



# Quality Certification Alliance

Quality and Safety. Delivered.

By D. Fenton, QCA Executive Director Compliance

## Measuring and Defining Environmental Compliance

“Compliance” is alternatively defined as the “act or process of complying to a desire, demand or proposal or to coercion,” “the act of conforming, acquiescing or yielding,” and “the act of cooperation or obedience.”

As “compliance” is used in relation to the standards advocated by QCA, it is complying to regulatory and legal standards, best practice standards and other applicable voluntary standards as appropriate. Companies’ practices that have been accredited under the auspices of QCA are deemed to MEET OR EXCEED requirements, whether those requirements are regulatory (legal) in nature or best practices.

## Environmental Stewardship Compliance

Firstly, QCA requires Accredited Companies to maintain policies, procedures and protocols that assure compliance with all legal requirements. QCA also advocates a commitment to promoting Environmental Stewardship throughout the product realization process. From a client-customer’s initial interaction through delivered product, accredited QCA companies strive to assure companies policies protect and preserve the environment.

QCA Accredited Companies also have policies, procedures and protocols in place that ensure products manufactured and imported by the Accredited Company are produced in a manner that protects the health of the people and the environment in which they are manufactured and distributed.

All accredited companies must have:

- A documented policy for assuring continuous improvement in relation to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle efforts
- A documented protocol for assuring a healthful work environment throughout the supply chain
- A documented protocol for assuring compliance with applicable regulatory requirements in all finished and packaged products provided to end users
- A documented protocol for handling and control of hazardous substances
- A documented means for communicating banned and restricted substances to those manufacturing products on the company’s behalf
- Assignment of Environmental Stewardship responsibilities to a specific position within the company

## Environmental Stewardship Best Practices

Best practices are those activities implemented by individual companies that assist in achieving compliance over a set of processes. Not all accredited companies will adopt

identical best practices. Companies frequently have different methodologies for achieving the same outcome. Arguably, best practices are considered to be strategic decisions on the part of a company given their internal structure, size and product line.

Best practices advocated to promote good stewardship include, but are not limited to:

- Performance metrics for assuring continuous improvement in relation to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle efforts
- Use of FSC wood and wood by-products throughout business
- ISO14001 certification
- Documented supplier corrective actions

### **Restricted Substance List**

Some substances are known to be hazardous, while others are suspected to be. Some substances are controlled by regulatory requirements. Other substances are banned outright. QCA has compiled a restricted substance list that compiles regulated substances by product category. QCA-accredited Companies are encouraged to distribute this list to their supply base to ensure manufacturers are aware of substances regulated, restricted and banned by the US government and state-level agencies.