AFIRM History & Industry Landscape for Restricted Substances

Nathaniel Sponsler, AFIRM Group Director | AFIRM GROUP
2004: AFIRM Group Established

Apparel & Footwear International RSL Management Group

Founding Members

- Primary goals: adoption of RSLs across industry and education of the supply chain
  - Common RSL proved difficult
  - Unanimity voting requirement
2006: First AFIRM Supplier Seminar

Apparel & Footwear International RSL Management Group

- First supplier seminar: Hong Kong
  - Education on RSL and implementation
- Subsequent seminars
  - Shanghai — 2007
  - New Delhi — 2008
  - Hong Kong — 2010
  - Ho Chi Minh City — 2012
  - Shanghai — 2014
  - Ho Chi Minh City — 2018

AFIRM Membership: 8 Companies
2006: Europe Enacts REACH

Registration, Evaluation, Authorization of Chemicals

• Substances of very high concern (SVHC) regulated in imported goods
• Annex 17
2008: Chemical Regulations Take Off

After REACH, Dramatic Spike in Chemical Regulations

- “Retailer as regulator” model takes hold
- Cost of compliance & access to market concerns
  - European Union
  - United States
  - Individual U.S. States
  - Asia
  - U.S. Counties & Cities?

AFIRM Membership: 14 Companies
2010: Brand RSLs Proliferate

250+ Product RSLs in the Apparel & Footwear Industry

• Different chemicals, limits, methods and formats
  o Estimated 12,000 pages of chemical restrictions

• Very challenging for supply chain
  o Why is this happening?
  o Is this the proper way to manage industry?
2012: AFIRM RSL Guidance Published

A Big Step Toward a Common RSL

- Compilation of brands’ strictest limits
  - Some exceptions
- Would brands adopt in place of own RSL?
2015: AFIRM RSL Published

AFIRM and Non-AFIRM Brands are Adopting

- Common RSL that goes beyond globally regulated limits
- Simplify compliance / gain efficiencies
- Demonstrate maturity / model legislation
- Updated: 2017, 2018, 2019
AFIRM’s Role

- Working group of leading brands (International)
- AFIRM RSL: stricter than global regulation
- Lead industry / anticipate regulations / policy engagement

US Trade Association with broad scope
- AAFA RSL based on regulations only

Staff-driven Foundation based in Amsterdam
- Primary Focus: Input chemistry controls (MRSL) & Wastewater controls
Industry Landscape: RSL vs. MRSL

Inputs & Outputs

MRSL → Ø ZDHC

Ø ZDHC → Wastewater Guidelines

Product RSL
AFIRM Today and in the Future

Apparel & Footwear International RSL Management Group

• Evolve and promote the AFIRM RSL
• Product chemical regulatory policy engagement and compliance
• Partnerships and supply chain education

AFIRM Membership: 26 Companies
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