

Topten Charter

September 2006

1. Topten is a concept with tools for end-users to speed up sales, focus quality and lower barriers for market access of energy efficient equipment and respective information in households, offices, buildings, industry, transportation, etc.
2. Topten is internationally coordinated by the Topten International Group (TIG: a non-profit association, based in Paris/France) in order to increase influence on energy efficiency standards, to safeguard high quality of operations, to maintain independence, to speed exchange of experiences and data and to provide access to tools and web-systems for national Topten organisations. TIG safeguards the use of the Topten concept worldwide. It will protect international property rights of Topten.info, its name, logo and web content.
3. Topten wants to move national and international markets, individual manufacturers and retailers, organisations of trade and manufacturers, international standard organisations, etc. to contribute to the efficient use of energy by providing, designing, building, marketing and operating more energy efficient equipment.
4. In order to achieve this goal Topten has led by TIG the following tasks:
 - a. Research in national and international markets for the best products.
 - b. Building and updating databases for energy efficient equipment.
 - c. Design of criteria catalogues for the Topten-qualification (cut-off line).
 - d. Providing independent testing facilities.
 - e. Support of procurement programmes for energy efficient equipment.
 - f. Design and hosting of a series of national and international websites.
 - g. Support of design and distribution of print products with information on energy efficient equipment, etc.
 - h. Training for personnel working in national Topten projects.
 - i. Contacts to national and international organisations to influence the sale of more energy efficient equipment.
5. Topten works in cooperation with, but is independent of, equipment manufacturers and retailers and their respective associations.
6. Topten is not engaged in the sales of equipment that is mentioned on any Topten site.
7. Topten is organised nationally in order to better understand and guide market conditions.
8. Topten is financed and supported by national, regional, local and international governmental agencies, consumer and environmental NGO's and other partners (utilities, media, etc.). No sponsor shall be directly linked to the manufacturing and selling of energy using equipment displayed in Topten.
9. TIG does not normally support national Topten projects with funds except in developing countries under special agreement.

10. TIG chooses, gives accreditation and supports national organisations that want to use and distribute Topten in their country according to the Topten Charter. For the process of accreditation the prospective national Topten organisation has to setup its national partners, funding, operation managers etc. and provide the relevant information to TIG. The accreditation procedure is a transparent process with a peer review.
11. TIG tries to avoid having more than one national Topten organisation in a given country / or in a given market.
12. All national organisations accredited by TIG are members of the Topten International Group and are linked to www.topten.info. They pay an annual membership fee. They can use the Topten logo, operate their national Topten system and have access to the Topten database and international market research.