



Setting the standard for
sustainable forest management
for more than 10 years

FAQs

What is the Australian Standard® for Chain of custody for forest products?

The Australian Standard® for Chain of custody for forest products (AS 4707) underpins the tracking of wood or forest products originating from sustainably managed, certified forests through all phases of ownership, transportation and manufacturing to the end consumer.

This Standard gives confidence to everyone in the certification chain that they are dealing with a certified wood or forest product.

It also assures buyers and consumers that the certified wood or forest products they purchase are sourced from well-managed forests and from participating processing/manufacturing companies.

Why do we need an Australian Standard® for Chain of custody?

To ensure the link from well-managed forest to the consumer and to help reduce the risk of false claims about the source of timber, consumers have been asking for more information to help make purchasing decisions that support sustainable practices.

This Australian Standard® provides accredited, independent, third-party certification that wood and forest products have been produced in accordance with clearly defined requirements and are from certified, sustainably managed forests.

How does the Standard fit within the Australian Forest Certification Scheme?

This Standard, along with the Australian Standard® for Sustainable forest management, underpins the Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS).

Australian Forestry Standard Ltd (AFS Ltd), a not-for-profit organisation and an accredited Standards Development Organisation, oversees the AFCS and manages both Standards as well as the process of accreditation of certification bodies (auditors) by JAS-ANZ and logo/label use rules.

What is the process for chain of custody certification?

Chain of custody tracks a wood or forest product from its origin in a certified forest through to its end use as a wood or forest product by the consumer.

Applicants seeking certification under the Australian Standard® must demonstrate to an independent auditor that they follow processes which ensure the product can be traced back to a sustainably managed forest. This will include processes to track purchasing, manufacturing, document control, inventory, transport, sales and distribution to ensure the product is from a certified forest.

Certification bodies are accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia

and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) and are independent of industry and stakeholder interests.

Certification is usually valid for a period of 3-5 years, with an annual verification audit to ensure continued compliance with requirements.

How does the Standard rate alongside international best practice?

The revised Australian Standard® for Chain of custody of forest products AS 4707:2014 is based on the recently revised PEFC Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2002:2013).

PEFC is the world's largest forest certification system, dedicated to promoting sustainable practices throughout the entire forest supply chain to ensure products are produced with respect for the highest ecological, social and ethical standards.

How often is the Standard reviewed?

The Australian Standard® for Chain of Custody of Forest Products (AS 4707) is reviewed approximately every five years to ensure it remains consistent with any changes in technical and operational knowledge and reflects community expectations at both the national and international level.

The Standard was updated in 2014 after a review by an independent Standards Reference Committee made up of experts and representatives from a broad range of stakeholders, including forest managers, wood processors, traders and wood/paper products customers.

The review followed the requirements set down by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) to ensure the consistency, accountability and transparency required of an Australian Standard®.

How do I know a product is certified under the Standard?

All you need to do is look for the AFS or PEFC logos on products you buy. This provides an assurance that they were sourced from sustainably managed forests. Businesses along the supply chain will need to obtain specific declarations from their suppliers as the basis for their own chain of custody.

