IRF TRUSTED MARK

THE INTERNATIONAL RETAIL FORUM SETTING **'CUSTOMER CENTRIC'** STANDARDS IN RETAIL

TRUSTED MARK® CERTIFICATION SCHEME

Trust 100 – Scheme Manual

Developed with reference to ISO/IEC 17067:2013 and ISO/IEC 17065:2012

Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	20.12.2016	Original publication of the Standards for Retailers
2.0	24.11.2020	Addition of Trusted Shopping Centre Standards
3.0	19.07.2026	Minor revisions
4.0	03.08.2026	Comprehensive alignment with revised Scheme documents, Application and Certification Process, Remote (e-Audit) and Hybrid Audit methodologies, revised audit-duration framework, Surveillance and Surprise Audit requirements, and related editorial updates

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Introduction

The **IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme** establishes customer-centric certification requirements for retailers, Shopping Centres and other approved categories covered under the Scheme.

The Scheme provides a structured framework for independent assessment of an organisation's conformity with applicable **Trust Standards and Scheme requirements**, including customer experience, service quality, operational practices and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

The Scheme has been developed with reference to the principles of **ISO/IEC 17067 – Conformity Assessment – Fundamentals of Product Certification and Guidelines for Product Certification Schemes**. Certification activities shall be undertaken by approved Certification Bodies operating in accordance with applicable requirements of **ISO/IEC 17065** and relevant accreditation requirements.

IRF Trusted Mark LLP is the Scheme Owner and is responsible for development, governance, maintenance and continual improvement of the Scheme. Certification Bodies shall retain independence and responsibility for evaluation, review and certification decisions in accordance with the Scheme and applicable accreditation requirements.

The Scheme Owner may approve one or more Certification Bodies for different certification categories under the Scheme.

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1. Scope

This Manual establishes the overall governance and operating framework of the **IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme**, including:

a. development and maintenance of Trust Standards and Scheme requirements;

b. eligibility and certification of organisations within approved certification categories;

c. approval and responsibilities of Certification Bodies;

d. Application, evaluation, certification, Surveillance and Recertification requirements;

e. Mystery Audit and other applicable assessment activities;

f. use and control of the TRUSTED MARK® Certification Marks;

g. complaints, appeals, suspension, withdrawal and other certification controls; and

h. governance, review and continual improvement of the Scheme.

Detailed technical and operational requirements are prescribed in the applicable controlled Scheme documents referenced in this Manual.

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2. Guiding Principles

The Scheme shall be operated in accordance with the following principles:

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

These principles shall apply, as relevant, to the Scheme Owner, IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat, Certification Bodies, auditors, committees and other parties involved in Scheme activities.

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3. Objectives of the Scheme

The Scheme aims to:

a. establish credible and measurable customer-centric standards;

b. independently assess conformity with applicable Trust Standards and Scheme requirements;

c. enhance consumer confidence in certified organisations;

d. encourage continual improvement in customer experience, service quality, operational practices and applicable statutory and regulatory compliance;

e. promote consistent, transparent and impartial certification practices; and

f. establish the TRUSTED MARK® as a credible certification mark for organisations demonstrating conformity with the applicable Scheme requirements.

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4. Certification under the Scheme

Certification under the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme is **voluntary**.

An eligible organisation shall submit its Application to the **IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat** in accordance with the applicable Application requirements.

Following acceptance of the Application, the applicant shall select an **approved Certification Body (CB)** from the list provided by the Scheme Owner and complete the applicable certification process prescribed under the Scheme.

Certification shall be granted only where:

a. the applicable certification requirements have been satisfactorily evaluated;

b. applicable Nonconformities have been satisfactorily addressed;

c. the minimum certification score prescribed under the applicable Trust Standard has been achieved; and

d. the Certification Body has made a positive certification decision.

Certification confirms conformity with the applicable Scheme requirements **within the defined certification scope at the time of assessment**. It does not constitute a guarantee of commercial performance or continuous conformity.

Continued certification is subject to applicable Surveillance, Surprise Audit where prescribed, and continued conformity with Scheme requirements.

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5. Certification Categories

The IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme may be applied to certification categories for which the Scheme Owner has established and approved applicable Trust Standards and certification requirements.

The Scheme currently includes:

Category	Scope
Trusted Shop	Retail brands, formats and stores covered under the applicable Trusted Shop Standards, including Fashion; Food & Grocery; Hypermarkets; Lifestyle; Consumer Electronics & Telecom; Consumer Durables; and Beauty & Cosmetics.
Trusted Shopping Centre	Shopping malls and mixed-use retail destinations
Trusted Restaurant	Restaurants, cafés, food courts and applicable foodservice establishments
Trusted Salon	Beauty salons and applicable personal care establishments
Trusted Spa	Spa and applicable wellness establishments
Trusted Care	Applicable Health, fitness and wellness establishments
Trusted Pharmacy	Retail pharmacies
Trusted Jeweller	Jewellery and applicable precious-metal retail establishments
Trusted Cineplex	Multiplexes and cinema establishments
Trusted Fun Zone	Applicable family entertainment, gaming, amusement and theme-park establishments
Trusted e-Shop	E-commerce and omnichannel retailers

Certification shall be undertaken only against an **applicable Trust Standard approved and issued by the Scheme Owner**.

The Scheme Owner may add, revise, combine, suspend or discontinue certification categories and applicable Standards in accordance with the Scheme's governance and document-control procedures.

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6. Scheme Documentation Framework

The IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme is implemented through a controlled set of Scheme documents covering:

a. applicable Trust Standards and assessment requirements;

b. Application and Certification Process;

c. Mystery Audit requirements;

d. Self-Evaluation and Certification Body Audit requirements;

e. Audit Man-Day determination;

f. auditor and certification personnel competence;

g. scoring and assessment methodology;

h. Surveillance and Recertification;

i. complaints and appeals; and

j. use and control of the TRUSTED MARK® Certification Marks.

These documents shall be read together with this Manual, as applicable.

Only the **current approved versions issued by the Scheme Owner** shall be valid for Scheme activities.

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7. Certification Process

Certification under the Scheme shall broadly comprise:

1. **Application** to the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat;
2. **Application Acceptance** and provision of applicable Scheme information;
3. **Mystery Audit** in accordance with applicable Scheme requirements;

4. **Selection of an approved Certification Body (CB)** by the applicant;
5. **Certification Agreement** between the applicant and selected CB;
6. **Document Review and Audit Preparation**;
7. **Certification Audit** using On-site, Remote (e-Audit) or Hybrid methodology, as applicable;
8. **Corrective Actions**, where required;
9. **Certification Review and Decision** by the Certification Body;
10. Certificate Issuance and TRUSTED MARK® usage formalities;
11. **Surveillance** during the certification cycle;
12. **Surprise Audit**, where applicable; and
13. **Recertification** before expiry of certification.

Certification, Surveillance and Recertification Audits shall normally assess the organisation's central management and controls at its **Head Office or principal management location**, using On-site, Remote (e-Audit) or Hybrid methodology as appropriate and permitted under the Scheme.

For **retail organisations**, the certification cycle shall additionally include **one Surprise Audit during the three-year certification cycle**, conducted in accordance with applicable Scheme requirements.

The additional Surprise Audit does not apply to Shopping Centre certification.

Detailed requirements governing certification activities are specified in **Trust 200 – Certification Process**, while Audit Man-Day determination shall be in accordance with **Trust 202 – Audit Duration & Man-Day Calculation Guidelines**.

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8. Scheme Governance

The IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme is owned and governed by **IRF Trusted Mark LLP ("the Scheme Owner")**.

The Scheme shall be governed through an appropriate structure comprising the **Trusted Board, technical and sector-specific committees, other committees constituted under the Scheme, and the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat**, as applicable.

The governance framework shall support:

a. impartiality and transparency;

b. appropriate stakeholder participation;

c. technical competence and consistency;

d. development and maintenance of relevant Standards;

e. effective oversight and continual improvement of the Scheme; and

f. protection of the integrity and credibility of the TRUSTED MARK®.

No Scheme governance body or the Secretariat shall influence a Certification Body's certification decision relating to an individual applicant or certified organisation.

Detailed responsibilities of the principal governance bodies are specified in the Annexures to this Manual.

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9. Scheme Owner

IRF Trusted Mark LLP is the owner of the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme and associated intellectual property.

The Scheme Owner shall be responsible for:

a. development, approval, maintenance and revision of the Scheme;

b. development and approval of Trust Standards and Scheme documents;

c. establishment of certification categories and Scheme requirements;

d. approval and recognition of Certification Bodies under the Scheme;

e. establishment of auditor and other competence requirements;

f. establishment of Mystery Audit, assessment and scoring methodologies;

g. constitution and administration of Scheme governance bodies and committees;

h. maintenance of the register of approved Certification Bodies and certified organisations;

i. control and protection of TRUSTED MARK® Certification Marks and associated intellectual property;

j. monitoring the effective and consistent implementation of the Scheme;

k. stakeholder consultation and communication; and

l. periodic review and continual improvement of the Scheme.

The Scheme Owner shall establish requirements applicable to certification under the Scheme but shall **not influence certification decisions relating to individual applicants or certified organisations**.

Where certification is undertaken by an approved Certification Body, certification decisions including granting, maintaining, suspending, restoring, withdrawing or refusing certification shall remain the responsibility of that Certification Body in accordance with applicable Scheme and accreditation requirements.

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10. IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat

The **IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat** shall administer the Scheme on behalf of the Scheme Owner.

Its responsibilities shall include:

a. receiving and administering Applications;

b. communicating Application acceptance and applicable Scheme requirements;

c. providing applicants with the current list of approved Certification Bodies eligible to undertake certification under the applicable certification category;

d. administering and coordinating the Mystery Audit Programme;

e. sharing applicable Mystery Audit Reports with the applicant and selected Certification Body in accordance with Scheme requirements;

f. coordinating with applicants, certified organisations, Certification Bodies, auditors, committees and other Scheme stakeholders;

g. maintaining Scheme records and registers;

h. publication and control of approved Scheme documents;

i. administration of TRUSTED MARK® usage requirements and Scheme communications;

j. coordination of complaints and appeals in accordance with applicable Scheme procedures; and

k. other administrative functions assigned by the Scheme Owner.

The Secretariat shall maintain appropriate **confidentiality, impartiality and protection of applicant and certified-organisation information**.

The Secretariat shall not direct, influence or participate in the independent certification decision of an approved Certification Body.

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11. Approved Certification Bodies

Certification under the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme shall be undertaken by **Certification Bodies (CBs) approved by the Scheme Owner** in accordance with applicable Scheme requirements.

Approved Certification Bodies shall:

a. maintain the competence, impartiality and independence necessary to undertake certification activities;

b. operate in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065, its applicable accreditation and certification governance requirements, and the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme.

c. ensure that personnel engaged in audit, review and certification activities meet applicable competence requirements;

d. plan and conduct certification, Surveillance, Recertification, Surprise and Special/Additional Audits, as applicable;

e. evaluate objective evidence and determine conformity with the applicable Trust Standard(s) and Scheme requirements;

f. communicate audit findings and Nonconformities to the applicant or certified organisation;

g. review corrective actions and objective evidence, where applicable;

h. independently undertake certification review and decision-making;

i. issue, maintain, suspend, restore or withdraw certification, as applicable;

j. maintain appropriate certification and audit records;

k. maintain confidentiality of information obtained through certification activities; and

l. inform the Scheme Owner/Secretariat of certification status and other information required under the Scheme.

Certification decisions shall remain solely with the approved Certification Body undertaking the certification.

The Scheme Owner and Secretariat shall not influence the CB's audit findings, technical review or certification decision.

12. Development and Maintenance of the Scheme

The Scheme Owner shall maintain a documented process for the development, review and revision of the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme and applicable Trust Standards.

Development and revision shall take into consideration, as appropriate:

a. customer expectations and customer-centric practices;

b. industry and sector requirements;

c. applicable statutory and regulatory requirements;

d. technological and operational developments;

e. audit and certification experience;

f. feedback from Certification Bodies, auditors and certified organisations;

g. complaints, appeals and other relevant Scheme information;

h. inputs from technical experts and relevant stakeholders; and

i. applicable developments in conformity-assessment standards and practices.

Relevant stakeholders may be consulted through the **Trusted Board, Technical Committee, Sector-Specific Committees, Working Groups or other mechanisms established by the Scheme Owner**.

Revisions shall be reviewed and approved through the applicable Scheme governance process before issue.

Material revisions affecting certification requirements shall be communicated to approved Certification Bodies and affected certified organisations, with an appropriate transition period where required.

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13. Certification Evaluation and Decision

Certification evaluation shall be undertaken against the applicable **Trust Standard(s) and Scheme requirements**.

Evaluation may include, as applicable:

a. Mystery Audit;

b. Self-Evaluation and supporting documented information;

c. Document Review and Audit Preparation;

d. Certification Audit conducted On-site, through Remote (e-Audit), or through a Hybrid Audit methodology;

e. review of applicable statutory and regulatory compliance;

f. internal audit information;

g. verification of corrective actions; and

h. other objective evidence required under the Scheme.

Audit duration and Audit Man-Day determination shall be in accordance with **Trust 202 – Audit Duration & Man-Day Calculation Guidelines**.

13.1 Certification Criteria

Certification may be granted where:

a. the applicable certification requirements have been satisfactorily evaluated;

b. applicable Nonconformities have been satisfactorily addressed;

c. the applicant achieves the **minimum overall certification score of 70 out of 100**, as prescribed in the applicable Trust Standard; and

d. the Certification Body makes a positive certification decision.

13.2 Certification Decision

The Certification Body shall ensure that the certification decision is based on sufficient information and objective evidence arising from the evaluation process.

Personnel responsible for certification review and decision shall meet applicable competence and impartiality requirements and shall not be improperly influenced by commercial, administrative or other interests.

The Certification Body shall inform the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat of the certification decision and certification status in accordance with Scheme requirements.

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14. Certification Cycle, Surveillance and Recertification

Certification under the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme shall normally remain valid for **three (3) years**, subject to successful Surveillance and continued conformity with applicable Scheme requirements.

14.1 Surveillance

Certified organisations shall undergo **annual Surveillance Audits** during the certification cycle in accordance with the applicable Scheme requirements.

Surveillance shall provide sufficient confidence that the certified organisation continues to conform with the applicable Trust Standard(s) and Scheme requirements.

Surveillance may be conducted On-site, through Remote (e-Audit), or through a Hybrid Audit methodology, as applicable.

14.2 Surprise Audit – Retail Organisations

In addition to annual Surveillance Audits, certified **retail organisations** shall undergo **one Surprise Audit during the three-year certification cycle**, in accordance with applicable Scheme requirements.

The Surprise Audit shall be undertaken at an eligible retail outlet covered under the certification scope.

This additional Surprise Audit requirement **shall not apply to Shopping Centre certification**.

14.3 Recertification

A Recertification Audit shall be undertaken before expiry of the existing certification to determine continued conformity with the applicable Trust Standard(s) and Scheme requirements.

Recertification shall take into consideration, as applicable, performance during the preceding certification cycle, previous audit findings, Nonconformities, corrective actions, significant changes and other relevant certification information.

Detailed audit-duration requirements for Surveillance, Surprise and Recertification Audits shall be governed by **Trust 202**.

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15. Impartiality, Independence, Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

The Scheme Owner, IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat, approved Certification Bodies, auditors, committee members and other personnel engaged in Scheme activities shall protect the **impartiality, integrity and confidentiality** of the certification process.

15.1 Impartiality and Independence

Certification activities shall be conducted objectively and without improper commercial, financial or other influence.

Certification Bodies shall identify, evaluate and manage risks to impartiality in accordance with applicable certification and accreditation requirements.

The Scheme Owner and Secretariat shall not influence individual audit findings, certification review or certification decisions.

15.2 Conflict of Interest

Persons involved in Scheme governance, evaluation, review or certification activities shall disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest relevant to their responsibilities.

Where a conflict could compromise impartiality, appropriate safeguards shall be applied, including exclusion from the relevant activity where necessary.

15.3 Confidentiality

Information relating to applicants and certified organisations obtained through Application, Mystery Audit, certification, Surveillance, complaints, investigations or other Scheme activities shall be treated as confidential, except:

a. information authorised for public disclosure;

b. certification-status information published under the Scheme;

c. information required to be disclosed by law, regulatory authority or applicable accreditation requirements; or

d. information otherwise permitted to be disclosed under applicable Scheme or contractual requirements.

Appropriate controls shall be maintained for the collection, access, storage, use and disclosure of confidential information.

15.4 Public Certification Information

The Scheme Owner may maintain and publish information necessary to establish the validity and status of certification, including, as applicable:

- name of the certified organisation;
- applicable certification category and scope;
- certified locations, where relevant;
- Certification Body;
- certificate status; and
- certification validity.

16. Certificate of Conformity and Use of TRUSTED MARK®

Following a positive certification decision, the approved Certification Body shall issue a **Certificate of Conformity** identifying, as applicable:

a. the certified organisation;

b. certification scope;

c. applicable Trust Standard(s);

d. certified brand, format, location(s) or Shopping Centre, as applicable;

e. Certification Body;

f. effective date and validity of certification; and

g. other information required under the Scheme.

The certified organisation may use the applicable TRUSTED MARK® Certification Mark only after completion of the applicable Scheme formalities and acceptance of the applicable TRUSTED MARK® usage requirements.

Use of the Certification Mark shall be subject to the applicable Scheme requirements and logo/mark usage guidelines.

The Certification Mark shall not be used in a manner that:

a. misrepresents the certification scope or status;

b. implies certification of an organisation, brand, location, product or service not included within the certification scope;

c. implies endorsement or guarantee by the Scheme Owner or Certification Body; or

d. may otherwise bring the Scheme or Certification Mark into disrepute.

The Scheme Owner retains ownership and control of the TRUSTED MARK® and associated intellectual property.

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17. Changes Affecting Certification

Applicants and certified organisations shall inform the Certification Body and/or IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat, as applicable, of significant changes that may affect certification.

Such changes may include:

a. legal, commercial, ownership or organisational status;

b. changes in management or organisational structure relevant to certification;

c. addition, closure or significant change of certified locations;

d. addition or removal of brands, formats or activities within the certification scope;

e. significant changes in products, services, processes or customer-facing operations;

f. significant changes in statutory or regulatory status relevant to certification; or

g. other changes that may materially affect continued conformity with Scheme requirements.

The Certification Body shall evaluate the significance of such changes and determine whether additional evaluation, change of scope or other certification action is required.

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18. Suspension, Withdrawal and Change of Certification Scope

The Certification Body may suspend, withdraw, restore or change the scope of certification in accordance with applicable Scheme and certification requirements.

18.1 Suspension

Certification may be suspended where, for example:

a. the certified organisation persistently or seriously fails to meet applicable certification requirements;

b. required Surveillance or other applicable audits cannot be conducted within the prescribed timeframe;

c. significant Nonconformities are not satisfactorily addressed within the stipulated timeframe;

d. the Certification Mark is misused;

e. material complaints or regulatory concerns indicate potential failure to maintain certification requirements; or

f. the certified organisation voluntarily requests suspension.

During suspension, the organisation shall not represent its certification as currently valid or use the Certification Mark in a manner inconsistent with its suspended status.

18.2 Restoration

Suspended certification may be restored where the causes of suspension have been satisfactorily resolved and continued conformity has been demonstrated.

18.3 Withdrawal

Certification may be withdrawn where:

a. the causes of suspension are not satisfactorily resolved within the prescribed period;

b. serious or repeated nonconformity with certification requirements is established;

c. certification was obtained on the basis of materially false, misleading or withheld information;

d. the certified organisation ceases the activities covered by certification;

e. the organisation fails to comply with applicable certification or Certification Mark usage requirements; or

f. other grounds for withdrawal arise under the Scheme.

18.4 Change or Reduction of Scope

Where an organisation no longer meets certification requirements for part of its certified scope, the Certification Body may reduce or otherwise amend the certification scope as appropriate.

The Certification Body shall inform the IRF Trusted Mark Secretariat of changes in certification status to enable corresponding Scheme records and public certification information to be updated.

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19. Complaints and Appeals

The Scheme shall maintain documented arrangements for receiving, evaluating and resolving **complaints and appeals**.

19.1 Complaints

Complaints may relate to:

a. a certified organisation;

b. Scheme administration;

c. Mystery Audit activities;

d. Certification Body activities; or

e. other matters relating to operation of the Scheme.

Complaints shall be referred to the party responsible for the activity concerned and handled objectively, confidentially and without discrimination.

Where a complaint concerning a certified organisation raises credible concerns regarding continued conformity, the Certification Body may undertake or require appropriate investigation, verification or a Special/Additional Audit.

19.2 Appeals

An applicant or certified organisation may appeal a certification-related decision in accordance with the applicable Scheme and Certification Body procedures.

Appeals relating to an independent certification decision shall be handled by the Certification Body responsible for that decision.

Where the Scheme provides a review mechanism concerning the audit process or application of Scheme requirements, such review shall be handled in accordance with the applicable Scheme procedure.

Persons involved in handling an appeal or review shall not have been directly involved in the activity or decision being reviewed where this could compromise impartiality.

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20. Misuse of Certification and the TRUSTED MARK®

The Scheme Owner and approved Certification Bodies shall take appropriate action where there is unauthorised, incorrect or misleading reference to certification or use of the TRUSTED MARK®.

Misuse may include:

a. use of the Certification Mark before certification is granted;

b. continued use following expiry, suspension or withdrawal of certification;

c. use outside the approved certification scope;

d. use by uncertified locations, brands, franchisees or entities;

e. alteration or unauthorised reproduction of the Certification Mark;

f. misleading statements regarding certification status; or

g. any other use capable of misleading customers or damaging the integrity of the Scheme.

Depending on the nature and severity of the misuse, action may include corrective action, suspension or withdrawal of certification, removal of claims or materials, public clarification and/or other appropriate contractual or legal action.

Upon expiry or withdrawal of certification, the organisation shall discontinue use of the Certification Mark and certification claims in accordance with applicable Scheme requirements.

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21. Scheme Monitoring, Review and Continual Improvement

The Scheme Owner shall periodically monitor and review the effectiveness and continued suitability of the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme.

Inputs to Scheme review may include:

a. certification and audit experience;

b. feedback from certified organisations and applicants;

c. feedback from Certification Bodies and auditors;

d. Mystery Audit findings and trends;

e. complaints and appeals;

f. stakeholder and committee inputs;

g. changes in applicable statutory and regulatory requirements;

h. developments in retail, Shopping Centre and other applicable sectors;

i. changes in relevant conformity-assessment standards and practices; and

j. other information relevant to Scheme effectiveness.

The Scheme Owner may revise the Scheme, Trust Standards and controlled documents where necessary to maintain their relevance, consistency, effectiveness and integrity.

Material changes shall be communicated to affected stakeholders and appropriate transition arrangements established where required.

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22. Controlled Scheme Documents

The IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme shall be supported by controlled documents approved and issued by the Scheme Owner.

These include, as applicable:

Document	Purpose
Trust 100	Scheme Manual
Trust 150 Series	Applicable Certification Standards
Trust 151 Series	Self-Evaluation requirements/checklists
Trust 152 Series	Applicable Shopping Centre Standards/assessment documents
Trust 200	Certification Process
Trust 201 Series	Application documents
Trust 202	Audit Duration & Man-Day Calculation Guidelines
Trust 203	Auditor/Personnel Competence Requirements
Trust 204	Scoring Methodology
Trust 205	Mystery Audit Manual
Other controlled documents	As approved and issued by the Scheme Owner

The Scheme Owner shall maintain appropriate controls to ensure:

a. documents are reviewed and approved before issue;

b. current revision status is identifiable;

c. current applicable versions are available to relevant users;

d. changes and revisions are appropriately controlled;

e. obsolete documents are prevented from unintended use; and

f. applicable records are maintained.

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23. Document Control, Effective Date and Scheme Authority

This Manual and all associated controlled Scheme documents shall be approved and issued under the authority of **IRF Trusted Mark LLP, the Scheme Owner**.

23.1 Document Control

Each controlled Scheme document shall, as applicable, identify its document title and number, version/revision number, effective date and revision history.

23.2 Effective Date and Transition

New or revised Scheme requirements shall become effective from the date specified by the Scheme Owner.

Where a revision materially affects existing certification requirements, the Scheme Owner shall determine an appropriate **transition period**, taking into consideration the nature and significance of the change.

Approved Certification Bodies and affected certified organisations shall implement revised requirements within the prescribed transition period.

23.3 Interpretation of Scheme Requirements

The Scheme Owner retains authority for interpretation of the **IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme, Trust Standards and associated Scheme documents**.

Where clarification of a Scheme requirement is necessary, the Scheme Owner may issue an interpretation or clarification applicable to Scheme implementation.

Such interpretation shall not interfere with the Certification Body's independent evaluation, review or certification decision.

23.4 Applicable Version

Certification activities shall be undertaken against the applicable current version of the Trust Standard and Scheme documents, subject to any transition arrangements formally established by the Scheme Owner.

ANNEXURE A

Trusted Board

A.1 Purpose

The **Trusted Board** is the principal advisory and oversight body supporting the Scheme Owner in maintaining the credibility, relevance and integrity of the IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme.

A.2 Composition

The Trusted Board should comprise persons with appropriate experience and standing from relevant stakeholder groups, which may include:

a. retail and Shopping Centre industry;

b. consumer interests;

c. quality, standards and conformity assessment;

d. legal and regulatory disciplines;

e. academia and professional institutions; and

f. other relevant sectors or areas of expertise.

Composition should seek to ensure appropriate balance of interests and avoid dominance by any single interest.

A.3 Responsibilities

The Trusted Board may:

a. advise on the strategic direction and development of the Scheme;

b. review significant changes to Scheme principles and governance;

c. provide stakeholder perspectives on Scheme effectiveness and credibility;

d. recommend areas for development or improvement;

e. support the principles of impartiality, transparency and customer-centricity; and

f. undertake other advisory or oversight responsibilities assigned by the Scheme Owner.

A.4 Independence from Certification Decisions

The Trusted Board shall **not participate in or influence certification decisions relating to individual applicants or certified organisations**.

Members shall disclose relevant conflicts of interest and shall not participate in matters where such conflict could compromise impartiality.

ANNEXURE B

Technical Committee

B.1 Purpose

The **Technical Committee** provides technical guidance for the development, interpretation, review and maintenance of the Scheme and applicable Trust Standards.

B.2 Composition

The Technical Committee should collectively possess relevant competence and experience in areas such as:

a. retail and Shopping Centre operations;

b. customer experience and service quality;

c. standards and conformity assessment;

d. audit and certification;

e. statutory and regulatory compliance;

f. safety, hygiene and operational controls; and

g. other technical disciplines relevant to the Scheme.

External experts may be invited where specialised knowledge is required.

B.3 Responsibilities

The Technical Committee may:

a. review and recommend technical requirements for Trust Standards and Scheme documents;

b. review proposed revisions arising from changes in industry practices, regulations or certification experience;

c. support consistency in interpretation of technical Scheme requirements;

d. review technical feedback from Certification Bodies, auditors, Sector-Specific Committees and other stakeholders;

e. recommend improvements to assessment and audit methodologies; and

f. provide technical advice to the Scheme Owner.

B.4 Impartiality

Technical Committee members shall disclose relevant conflicts of interest.

The Committee shall not undertake certification decisions or influence the outcome of certification of an individual organisation.

ANNEXURE C

Sector-Specific Committees

C.1 Purpose

The Scheme Owner may constitute **Sector-Specific Committees** to provide specialist industry input for particular certification categories, retail sectors or operating formats.

C.2 Composition

Sector-Specific Committees may include representatives and experts from:

a. the relevant industry or sector;

b. customer/consumer interests;

c. operations and customer experience;

d. technical, regulatory or professional disciplines;

e. Certification Bodies or conformity-assessment professionals, where appropriate; and

f. other relevant stakeholder groups.

C.3 Responsibilities

Sector-Specific Committees may:

a. identify customer-centric and operational requirements relevant to the sector;

b. provide inputs for development and revision of applicable Trust Standards;

c. review emerging industry practices and customer expectations;

d. identify relevant statutory, regulatory and operational developments;

e. provide technical inputs to the Technical Committee and Scheme Owner; and

f. recommend improvements to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of applicable Standards.

C.4 Limitation of Role

Sector-Specific Committees are advisory in nature and shall not undertake or influence certification decisions relating to individual applicants or certified organisations.

Members shall disclose relevant conflicts of interest.

ANNEXURE D

Governance and Impartiality Principles

D.1 General

All Scheme governance bodies and committees shall operate in a manner that supports:

a. impartiality;
b. competence;
c. transparency;
d. appropriate stakeholder representation;
e. confidentiality; and
f. integrity of the Scheme.

D.2 Conflict of Interest

Members shall disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest relevant to matters under consideration.

Where necessary to protect impartiality, the affected member shall abstain from discussion, recommendation or decision on the relevant matter.

D.3 Confidentiality

Members shall maintain confidentiality of non-public information obtained through participation in Scheme governance activities.

D.4 Certification Decisions

No Scheme governance body, committee, Scheme Owner representative or Secretariat personnel shall improperly influence an approved Certification Body's independent certification decision.

END OF TRUST 100

Trust 100 – Scheme Manual forms part of the controlled documentation of the **IRF TRUSTED MARK® Certification Scheme**.

Only the current approved version issued by **IRF Trusted Mark LLP, the Scheme Owner**, shall be used for Scheme activities.
