



**The American Watchmakers-Clockmakers Institute  
Official Opinion and Policy Regarding the Distribution of  
Replacement Parts, Equipment, Technical Data, and Education**

**Adopted by the Board of Directors, October 16, 2009**

Introduction: Organized in 1960, The American Watchmakers-Clockmakers Institute (AWCI) is recognized as the premier professional trade association made up of members of the horological industry. (*Those who practice the art of producing and maintaining timepieces.*)

*The Institute* recognizes that ensuring the public trust in horological products and services is beneficial to the entire horological community. Public desire and appreciation of horological products is dependent in the long term on proficient and reliable services. *The Institute* therefore encourages manufacturers, distributors and horologists to recognize the mutual benefit of sensible distribution policies.

The concern of *The Institute* is to advance the interest of horological science while promoting the highest level of technical proficiency in the maintenance and restoration of horological devices. *The Institute* therefore offers the following opinion regarding the distribution of replacement parts, equipment, technical data, and training. *The Institute* encourages all manufacturers, distributors and horologists to follow these reasonable recommendations to assure the future public trust in horological devices, and the horological industry.

**Parts:** The highest quality parts should be distributed as replacement parts. Experience indicates that parts manufactured to the original manufacturer's specifications (genuine) are the most satisfactory. In the event genuine parts are not available, parts of reliable quality should be distributed. It is impossible for the professional members of our organization to credibly operate without adequate sources of reliable replacement parts. Members are encouraged to respect trademarks and maintain branded product integrity by refusing to use inferior or generic parts when branded parts are available.

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**Tools and Equipment:** *The Institute* encourages our members to use the best and most up-to-date tools and equipment available. Quality brand-specific tools should be available to our qualified members at reasonable prices to ensure proper services, while maintaining the integrity of branded products.

**Technical Data:** Adequate technical data should be distributed to our members to assure proper service. *The Institute* is currently available to assist in the distribution of technical data. This includes materials that allow our members to effectively identify replacement parts, reducing confusion. Manufacturers are encouraged to allow *The Institute* to provide this function, enhancing brand-specific education.

**Distribution:** Focus should be on providing reasonable, affordable, reliable replacement parts, tools, equipment and technical data in adequate quantity to meet the demand. The use of material distributors is encouraged to simplify the process of distribution and provide a centralized source of materials for horologists.

*The Institute* considers it to be reasonable for companies to limit distribution to reasonably qualified persons to assure brand-specific service is completed in a competent manner. This has the benefit of assuring the public trust in the product and the profession. However, *The Institute* discourages the withholding of replacement parts, training, technical data and brand-specific tools and equipment from reasonably qualified persons. This can lead to monopolizing services with reduced availability, increasing costs to consumers. It also encourages faulty service, the production and use of inferior imitation parts, and degradation of the integrity of both horological products and services. Such policies are seen as detrimental to the horological community and undermining of the public trust. *The Institute* considers this practice unethical.

*The Institute* encourages all manufacturers to effectively distribute technical data, brand-specific tools, and quality parts at affordable prices to reasonably qualified horologists. This enhances sales by supporting local serviceability, reducing the time and expense to the consumer. *The Institute* encourages manufacturers and distributors to adopt these reasonable recommendations ensuring the public trust and appreciation of horological products and services.

**Education:** *The Institute* is actively engaged in providing a means for horologists to distinguish themselves as educationally qualified through Certification under the Standards and Practices of *The Institute*. *The Institute* provides educational classes in continuing education to keep members up to date, assisting those who are pursuing further education. Manufacturers are encouraged to assist AWCI in brand-specific training whenever possible.

In summary, it is the position of The American Watchmakers-Clockmakers Institute, for the reasons outlined in this opinion and policy statement, that the horological industry should allow qualified horologists reasonable access to spare parts, tools, equipment, technical information and training. Furthermore, it is our opinion that the public trust in the horological industry's products and services would only be enhanced by such reasonable access.