

IC COMPANYS

Brands: Peak Performance, Tiger of Sweden, By Malene Birger, Soaked in Luxury, InWear, Part Two, Saint Tropez, Designers Remix, Matinique



COMPANY POSITION ON THE LIVING WAGE:

“We implement the BSCI [Business Social Compliance Initiative] Code of Conduct in our international supply chain. This Code prescribes the payment of the legal minimum wage. This legal minimum wage should be at a level that covers workers basic needs as well as provide some discretionary income.

“We believe it is essential to emphasize the importance of a holistic approach towards the issue of fair remuneration for workers. In this context, it is important to address the qualitative aspects of wages as well as quantitative aspects ... such as the way of payment, timely and formal payment of wages, reflecting skills and education of workers in the level of wages, and equal treatment of full-time employees, part-time, and piece-rates workers.”

WHAT WE SAY:

As with Lidl, Aldi, WE and others, IC Companys has simply repeated back to us the answers provided by the BSCI, without engaging in the issues. Very little evidence was given of any work to address the problem of low pay. Nothing in the answers provided by this company indicated to us a serious engagement in the need to increase pay to a living-wage level.

IN MORE DETAIL:

Has living-wage benchmarks?

No.

Worker empowerment:

IC Companys says: “Due information and training of factory workers is the responsibility of factory management, the honouring of which is a requirement for BSCI Code of Conduct compliance.”



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Commitment and practices:

IC Companys says: “Our Supplier Scorecard which we use as a dialogue tool to improve conditions in the factories, includes remuneration as well as a number of other CSR issues.”

On living-wage benchmarks, IC Companys says: “The calculation of the local living wage forms part of the BSCI audit and is calculated according to the SA8000 methodology. They are used for the gap analysis and in the Corrective Action Plans that are issued to factories after each BSCI audit, indicating steps to be taken in order to arrive at the level of a living wage.”

Collaborative approach:

IC Companys works with the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH) to “promote social dialogue as an important tool to improve wages.”

Strategy:

IC Companys says: “As part of our consolidation of suppliers, our supplier scorecard, our work with DIEH and Sustainable Apparel Coalition we will be working even closer with our suppliers also on wages.” No more information was given about what this work would entail.

Production overview:

Number of suppliers: IC Companys did not disclose this information.

Main production countries listed as: China (63%), Other Asia (11%), Europe (24%), Africa (2%)

IC Companys does not publish a full public list of the names and addresses of its supplier factories.

COMMENTS:

IC Companys can demonstrate very little evidence of work towards defining and paying a living wage for workers in its supply chain. Without this, its policy commitment to ensuring wages cover workers’ basic needs will remain a paper promise. A repeated reliance on membership of the BSCI as an answer to important questions regarding due diligence on human rights is, to us, very disappointing.

Our take on the BSCI focus on addressing “the qualitative as well as quantitative aspects” of wage payment is that this is missing the point. It is important, yes, to pay workers on time and ensure wages reflect how skilled workers are, but the main issue for most factory workers is that they cannot afford to buy shoes for their children. The repeated protests that take place around the world in garment-producing countries all call for a significant quantitative wage increase. The focus on other aspects of wage payment is a distraction from the pressing and urgent issue of poverty. Given a list of 12 things to do, one of which is ‘pay more’, every supplier will do the other 11 first.

IC Companys gave no evidence of any attempt to engage with workers, suppliers or NGOs in an effort to improve workers’ wages or conditions.

IC Companys needs to take personal responsibility for its global supply chain and invest in ensuring that the rights of all workers within that supply chain are respected.