CARES
General Instructions

EPD Programme

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Contents

Amendment Control Sheet

Section	Amendment	Date of Issue
All sections	First issue	July 2024
All sections	First revision	February 2025

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 **Applicant:** An individual, company, partnership or body incorporated or unincorporated which has applied for PCR establishment or conduct LCA or verify EPD and/or issue EPD.

1.2 **Audit:** A third-party verification of the Applicant-reported data and information conducted as required by the PCR or EPD.

1.3 **Environmental Product Declaration (EPD):** Type III environmental label which quantifiably demonstrates the environmental impacts for a product on a harmonised and scientific basis.

1.4 **LCA consultant:** Independent, competent and impartial person or body that carries out execution of the LCA or the development of the declaration.

1.5 **LCA practitioner:** independent, competent and impartial person or body conducts LCAs and generates Project Report and EPD.

1.6 **LCA/EPD tool:** Tool to evaluate the environmental impacts of a product throughout its entire lifecycle.

1.7 **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA):** Compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle.

1.8 **Life Cycle Inventory Analysis (LCI):** Phase of life cycle assessment involving the compilation and quantification of inputs and outputs for a product throughout its life cycle.

1.9 **PCR Review Panel:** Independent, competent and impartial panel and verifies the PCR. Minimum Qualifications include bachelor's degree in science or engineering related discipline; at least 5 years of professional experience in LCA and LCI; knowledge of Greenhouse Gases verifications and specific verification systems and procedures.

1.10 **Product Category Rules (PCR):** Set of specific rules, requirements and guidelines for developing Type III environmental declarations for one or more product categories.

1.11 **Programme Operator:** Body or bodies that conduct a PCR and EPD (Type III environmental declaration) programme.
The UK Certification Authority for Reinforcing Steels (CARES), a company limited by guarantee and registered under the Companies Act 1948-81 under No 1762448.

1.12 **Project report:** Report summarises the project documentation in a systematic and comprehensive way in order to support effective verification of the EPD. The project report may be called as 'background report' or 'mini report'.

1.13 **Standards:** The LCA, EPD and sustainability standard as laid down in the relevant part of this manual.

1.14 **Type III environmental declaration:** Environmental declaration providing quantified environmental data using predetermined parameters and, where relevant, additional environmental information.

1.15 **Verifier:** Independent, competent and impartial person or body with responsibility for performing and reporting on a verification. Minimum Qualifications and competence including bachelor's degree in science or engineering related discipline; at least 5 years of professional experience in LCA

and LCI; knowledge of relevant sector, product and product-related environmental aspects; process and product knowledge of the product category; expertise in LCA and methodology for LCA work; knowledge of relevant standards in the fields of environmental labelling and declarations and LCA; knowledge of the regulatory framework within which requirements for Type III environmental declarations have been prepared, and knowledge of the Type III environmental declarations programme. The verifier shall be approved by the Programme Operator.

2. INTRODUCTION & SCOPE

2.1 CARES is a Programme Operator based on ISO 14025 (Environmental labels and declarations - Type III environmental declarations - Principles and procedures) as well as EN 15804 (Sustainability of construction works - environmental product declarations. Core rules for the product category of construction products) and other standards for the life cycle assessments.

2.2 The scope of the CARES EPD Programme is limited to semi-finished and finished steel products classified in accordance with United Nations Central Product Classification (UN CPC) 41. Product categories covered by the program are as follows:

a. Single manufacturer – Single site – Single product
b. Single manufacturer – Single site – Multiple products
c. Multiple manufacturers – Single Site – Average of single product (e.g. Sector average)

2.3 This manual presents the detail of the CARES EPD Programme for the semi-finished and finished steel products used in assets such as construction; and describes the programme instructions governing the development, verification, and publication of PCR and EPD.

2.4 The intended audience of the CARES EPD Programme is business-to-business (B-to-B) and business-to-consumer (B-to-C).

2.5 The Programme Operator will keep confidential all data and information relating to the Company's business and shall not disclose to any third-party information unless required to do so by law.

2.6 A continuous review of this manual is maintained for compliance with ISO 14025 and EN 15804 by the Board of Management of the Programme Operator, who will arrange for revised editions to be issued as necessary. Each revision of the manual will bear the date of issue.

2.7 The Programme Operator engages regularly via various communication channels with the relevant interested parties (stakeholders) to participate and provide input on this Programme for ensuring the credibility and transparency in the operation of the programme. Input received from interested parties was incorporated into this manual. The interested parties can be found via the CARES website https://www.carescertification.com/certification-schemes/sustainable-constructional-steel.

2.8 The Programme Operator received no external funding for the development of this Programme. The main source of funding for its activities is the fees paid by applicants for developing, verifying and publishing PCRs and EPDs.

3. OBJECTIVE

3.1 The objective of this Programme is to develop, verify and publish PCRs and EPDs based on one or more LCAs in compliance with ISO 14025 standard. All life cycle assessments will follow ISO 14040 series of standards including ISO 14044 and also EN 15804 standards.

3.2 The Programme is to give confidence to the purchaser and user of semi-finished and finished steel products that reports environmental performances without the need to undertake separate verification.

3.3 The Programme is established to support the producer's efforts in communicating a product's third-party verified environmental performance in accordance with ISO 14025 and applicable PCRs.

3.4 The Programme is implemented such that the EPD will be an assurance of environmental performance of the product. Nevertheless, the legal responsibility for compliance with the relevant published standards remains with the producer or supplier.

4. ORGANISATION

4.1 Administration of the Programme is by an independent Board of Management, hereafter referred to as the Board. The Board is responsible for policy and all matters arising from the Programme's operation.

4.2 The Board is composed of executive directors and non-executive directors and is chaired by an independent Chairman.

4.3 The Board is advised by a number of committees, one being the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). A primary function of the PAC is to ensure the Board is made aware of the views of interested parties regarding policy and strategy and also to receive issues as reported by the Board.

4.4 A Chief Executive Officer (CEO), appointed by the Board, is responsible for the granting of, and where necessary, the withdrawal of PCR and EPD, in accordance with the operating procedures and regulations of the Programme Operator. He/she is responsible for the routine business activities of the company, direct co-operation with purchasers, suppliers and other bodies and the publication of a list of all those companies holding PCR and EPD.

4.5 The CEO may, from time to time, appoint external bodies to act as agents of the Programme Operator for the purposes of assessment and data verification audits. He is an ex-officio member of the Board.

4.6 Administration of the Programme is applied in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner. The Programme Operator confines its requirements, evaluation, review, decision and surveillance to those matters specifically related to the scope of PCR and EPD. For further information reference should be made to the Programme Operator's impartiality policy statement available at www.carescertification.com.

4.7 The Programme Operator team (Programme Manager, Personnel / Assessors, LCA Practitioner) of industry experts are dedicated to providing comprehensive PCR and EPD using a proven and consistent mechanism and LCA tool. The

team of experts share the best practices that they have learned and experienced in their assurance and assessment works.

4.8 The Programme Operator is based at the following address:

Pembroke House, 21 Pembroke Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1XR, U.K.
Tel : 00 44 1732 450000
E-mail : general@carescertification.com
Website: www.carescertification.com

5. OPERATING PROCEDURES

5.1 Programme Operator Responsibilities

a. Prepare, maintain and communicate General Programme Instructions (this document)
b. Publish the names of the organisations involved as interested parties in the programme development
c. Implement procedures for the verification of LCA studies, LCA/EPD tool and EPD report that have been critically reviewed by approved verifiers that have been assigned to ensure that the requirements of the PCR, ISO 14025 Clause 7 and EN 15804 have been complied with. The verification is conducted as per the requirements of ISO 14040, ISO 14044 and ISO/TS 14071 for verification process and reviewer competencies.
d. Implement procedures and documented information to safeguard the consistency of data (The Programme Operator shall maintain a verification checklist to ensure that verification is undertaken consistently and addresses the requirements of the relevant Standards, this General Programme Instructions and PCR).
e. Maintain publicly available lists and records of PCR documents and Type III environmental declarations (www.carescertification.com/certification-schemes/environmental-product-declarations)
f. Adopt existing PCRs and/or publish PCR documents and Type III environmental declarations
g. Monitor changes in standards (EN 14025, EN 15804, EN 15941, prEN 17662), programmes (e.g. Eco Platform), procedures and documents of related Type III environmental declaration programmes, and revise procedures and documents when necessary
h. Ensure and keep records of the selection of independent, competent and impartial approved verifiers and PCR review panel members
i. Implement a transparent procedure for the PCR review, including the scope of the review, details of the review and constitution of the PCR Review Panel
j. Implement procedures to avoid misuse of references to ISO 14025, the CARES PCR, CARES EPD Program, CARES issued Type III Environmental Declarations and CARES Logo.

5.2 Application

a. The Applicants are those seeking the following services individually or combined: PCR establishment, conduct LCA, critically review LCA, verify EPD, and issue EPD.

b. The Applicants are provided access to an online enquiry form on the CARES website, www.carescertification.com.
c. The Programme Operator is to send the Application and Declaration Form to the Applicant.
d. The application shall be on a completed Application and Declaration Form accompanied by the appropriate fee(s) and documentation before the application can be considered. The Application and Declaration Form includes a legally binding undertaking by the Applicant to comply with all the requirements from time to time laid down by the Programme Operator.
e. The Applicants application will be subjected to an initial review by the Programme Operator.
f. Once the enquiry is received, the Programme Operator ensures that:
    - ✓ The Applicant has the technical ability and resources required to comply with these operational procedures
    - ✓ The Applicant's scope is within the scope of this Programme and/or relevant PCR.

5.3 Assessment of a PCR application

a. A favourable review will be followed by the acknowledgment of the application and planning of the assessment.
b. All PCRs developed by this Programme Operator for product categories of related products shall follow the LCA methodological requirements of relevant standards including ISO 14025 and ISO 14040 series of standards.
c. The PCR Review Panel shall assess the compliance with ISO 14040 and 14044, ISO 14025 and this general programme requirements with an inclusion of all environmental issues relevant to the product category.
d. The PCR Review Panel shall determine whether substantive revisions are needed, and a new version shall be issued as necessary.
e. The final PCR document shall include or incorporate the PCR Review Panel findings, comments and recommendations.
f. The Programme Operator maintains a publicly available list of completed PCRs and supporting documents as required by ISO 14025.

5.4 Renewal of a PCR

PCRs developed by this Programme Operator are valid for three years, unless otherwise specified.

5.5 Assessment of an EPD application

a. A favourable review will be followed by the acknowledgment of the application and planning of the assessment.
b. A remote or an onsite data verification assessment audit will be conducted by the Programme Operator's assessment team or agents and the Programme will provide for:
    - ✓ An introductory meeting with the Applicant during which the assessment procedures will be explained.

- ✓ A timetable of activities so that arrangements can be made for appropriate staff to be available during the assessment.
- ✓ Full assessment in accordance with this Operating Procedure.
- ✓ A final meeting at which the Assessors will present their findings to the Applicant.
- ✓ A data verification audit report in the form of questionnaire will be issued and reported to Programme Manager.

c. The Programme Manager shall review the data collection audit report and issue the project report by using the verified LCA/EPD tools or LCA systems developed by LCA Consultant and that are following PCRs specified in this program.
d. The Programme Manager shall issue the draft EPD.
e. The Programme Operator shall submit the project report, draft EPD, verification checklist and other documents to an independent, competent and impartial approved verifier for review in accordance with the requirements of ISO 14040, ISO 14044 and ISO 14025.
f. At the end of the verification process, the approved verifier will produce an EPD Verification Report, assessing whether the EPD was prepared in accordance with the PCR and ISO 14025 standard. EPD Verification Reports are available to anyone upon request. EPD Verification Reports shall not include confidential business information.
g. A recommendation for approval will be produced.
h. The Applicants application, the verified EPD report and recommendation will then be considered by the CEO. When the CEO is satisfied that the Company meets the requirements of this Programme, an EPD will be issued.
i. If approval is withheld the reasons for this will be communicated to the Applicant together with recommendations for any corrective action which needs to be implemented before the application can be reconsidered. Should an Applicant wish to appeal against the withholding of the EPD report, the appeal will be heard in the manner described in the CARES Complaints and Appeals (https://www.carescertification.com/about/complaints-and-appeals).

5.6 Renewal of an EPD

a. The EPD is valid for three years.
b. Prior to the end of the three-year cycle, a data verification audit shall be carried out for the renewal of the EPD.

6. COSTS

Fees are reviewed annually and the CARES Standard Terms of Business, as amended from time to time, shall apply. Adequate notice will be given as to any impending change.

7. APPLICATION AND DECLARATION

A completed application, including the declaration, signed on behalf of the Company (Applicant), by a director or officer of the company and the relevant fee, should be sent to the Chief Executive Officer of CARES. The following details shall be completed in the English language. Please type your answers, or write in capitals in black pen, and answer all questions.

7.1 The applicant contacts

Name of company applying	
Address	
Town	
County	
Post Code	
Country	
Telephone	
Website	
Contact Full Name	
Position	
e-mail	
Contact number	

7.2 PCR application

Name of PCR	
Standards conformance	
Product category	
Product classification	

Existing PCRs for the product category (if applicable)	
Reasoning for development of PCR	
Underlying studies	
Conformance with the PCR Guidance	
Geographic region	
Language(s) of PCR	
Comments on the PCR	
Target date of publication	
Validity and Schedule for renewal	

7.3 EPD application

Address of the site	
Town	
County	
Post Code	
Country	
Product category	
Product classification	
Process route	

7.4 Declaration (A copy should be retained by the Applicant)

a. The Company shall ensure that all access, assistance, information, records, documentation and facilities are made available to Programme Operator, including the assistance of properly qualified, briefed and authorised personnel of the Company. The Company shall take all necessary steps to eliminate or remedy any obstacles to or interruptions in the performance of the services. The Company accepts that the agreed date, time and place of the assessments (remote or site visit) shall be binding. The Company shall not publicise details of the way in which the Programme Operator performs, conducts or executes its operations.
b. In the event of being accepted for consideration for a PCR or EPD approval, we undertake to demonstrate our ability to comply with the requirements set out in the Programme.
c. In the event of being granted a PCR or EPD approval we further undertake to:
   - ✓ Abide by the terms of conditions in this Programme as amended from time to time by the Board of the Programme Operator.
   - ✓ Pay the fees and costs required by the Board.
   - ✓ Accept audits by the Board and its Assessors and Agents.
   - ✓ Inform the Programme Operator, without delay, of the occurrence of a serious incident, breach of regulation, complaint, fraudulent behaviour or requirement necessitating the involvement of the Programme Operator.
d. The acceptance of our application shall constitute a contract between ourselves and the Programme Operator but not between ourselves and any other applicant for, or holder of, a PCR or EPD.
e. In the event of being granted a PCR and EPD, we understand that we are responsible for complying with the Programme requirements as amended from time to time and ensuring all services supplied under the PCR and EPD comply with such regulations and are fit for use. In addition we confirm that we will not make or be involved in, directly or indirectly, any claim against the Programme Operator whatsoever and we undertake to keep the Programme Operator, its Board of Management, officers, employees and agents fully indemnified against any losses, business profits or contracts, business interruption, goodwill or reputation, liabilities, costs, claims, actions and demands, which they may incur or which may be made against them as a result of or in relation to any actual or alleged breach by us of the regulations as amended from time to time or as a result of or in relation to any use of the Programme Operator's mark or failing to comply with the assessment requirements of the Programme Operator as amended from time to time.
f. The Programme Operator is not liable for any failure to perform, or delay in performance of, any of our obligations that is caused by events, including but not limited to, acts of God, war, terrorist activity or industrial action failure to obtain permits licenses or registrations, illness, death or resignation of personnel or failure by Company to comply with any of its obligations under the Agreement.

g. This undertaking and the requirements of the Programme Operator (together with all other documents referred to therein) shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, English law. We hereby submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts for all purposes connected herewith.

Signature (Electronic) *(for and on behalf of the Applicant as declaration of agreement with the requirements of the CARES General Instructions - EPD Programme)**:***	
Name	
Position	
Company	
Date	

8. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The following standards are relevant to the application of this programme. Unless agreed otherwise during the application process, the latest version (inclusive of its updated amendments) of the standards will apply.

ISO 14025 Environmental labels and declarations – Type III environmental declarations – Principles and procedures

ISO 14040 Environmental management – Life cycle assessment – Principles and framework

ISO 14044 Environmental management – Life cycled assessment – Requirements and guidelines

EN 15804 Sustainability of construction works - Environmental product declarations - Basic rules for the product category construction products

prEN 17662 Execution of steel structures and aluminium structures - Environmental Product Declarations - Product category rules complementary to EN 15804 for Steel, Iron and Aluminium structural products for use in construction works

ISO/IEC 17065 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services

PD CEN ISO/TS 14071:2016 Environmental management. Life cycle assessment. Critical review processes and reviewer competencies: Additional requirements and guidelines to ISO 14044:2006