



Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation – Scheme Guidance Document For Applicants and Assessors

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**Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme
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Executive summary

As the lead industry association for wood energy activities, the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand (Bioenergy Association) is providing an accreditation service for suppliers (retail and wholesale) of solid biofuel, i.e., wood fuel.

This Guidance Document sets out the details relating to the production and supply of wood fuel that prospective applicants need to provide as part of their application for accreditation. Independent Assessors will consider the evidence submitted by the supplier and recommend accreditation to the Scheme Administrator. An appeal process is available for any applicant declined accreditation.

This Guidance Document is also a guide for Assessors setting out what they should be looking for in an application from prospective applicants.

Applications are welcome from suppliers of all type of wood fuel, i.e., those who retail or wholesale wood fuel including wood chip, pellets or domestic firewood. In future, the Scheme may expand to address the production of wood fuel.

This document sets out the following details:

- The evidence required from applicants to the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme (WFSAS) such that they can demonstrate that they have the capability to supply wood fuel and that they have a suitable system in place to assure end users that their product meets the appropriate quality standards.
- The criteria for initial accreditation, and for maintenance of the awarded accreditation; and
- An outline of the assessment process, a timescale for processing applications, and complaints and appeals processes.

Appendix 1 provides a list of the forms that are required to make a full application for accreditation.

A list of supporting documentation prepared for the Scheme is also listed in Appendix 1.

1. Introduction

There is a steady growth in the use of wood fuel for the production of heat and heat plant owners, who traditionally have used coal or gas as fuel, are now looking to use wood fuel. Heat plant owners are looking for the level of assurance of fuel quality and consistency of supply that is similar to that which they are used to when purchasing coal and gas.

Some types of wood fuel can be very variable as to their quality and characteristics. As a result heat plant owners are seeking assurance that the potential variability can be managed by their suppliers. Technically there has been in recent years a marked advancement in the quality of equipment and expertise available for wood fuel production but this has to be demonstrated to potential wood fuel customers as being used.

Heat plant owners who have made the effort to consider using wood fuel have raised concerns to the Bioenergy Association about their difficulty in being able to identify the wood fuel suppliers who are likely to meet their needs. They have indicated that they would welcome an independent body to assess supplier's ability to consistently deliver what they contract for.

The Bioenergy Association has conducted studies on various aspects of wood fuel such as its classification in terms of type and quality, its use in new and converted coal boilers, data around the availability of wood fuel and market growth (residential and small commercial/industrial). As a result the Bioenergy Association has developed a suite of Technical Guidance documents that relate to many aspects of the production and use of wood fuels and regularly holds conferences, sites visits and workshops on the production and use of wood fuel. This Accreditation Scheme builds on that work to provide assurance to fuel users that they are using a quality of fuel appropriate to the needs of design of their heat plant.

Occasional renewable energy focused Government grant schemes have provided incentives to heat users to switch to wood fuel as a cleaner, greener more sustainable source of fuel. A picture of the growth in the use of wood fuel country wide can be seen on the [Bioenergy Projects Database](#) where examples of wood fuel in use are presented as 'projects', and the details of those active in the sector (suppliers, producers, consultants, equipment retailers and installers) are available on the UseWoodFuelNZ website www.usewoodfuel.org.nz.

This guidance document sets out the rules for accreditation and gives direction to the Scheme Administrator and Assessors as to the criteria for accreditation. An applicant must meet the requirements of this document.

2. The scheme

The definition of 'Wood Fuel' in the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme is as given in the *Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 1 – Solid Biofuel Classification Guidelines* where wood fuel types are listed as follows:

- Wood chips
- Hog Fuel
- Wood Pellets
- Urban Wood Fuels
- Compressed Firelogs and Briquettes
- Torrefied wood
- Herbaceous wood fuels
- Firewood.

Wood fuels can come from a number of sources including the following:

- Products from forestry and agriculture
- Wastes from forestry and agriculture
- Vegetable waste from food processing industries

- Biomass residue from wood processing
- Fibrous vegetable waste from pulp and paper operations
- Other biomass related materials.

2.1 Scope

The Accreditation Scheme will accept applications from New Zealand and Australian suppliers of any type of wood fuel irrespective of the feedstock or the production process.

The Solid Biofuel Classification Guidelines set out the following:

- Types of solid biofuel
- Classifications and grades within types of fuels
- Description parameters

The Guidelines are based on the various appropriate international technical standards for sampling and testing the quality of solid biofuels. The Guidelines don't replace the technical standards but draw on the relevant parts of any standard and apply them to the Australasian heat markets.

The Solid Biofuel Classification Guidelines are supported by *the Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5 - Standard Methods for Verifying the Quality of Solid Biofuel*. This Guide sets out the recommended and standard methods for verifying the characteristics and quality of solid biofuels (wood fuel) for the New Zealand and Australian markets.

The exact specification of the fuel delivered to a customer will be determined by the supply contract and this specification may be particular to an individual customer. The Accreditation Scheme is therefore concerned with the capability of the supplier to consistently deliver fuel that meets the specification and thus comply with the contract. The method of assurance is based on testing, testing frequency and the associated results are therefore a key component of the accreditation process.

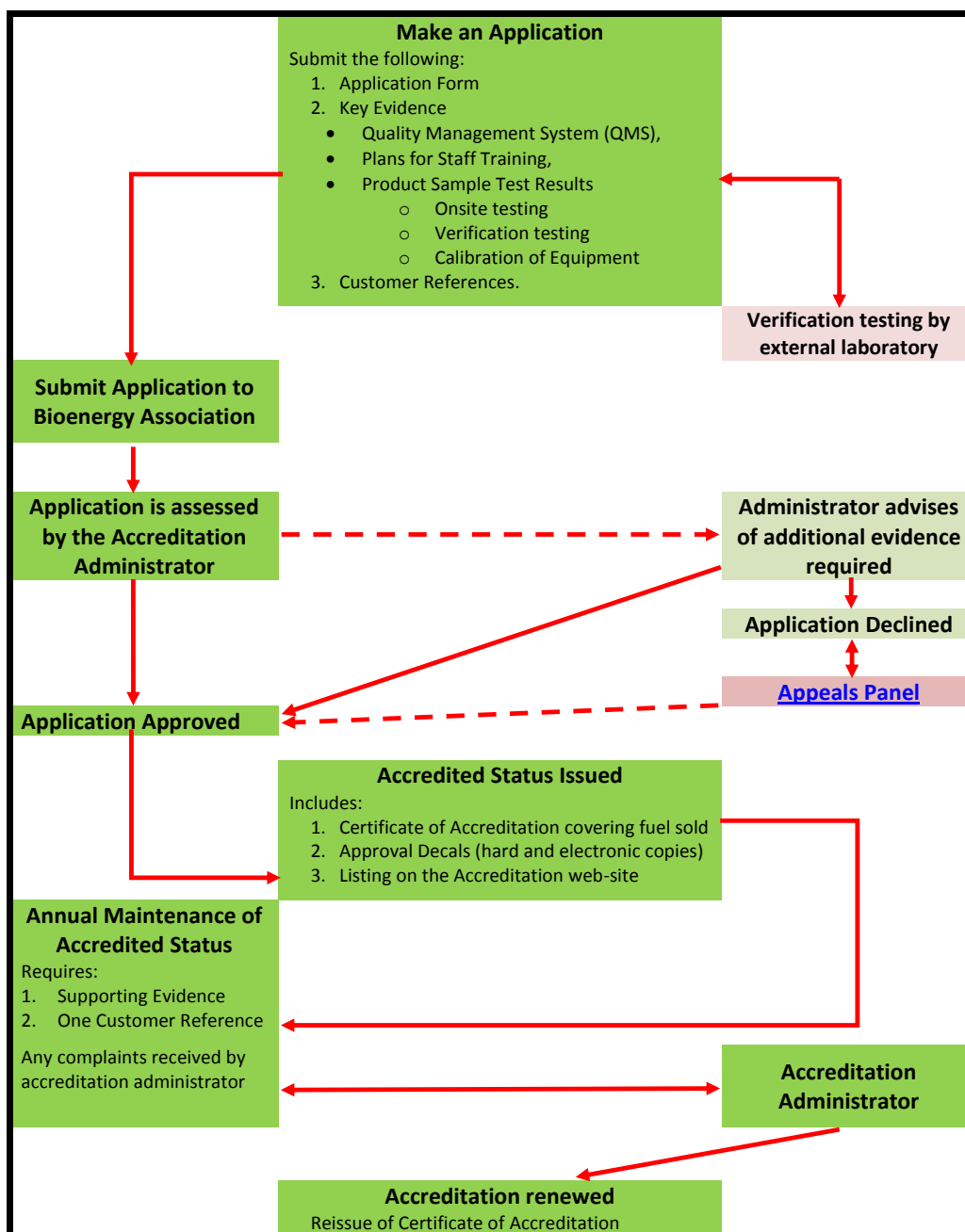
2.2 Definitions

The following technical terms are defined in this document for clarity:

Accreditation	A formal acknowledgement from the independent Scheme Administrator that the fuel supplier has the capability to source and deliver specific types of wood fuel reliably and consistently to a predetermined specification.
Professional Standards and Complaints Committee	The independent panel of three appointed by the Bioenergy Association AGM to consider appeals to any decision by the Scheme Administrator.
Authorised testing body	IANZ approved testing body
Certificate of Quality (CoQ)	<p>A certificate which details the quality of a sample of wood fuel by listing the test results and signed by an authorized testing body.</p> <p>A CoQ must include the description of the wood fuel being tested, the name of the specification it should meet, batch number and release date. Each specification property for the substance must be listed together with the test method, unit of measure, test result and ideally the specification limit for that property. All key properties in the specification must be included but the most recent frequency test result can be given for any minor properties provided this is indicated. Any tests carried out by another laboratory should be indicated.</p> <p>Descriptive terms that identify the fuel should also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main type and form (chips, hog fuel etc) • A grade within that type and form (I.e. grade 1 through to grade 8 wood chips).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific descriptions that are based on the properties of the wood fuels. <p>The CoQ should include a statement that the batch meets the specification with the exception of any tests that have failed or have been omitted and be signed by an approved person.</p>
Conforming	Meeting specification requirements.
Control document	A document forming part of a quality management system (QMS) marked by the following: a title, issue number, release date, page numbers (page of pages) and a signature by the authorised approver.
Description parameters	The characteristics of solid biofuels with regard to Size (P), Moisture (M), Ash (A), Bulk density (BD), and Energy density (ED) are set out in the Solid Biofuel Classification Guidelines
Definition of wood fuel types	<p>The wood fuel types covered by accreditation are set out in the Solid Biofuel Classification Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood chips • Hog Fuel • Wood Pellets • Urban Wood Fuels • Compressed Firelogs and Briquettes • Torrefied wood • Herbaceous wood fuels • Residential firewood
Quality control (QC)	Activity associated with testing to confirm quality including the setting of pass-fail criteria and quarantine of failed product. QC normally includes defined methods for taking and labelling samples, test selection, test method evaluation, ensuring test equipment integrity and maintaining product traceability.
Quality Management System (QMS)	<p>A process and systems designed to provide assurance that a product always reaches the end user meeting the intended specification and fit for the intended purpose.</p> <p>QMS activities include all the elements of QC but extend to the management and continuous improvement of the manufacturing process including management responsibilities, review of specifications, review of processes, packaging, labelling and delivery, incident investigation, analysis and rectification, managing changes to processes, customer support, internal review and external audit.</p>
Representative sSample	A sample taken in a way that represents the average composition of the contents of a container. Sampling is defined in the Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5.
Scheme administrator	The independent person appointed by the Bioenergy Association AGM to be an administrator of the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme.
Fuel specification	A schedule in a contract that sets out the properties the wood fuels being purchased must meet.
Test	A laboratory process used to determine a given property of a sample of wood fuel.
Wood fuel supplier	Any person or entity entering into contracts for the supply of wood fuel to customers.

3. Application process



4. Scheme design and operation

The Bioenergy Association Wood Energy Interest Group (WEIG) represent the leading players in terms of the suppliers and end users of wood fuel and those who provide wood energy equipment (suppliers and installers of boilers and burners) in New Zealand and Australia. The WEIG Committee provides oversight of the accreditation scheme.

The key focus of the Scheme is delivering Quality Assurance and ensuring a system of checks and balances that in general work towards the delivery of a high quality wood fuel consistent with contractual agreements. High quality and reliability will in turn increase the demand for wood fuel from the market as customer confidence grows. The issue of quality is a key factor in a successful wood fuel sector. The consistent delivery of high quality fuel will provide the necessary assurance to potential customers that solid biofuel available from accredited suppliers throughout Australasia is a quality product suited to the purpose intended by the end user. The Scheme covers the retail and wholesale supply of all types of wood fuel, including residential firewood..

The Bioenergy Association is conscious of the need for the Accreditation Scheme to be credible but affordable. Sound quality assurance (QA) is a fundamental requirement for accreditation. While the Scheme cannot guarantee the quality of all wood fuels produced, it does require that each accredited supplier has standardised processes and procedures capable of delivering a specified product. Accreditation aims to establish a reputation for reliable quality and sustainably sourced feedstocks. The onus is also on customers to demand accredited wood fuel so reinforcing the importance to supply high quality fuel to the market. However the scheme criteria are not too onerous that unnecessary costs are incurred.

The Bioenergy Association acknowledges that there are a number of international standards in relation to wood fuel and these form the basis of the association's Technical Guides on fuel classification and wood fuel testing. The Technical Guides are based on the international standards but take only the relevant parts which are applicable to New Zealand conditions.

- **Who can apply for accreditation?**

Any person or entity can seek accreditation as a Wood Fuel Supplier. As the Scheme develops, it may be possible to expand to cover wood fuel production.

- **Requirements for accreditation**

In order to gain accreditation, suppliers of wood fuel are required to demonstrate an active Quality Management System covering procedures, methods and training etc and to also supply details of tests conducted on samples of their fuel. In addition, they will be required to demonstrate that they have been able to consistently provide fuel to a specification as required through a contract with a customer. The Bioenergy Association understands that this specification varies according to the needs of each specific customer. The key issue is the ability of the supplier to consistently meet those needs.

To avoid imposing unnecessary costs on suppliers, applicants may put forward their existing QA schemes for consideration.

- **Monitoring and oversight of a supplier's accreditation**

In order that the Accredited Supplier can be monitored and be held accountable for best practice performance by the Bioenergy Association Professional Standards and Complaints committee the supplier must be a financially paid up member of the Bioenergy Association at all times. As a member the supplier must abide by the Association Member's Code of Conduct.

- **Recognition of other accreditation schemes**

Where a supplier has a recognized certification scheme such as DinPlus then that scheme may be recognized by the Scheme Administrator who will advise the applicant what additional information is required in order to achieve accreditation under this scheme.

In general use of a recognized alternative certification Scheme will significantly reduce compliance costs with regard to this scheme.

- **Recognition of accreditation**

The Scheme has a recognised label demonstrating that an accredited supplier meets a set of predetermined quality criteria. The accreditation will be endorsed with regard to the types of fuel that the supplier has shown they can deliver.

- **Limited accreditation**

Limited accreditation may be awarded to a supplier who does not have a fully developed QMS. Limited accreditation lasts for 6 months after which time a complete QMS must be provided to the Scheme Administrator. Limited accreditation is an indicator that applicants are working towards full accreditation under the Scheme. Limited accreditation applies to a specific relationship, i.e. a producer supplying to a specific commercial user. General supply to the retail sector requires unlimited accreditation.

A supplier with limited accreditation cannot display the accreditation logo and must indicate that their accreditation is “limited”.

5. Making an initial application

This section sets out the requirements for an initial application for accreditation under the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme. For all sections, applicants should provide as much information as possible.

Form WFSAS 02 – WFSAS Application Form (Appendix 1.1) should be used to make an initial application for accreditation.

All information received from the Applicant by the Scheme Administrator and the Assessors will be held in confidence and no information will be shared with any other party

5.1 About you and what you do

The following information is required:

- **Your contact details** – Provide contact details for the main contact person and a second person who can be contacted in their absence about the organisation seeking accreditation.
- **Brief overview description of wood fuel supply business** – This section is intended to provide the Scheme Administrator and the Assessors with an overview about the applicant’s operations. Applicants should clearly indicate under which fuel types they are applying for accreditation. This should include the sources of feedstock, processing methods, how fuel is stored, if it is sold retail or wholesale, and the nature of the supply contracts. This is a scene setting description and should not go into detail that is better covered elsewhere.

5.2 Information required for accreditation

The information requested in this section will be the evidence to support the application being made. It’s important that as much information and explanations as possible are presented for assessment.

The following information (or evidence of it) is required as part of an application for accreditation:

- Quality Management System (QMS),
- Plans for staff training,
- Product Sample Test Results
 - Onsite testing

- Verification testing,
- Equipment Calibration
- Customer References.

5.2.1 Quality Management System

A Quality Management System (QMS) shows how an organisation operates. The QMS includes the organisation's policies and procedures, and supporting attachments, such as forms, templates, flowcharts and training manuals. The policies and procedures should be complete, applied, understandable and consistent with actual practice. A well-developed QMS describes how policies and procedures are:

- developed
- documented
- approved
- implemented
- regularly re-assessed through self-review.

Application Tip 1: QMS can be simple

The information requested in this documentation may appear onerous but simple processes may be as effective as complex ones. As an example to effective processes – Is the tyre flat – looking at the tyre to see if it needs air, can be as effective as measuring the pressure. Assessors will want to be assured that you have a good process not a complex or costly process.

Applicants should look at the principles of what is sought and not assume that there needs to be lots of documentation. Photos and video evidence showing equipment in operation can be very effective and provide indisputable evidence.

• **QMS Documentation**

While there is no required format for a QMS, the Scheme Administrator needs to see evidence of a structured approach to how the applicant manages their day to day operations. Ideally, their QMS should include the following general features:

- It should be appropriate to the size, nature, complexity of the processes and the organisation.
- It should document all relevant aspects of any required standards and legislation that is being used.
- It should describe in detail the processes used, and how these processes are regularly reviewed, corrected and improved.
- It should explain how quality is monitored and documented.
- All changes made to the processes should be subject to a *management of change* review to ensure that all the effects of the change are addressed.
- All key documents should be controlled documents.
- The QMS should also outline how:
 - staff are trained
 - safety and good manufacturing practice are maintained
 - all details of receipts, fuel processing, deliveries and samples are recorded.
 - nonconforming product is dealt with; and
 - how problems are managed.

Application Tip 2: A Quality Management System

The Scheme Administrator needs to see that there is a structured approach to the management and delivery of a product that meets the customer's specification. The QMS is the document that anyone should be able to reference for information on procedures and it must be usable and accessible either electronically or physically. A small organisation might have one copy of the QMS in circulation – it could be amended manually and updated as appropriate. A large organisation may decide to review its full QMS at regular intervals. Some parts may be reviewed more frequently and in more depth. New procedures may have a shorter review cycle initially to ensure any teething problems can be rectified.

Application Tip 3: What to do if you don't have a QMS

The Scheme Administrator accepts that some small but growing businesses may not yet have a formalised QMS. As an interim measure, the Scheme Administrator is willing to receive any other documented and current management processes used by the applicant. If applicants choose to submit this information, their application will be considered for "limited" accreditation for a period of six months or until full accreditation is awarded whichever is the former.

Depending on the nature of the applicant's specific activities, it is expected that their QMS (or alternative) will also cover a number of specific elements. Provide details as follows:

- **Processes**

- a) Person accountable for or appointed to manage the quality system
- b) Product specifications for wood fuel supplied
- c) Product Certificate of Quality provided to customers
- d) Fuel handling and storage including moisture and contaminants exclusion and protection
- e) Nature and frequency of sampling and testing
- f) Test methods and equipment
 - i. Maintenance and calibration
 - ii. Participation in correlation schemes
 - iii. Tests performed in house
 - iv. Use of external test laboratories
 - v. Laboratory or test room accreditation status and QC tester qualifications/experience
- g) What approach is used for working with customers on quality related issues including for example to customers - the provision of information, advice, and management of complaints etc; to contractors – any contractual agreements for services.
- h) What processes are there in place to manage non-conforming fuel.
- i) Labelling and signage
- j) Transportation – Policy and Practice
- k) Promotional material and activities
- l) Contract management
- m) Handling of information requests and complaints – how is this done?

Applicants should indicate which of the above issues their QMS covers and which are yet to be addressed.

- **QMS Internal review**

Having a QMS in place is a significant step towards operating in a quality focused way. This is a key first step but over time it's highly likely that operations change or develop and more effective ways of doing things are identified. It's important therefore that the QMS is kept up to date and address all changes or developments in onsite activities and processes. An internal review is somewhat like a process of checks and balances in order to ensure that the QMS is effective. It's important that the responsibility for managing, reviewing and implementing the QMS is allocated and that it is regularly monitored.

The Scheme Administrator would like information on how the QMS is reviewed and as a result of any specific findings leads to the amendment of internal policies, processes and procedures as part of the management of the business in its delivery of a quality product or service.

- **QMS external audit**

Having a QMS in place is a significant step towards operating in a quality focused way. Internal reviews are a first step in managing the effectiveness of the QMS but external audits can be the best way to assess the true effectiveness of the QMS. Quality audits are essential to verify the existence of objective evidence showing conformance to required processes, to assess how successfully processes have been implemented, for judging the

effectiveness of achieving any defined target levels, providing evidence concerning reduction and elimination of problem areas and are a hands-on management tool for achieving continual improvement in an organisation.

To benefit the organisation, quality auditing should not only report non-conformances and corrective actions but also highlight areas of good practice and provide evidence of conformance. In this way, staff may share information and amend their working practices as a result, also enhancing continual improvement.

The Scheme Administrator is interested in whether the QMS has been externally audited, what the findings were and how they have been addressed. If it has not been externally audited, is one planned? Having had an external audit by an auditor acceptable to the Scheme Administrator can minimise the necessity for the Scheme Administrator to make such in depth enquiries. Similarly if the QMS has been reviewed by another certifying party a report from that party may avoid such information having to be provided for demonstration of compliance under this scheme.

Application Tip 4: Market benefit of having had independent external audit

The supplier can obtain significant market benefit from having had an independent audit of the QMS and use the information when bidding for supply contracts. Customers are keen to know that you have been independently looked at.

5.2.2 Staff training

Staff training is a key component of running a quality process. The Scheme Administrator is seeking details of the applicant's commitment to training and details of how training is structured and assessed within the organization with regard to quality fuel supply.

Applicants should outline the training procedures and initiatives that they have in place noting the frequency of training, training topics and how many staff members are trained. Reference the QMS as appropriate.

5.2.3 Ensuring product quality (quality control procedures)

Ensuring that fuel quality is maintained from the point of production to the point at which it is delivered to the customer is essential. This focus on the maintenance of quality in both practical and contractual terms is of fundamental interest to the Scheme Administrator. This is achieved by good control of all processes involved and confirmed using an appropriate level of sampling and testing along the whole supply chain.

Information on the expected best practices for product quality verification is set out in the *Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5 - Standard Methods for Verifying the Quality of Solid Biofuel*.

The tests and other processes applied at each stage of manufacture and distribution should be appropriate to the applicant's own circumstances. The recommendations below are advisory only and are not intended to cover all circumstances or actions that may be required. Details as follows:

- Sampling
- Product Testing
- Transportation methods
- Equipment Calibration

- **Sampling**

Sampling must be carried out appropriately and with sufficient frequency as to represent a credible picture of the applicant's activities. Applicants should refer to the Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5 which sets out recommended sampling procedures and frequencies against which accreditation will be assessed.

- **Product testing**

It is important that product tests of properties related to wood fuel type and quality are carried out periodically. For accreditation the frequency of sample testing is set out in Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5.

It is important to appreciate that these tests not only give a customer confidence but also signal to potential customers the supplier's commitment to quality and performance. These tests and the performance are what helps to set some suppliers apart from others.

Bioenergy Association approved testing bodies are set out in Technical Guide 5.

- **Fuel transportation methods**

Applicants should demonstrate that their fuel transportation methods are appropriate for maintaining product quality during transport eg are wood pellets transported in covered trucks.

- **Equipment calibration**

Equipment used to test samples should be calibrated regularly to ensure accuracy and consistency of results. Applicants should advise on calibration testing results. An ideal calibration regime is set out in Bioenergy Association Technical Guide 5. **Form WFSAS 13 – Testing equipment** may assist.

Equipment description	
Serial No. / or ID	
Manufacturer	
Relevant to which fuel type	
Is calibration necessary to ensure product quality	Y / N if yes, state required frequency of calibration
Is training critical to product quality?	Y / N if yes, ensure all users have training recorded on C8

- **Information requirement**

Information required for demonstrating product quality includes:

- An outline of the sampling and testing carried out under the applicable headings above. (Please note, there is no requirement to follow the recommendations above but the Scheme Administrator would like to understand your reasons /justification for departing widely from them in cases where you apply a lower level of testing.)
- An outline of how retail samples are selected (e.g. site and season) and sampling frequency.
- An outline of your testing facilities; tests you can carry out on your production site and independent laboratories you use for non urgent tests.
- Ability to investigate changes to your processes by laboratory trials.
- Participation in any QA audits, e.g. ISO 9001 and the areas they cover or other quality assurance activities associated with sampling and testing.
- Information on retained samples and records kept.
- Any recent examples of product failing to meet specification but detected and able to be rectified before leaving your production facility. Any examples of the need to rectify product and lessons learned.
- Information on your ability to quarantine and reprocess or dispose of faulty product.
- Any examples of incidents you may have experienced in the last year such as product released to the marketplace which was later found to be outside specification, the reasons for this and the actions you took to identify and rectify the problem.
- A representative sample of sets of results for the wood fuel products you have retailed in the past year. All results should be recorded as part of the QC process. How the results compare against contracted deliverables should be presented with the results submitted for accreditation.
- Details of how and when to calibrate testing equipment and the reporting of actions/corrections taken.
- Facilities for dealing with customer complaints and claims relating to quality.

Note to Parties Seeking Accreditation:

List the Equipment you hold onsite for the purposes of quality testing. For each item listed please note which fuel types the equipment is relevant to. If you replace the equipment, please advise the Scheme Administrator at your next re-accreditation.

- **Managing wood fuel quality contractually**

The Scheme Administrator is interested to understand how the issue of wood fuel quality is addressed contractually. Applicants to the Accreditation Scheme should indicate the typical nature of contractual requirements between parties. Further, it should also be noted what the agreed steps are to remedy any contractual failures.

- **Provision of full and clear Information**

The Assessor's judgment has to be made to a large extent on the information provided to them. It's in the applicant's interest to provide as much information as possible.

Note – All information submitted to the Scheme Administrator in support of an application for accreditation is confidential to the Bioenergy Association and held securely. It will not be disclosed to any third party.

5.2.4 Referee statements

The success of the Wood Fuel Industry in New Zealand will be built and secured on the development of a reputation for fuel quality, availability of fuel and the maintenance of good customer relationships. The Scheme Administrator is interested in feedback from customers. This applies whether the customer is the fuel's end user or a buyer on-selling to others.

In supplying the details of five referees (customer details) applicants are giving their approval for the Scheme Administrator (or an Application Assessor under the Scheme) to contact up to two of these person(s).

6. Information for accreditation listing

Assuming that an application for accreditation has been made successfully, the information provided to the Scheme Administrator for the purposes of promoting the applicants accredited status will be used in the listing on the Accreditation pages of the UseWoodFuelNZ web-site. All other information provided to the Scheme Administrator is done so in confidence and remains confidential.

For listing purposes applicants should supply 200 words of text promoting their operations and services. In addition, a high resolution jpeg file of their company logo should be supplied to accreditation@bioenergy.org.nz

A successful application will lead to the award of accreditation under the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme as

'Accredited Wood Fuel Supplier'. The accreditation will be endorsed for specific fuel types.

The Scheme Administrator will make it clear in the website listing what fuels the accredited party supplies and has been accredited for.

7. Maintaining accredited status

Accredited status is maintained by the supplier continuing as a member of the bioenergy Association and the annual provision to the Scheme Administrator of a required set of details to keep the accredited status current.

Form **WFSAS 15 – Annual Accreditation Renewal** – should be used to submit the information required to maintain accredited status.

The following information is required annually to maintain accredited status:

QMS update	Provide an update on the QMS including improvements, reviews, audits etc and activities to keep it current.
Sample test data	(Per wood fuel type) Submission of one full specification set of tests, two sets of release tests including frequency tests and a representative sample of batch release tests. The Scheme Administrator requires evidence annually of quality fuel production and its delivery to the market. It is suggested that test results for 1 in 50 deliveries be provided.
Ongoing quality management / customer service	Provide updated details of the success of customer service plus details of complaints or disputes with customers and how they have or are being resolved.
A brief update on staff training	Detail any changes in the training being provided and provide a summary of activities since original accreditation.
Significant changes to operations	Provide a brief report on any significant changes to the information in the original accreditation application.
Customer reference	Provide one new reference.

7.1 Quality Management System (QMS) – Update

Initial accreditation under the Scheme requires applicants to have an operational Quality Management System to support their quality driven activities. The Scheme Administrator would like to see a clear demonstration annually of how the QMS is implemented, amended, updated and general evidence of how it is used in day to day activities to ensure that the business produces a quality product or delivers a quality driven service of relevance to the Scheme (e.g., transportation or retail sale).

Applicants should highlight recent activities including amendments/updates, audits or internal reviews of the QMS and QC procedures. If operational activities have been audited internally or externally the Scheme Administrator would like to see a summary of the findings from this Audit.

7.2 Ensuring product quality

To maintain accreditation the Scheme Administrator requires evidence annually of the supplier's quality fuel production and its delivery to the market. For renewal the supplier must complete the summary table (Table 2 WFSAS 02) providing (per wood fuel type) one full specification set of tests, two sets of release tests including frequency tests and a representative sample of your batch release tests. It is suggested one in five to one in 10 batches.

The Scheme Administrator is interested to see details of any non-compliances issued and what steps have been taken to address the issues highlighted.

NOTE – except those for promotional use (i.e., listing on the Scheme Register) all details supplied are confidential to the Scheme Administrator and the Independent Assessors contracted under the Scheme.

7.3 Production volumes, volumes delivered and volumes sold

The disclosure of a supplier's wood fuel sales data is not a requirement of accreditation. However the Scheme Administrator is interested in sales of product to help establish the scale and make-up of the sector in New Zealand in terms of the key sales areas/regions and key wood fuels sold. Any supplier's information provided will be held confidential to the administrator and the data will only be aggregated with other supplier's data to show total growth in the market. A benefit of accreditation is that by participation the supplier will be able to assess their market share in each region and nationally by comparing their own data with the aggregated data. The Scheme Administrator is keen to understand if there is growth in the Wood Fuel market and in sales (retail and wholesale) and where generic market promotion should be focused.

Applicants should provide data according to the type of wood fuels that they produce or sell. Collection of data will be undertaken by the Scheme Administrator separate from the accreditation process.

7.4 Ongoing quality management / customer service

A strong future for the wood fuel sector in New Zealand relies on the ability of those key players in the sector to produce or deliver quality wood fuel to the customer time and time again. Part and parcel of this is the maintenance of a positive relationship with customers. In this sense, a 'customer' may be anyone in the chain from the point of wood fuel production to the point of its sale (retail or wholesale).

The Scheme Administrator is interested in brief synopsis of issues relating to quality that applicants have had to address and manage in the past year. The disclosure of confidential information is not expected but applicants are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to reinforce that they are providing a competent service and to assist with the identification of future learning opportunities. The Scheme Administrator will aim to use details from applicant's experiences to illustrate in training activities under the Scheme.

7.5 Staff training

The Scheme Administrator requires evidence of ongoing staff training within the organisation seeking to maintain accreditation. Training can be webinars, site visits or presentations. Please provide details of the topics that have been the focus of internal training activities. Applicants should attach information as appropriate to their application details. Form *WFSAS 03 – Staff training records* and Info sheet *WFSAS 04 - Staff training hints and tips* – may assist.

7.6 Significant changes to operations

Providing information as part of maintaining accredited status is an opportunity to highlight any significant changes to operations.

Applicants should outline any specific but reasonably substantial changes to the operations as they were described in the original application for accreditation.

7.7 Customer reference

An important component of the Scheme is customer satisfaction. Maintenance of accredited status requires the applicant to provide the details of at least one new customer from which a reference will be sought.

8. Ethical conduct requirement

As an accredited wood fuel supplier (producer and/or retailer) under the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme all parties are expected to conduct their activities according to ethical standards generally accepted in New Zealand business and set out in the Bioenergy Association member's code of conduct. Further, this conduct should be such that the aims and objectives of the Scheme and the reputation of the industry sector generally are not jeopardised as it works towards establishing sector recognition for quality wood fuel.

Accreditation may be suspended by the Scheme Administrator if the Scheme Administrator considers that the accredited party's behaviour has not met Scheme standards or that the supplier has not renewed its annual membership of the Bioenergy association..

The Scheme Administrator requires accredited parties to disclose any problems raised by customers or issues as part of the accreditation process and to seek assistance from the Scheme Administrator in the resolution of any such issues where wood fuel quality is a concern.

The Scheme Administrator endeavours to support and work with accredited parties in the attainment of their accreditation and its maintenance. It is in the best interest of the wider sector for all suppliers to work towards the delivery of the highest quality wood fuel at all times.

9. Assessment process – how an application is assessed

This section sets out as a rough guide how an application for accreditation will be processed.

When the application is received, the Scheme Administrator will check firstly if all the required information has been provided. The Administrator may wish to refer the application to one of the Scheme's Panel of Independent Industry Assessors. The Administrator will discuss with the applicant possible Assessors and agree one acceptable to the Applicant who is not in business competition with the applicant.

The Scheme Administrator or the Assessor will review the application supporting material and may contact the applicant to discuss aspects of their application.

The Scheme Administrator, on the basis of the advice from the Assessor or otherwise, will make an overall decision on whether an application for accreditation passes or fails. The Scheme does not have a scoring system as such. In the situation where an applicant fails in their attempt to become accredited, the Assessor will outline to them why this decision was made and what they need to do in order to improve things. Equally so, if an applicant is successful but the Assessor feels there are some aspects that warrant attention over the year ahead, these issues will be highlighted to the newly accredited party.

When the process is complete the Scheme Administrator will contact the applicant with the outcome of their application. Assuming a positive outcome, applicants will be issued with an Accreditation Certificate, a unique accreditation number and their details (as provided by the applicant) will be listed on the Scheme web-site. In addition, successful applicants will be issued with the Scheme logo in hard and soft copy forms.

9.1 Accreditation assessors – the panel of assessors

Where the Scheme Administrator considers it necessary the Administrator will engage the services of independent sector experts (a 'Panel of Assessors') to assess all applications. A single assessor from the panel will be appointed to each application. The assessor will be under contract to the Bioenergy Association and will be bound by confidentiality clauses in the contract. The Assessor will not be a person in a similar line of business to the applicant and may be the Scheme Administrator.

All details provided in an application are confidential to the Scheme Administrator and the Assessor. In practice, it is the appointed Assessor who will consider the information provided in detail. On receipt of an application the Scheme Administrator will advise applicants on possible Assessor and agree one.

9.2 What the assessor is looking for in the submitted evidence

In line with the information that has been submitted, Table 1, following, sets out a brief check sheet of what the Assessor is looking for. This is intended only to be a basic guide to help applicants understand the essential features of the information that must be provided to ensure a successful application.

At all times applicants should focus on providing as much information as possible and preferably offer some response for each question rather than leave them blank.

NOTE – applicants are advised that if they are in doubt about their ability to provide some elements of the information required for accreditation, it may be advisable to contact the Scheme Administrator in advance to discuss whether it's appropriate that an application is made at all at this time.

The QMS - or alternative (as a temporary substitute)	<p>While there is no hard and fast requirement for what the QMS should look like. The Guidance Document clearly sets out what the Assessor will be looking for in terms of the topics it covers.</p> <p>The Assessor will want to see evidence of how applicants ensure the QMS is central to operations.</p>
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	In the absence of a formal QMS, the Assessor will consider alternative current documentation which focuses on the delivery of a quality process. Applicants should provide a clear account of how this collection of documents ensures that quality driven processes are in place.
Staff Training Activity/Plans	The Assessor will be keen to identify that applicants have a strong commitment to staff training and are able to demonstrate a good understanding of the role that staff training has in the operation of a quality driven process. Training should also cover health and safety and emergency procedures.
Ensuring Product Quality	<p>The Assessors interest is in how an applicant addresses quality in the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling • Product Frequency Testing • Transportation – Policy and Practice • Information Required for Accreditation (Retailers) • Managing Wood Fuel Quality Contractually. <p>The Assessor needs to be satisfied that the applicant has ready access to sound testing facilities and that the tests you apply at various points of the supply chain are pertinent to your process and are carried out at an appropriate frequency. Also that samples are correctly taken and managed, and records are properly kept.</p> <p>The Assessor will want to see how an applicant addresses a ‘fail’ test result in terms of the remedial activity they pursue and future avoidance. The Scheme Administrator will want to see examples of actual test results and other information about the supplier’s testing history, issues in terms of parameters that have failed and how the applicant has attempted to address them.</p>
Referees Statements	The Assessor is interested in talking with the referees that applicants have identified to get a sense of the service that has been provided to them. As this Guidance Document advises, the quality of the service provided is important for individual businesses and in securing the future of the industry in general.

Table 1: A brief guide to what an Assessor is looking for in an Application

10. Timetable of applications

The Scheme Assessors will endeavour to complete each initial assessment within 3 weeks from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate set of application documents by the Scheme Administrator.

The Scheme Administrator accepts no responsibility for any effects:

- from any delay in the completion of an assessment of an application; or
- of an applicant not being granted Full Accreditation by the Scheme Assessor(s).

For annual accreditation renewals, the Scheme Administrator will be able to confirm that applicants have maintained their accredited status (or if there are additional details required) within 2 weeks of the receipt of a completed application form.

11. Issuing accreditation certificates

Successful applicants will be issued with a Certificate of Accreditation and an Accreditation Number.

The Certificate will confirm that the applicant is accredited under the Scheme. The Certificate will be numbered and entered in the Register which will be maintained by the Scheme Administrator. The Certificate will record the wood fuel types under which the applicant has been accredited. New fuel types can be added on request and on the provision of suitable evidence.

The Register of accredited parties under the Scheme will be shown on the Scheme web-site

<http://www.usewoodfuel.org.nz/find-wood-fuel-supplier>

11.1 Display of accreditation logo – terms and conditions of use

Appendix 2 presents the Scheme Logo. The logo is available as a hard and soft copy and will be provided to the successful applicant on their accreditation.

The Scheme Logo presents the following information:

- The logo is a clear sign that the holder is accredited under the Scheme
 - Endorsements as to the types of fuel accreditation applies
- Scheme Registration Number.

More information – the Scheme Logo provides a web-site address www.usewoodfuel.org.nz where interested parties can get further details about suppliers, the currency of their accreditation status and the services they offer.

The logo can only be used by parties accredited under the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme. On successful application for Accreditation the Applicant will be permitted to use the logo as set out in the Terms and Conditions of Use as follows:

Terms & Conditions for the use of the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme logo

The use of the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme Logo once awarded is subject to applicants agreeing to these terms:

1. The Bioenergy Association through its Scheme Administrator ('the Scheme Administrator') is the sole owner of the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme Logo ('the logo'). Use of the logo acknowledges the Bioenergy Association as the owner of the logo.
2. The Scheme Administrator reserves the right to take action against any use of the logo that does not conform to any of the conditions herein, or that infringes any intellectual property or other rights of the Scheme. All use of or goodwill associated with the logo will convey to the benefit of the Scheme.
3. Use of the logo by accredited parties is evidence that their activities/operations have been independently assessed against the Scheme criteria and found to be acceptable.
4. Use of the logo does not guarantee the quality or suitability or otherwise of a product or service and the Scheme is not liable for any issues arising from the improper use of the logo.
5. Use of the logo is solely at the risk of the user.
6. As a successful applicant for Accreditation under the Scheme, the Scheme Administrator hereby grants permission to use the logo, provided that there is agreement to the following:
 - The logo can be used on a supplier's web-site for the purpose of linking to the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme web-site.
 - The link will always be an active link.
 - The logo will always stand alone and will not be combined with any other graphical elements.
 - The logo will not be altered in any manner including its size, proportions, font, design, arrangement, colors or elements or animated, morphed or otherwise distorted in perspective or appearance.
 - The logo will not appear more prominently than the personal, company, product or service web-site name on the applicant.
 - The logo will be displayed in a positive manner and will not be used in any way that adversely affects the Scheme.
 - Accredited parties will not transfer, assign, sell, reproduce, distribute or otherwise exploit their link to the Scheme or their use of the Scheme logo.
 - The logo will appear as provided by the Scheme Administrator in an electronic form.
 - The Scheme Administrator will issue accredited parties with a set number of hard copy logo's specific to their accredited status (i.e., the categories under which accreditation was sought and awarded).
 - Accredited parties will remove the logo from their web-site and/or operational activities in the event that their Accreditation has not been renewed or has been suspended for more than 3 months.
 - Accredited parties will direct current and potential customers to information on the Accreditation Scheme on the Scheme web-site

Accredited parties will not transfer any of the logos provided for their use to a third party.

12. Post assessment processes

12.1 Suspension of accredited status

Parties accredited under the Scheme are expected to carry out their operations in a manner consistent with normal business ethics as outlined in Section 8 – Ethical Conduct Requirement.

Should a situation arise in which an accredited party brings himself or the Scheme into disrepute, the Scheme Administrator will advise the applicable accredited party that their accredited status is to be suspended. Parties will be advised in writing and where appropriate will be granted an opportunity to explain the details of an identified situation as appropriate.

12.2 Complaints process

If applicants are unhappy with any aspect of the administration of the Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme they can make a complaint. Complaints should be directed to the Scheme Administrator in the first instance. In all cases, complaints are to be made in writing.

All complaints are made in confidence. Decisions on complaints will be made by the Scheme Administrator and complainants will be kept informed on the status of their complaint by the Scheme Administrator.

Where the complaint is about the performance or conduct of the Scheme Administrator, or the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Administrator to a complaint, the Complainant may refer the complaint to the Bioenergy Association Professional Standards and Complaints Committee.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, complainants (and any other parties identified) may be contacted by the Scheme Administrator. All communications between the complainant and the Scheme Administrator and the Bioenergy Association Professional Standards and Complaints Committee will be held on file. Details of the steps in dealing with complaints are available on request.

If applicants are unhappy about the outcome of their complaint, they may appeal the decision to the board of the Bioenergy Association.

12.3 Appeals process

An appeals process has been established to manage cases where unsuccessful applications for accreditation are disputed by applicants who may complain and then appeal the Scheme Administrator's decision.

An appeal against the decision made by the Scheme Administrator must be made in writing to the Bioenergy Association Professional Standards and Complaints Committee, within one month of being notified of the Scheme's decision.

All appeals are made in confidence. The appeal will be tabled at a special meeting of the Professional Standards and Complaints Committee, which will make the appeal decision based on the papers received.

Appellants will be kept informed about the status of their appeal, and may be contacted by the Professional Standards and Complaints Committee. All communication between the appellant and the Scheme Administrator and the Professional Standards and Complaints Committee will be held on file. Details of the steps in the appeal process are available on request.

13. Communications

The Scheme Administrator takes the lead on communications on or about the Scheme.

No other person or persons have the authority to speak on behalf of the Scheme or its activities unless written permission has been granted by the Scheme Administrator.

Any queries should be addressed to. accreditation@bioenergy.org.nz

14. Application fees

Application fees are set out in Table 2 as follows:

Details	Details	Fees (\$) (ex-GST)
Full Application	<p>The Full Application Fee includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application processing costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administration ○ Assessor fees ○ Assessor Site Audit ● Maintenance of the Accredited Producer Register ● General Record Maintenance ● Promotion of the accredited suppliers details on the website 	<p>\$700*</p> <p>* For 2015 and 2016 and to assist with the establishment of the scheme the cost has been reduced to \$550 plus GST</p>
Annual Renewal	<p>The Annual Renewal Fee includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application processing costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administration ○ Assessor fees ○ Assessor Site Audit ● Maintenance of the Accredited Producer Register ● General Record Maintenance ● Promotion of the accredited suppliers details on the website 	\$400
Other Fees		
Scheme Administrator Advice/Consultancy	The Scheme Administrator can assist interested parties with requests for assistance.	\$100 /hr
Annual Training Sessions	The Scheme Administrator will organise at least 1 training session annually or meet individually with Accredited suppliers to discuss accreditation.	Cost tbc

Table 2: Wood Fuel Supplier Accreditation Scheme Rates and Fees

Parties seeking accreditation are expected to hold at least Ordinary Level Membership of the Bioenergy Association. As an association Member, they are entitled to reductions in the fees for attendance at wood focused events. As an accredited party under the Scheme (and a Bioenergy Association Member) access to Technical Guides and associated resources is free.

Appendix 1: Documentation

Appendix 1.1 Bioenergy Association Technical Guidance Documents – Wood Fuel

Guide Number	Title
Technical Guide 1	Solid Biofuel Classification Guideles
Technical Guide 2	Guidelines for the Conversion of Solid Fuel Boilers from Coal to Wood Pellet Firing
Technical Guide 3	Guidance for the Safe Operation of Small Scale Wood Fuelled Heat Plant
Technical Guide 4	Tender Guidelines for the Specification, Supply and Installation of Wood Energy Plant
Technical Guide 5	Standard Methods for Verifying the Quality of Solid Biofuels
Technical Guide 6	Contracting to Deliver Quality Wood Fuel to Customers

Appendix 1.2 Scheme Documentation

A number of documents have been developed as part of the process to assist applicants in their preparation of an application for accreditation. A Guidance document outlines what the process is and how the evidence submitted will be assessed.

Resource	Description
WFSAS 01 WFSAS Scheme Guidance Document	A Guide to completing the Application Forms, Fees and General Procedures. This document offers supporting information to Applicants as they complete their forms for the initial application and maintenance of accreditation and also provides a brief Guide to Assessors as they consider the information submitted for assessment.
WFSAS 02 WFSAS application form	This form is used to apply for initial accreditation under the Scheme.
WFSAS 03 Staff training record	Form to use supporting staff training
WFSAS 04 Staff training hints and tips	Info sheet providing independent advice on how inclusion of staff training in a QMS can ensure best practice compliance.
<u>WFSAS 05 Product sample test reporting hints and tips</u>	Info sheet providing guidance on best practice sample test reporting.
<u>WFSAS 06 Referee request form</u>	Form sent by the Scheme Administrator to referees seeking a reference
<u>WFSAS 07 Assessors check sheet</u>	This form is used by an assessor to record their findings and observations on the application submitted for accreditation.
<u>WFSAS 09 Now you are accredited</u>	Information sheet on promotion protocols and Accredited Supplier responsibilities
<u>WFSAS 10 Annual accreditation renewal form</u>	This form is used by accredited parties to maintain their accredited status.
<u>WFSAS 11 Scheme Governance and Administration Document</u>	A description about how the Scheme operates, including roles and responsibilities and how applications, complaints and appeals are processed.
<u>WFSAS 12 Sample test audit</u>	Form for recording results of site audit by the WFSAS Assessor
<u>WFSAS 13 Testing equipment</u>	Form for recording the details on test equipment including records of calibration and any modification.

Appendix 2 Wood Fuel Accreditation Scheme Logo

