

Responsible procurement

The products and services purchased by Bell every year are either directly used by us for our own internal operations or for providing equipment and services to our customers. They are focused largely in the following areas: wireline and wireless network infrastructure, information technology, wireless devices, consumer residential products, business telecommunications products and services, media content, and carrier services.

Suppliers who do business with us are held to high standards since any purchase of goods and services can generate social and environmental impacts which, if not properly addressed, could affect Bell's corporate image and our ability to provide quality services. We seek quality products and services through mutually beneficial and ethical relationships with suppliers who act responsibly, respect the environment, and demonstrate integrity in the marketplace.

Supplier selection and accountability

GRI 205-1, 308-1, 412-3, 414-1

Bell policies (see our [Environmental policy](#), for example) require that we deal with suppliers who seek to minimize their environmental and energy consumption impacts.

We evaluate the corporate responsibility and environment risk associated with our contracts. The goal is to determine the level of risk of suppliers and mitigate the inherent risks by implementing measures before the contract is signed. During the supplier selection process, we ask specific suppliers to complete a corporate responsibility self-assessment questionnaire, which contains detailed questions about their environmental, health and safety, ethical, and labour practices. We use the results of the assessments as one criterion in the selection of suppliers. Audits may be performed on selected suppliers in order to validate the input that was provided in the questionnaire. For providers of environmental services, suppliers must undergo an environmental risk evaluation and Bell will conduct an environmental audit of operations during the request for proposal phase.

All new Bell contracts bind suppliers to standards consistent with Bell's [Supplier Code of Conduct](#) (implemented in 2007), clearly establishing the expectation that the supplier will take all reasonable measures to respect the requirements of the Code in its own operations and within its own supply chain.

The Bell Supplier Code of Conduct outlines standards to ensure that working conditions in the supply chain are safe, that workers are treated with respect and dignity, and that design and manufacturing processes are environmentally and ethically responsible. Bell is committed to sourcing responsibly and considers all activities in its supply chain that fuel conflicts and lead to human rights abuses as unacceptable.

Supplier diversity

At Bell, we also promote diversity among our suppliers. In 2014, Bell launched a supplier diversity program aimed at promoting active inclusion of companies owned and managed by women, Indigenous Peoples, LGBT, and other minorities in our supply chain. This has since expanded to include companies that are owned and managed by Veterans and/or Persons with Disabilities.

In 2015, our Procurement team incorporated supplier diversity into our corporate diversity and inclusion strategy, with the executive support of the Diversity Leadership Council. Bell's Procurement team participates in at least 6 supplier diversity industry networking events annually, maintains a certified diverse supplier database accessible to all Bell team members, advocates and builds awareness on behalf of a wide range of certified suppliers, and promotes inviting a broad mix of suppliers to more sourcing activities.

We also maintain memberships with key Canadian councils that certify companies as diverse (51% ownership and managed), including the Women's Business Enterprise ([WBE](#)), the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council ([CAMSC](#)), and the Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce ([CGLCC](#)). More recently, Bell became a corporate member of the Inclusive Workplace & Supply Council of Canada ([IWSCC](#)), which certifies companies that are 51% Veteran and/or Persons with Disabilities owned and managed.

Due diligence on products

GRI 308-1

Beyond the supplier approach to responsible business and risk management, we also address specific products through our expanding sustainable criteria program.

Since 2011, we have adhered to a set of sustainability criteria for customer facing products, including mobile phones and accessories, batteries, chargers, SIM cards, urban furniture, modems and TV receivers, as well as other internal products (laptops, paper, cleaning products). Sustainable packaging criteria are required for all tangible goods contracts that we resell to customers or use internally. These address the use of toxic substances and conflict minerals, the recyclability of materials, identification of plastics, energy efficiency, and the impact on our carbon footprint. Sustainable packaging criteria are required for all tangible goods contracts that we resell to customers or use internally.

Bell also participates in a voluntary energy efficiency program for set-top boxes called CEEVA (Canadian Energy Efficiency Voluntary Agreement), which refers to Energy Star standards.

Conflict minerals

GRI 412-3

Many electronic devices contain small amounts of metals – such as tantalum, tin, tungsten and gold – that are derived from minerals known under U.S. laws as conflict minerals because in certain cases they are mined in exploitative circumstances. Bell shares the concerns of many companies in the electronics and telecommunications industries that the use of conflict minerals may directly or indirectly finance or benefit armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) or adjoining countries.

We consider as unacceptable the exploitation and trade of conflict minerals that fuel armed conflicts and lead to the abuse of human rights. Our policy and our practice are to make every appropriate effort in seeking to ensure our suppliers source conflict minerals responsibly.

In 2011, we asked our major suppliers of electronic equipment to implement processes and control mechanisms to avoid the use of minerals that may directly or indirectly finance or benefit armed groups in the DRC or adjoining countries in the products they supply to Bell. Today, we continue to engage with suppliers on this issue.