

Guidance on International Accord Lead Brand Role

This guidance outlines the purpose, responsibilities and allocation of the International Accord lead brand role.

PURPOSE

the RMG Sustainability Council (RSC) conducts fire, electrical and structural safety inspections at all garment factories in Bangladesh which produce for International Accord company signatories in accordance with the protocols and procedures developed by the Accord.

The International Accord appoints an International Accord “Lead Brand” at each factory to coordinate discussions between the factory and companies concerning all aspects of remediation.

General purpose of lead brand role: to ensure effective corrective action plan (CAP) development and coordinated, timely and successful remediation of all CAP issues.

The International Accord advises the following objectives for the Lead Brand:

1. Act as the chief spokesperson, coordinator, and intermediary with the RSC, the factory owner, and the other International Accord companies present at the factory.
2. Organize meetings and discussions with other International Accord companies about the factory’s participation in the RSC programme, including: preparation for inspections; finalization of CAPs; confirming remediation is financially feasible; coordinating with other companies, the factory and RSC to ensure remediation is on track; escalating delays or problems with remediation to the RSC; and keeping the RSC updated on progress and ultimately, on CAP completion.
3. Coordinate with the International Accord and RSC to assist the factory owner regarding any potential media queries.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

CAP Finalisation - key actions for Lead Brand on receipt of inspection reports

The International Accord expects the following actions to encourage quick and effective CAP development following receipt of the inspection reports:

1. Review inspection reports - within 7 days of receiving inspection reports from the RSC.
2. Contact factory to develop a CAP and cc: other International Accord companies in the factory - within 10 days of receiving inspection reports:
 - Review factory’s proposed CAP
 - Check that factory understands all requirements of the CAP
 - Ensure satisfactory explanation if factory’s proposed actions or timelines differ from RSC requirements
 - Advise factory owner to hire an engineer, designer and/or architect to finalise the CAP as required
3. Ensure factory has proposed actions and timelines for all CAP items - within 28 days of receiving inspection reports from the RSC.
4. Discuss remediation budget and finance plan with factory and establish if the owner needs financial support from the companies – within 28 days of receiving inspection reports from the RSC .
5. Send finalised CAP to RSC for approval – within 35 days of receiving inspection reports from the RSC.

CAP Implementation – key actions for lead brand on receipt of approved RSC CAP

1. RSC will send the approved CAP to factory and lead brand – within 7 days of RSC having received the finalized CAP from the lead brand.
2. Follow up by lead brand by CAP item in date order, to ensure the agreed timelines are being adhered to.
3. Monthly CAP update to RSC and other International Accord brands in the factory on progress, including explanations of any delays on CAP implementation with a specific request for time extension.
4. Chief Safety Officer to review any delay as outlined in monthly CAP update, and to grant an extension as determined by him or her for reasonable delay – within 10 days of receipt of the CAP update.
5. The lead brand will follow up on the delayed action item within the agreed timeframe.
6. Advise the RSC of concerns about remediation progress so that escalation can be considered in line with the Article 21 Escalation Protocol.

ALLOCATION OF LEAD BRAND

The International Accord team allocates lead brand with the following objectives:

- Aim for approx. 33% of each company's total factory list (active and responsible inactive factories).
- Consideration of feedback from brands regarding relationship with each factory (order volumes, length of relationship, future plans).

The International Accord's decision regarding lead brand nominations is final. Please note there are regular reallocations of lead brand in the circumstances below.

Lead brand reallocations

If you believe another International Accord company is a more suitable lead brand, please agree that with the other company and notify signatories@internationalaccord.org of the change.

If you stop sourcing from a factory, update FFC to record the factory as inactive. The International Accord checks for inactive lead brands every month and reallocates to an active International Accord company wherever possible, using the allocation criteria above.

ROLE OF OTHER RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL ACCORD COMPANY SIGNATORIES

All International Accord companies who source from the factory have the same obligations under the International Accord. All International Accord companies who source from the factory need to participate in discussions organised by the lead brand. N.B. Companies are still responsible to participate in remediation discussions if they delist a factory within 30 days before an inspection.

Failure by a signatory to undertake its International Accord obligations could lead to a charge being brought by another Accord signatory.

SUPPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACCORD TEAM

An RSC Case Handler is allocated for each factory to coordinate all RSC programme activities and to work closely with the lead brand. The lead brand can also request support from the RSC Managing Director and Safety Inspection teams if necessary.