**RPA 2000 Statement**

**Applications for RWA Certification from holders of the UK Environment Agencies’ (EAs’) Grandfather Rights (GR) recognition certificates to act as RWAs**

**Background**

There are 785 holders of the EAs’ GR certificates of recognition to act as RWAs and expectations are that some 500 of these holders are likely to seek ongoing certification from RPA 2000. All GR certificates expire on 30 June 2016 and need to be replaced by RPA 2000 RWA certificates of competence by that date.

The RPA 2000 RWA certification scheme was launched on 1 January 2013 and expectations were that very few applications would be submitted during the first year of operation. To date there have been less than 5 applications for RWA certification from either new applicants or holders of GR certificates. The consequence is that a workload of around 500 assessments for initial certification will fall on RPA 2000 over a 2.5 year period. The Board has concluded that currently it does not have the resources to manage such a workload and has drawn up an Operational Plan aimed to achieve the best result available to it.

One component of this plan is to encourage as many early applications as possible, hopefully preventing a surge of applications as the 2016 deadline approaches.

**Submission timescales and fees**

The following measures have been put in place:

* Applications from GR holders received by no later than 31 December 2014 will benefit from a reduced fee of half the current RPA 2000 application fee for an initial certification, namely:
* £125 from 1 January to 31 December 2014.
* Applications received after 31 December 2014 will pay the full RPA 2000 application fee for initial certification.
* For applications **received by not later than 31 December 2014**, RPA 2000 will guarantee to complete the assessment process by not later than 30 June 2016 (provided sufficient information is provided with the initial application for the assessor to make a full assessment without requesting further evidence).
* For applications **received after 31 December 2014**, RPA 2000 regrets that it cannot guarantee completing the assessment of the application before 30 June 2016. However, it will make every endeavour to complete as many assessments as possible before that date**.**

**Implications of submission after 31 December 2014**

Please note that if you, and too many other people, delay your applications until after 31 December 2014 then you run the risk of having no valid RWA certificate as from 1 July 2016. While RPA 2000 will do all it can to avoid this happening, we regret that we are unable to give you any guarantee that we will be able to complete your assessment by that date. Should that happen you will be advised to contact the UK EAs to seek advice as to whether or not you are able to continue to operate as an RWA.

In order to guarantee the processing of your application by 30 June 2016, and to spread out the demand on our limited number of assessors, RPA 2000 is asking for your co-operation in **applying for your RPA 2000 RWA certificate as soon as you are able but, in any case, by not later than 31 December 2014.**

**Additional information**

Three further points are relevant:

1. As is current practice, all RPA 2000 RWA certificates of competence will be prepared as soon as the assessment is completed and will be valid for a period of 5 years from the date of issue.
2. New\* applicants are not subject to any of the special measures described in this Statement. Their applications for RPA 2000 RWA certificates will be treated in accordance with the RPA 2000 Operating Procedures (Document G1) and in particular the normal timescales will apply. [\* i.e. Applicants who have never held a GR certificate from the EAs].
3. Holders of GR certificates from the EAs are not permitted to follow the new applicant route to obtain an RWA certificate from RPA 2000. Separate application forms are available and the correct form should be used. The use of an incorrect form will simply mean that it will be returned to you, but we would hold your portfolio pending receipt of the correct application form.

Richard Paynter

Secretary to RPA 2000 Board.

9 February 2014