

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CIBJO ruling modifies definition to permit the word Composite to be used to describe lead-glass treated ruby**

**New York, 5 September 2013:** During the most recent CIBJO conference this past May, the colored stone commission came together to address the disclosure nomenclature to properly represent the heavily treated lead-glass rubies that have been entering the industry in large numbers since 2003.

When CIBJO issued its press release following its 2013 conference in Tel Aviv (9 May 2013 press release), the colored stone commission issued its disclosure guidelines for lead-glass treated rubies. In the release, it was explained that CIBJO would follow the guidelines set out by the Laboratory Manual Harmonization Committee (LMHC), as well as recognizing the use of the term *composite* to describe these stones.

In order to accommodate the second approach, the colored stone commission amended its definition for the term *composite* to allow it to be used to describe this product. At the time of the press release, most publications focused primarily on the CIBJO decision to follow the LMHC in disclosing this product, without much mention of their pivotal change allowing for the use of the term *composite* to also represent these stones.

“AGL has received many comments from the industry members who did not fully recognize the impact and importance of the CIBJO decision following the conference, as it pertains to the use of the word *composite* for describing these heavily treated stones.” Stated Christopher P. Smith, President of American Gemological Laboratories (AGL).

The previous definition of the word *composite* in the CIBJO Blue Book did not permit this term to be used as a description for these stones.

“This was a significant ruling for the CIBJO Colored Stone committee to make, which required a revision in the by-laws of the definition for the term *composite*.” indicated Smith. “It was not unexpected that the CIBJO ruling would follow the terminology proposed by the LMHC. However, they have also approved the use of the word *composite* for this product, which was pioneered by the AGL.”

The AGL’s contention was always that this material represented a composite of lead-glass and natural ruby/corundum. This treatment process being fundamentally different from the more traditional heating practices used to treat rubies and therefore needed to be disclosed in a manner that made this distinction clear. In addition there are special care conditions inherent to this product that require further disclosure.

In closing Smith stated “I was very pleased to learn of the CIBJO decision to allow for both methods of describing this material. I believe that the CIBJO umbrella has again demonstrated its key fundamentals towards helping to establish useful and practical approaches for the betterment of our industry.”

---

Background: Beginning in 2003, the industry saw a new type of treated ruby product entering the market in vast numbers. This treatment process took very low quality, industrial grade ruby and in-fused it with a high lead-content glass. In some cases the resulting stones are more ruby than glass however in other cases there is more glass than ruby. In all cases though the extent of glass in these stones is significant and there are special care requirements, as the glass may be damaged by a variety of standard bench jeweler practices and even household products.

The LMHC approach involves a multi-tiered disclosure for this lead-glass treated material that is dependent upon the extent of treatment. Only the most extreme cases are classified as "a manufactured product".

The AGL approach collectively describes all of this material as Composite Ruby, a product requiring special care.

Additional trade organizations that also recognize the term *composite* to describe lead-glass treated ruby: American Gem Trade Association (AGTA), International Colored Gemstone Association (ICA), Gemstone Industry and Laboratory Committee (GILC), Jeweler's Vigilance Committee (JVC)