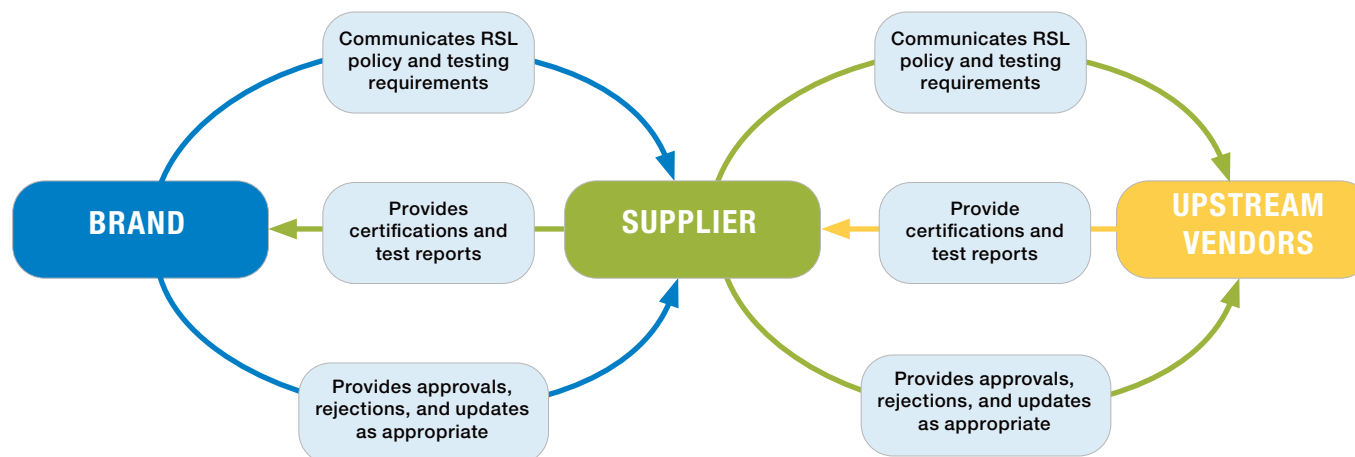


4. Educating the Supply Chain

Implementing a robust RSL policy, shown in Figure 2, is a collaborative effort between brands and suppliers. Brands are responsible for educating their contracted suppliers about their RSL requirements and procedures, including clear testing protocols. Ideally, suppliers communicate brand RSL requirements along with real-time updates to upstream vendors, keeping all links in the supply chain informed and compliant.

Figure 2. Implementing a Robust RSL Policy Across the Supply Chain



Communicating with Upstream Vendors

AFIRM suggests the following process for educating your own supply chain:

1 Communicate all RSL and testing requirements to upstream vendors.

Ensure all subcontractors, accessory suppliers, dye mills, print mills, tanneries, chemical suppliers, etc. are aware of the brand's RSL requirements and have the latest version of the brand RSL on hand.

See Appendices A and B for tips on how to establish a strategy for RSL management as well as a testing program.

2 Use and encourage the use of chemistries from reputable manufacturers only.

Good resources include:

- Ecological Toxicological Association of Dyestuffs www.etad.com
- bluesign@ www.bluesign.com

3 Insist that chemical suppliers provide safety data sheets (SDSs) for dyes and textile auxiliaries.

SDSs may help reveal whether the materials contain restricted substances.

See Appendix H for an overview and examples of SDSs.

4 Make an effort to understand chemistries in use and where restricted substances may be found in the apparel and footwear supply chain.

See Figure 1 and Table 1 above, as well as Appendix G, for more specific technical information about where various restricted substances are introduced during the manufacturing process.

Appendix D provides examples of RSL failures and the corrective actions taken to remediate them.