

Responsible Minerals Initiative cuts ITSCI from approved traceability list

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The Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI) removed ITSCI from its list of approved traceability schemes on Monday, 31 October, meaning smelters sourcing minerals through ITSCI will have to do additional due diligence to meet RMI auditing requirements.



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ITSCI, which is run by the International Tin Association, is a private sector scheme monitoring tin, tantalum, and tungsten mines in Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi for human rights abuses such as child labour, and connection to conflict financing.

In an update posted on its website, RMI said it had previously based its approval of ITSCI on a 2018 assessment of the scheme from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development with a validity period of three years, which was extended but has now expired because it did not receive "ITSCI's affirmative response to the RMI's invitations to reapply".

In an email, ITSCI programme manager Mickael Daudin said the organisation would need more time to analyse the RMI statement before commenting.

A year ago, ITSCI told members in a memo seen by Reuters that the scheme had "reservations" around sharing information with RMI and protecting confidentiality.



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Change effective from 2023

RMI said the change will take effect on 1 January 2023, with a six-month grace period for smelters after which they will have to show RMI auditors direct evidence of traceability, mine site assessments, supply chain risk assessments, and KYC (know your customer) procedures, or be labelled non-conformant.

The move by RMI could incentivise mineral exporters and smelters to more closely examine their supply chains, said Mike Loch, president of Chicago-based mineral due diligence firm Responsible Trade.

"It might drive some innovation, it might drive some companies to implement their own chain of custody," he said.

RMI, which has more than 400 member companies from Apple and Alphabet to Tesla and Walmart, develops tools and resources that companies use to make decisions on sourcing minerals.

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