Overview of AFIRM and RSL Programs

AFIRM

What is an RSL and why?

Failures

Testing

AFIRM RSL / Toolkit
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
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
Different But Similar

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

All have similar:

- Missions
- Guiding principles
- Approaches
- Sales markets
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.
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:
- Prohibited from use
- Restricted in products
- Restricted in manufacturing

**due to**
- Legislation
- NGOs/External classification schemes
- Consumer / worker protection
- Environmental protection

**Rules**
1. You can....
2. You can’t....
3. You can....
4. You can’t
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>China</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>GB 18401-2003 (National general safety technical code for textile products)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EU</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of CHemicals), SVHC</td>
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<td><strong>US</strong></td>
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<td>California Proposition 65</td>
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<td>CPSIA</td>
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<td><strong>Japan</strong></td>
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<td>Law 112 (Law for the control of household products containing harmful substances)</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
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External Classification Schemes

Examples:

Oeko-Tex, www.oeko-tex.com

Stricter than many legal requirements:

ÅAZO dyes

ÅDisperse dyes

EU Ecolabel, www.ecolabel.eu

Scope includes environmental impact:

ÅBiodegradability 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
Environmental Protection

Chemicals into environment:

- Air
- Water
- Soil

Examples:
- APEOs
- Dyes
- Heavy metals
Environmental Protection
Where do chemicals end up?
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
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

- Chemicals
- Fabric
- Accessories
- Production
- Garment

What you put in is coming out!
Communication

- **RETAILER**
- **VENDOR**
- **SUB CONTRACTOR**
- **Dyer**
- **Printer**
- **Tanner**
- **CHEMICAL SUPPLIER**

**RSL**
- Compliance declaration
- Test reports
Testing

GENERAL PROCEDURE

Use the brand’s approved test methods

Use accredited labs

Testing = improving quality ”?”
Why is it important to test?

Legal compliance

Consumer safety

Worker safety

Environmental protection
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
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/suppliersrls tool.htm