

Overview of AFIRM and RSL Programs



AFIRM

What is an RSL and why?

Failures

Testing

AFIRM RSL / Toolkit



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AFIRM Who We Are

Multi-company working group that includes:

- “Apparel and footwear companies with RSLs
- “Regulatory, product safety and chemistry experts

Which shares

- “Best practices
- “RSL management, information and experiences, and benchmarking

Complies with the antitrust laws of the US



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Why We're Here



Regulatory burden is growing

Green consumerism/consumer awareness is rising

Brands managing RSLs are growing

Streamlining requests from suppliers and manufacturers

Leverage resources

Factory self-governance on chemical product safety is required to prevent product recalls and cancelled contracts



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Different But Similar

Individual companies have their own RSLs
The differences between them are minor

All have similar:

- Missions
- Guiding principles
- Approaches
- Sales markets



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AFIRM's Mission/Vision

To reduce the use and impact of harmful substances in the apparel and footwear supply chain.

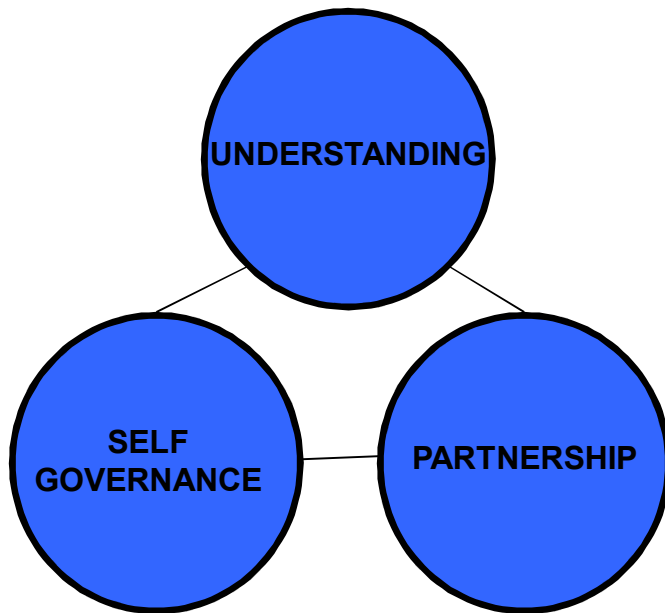
To provide a forum to advance the global management of restricted substances in apparel and footwear, communicate information about RSL to the supply chain, discuss concerns, and exchange ideas for improving RSL management, to ultimately elevate consumer satisfaction.



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Guiding Principles



1. Chemical product safety must be **understood in the global supply chain** as an integrated whole, from workplace to consumer
2. Chemical product safety can only be achieved through **partnership** among retailers, suppliers and manufacturers.
3. Retailers must encourage **suppliers' and manufacturers' self-governance of chemical product safety**



What is an RSL? Why?

Chemical substances are either:

RULES

1. YOU CAN....

2. YOU CAN'T...

3. YOU CAN....

4. YOU CAN'T

" Prohibited from use

" Restricted in products

" Restricted in manufacturing

due to

" Legislation

" NGOs/External classification schemes

" Consumer / worker protection

" Environmental protection



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Legislation



China

GB 18401-2003 (National general safety technical code for textile products)

EU

REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals), SVHC

US

California Proposition 65
CPSIA

Japan

Law 112 (Law for the control of household products containing harmful substances)

etc.



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Environmental
Health & Safety
Social Responsibility

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External Classification Schemes



Examples:

Oeko-Tex, www.oeko-tex.com

Stricter than many legal requirements:

“ AZO dyes

“ Disperse dyes

EU Ecolabel, www.ecolabel.eu

Scope includes environmental impact:

“Biodegradability of auxiliary chemicals



Consumer Protection

Chemicals remain on finished products

What is the consumer exposure?

“ Day / Night wear

“ Direct skin contact

“Infants / adults

What are the risks?

“Skin irritation/allergy

“Respiratory problems

“Cancer



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Environmental Protection

Chemicals into environment:

Air

Water

Soil

Examples:

” APEOs

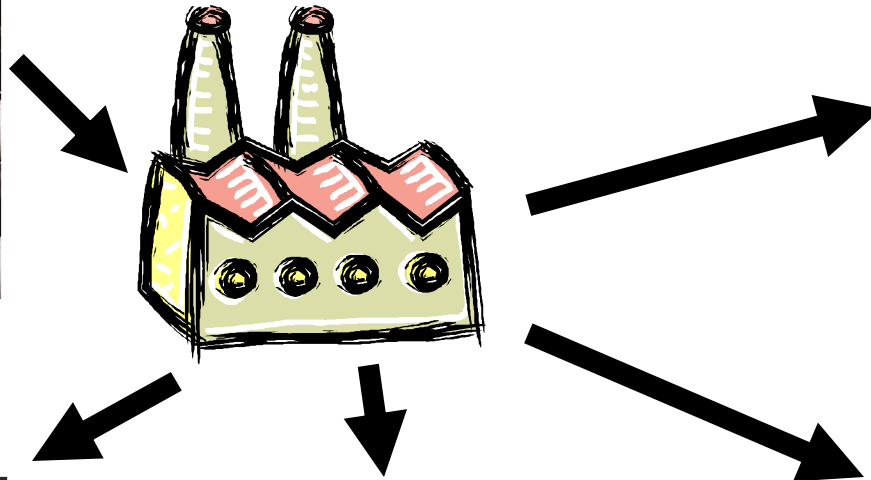
” Dyes

” Heavy metals



Environmental Protection

Where do chemicals end up?



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Chemical Categories of Concern

Substances classified as:

Carcinogenic

Toxic for reproduction

Mutagenic

Environmentally harmful

Allergenic



Sources of Failure



Raw Material (e.g. yarn, greige fabric)

Dyes and Chemicals

Cleaning/maintenance Chemicals

Poor Process control

Lack of Communication



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Dyes and Chemicals



Good suppliers know what's in the chemical product (and should tell you)

MSDS essential....

But many have incomplete information

Many RSL failures due to non deliberate application

Some companies don't provide MSDS!



Dyes and Chemicals



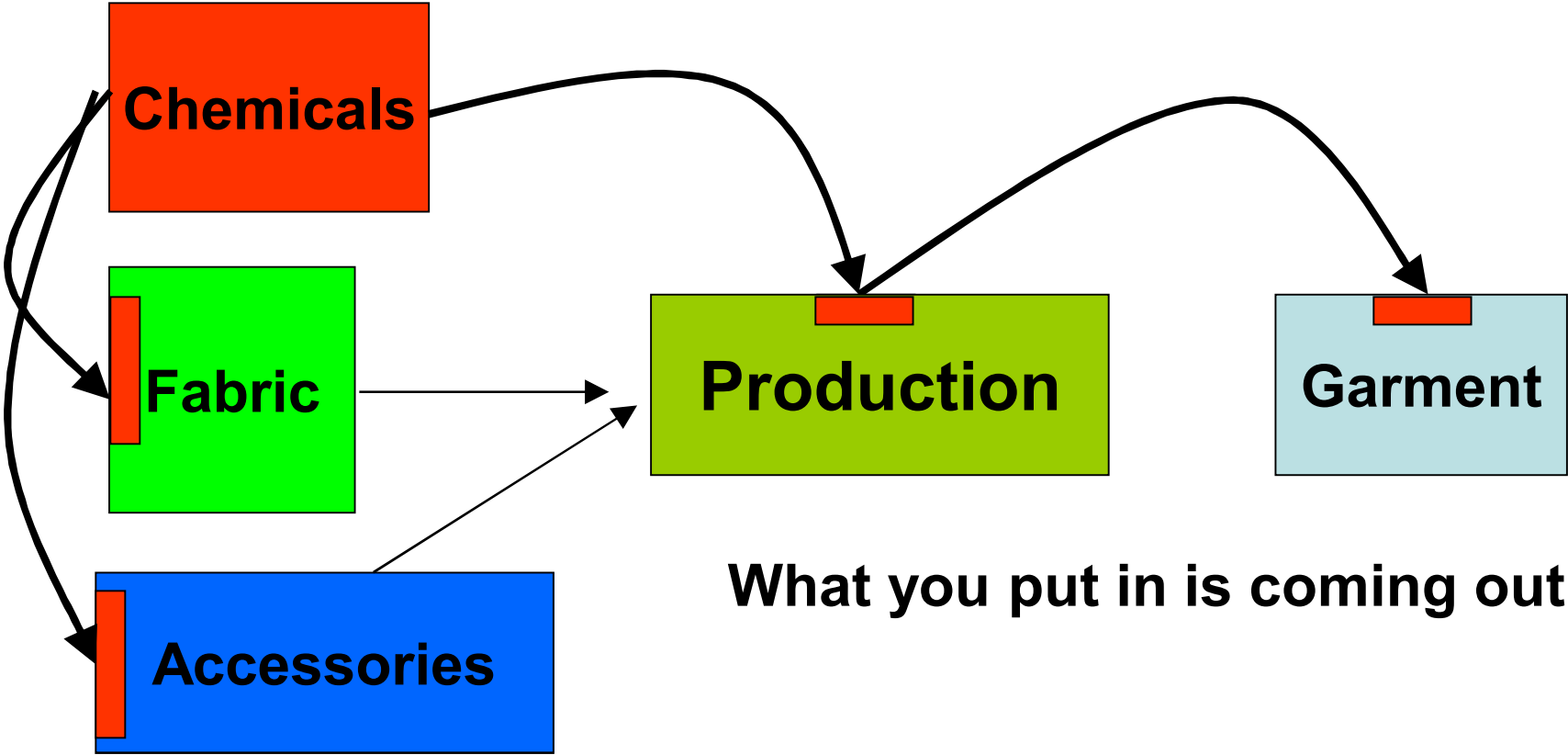
Documentation

Labels

Storage

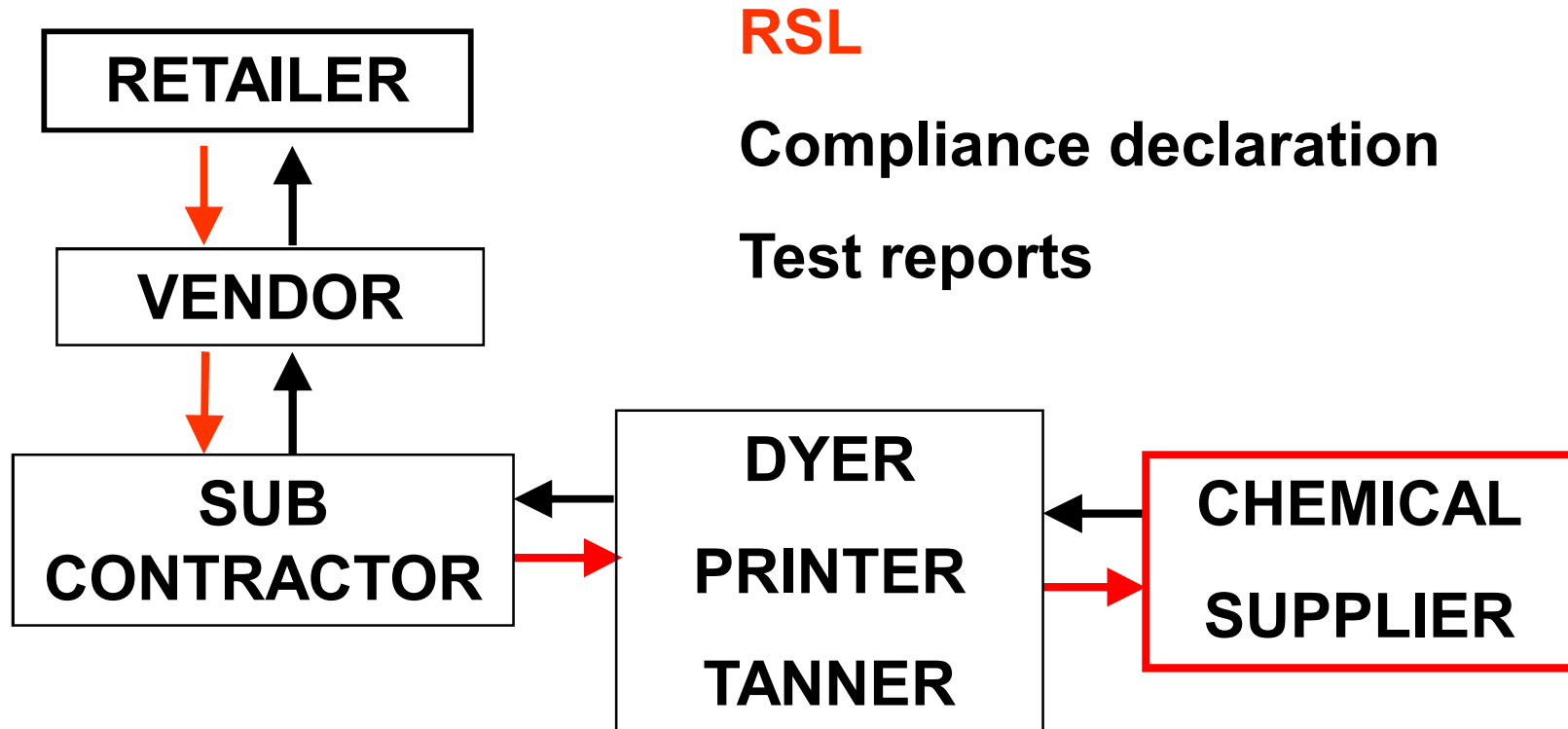


Process Control



What you put in is coming out!

Communication



Testing



GENERAL PROCEDURE

Use the brand's approved test methods

Use accredited labs

Testing = improving quality "?"



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Testing

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TEST?

Legal compliance

Consumer safety

Worker safety

Environmental protection



Testing

WHY IS TESTING ONLY PART OF THE SOLUTION?

A test itself is not improving quality

It only gives you a receipt on whether you have taken enough proactive actions

When testing is performed on final product = no chance to improve



Legislation was introduced in 1995 to protect workers from occupational health hazards, but it remains largely unenforced and being crippled on factory floors, writes Clara Li in the first of a two-part series from Guangzhou.

Poisoned workers merely the tip of an iceberg

More than 100,000 workers in China are suffering from occupational health hazards, writes Clara Li in the first of a two-part series from Guangzhou. The women are from Guizhou, Henan, Sichuan and Hubei provinces. The case has raised awareness of the industrial health and safety issues in China, and the lack of government supervision of workplaces. A letter sent to the Guangdong Women's Federation on June 22 signed the investigation. The workers who worked on the various assembly lines are exposed to nitric acid every day. "It said: 'The glue is toxic. If women are exposed to it for a long period of time their health should start to become much, then the health...

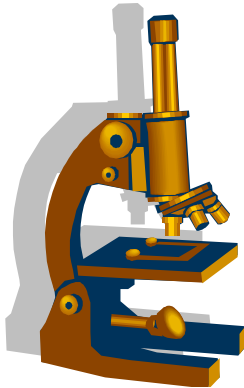


Benzene and its toxic effects
What is it?
Benzene is a highly flammable liquid...

Only Wengen, paralyzed and now weighing just 25kg, is tended to by a fellow victim of benzene poisoning at a Guangzhou hospital. The women were poisoned while working for a Taiwan-owned shoe factory.

AFIRM RSL

Why Not Yet?

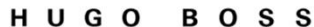


Various reasons

“ Legislation

“ Sales markets

“ RSL scope varies between companies





NO AFIRM RSL YET

So what is the option?

AFIRM companies strive to one common objective

“Eliminate harmful impact of certain substances

“Implementation Toolkit

“Toolkit’s principles helps to eliminate substances of all AFIRM companies’ RSLs

www.afirm-group.com/supplierrsltool.htm



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