving the Scheme, while certification decisions remain the sole responsibility of approved Certification Bodies.

1. Scope

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme establishes the requirements for certification of retailers and shopping centres and provides a uniform framework for:

- development and maintenance of customer-centric standards;
- qualification and recognition of Certification Bodies;
- certification of retailers and shopping centres;
- surveillance and recertification activities;
- governance and continual improvement of the Scheme.

The Scheme is intended for use by:

- retailers;
- shopping centres;
- Certification Bodies;
- Accreditation Bodies;
- consumers;
- regulators;
- trade associations; and
- other interested stakeholders.

2. Guiding Principles

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme is founded upon the following principles:

- customer-centricity;
- impartiality;
- transparency;
- consistency;
- objectivity;
- competence;
- integrity;
- continual improvement;
- evidence-based assessment; and
- independent certification.

All organisations participating in the Scheme shall uphold these principles throughout the certification process.

3. Objectives of the Scheme

The principal objectives of the IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme are to:

- establish customer-centric standards for retailers and shopping centres;
- recognise organisations demonstrating excellence in customer experience and operational performance;
- provide consumers with confidence in certified organisations through independent third-party certification;
- encourage continual improvement in service quality, business processes and statutory compliance;
- create a nationally and internationally recognised mark of trust for the retail and shopping centre industry;
- promote fair competition through transparent and consistent certification practices; and
- contribute towards improving the overall quality, professionalism and credibility of the retail sector.

4. Certification under the Scheme

Certification under the IRF Trusted Mark Scheme is voluntary.

Any eligible retailer or shopping centre may apply for certification through an approved Certification Body.

Certification is granted only after successful completion of the certification process prescribed under **Trust 200** and upon achieving the applicable requirements specified in the relevant Trusted Mark Standards.

Certification confirms that the organisation has demonstrated conformity with the Scheme requirements at the time of assessment.

Certification does not constitute a guarantee of commercial performance or continuous compliance. Continued certification is subject to successful surveillance audits and ongoing conformity with Scheme requirements.

5. Certification Categories

The Scheme presently covers the following business categories:

Category	Scope
Trusted Shop	Hypermarkets, supermarkets, department stores, specialty stores, convenience stores and other retail formats
Trusted Shopping Centre	Shopping malls and mixed-use retail destinations
Trusted Restaurant	Restaurants, cafés, food courts and foodservice establishments
Trusted Salon	Beauty salons and personal care establishments
Trusted Spa	Wellness centres and spa facilities
Trusted Care	Health, fitness and wellness centres
Trusted Pharmacy	Retail pharmacies
Trusted Jeweller	Jewellery and bullion retailers
Trusted Cineplex	Multiplexes and cinema operators
Trusted Fun Zone	Family entertainment centres, gaming centres, amusement and theme parks
Trusted e-Shop	E-commerce and omnichannel retailers

The Scheme Owner may introduce additional certification categories from time to time in response to industry developments.

6. Certification Framework

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme comprises the following key elements:

- Scheme Manual (Trust 100)
- Scheme Standards (Trust 150 Series)
- Mystery Audit Guidelines
- Certification Process (Trust 200)
- Application Process (Trust 201)
- Audit Man-Day Estimation Guideline (Trust 202)
- Auditor Competence Requirements (Trust 203)
- Audit Weightage Rules (Trust 204)
- Appeals and Complaints Procedure
- Logo Usage Rules

Together, these documents establish the governance, technical requirements and certification methodology applicable under the Scheme.

7. Overview of the Certification Process

Certification under the Scheme broadly comprises the following stages:

1. Registration with the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat.
2. Selection of an approved Certification Body.
3. Document Review.
4. Mystery Audit (where applicable).
5. On-site Certification Audit.
6. Corrective Actions.
7. Certification Review.
8. Certification Decision.
9. Certificate Issuance.
10. Surveillance Audits.
11. Recertification.

The detailed certification process is described in **Trust 200 – Certification Process**.

8. Scheme Governance

The **IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme** is owned and administered by **IRF Trusted Mark LLP** ("the Scheme Owner").

The Scheme Owner is responsible for maintaining the integrity, impartiality and continual improvement of the Scheme. To ensure balanced governance and stakeholder participation, the Scheme is administered through the **Trusted Board**, supported by various technical and advisory committees.

The governance structure has been established to ensure that:

- the Scheme remains transparent, impartial and technically robust;
- all interested stakeholders are appropriately represented;
- certification requirements remain relevant to evolving retail practices;
- certification activities are implemented consistently across all approved Certification Bodies; and
- consumers continue to have confidence in organisations certified under the Scheme.

9. Scheme Owner

The **Scheme Owner**, IRF Trusted Mark LLP, shall have overall ownership and responsibility for the IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme.

The responsibilities of the Scheme Owner include:

- development and maintenance of the Scheme;
- publication of Scheme documents;
- approval and recognition of Certification Bodies;
- maintenance of the register of certified organisations;
- appointment of governance committees;
- development of sector-specific certification standards;
- oversight of Scheme implementation;
- promotion of the Scheme nationally and internationally;
- protection of the IRF Trusted Mark intellectual property and certification marks; and
- periodic review and continual improvement of the Scheme.

The Scheme Owner shall not participate in certification decisions relating to individual applicants. Certification decisions shall remain the sole responsibility of the respective approved Certification Bodies.

10. IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat

The **IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat** shall act as the administrative office of the Scheme Owner.

The Secretariat shall be responsible for:

- administration of the Scheme;
- registration of applicants;
- maintaining records of approved Certification Bodies;
- maintaining the public register of certified organisations;
- coordination with Certification Bodies;
- coordination with Accreditation Bodies where necessary;
- organisation of committee meetings;
- publication of Scheme documents;
- management of Scheme communications;
- administration of the Mystery Audit Programme;
- promotion of the Scheme.

The Secretariat shall perform only administrative and coordination functions and shall not influence or participate in certification decisions.

11. Approved Certification Bodies

Certification under the IRF Trusted Mark Scheme shall be carried out only by Certification Bodies approved by the Scheme Owner.

Each approved Certification Body shall:

- operate in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065;
- maintain accreditation by the relevant Accreditation Body;
- demonstrate competence in retail and shopping centre certification;
- maintain impartiality and confidentiality;
- appoint competent auditors;
- ensure independence of certification decisions;
- comply with all applicable Scheme documents.

Each Certification Body shall remain solely responsible for:

- audit planning;
- audit execution;
- certification review;
- certification decisions;
- surveillance audits;
- recertification;
- suspension, withdrawal and restoration of certification.

12. Development of the Certification Scheme

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme has been developed through consultation with representatives from:

- retail organisations;
- shopping centre operators;
- Certification Bodies;
- Accreditation Bodies;
- consumer representatives;
- industry associations;
- technical experts;
- academia;
- regulatory and policy professionals.

The Scheme shall continue to evolve through stakeholder consultation to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness and international acceptance.

13. Development of Standards

The technical requirements of the Scheme are established through the **Trust Standards Series (Trust 150)**.

The standards are designed to:

- promote customer-centric practices;
- encourage continual improvement;
- improve service quality;
- strengthen operational excellence;
- enhance statutory compliance;
- improve customer confidence.

Sector-specific standards may be developed for different retail formats and shopping centre categories.

14. Operation of the Certification Scheme

The Scheme operates through an independent third-party certification model.

The responsibilities of the principal parties are summarised below.

Scheme Owner	Certification Body	Applicant
Responsible for: • development of the Scheme; • governance; • publication of Scheme documents; • recognition of Certification Bodies; • administration of the Scheme.	Responsible for: • conducting certification audits; • certification review; • certification decisions; • certificate issuance; • surveillance; • recertification.	Responsible for: • implementing Scheme requirements; • maintaining conformity; • facilitating audits; • addressing non-conformities; • complying with certification conditions.

15. Certification Framework

Certification under the Scheme shall normally follow the sequence below:

1. Application and Registration.
2. Appointment of Certification Body.
3. Certification Agreement.
4. Document Review.
5. Mystery Audit (where applicable).
6. On-site Certification Audit.
7. Corrective Actions.
8. Certification Review.
9. Certification Decision.
10. Certificate Issuance.
11. Registration on the IRF Trusted Mark website.
12. Surveillance Audits.
13. Recertification.

The detailed certification methodology is prescribed in **Trust 200 – Certification Process**.

16. Confidentiality and Impartiality

All persons involved in the operation of the Scheme shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding information obtained during certification activities.

Certification Bodies shall establish documented procedures to ensure:

- impartiality;
- confidentiality;
- management of conflicts of interest;
- protection of proprietary information.

The Scheme Owner shall similarly maintain confidentiality of applicant information except where disclosure is required by law or accreditation requirements.

17. Transparency

To promote confidence in the Scheme, the Scheme Owner shall maintain and publish:

- approved Certification Bodies;
- certified organisations;
- current Scheme documents;
- certification categories;
- logo usage rules;
- appeals and complaints procedures.

The Scheme Owner may publish additional information considered beneficial to stakeholders.

18. Scheme Documentation

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme is supported by a suite of controlled documents, each serving a specific purpose in the implementation and operation of the Scheme.

Trust Document	Title
Trust 100	Trusted Mark Certification Scheme Manual
Trust 101	Frequently Asked Questions
Trust 150	Standards / Audit Checklist – Retail Brands
Trust 150A	Mystery Audit Guidelines – Retail Brands
Trust 152	Standards / Audit Checklist – Shopping Centres
Trust 152A	Mystery Audit Guidelines – Shopping Centres
Trust 153	Shopping Centre Self-Evaluation Guidelines
Trust 200	Certification Process
Trust 201	Application Process
Trust 202	Audit Man-Day Estimation Guideline
Trust 203	Certification Body Personnel Competence Guidelines
Trust 204	Weightage Rules and Audit Value Ratings
Trust 210	Appeals and Complaints Procedure
Trust 211	Incident Report
Trust 250	Rules for Use of the IRF Trusted Mark

Only the latest approved versions of these documents published by the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat shall be considered valid.

19. Maintenance and Continual Improvement

The Scheme Owner is committed to the continual improvement of the IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme.

The Scheme shall be periodically reviewed to:	Inputs for review may be obtained from:
• maintain alignment with international conformity assessment standards; • incorporate changes in retail business practices; • address stakeholder feedback; • improve audit effectiveness; • simplify certification processes; • strengthen customer confidence; and • enhance the overall credibility of the Scheme.	• Certified Organisations; • Applicants; • Certification Bodies; • Accreditation Bodies; • Retail Associations; • Consumer Organisations; • Regulatory Authorities; • Technical Experts; • Members of the Trusted Board and its Committees.

Where revisions are approved, the Scheme Owner shall notify all Certification Bodies and other stakeholders and specify the applicable transition period.

20. Governance Structure

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme shall operate through the following governance framework:

- Trusted Board
- Technical Committee
- Focused Retail Committees
- Certification Committee
- Mediation Committee
- IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat

Each body shall operate within its defined responsibilities while maintaining the principles of impartiality, transparency and technical competence.

Annexure A

Trusted Board

Purpose

The Trusted Board is the apex governing body of the IRF Trusted Mark Certification Scheme. The Board provides strategic direction, governance and oversight to ensure that the Scheme remains credible, impartial and internationally relevant.

Responsibilities

The Trusted Board shall:

- approve the overall strategy and direction of the Scheme;
- approve new certification sectors and standards;
- oversee Scheme governance;
- approve major revisions to Scheme documents;
- review Scheme performance periodically;
- provide strategic guidance to the Secretariat;
- promote the Scheme nationally and internationally;
- safeguard the integrity and reputation of the IRF Trusted Mark.

The Board shall meet at least once every calendar year.

Annexure B

Technical Committee

Purpose

The Technical Committee shall be responsible for the technical integrity and continual improvement of the Scheme.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

- review existing standards;
- develop new sector-specific standards;
- recommend revisions to Scheme documents;
- interpret technical requirements where necessary;
- review changes in laws, regulations and international standards;
- recommend transition arrangements whenever standards are revised.

The Committee may establish working groups for specialised technical subjects.

Annexure C

Focused Retail Committees

Purpose

Focused Retail Committees shall provide sector-specific expertise for individual retail segments. Separate committees may be constituted for different retail formats including shopping centres.

Responsibilities

The Committees shall:

- recommend improvements to certification standards;
- identify emerging industry practices;
- advise on customer expectations;
- provide practical implementation feedback;
- recommend sector-specific guidance.

The Committees shall function in an advisory capacity.

Annexure D

Certification Committee

Purpose

The Certification Committee shall oversee the effective implementation of certification activities under the Scheme.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

- monitor consistency amongst Certification Bodies;
- review Scheme implementation;
- recommend improvements to certification procedures;
- review auditor competence requirements;
- review witness audit findings;
- evaluate recurring audit issues;
- recommend improvements to certification effectiveness.

The Committee shall not participate in certification decisions relating to individual applicants, which remain the responsibility of the respective Certification Bodies.

Annexure E

Mediation Committee

Purpose

The Mediation Committee shall provide an independent mechanism for resolving disputes relating to the operation of the Scheme.

Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

- consider appeals relating to Scheme administration;
- investigate complaints regarding Scheme implementation;
- facilitate amicable resolution of disputes;
- recommend corrective actions where appropriate;
- identify recurring issues requiring improvements to the Scheme.

Where a matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the decision of the Trusted Board shall be final.

Annexure F

IRF Trusted Mark Certification Marks

The IRF Trusted Mark Certification Marks shall be used only by organisations holding a valid certificate issued by an approved Certification Body.

Use of the certification marks shall be governed by **Trust 250 – Rules for Use of the IRF Trusted Mark**.

Unauthorised or misleading use of the certification marks may result in suspension or withdrawal of certification and such other action as deemed appropriate by the Scheme Owner.



21. Effective Date

This Scheme Manual shall become effective from the date approved by the **IRF Trusted Mark LLP** and shall remain in force until revised or withdrawn.

The latest approved version shall always be available through the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat.

Document Control

Document: Trust 100 – Trusted Mark Certification Scheme Manual

Scheme Owner: IRF Trusted Mark LLP

Applicable Standards:

- ISO/IEC 17067 – Conformity Assessment – Fundamentals of Product Certification and Guidelines for Product Certification Schemes
 - ISO/IEC 17065 – Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services
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