

## THE ACCORD UPDATE – March 12, 2014

Clean Clothes Campaign International

### THE BANGLADESH ACCORD

#### *The Accord Safety Inspections*

- The ACCORD on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (ACCORD)<sup>1</sup> requires all suppliers producing garments for the signatory brands and retailers are designated into three tiers, they are inspected for Fire, Electrical and Structural safety conditions based on ACCORD building standard<sup>2</sup>. The brand and retail signatories of the ACCORD have disclosed all the factories which produce their garments in Bangladesh.<sup>3</sup>
- The Accord conducts inspections of all factories producing garments for signatory brands and retail companies, under the direction of an independent Chief Safety Inspector.
- Initial inspections are conducted through four International engineering firms selected carefully and independently verifying their track records. 38 teams of fire, electrical and structural engineers work with Bangladeshi engineers and technicians in the *initial inspections* process. These initial inspections will be completed in 1500 factories by end of August 2014.
- The inspection engineers teams are accountable to the Accord as a whole and not to any individual brand or factory.
- Brand and retail signatories are responsible for working with factory owners to ensure that sufficient funds are available to implement the remediation, renovations and other safety improvements as directed by the Safety Inspector.
- Ongoing inspection services will be provided by 25 ACCORD engineers for a period of 5 years.
- Developed a procedure for the engagement and selection of worker representatives at the factory level and for accompanying the inspectors, as observers, during factory inspection assessments.

#### *Safety Inspection procedure*

1. A notice of inspection is issued two weeks prior to the inspection to the factory.
2. A team/s of safety inspectors conduct the inspection.
3. Findings of the inspection along with the remediation plan is sent to the factory owner, brands and the worker representative within two weeks of the inspection.

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1 The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (Accord) is a legally binding agreement signed by more than 150 clothing brands and retailers and two global trade unions, IndustriALL and UNI together with their Bangladeshi Trade Union affiliates. International NGOs including Clean Clothes Campaign and Workers' Rights Consortium are witness signatories to the Accord. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) acts as the independent chair. This agreement will be effective for a period of five years. (See the list of signatories here <http://www.bangladeshaccord.org/signatories/>)

2 ACCORD Building Standard

<https://www.bangladeshaccord.org/wp-content/uploads/Accord-building-standard.pdf>

3 Public list of factories to be inspected

<http://www.bangladeshaccord.org/wp-content/uploads/Accord-Public-Disclosure-Report-1-March-2014.pdf>

4. Owner, brands and worker representative discuss the report and develop a final remediation plan.
5. Final remediation plan is reviewed by ACCORD staff.
6. Inspection reports and final remediation plan are published on the Accord website within six weeks of the inspection.
7. Continuous monitoring of the Corrective Action Plans.

#### *First batch Inspection of factories*

- On March 10, 2014 the ACCORD announced the completion of its first batch of 30 inspections carried out in 10 factories in Bangladesh by December 2013. (These ten factories are:
  - Alif Garments Limited,
  - Anlima Textile Limited,
  - Big Boss Corporation,
  - Dragon Sweater,
  - The Fashion Island Limited.,
  - Grameen Knitwear Ltd.,
  - Majumder Fashions Ltd.,
  - Redpoint Jackets Ltd.,
  - Rio Fashion Wear Ltd
  - Viyellatex Ltd.,
- The reports of these inspections are made public through the ACCORD website. These reports are grouped under Fire, Electrical, Structural and Corrective Actions Planned and available for download from the Accord website <http://www.bangladeshaccord.org/inspection-reports/>. Future inspection reports will be also made available for public view on the website.

#### *Furure Inspections*

- Around 200 factories are identified for second batch of inspection and the process started.
- Between 200 to 250 factories are expected to be inspected every month till August 2014.

#### *Issues identified in the first inspection*

- The need to reduce weight loads in certain areas of the factory through moving material, stock, or supplies
- The requirement for better support for and enclosure of electrical cables; and the need to improve maintenance procedures around items such as electrical circuits, for example keeping them free of dust.
- The need to remove lockable gates on exists
- The need to install fire doors, automatic sprinkler system and automatic fire alarm system.
- After the inspection teams findings, a review panel ordered evacuation of six floors two

adjoining buildings of two factories Softex and Fame Sweaters due to serious structural flaws and asked to strengthen the building's structural columns. The remaining floors were allowed to operate. This case was wrongly reported in some media as “closure of factory and laying off” of workers. As per the ACCORD<sup>4</sup>, the brands together with their supply factory is responsible to compensate the workers during any closure for remediation and maintenance. We are seeking further updates and clarification from the ACCORD office on this situation.

*More about the ACCORD implementation*

- ACCORD Foundation is established with its office in Amsterdam.
- ACCORD Steering Committee is formed and it meets once a month through Skype call to monitor and plan the implementation of the ACORD provisions.
- Chief Inspector is operating the inspection of factories from Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ACCORD has issued statement in support of the Rana Plaza compensation arrangement and encouraging brands to contribute to the fund.
- Workers are expected to receive training on safety soon as per the Accord with the involvement of Unions and workers representation.

<http://insite.cleanclothes.org/urgent-actions/ohs-campaign-bangladesh-fire-and-building-safety/accord-update-to-uac-and-euro/worker-participation-working-group-proposal/>

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<sup>4</sup> Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, article 13,  
[http://bangladeshaccord.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/the\\_accord.pdf](http://bangladeshaccord.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/the_accord.pdf)