

2. Restricted Substances Lists

The purpose of a restricted substances list (RSL) is to reduce the use of hazardous substances in the footwear and apparel supply chain. This includes certain accessories and equipment that fall within the scope of the AFIRM RSL. Brands publish RSLs to ensure that suppliers and vendors—as well as internal corporate employees—are aware of and can follow their restricted substance requirements.

Why RSLs Are Important for Suppliers

The AFIRM RSL and brand-specific RSLs clearly set forth for suppliers those chemicals that are restricted.

When placing orders, AFIRM brands will make it clear to suppliers that compliance with their RSL is required. It is expected that all footwear, apparel, accessories, and equipment comply with the requirements of the RSL on an on-going basis.

AFIRM recommends that suppliers understand the purpose of an RSL and develop their own programs to ensure they comply with their customers' RSL requirements.

A brand RSL is typically based on environmental and health and safety risk assessments, current and anticipated legal

requirements of markets where products are distributed or sold, and industry best practices. If a brand has an RSL, it is essential to follow its RSL.

Because individual brand RSLs vary, it is critical to check with your customer to ensure that you are using the correct list. If a customer does not have an RSL, the AFIRM RSL is a good place to start.

The AFIRM RSL lists substances currently subject to legislated limits around the world, as well as limits based on best practices in the apparel and footwear industries.

The AFIRM RSL is available at <http://afirm-group.com/afirm-rsl/>. Its policy has been adopted by many brands—both AFIRM members as well as non-members.



Manufacturing Restricted Substances Lists

In addition to RSL requirements, brands often have a policy of adherence to a manufacturing restricted substances list (MRSL). MRSLs cover all input chemistries and place restrictions on substances used in the manufacture of goods. This should not be confused with an RSL, which restricts chemistries at the product level.