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## IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN BECOMES FIRST WATCH BRAND TO ATTAIN RJC'S NEW LEVEL OF CERTIFICATION

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Schaffhausen, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 – IWC Schaffhausen has become the first luxury watch brand to meet the new 2019 Code of Practices (COP) standard set by the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC). By attaining this certification, the Swiss manufacturer reaffirms its commitment to the responsible sourcing of precious materials and a new benchmark of sustainability for the industry.

Since it was founded in 2005, the RJC has provided a clear Code of Practices (COP) for members within the watch and jewellery sector, from mining to retail, to ensure ethical, social and environmental responsibility. IWC first joined the leading global standards organisation in 2012, gaining the 2013 COP certification in both 2014 and 2017.

Last year, the RJC unveiled a revised version of their COP standard, which included stronger provisions for responsible business practices, activities and supply chain management. As soon as these revised standards came into force, IWC, due for recertification and eligible to choose either Code, asked to be recertified to the new 2019 COP standard. Opening the business to be verified by independent third-party auditors, the company was judged to be compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. The audit also recognised IWC's adoption of good practices beyond what is legally required, including in sourcing, employer responsibility, customer interactions and our investment in our local communities.

"IWC is honoured to become the first Swiss luxury watch brand to receive this more stringent level of certification," explained IWC's CMO and Sustainability Committee Chair Franziska Gsell. "Being a member of the RJC allows us to examine every aspect of our business through their well-respected lens to ensure we are meeting the rising ethical demands of our consumers and employees. Our product is designed to last for generations, and becomes truly sustainable when it is made responsibly."

The RJC also offers a voluntary 'Chain of Custody' (CoC) standard that defines an approach for companies to handle and trade gold, silver and platinum group metals in a way that is fully traceable and responsibly sourced. IWC is now working with its carefully selected suppliers to become one of the first Swiss watch brands to attain this CoC certification of specific gold components.

"We believe that being COP certified accurately illustrates our dedicated efforts to securing a responsible supply chain," Franziska Gsell added. "As we continue to conduct our business in this socially and environmentally sustainable manner, our next aim is to lead the way in Swiss watch manufacturing by being audited for CoC certification to reflect further the very great care we take in sourcing our materials."

Iris Van der Veken, Executive Director of the Responsible Jewellery Council said: "We would like to congratulate IWC on achieving re-certification for our 2019 Code of Practices standard. They have been a long-term supporter of the RJC and have shown strong commitment towards implementing and promoting responsible business practices in their supply chain. In this era of trust and resilience, now more than ever there is a need for more companies like IWC to inspire, take action and commit towards a journey of purpose and continuous improvement."

## THE RESPONSIBLE JEWELLERY COUNCIL

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit standards and certification organisation. It has more than 1,200 member companies that span the jewellery supply chain from mine to retail. RJC Members commit to and are independently audited against the RJC Code of Practices – an international standard on responsible business practices for diamonds, coloured gemstones, gold, silver and other precious metal groups. The Code of Practices addresses human rights, labour rights, environmental impact, mining practices, product disclosure and many more important topics in the jewellery supply chain. RJC also works with multi-stakeholder initiatives on responsible sourcing and supply chain due diligence. The RJC's Chain-of-Custody Certification for precious metals supports these initiatives and can be used as a tool to deliver broader Member and stakeholder benefit. Through the implementation of the COP and CoC members contribute towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 agenda.

## IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN

In 1868, the American watchmaker and entrepreneur Florentine Ariosto Jones travelled from Boston to Switzerland and founded the 'International Watch Company' in Schaffhausen. His visionary dream was to combine advanced American manufacturing methods with the craftsmanship of Swiss watchmakers to make the best pocket watches of his time. In doing so, he not only laid the foundation for IWC's unique engineering approach but also established the centralised production of mechanical watches in Switzerland.

Over its 150 year history, IWC Schaffhausen has developed a reputation for creating functional complications, especially chronographs and calendars, which are ingenious, robust, and easy for customers to use. A pioneer in the use of titanium and ceramics, IWC today specialises in highly engineered technical watch cases manufactured from advanced materials, such as titanium-aluminide and Ceratanium®. Preferring the principle of "form follows function" over decoration, the Swiss watch manufacturer's timeless creations embody their owners' dreams and ambitions as they journey through life.

IWC sources materials responsibly and takes action to minimise its impact on the environment, creating intrinsically sustainable timepieces that are built to last for generations. The company prides itself in training its own future watchmakers and engineers, as well as offering an excellent working environment for all employees. IWC also partners with organisations that work globally to support children and young people.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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