



## Chain of custody for forest products



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The following are represented on the Standards Reference Committee responsible for this Australian Standard®:

- Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
- Australian Forest Contractors Association
- Australian Forest Growers
- Australian Forest Products Association
- Australian Furniture
- Australian Timber Importers Federation
- Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union
- Engineered Wood Products Association of Australia
- Printing Industry Association of Australia
- Timber and Building Materials Association
- Timber Veneer Association of Australia

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Australian Forestry Standard Limited wishes to acknowledge the participation of the expert individuals that contributed to the development of this Standard through their representation on the Committee.

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## Preface

Australian Standard AS 4707 sets requirements for the chain of custody of forest products marketed with claims about certification under AS 4708:2013, the Australian Standard® for Sustainable Forest Management. AS 4708:2013 is referred to in AS 4707 as the Australian Forestry Standard, or by the abbreviation AFS. Products with the AFS certification claim and/or label deliver confidence to customers and consumers that the raw material originates in sustainably managed forests, recycled material, and controlled sources. AFS certification also covers health, safety and labour related requirements. “AFS Controlled Sources” addresses the risk of using products from controversial sources, including legality aspects. Purchasers and potential purchasers can use this information to choose the product based on sustainability and other considerations. The aim of communicating the raw material’s origin is to encourage demand for and supply of products originating in sustainably managed forests, thereby stimulating market-driven continuous improvement of management of Australia’s forests.

The AFS certification scheme is endorsed by the international Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification. Products eligible for AFS claims are therefore also eligible for PEFC claims.

This standard has been developed in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus based process covering a broad range of stakeholders. It replaces AS 4707:2006.

Certification bodies are accredited, independent third-party organisations that assess and verify the tracking system for the origin of wood or forest products in each link of the certification chain. The tasks of certification bodies include:

- verifying the whole chain of custody system and the proportion of certified forest product in each link of the certification chain;
- issuing, monitoring and withdrawing chain of custody certificates;
- providing advice on issuing and withdrawing chain of custody certificates to Australian Forestry Standard Limited; and
- monitoring and controlling the use or misuse of chain of custody certificates including the certificate holder’s statements and any market claims.

The Australian national accreditation body, the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) accredits certification bodies to audit and certify to particular standards to ensure the transparency and credibility of the certification process. It also ensures third-party competence, impartiality and independence in regards to certification activities and to facilitate mutual recognition. Certification bodies undertaking chain of custody certification to this standard must be accredited by JAS-ANZ.

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## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Scope</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Normative references</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Terms and definitions</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Identification of the material category of material/products</b> .....	<b>11</b>
4.1	Identification at delivery (incoming) level .....	11
4.2	Identification at supplier level.....	12
<b>5.</b>	<b>Minimum Due Diligence (DDS) requirements</b> .....	<b>12</b>
5.1	General requirements .....	12
5.2	Gathering of information .....	13
5.3	Risk assessment.....	14
5.4	Substantiated comments or complaints .....	17
5.5	Management of significant risk supplies .....	17
5.6	No placement on the market.....	19
<b>6.</b>	<b>Chain of custody method</b> .....	<b>19</b>
6.1	General .....	19
6.2	Physical separation method.....	19
6.3	Percentage based method.....	20
<b>7.</b>	<b>Sale and communication on claimed products</b> .....	<b>23</b>
7.1	Documentation associated with sold/transferred products .....	23
7.2	Use of logos and labels.....	24
<b>8.</b>	<b>Minimum management system requirements</b> .....	<b>24</b>
8.1	General requirements .....	24
8.2	Responsibilities and authorities .....	24
8.3	Documented procedures.....	25
8.4	Record keeping.....	25
8.5	Resource management.....	26
8.6	Inspection and control.....	26
8.7	Complaints .....	26
8.8	Subcontracting .....	27
<b>9.</b>	<b>Social, health and safety requirements</b> .....	<b>28</b>
9.1	Scope .....	28
9.2	Requirements.....	28
Appendix 1	Specification of the AFS claims .....	29
Appendix 2	Implementation of the chain of custody standard by multi-site organisations .....	31
Appendix 3	Guidance on eligible inputs for claims, material category identification and due diligence requirements .....	35
Appendix 4	Requirements for certification bodies .....	36

## 1. Scope

This standard covers the requirements to implement a chain of custody for wood and other forest based products.

These chain of custody requirements describe a process of how to get from the information about the origin of the procured raw material to the information about the origin of the organisation's products. This standard specifies two optional approaches for chain of custody, namely the physical separation method and the percentage based method.

This standard also specifies the minimum management system requirements for the implementation and management of the chain of custody process. An organisation's quality (ISO 9001:2008) or environmental management system (ISO 14001:2004) may be used to implement the minimum requirements for the management system defined in this standard.

In addition this standard includes minimum requirements for health, safety and labour issues.

The chain of custody shall be used in connection with the definition of specific AFS and/or PEFC claim(s) ("X% AFS/PEFC Certified" and "AFS/PEFC Controlled Sources") which include criteria for the recognition of certified material. The core part of the standard therefore defines the chain of custody process using the generic terms "certified, neutral and other material", while the content of those terms specific for an individual claim is defined in an Appendix to this standard.

The use of claims and relating labels, as a result of implementation of the chain of custody, is based on ISO 14020:2000 that shall be followed by the users of this standard. Consideration of recycled material within the chain of custody is based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 14021:1999 that shall be followed by the users of this standard.

The labelling of products is considered as an optional communication tool which may be incorporated into the organisation's chain of custody process(es). Where the organisation decides to apply on-product or off-product labelling, the requirements for the use of a label, including those set up by the owner of the label are becoming an integral part of chain of custody requirements.

This standard shall be implemented for the purposes of third party conformity assessment based on requirements defined by the AFS Board. The conformity assessment is considered as product certification and shall follow ISO/IEC 17065.

The term "shall" is used throughout this standard to indicate provisions that are mandatory. The term "should" indicates provisions which, although not mandatory, are expected to be adopted and implemented. The term "may" used throughout this standard indicates permission expressed by this standard whereas "can" refers to be ability of a user of this standard or to a possibility open to the user.

## 2. Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this standard. For both dated and undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendment) applies.

- Australian Forestry Standard Chain of Custody Scheme Rules
- Australian Forestry Standard Logo Use Rules
- ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, *Standardization and related activities – General vocabulary*
- ISO 9000:2005, *Quality management systems – Fundamentals and vocabulary*
- AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008, *Quality management systems – Requirements*
- AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004, *Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*
- ISO/IEC 14020:2000, *Environmental labels and declarations – General principles*
- ISO/IEC 14021:1999, *Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)*
- ISO 19011:2011, *Guidelines for auditing management systems*
- ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996, *General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems*
- ISO/IEC 17065, *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*
- EN 643:2001, *Paper and board – European list of standard grades of recovered paper and board*

### 3. Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2 and ISO 9000:2005 apply, together with the following definitions:

AFS recognised certificate	Any of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) a valid accredited forest management certificate issued against AS 4708</li><li>(b) a valid accredited chain of custody certificate issued against AS 4707</li><li>(c) a valid accredited forest management certificate issued by a PEFC notified certification body against a forest management scheme/standard which is endorsed by the PEFC Council</li><li>(d) a valid accredited chain of custody certificate issued by a PEFC notified certification body against this standard together with PEFC recognised and specification of the material category or</li><li>(e) a valid accredited chain of custody certificate issued by a PEFC notified certification body against a scheme specific chain of custody standard which is endorsed by the PEFC Council.</li></ul>
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*Note: PEFC endorsed forest certification scheme and chain of custody standards are found at the PEFC Council website, [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org).*

Australian Forestry Standard (AFS)	For convenience, AS 4708:2013 Australian Standard® for Sustainable Forest Management is referred to in AS 4707 as 'Australian Forestry Standard', or by the abbreviation 'AFS'.
Certificate	A document indicating that an organisation's chain of custody system conforms to this Australian Standard and any supplementary documentation required under the chain of custody system.
Certified material	Raw material covered by the chain of custody claims. The criteria for certified material and its suppliers are defined in an Appendix to this standard.
Certified product	Product claimed to include <b>certified material</b> whose content is verified by chain of custody.
Chain of custody	Process of handling of information on the <b>material category of forest based products</b> which allows the organisation to make accurate and verifiable claims on the content of certified material.
Claim	Information which indicates certain aspects of a product. The term "claim" used in this standard indicates use of the official chain of custody claims (see, for example, Appendix 1) relating to the AFS/ PEFC claim.