

FRENCH CONNECTION

Supply Chain Transparency and Modern Slavery Statement

This statement is published by French Connection Group PLC and French Connection UK Limited (“French Connection”) in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and California Transparency in Supply Chains Act 2010. This statement sets out the actions taken during the financial year ending 31st January 2020 and steps we intend to take going forward in order to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking throughout our business and supply chain.

French Connection is committed to maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all our dealings, wherever we operate and have a zero-tolerance approach to bribery, corruption, the use of child or forced labour and human trafficking.

The Business

French Connection is a design led, medium sized fashion group which consists of three brands; French Connection, Great Plains and You Must Create, with French Connection representing 94% of group revenues in the latest financial year. We operate retail, wholesale and licensing businesses across the UK, Europe, North America, Middle East, Asia and Australasia.

We use third party production facilities around the world to manufacture the goods, with the main countries of origin being China, India, Bangladesh and Turkey with specialist products also manufactured in other European and Asian countries supervised by local buying offices. Product development, materials sourcing, production planning and control and quality assurance are all directly controlled by French Connection.

Policies

French Connection requires all of our product suppliers, including those involved in any subcontracted processes, to abide by the guidelines contained in our Supplier Manual’s Code of Conduct. Our Supplier Manual contains the employment standards required of our suppliers and is in accord with industry standards including *inter alia* that employees should be given a safe and healthy environment to work in, be given the right to free association, be paid a fair wage, not be forced or bonded labour, be of an appropriate age, and work only reasonable hours.

Due Diligence Process

French Connection undertakes due diligence when considering new suppliers and will not work with suppliers where the employment or environmental practices are below acceptable standards. New suppliers undergo a comprehensive review process, which includes reviewing third party audits previously performed with the supplier.

Our own staff visit the factories we use for garment production on a regular basis and consider the environment and work practices during those visits. We do not use third-party verifiers, but conduct our own surveys which are designed to investigate and document factory operations, in addition to inspecting any third party audit documentation held by the factory. In Hong Kong, India, Turkey and

Poland we also have buying offices staffed with French Connection employees which allows us to further monitor standards of factories directly. In addition, senior staff from the UK head office regularly visit factories to provide an additional level of oversight on the day to day operations.

French Connection recognises that it is not possible to provide absolute assurance that the standards expected of our suppliers are adhered to, however where transgressions are identified we would work with the supplier to develop an appropriate reform programme if appropriate. In addition we will not hesitate to stop using any supplier who we identify that continues to operate in contravention of our standards or failing to implement agreed reform programmes.

Risks

We are not aware of any instances of modern slavery or human trafficking having taken place in our supply chain, nor have we had any issues with policy compliance over the past year.

The areas of our supply chain where there is most risk of modern slavery and human trafficking is where product is sourced through suppliers not directly controlled by French Connection which is particularly prominent in our licensing business. To manage this risk we work with trusted partners who are required to sign licencing agreements which contain extensive anti-bribery and modern slavery provisions to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Further steps to prevent Modern Slavery

French Connection has a number of policies in place which support human rights principals which include:

- Supplier Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Statement
- Anti-Bribery Policy

French Connection is committed to ensuring we maintain high ethical standards and we have due diligence processes in place which aim to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain. Though French Connection does not provide specific training on human trafficking and slavery we assess the risk of modern slavery in our business on a continuous basis and aim to further strengthen relationships with suppliers in the coming year, while working towards implementing a formal audit procedure.

Neil Williams

Neil Williams (Jun 26, 2020 13:11 GMT+1)

By order of the Board
Neil Williams
Chief Operating Officer

26 June 2020