

Policy and Template for Issuing Letters of Approval for Colourants and Textile Auxiliaries

Objective

This policy provides for mandatory instructions and notes to be followed by Certification Bodies (CBs) approved for the GOTS accreditation scope "Approval of textile auxiliary agents (chemical inputs) on positive lists" (= scope 4 of the 'Approval Procedure and Requirements for Certification Bodies').

The purpose of this policy and the corresponding template is to unify layout, format and text among the different certifiers in order to enable an easy and practical handing and verification for all users of *Letters of Approval*.

The policy is to be followed and the corresponding template to be used for any *Letters of Approval* issued for colourants and textile auxiliaries assessed on basis of GOTS Version 4.0 from 1st March 2015 onwards and for all following standard versions.

Original Document

The individual CB's letterhead must contain its name and address. Each CB should declare if their original document is a paper version or a digital version or if both options are used. If the original is a digital version the following sentence should be added at the bottom of the certificate: "This electronically issued document is the valid original version". The CB should further inform which (unique) security features are used for the original version of the Approval Letter (e.g. letterhead and paper layout, watermark etc.). Digital versions should be prepared in secure pdf mode. The CB should also provide the contact details (and features, if applicable) for immediately verifying authenticity of the Approval Letter. The standard setter makes this information available to the whole group of approved certifiers.

Template Format

Wording, size of letters and structure is to be used as provided with the attached template. The text highlighted in yellow requires individual adaption.

Content

Instructions and notes regarding the content of the *Letter of Approval* are provided in the following:

Title

The document is called '*Letter of Approval*' with subtitle 'for Colourants / Textile Auxiliaries'. Other terms (such as 'certificate') are not used.

General remark about the language to be used:

Only textile products that comply with all requirements and entities processing, manufacturing or trading/retailing them can become 'GOTS certified'. Inputs (dyestuffs, pigments and auxiliaries) cannot become 'GOTS certified' but become "GOTS approved" for application in the processing of GOTS certified textile products.

The chemical suppliers / producers do neither become 'GOTS certified' nor 'GOTS approved'.

No. of the *Letter of Approval*

Each *Letter of Approval* must have a unique number/code generated by the CB. It must include:

- the certifiers licensing code (same as used in TCs, box 2a:, (e.g. GOTS-IMO-01, GOTS-SACL-02, GOTS-CUC IN 16) followed by
- a reference (or contract) number of the company for which the inputs have been assessed and



Name of Company and Address

The full name and address of the chemical supplier / producer who is responsible and has applied for the assessed inputs is to be provided here.

Standard Version

With release of a new standard version CBs are requested not to accept any new applications for input approval according to the former standard version.

A *Letter of Approval* can only contain inputs assessed to one standard version. During the implementation period of a new standard version (= usually a time period of 12 months in which the new version is released but the former version is still valid) there may exist two valid *Letters of Approval* for one company based on two different standard versions.

Table(s) listing the approved inputs

According to GOTS 2.3.3 all preparations must have been evaluated and their trade names registered on approved lists prior to their usage. This concerns all colourants (dyestuffs and pigments) as well as textile auxiliaries (including spinning additive (e.g. paraffin products), sizing and desizing agents, pre-treatment agents (e.g. washing and wetting agents, bleaches, optical brighteners), dyeing and printing auxiliaries (e.g. for improving migration, equalisation, fastness) as well as finishing agents (e.g. softeners, flame retardants). Helping agents (e.g. knitting / weaving oils) can be assessed and listed as well, it is however not a precondition for their use. If not listed it is the responsibility of the CB of the processor / manufacturer to assess their compliance. Basic substances / chemicals (e.g. salt, soda) are not expected to be listed on *Letters of Approval*.

In case both colourants and auxiliaries have been approved, two separate tables are to be prepared on the *Letter of Approval* – called 'Colourants (Dyestuffs and Pigments)' and 'Textile Auxiliaries'.

Trade Name of Input (1st column)

In this column the complete and unique trade names of the approved inputs as stated on the official MSDS which have been provided with the application is to be listed.

Type / Utilisation (2nd column)

The type of dyestuff or the declared (main) utilisation category of auxiliaries is to be addressed. Samples are provided on the template.

Date of Approval (3rd column)

The initial date of approval based on the assessment according to the declared standard version is to be used (not any previous approval dates based on a former standard version). In case several *Letters of Approval* are issued during the validity period of one standard version, there may also be several approval dates for the listed inputs.

Date of MSDS (4th column)

Date of the official MSDS which has been taken as a basis for assessment. The CB needs to assure that these MSDS are indeed prepared according to a recognised norm or directive as listed in the Manual, chapter 2.3.3.

Comments/restrictions (5th column)

With reference to GOTS criteria the following information is to be provided:

- the copper content in weight percentage in case the copper content exceeds 0,1% in blue, green and turquoise dyestuffs (ref. to GOTS 2.4.6/2.4.7 with tolerated level of 5% for these shades)



- the permanent AOX in weight percentage in case the permanent AOX content exceeds 0,1% (ref. to GOTS 2.4.7 with tolerated level of 5% in yellow, green and violet pigments respective to GOTS 2.3.1 with tolerated level of 1% for any other input)
- for any approved synthetic sizes the following wording: "may only be used in compliance with GOTS criteria 2.4.3"
- for any auxiliaries used in mercerisation and containing alkaline: "may only be used for mercerisation if alkaline is recycled" (acc. to GOTS 2.4.5)
- for any approved synthetic finishing agents for which the declared application purpose / utilisation includes also one (or several) of the prohibited applications (anti-microbial finishing (including biocides), coating, filling and stiffening, lustring and matting or weighting) the following wording: "must not be used for [term of application as used in GOTS chapter 2.4.9, e.g. coating or weighting]."

No of inputs listed

The tables are followed by the figure counting the total number of inputs approved and listed in the *Letter of Approval*.

End of validity of the *Letter of Approval*

General revisions of GOTS are scheduled every 3 years. With a new version of GOTS in force (which is 12 months after its release, provide no other period is published) the validity of any *Letter of Approval* issued to the former version terminates the latest. Based on the CBs procedures and risk assessment a shorter validity period may be provided.

Authorisation

The authorisation consists of date and place of issue, signature and name of the authorised person as well as the stamp of the CB. As it is stipulated in the licensing and labelling guide that suppliers of GOTS approved inputs are not permitted to use the GOTS logo to identify, market or advertise such products the GOTS logo is also not to be used on the corresponding *Letters of Approval*.

Declarations at the bottom

The first declaration states either that all previous issues of *Letters of Approval* are replaced or informs on a second *Letter of Approval* issued based on the former version and still valid during implementation period of a new standard version (see also related advice in chapter 'Standard Version' above).

This is followed by two declarations stating that the issuing body can withdraw the *Letter of Approval* before it expires and that the company remains responsible for the correctness, completeness and immediacy of the provided data. The CB may decide to add an additional declaration that references the *Letter of Approval* to stipulations of the contract with the company and/or clauses of the certifier's scope specific procedures.

In addition the applicable accreditation body and the CB's accreditation number need to be stated.

No further information should be contained.

Footer

The footer contains the wording "*Letter of Approval*, page [no of page] of [total no of pages]"

Marcus Bruegel, GOTS Technical Director