



BRAND PERFORMANCE CHECK

Mountain Force AG

this report covers the evaluation period 01-01-2013 to 31-12-2013

ABOUT THE BRAND PERFORMANCE CHECK

Fair Wear Foundation believes that improving conditions for apparel factory workers requires change at multiple levels. Traditional efforts to improve conditions focus primarily on the factory. FWF, however, believes that the management decisions of the clothing brands have an enormous influence for good or ill on factory conditions.

FWF's Brand Performance Check is a tool to evaluate and report on the activities of FWF's affiliate members. The Checks examine how affiliate management systems support FWF's Code of Labour Practices.

In most apparel supply chains, clothing brands do not own factories, and most factories work for many different brands. This means that in most cases FWF affiliates have influence, but not direct control, over working conditions. As a result, the Brand Performance Checks focus primarily on verifying the efforts of affiliates. Outcomes at the factory level are assessed via audits and complaint reports, however the complexity of the supply chains means that even the best efforts of FWF affiliates cannot guarantee results.

Even if outcomes at the factory level cannot be guaranteed, the importance of good management practices by affiliates cannot be understated. Even one concerned customer at a factory can have significant positive impacts on a range of issues like health and safety conditions or freedom of association. And if one customer at a factory can demonstrate that improvements are possible, other customers no longer have an excuse not to act. The development and sharing of these types of best practices has long been a core part of FWF's work.

Improvement of supply chains is a step-by-step process, through which affiliates must address many different issues. FWF affiliates vary greatly in management structures, and have different strengths. The Performance Benchmarking system is designed to reflect these differences, and the many different ways that a company can support better working conditions.

During the Brand Performance Check, FWF staff speak to various employees at the affiliate who have important roles to play in the management of supply chains. FWF verifies the actions of affiliates based on several sources including documentation of activities, financial records, the affiliate's supplier register and staff interviews. Following the Brand Performance Check, FWF summarizes findings in this report, which is made public via www.fairwear.org. The [Brand Performance Check Guide](#) provides more information about the indicators and is available for download.

BRAND PERFORMANCE CHECK OVERVIEW

Mountain Force AG

Evaluation Period: 01-01-2013 to 31-12-2013

AFFILIATE INFORMATION	
Headquarters:	Rotkreuz, Switzerland
Member since:	15-08-2011
Product types:	Sportswear
Production in countries where FWF is active:	China
Production in other countries:	N/A
BASIC REQUIREMENTS	
Workplan for this evaluation period was submitted?	Yes
Actual supplier register for this evaluation period has been submitted?	Yes
Membership fee has been paid?	Yes
All suppliers have been notified of FWF membership?	Yes
SCORING OVERVIEW	
% of own production under monitoring	100%
Benchmarking score	77
Category	Leader

Summary:

Mountain Force meets most of FWFs management system requirements and goes beyond. It has monitored 100% of its supply chain, and therefore easily meets the monitoring threshold.

In 2013, the company sourced exclusively at its supplier in China. This supplier is a FWF factory member, and consecutive audits have shown significant improvements in labour conditions.

Mountain Force undertook steps in 2013 to source at a low risk country. FWF encourages the company to familiarize itself with the relevant risks in that country, and take steps to mitigate these risks when it starts production there in 2014.

In terms of transparency, Mountain Force is encouraged to provide more information about their efforts to implement the FWF Code of Labour Practices by publishing its Social Report on its website.

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY OVERVIEW

Leader: This category is for affiliates who are doing exceptionally well, and are operating at an advanced level.

Good: It is FWF's belief that affiliates who are making a serious effort to implement the Code of Labour Practices—the vast majority of FWF affiliates—are 'doing good' and deserve to be recognized as such. They are also doing more than the average clothing company, and have allowed their internal processes to be examined and publicly reported on by an independent NGO. The majority of affiliates will receive a 'Good' rating.

Needs Improvement: Affiliates are most likely to find themselves in this category when major unexpected problems have arisen, or if they are unable or unwilling to seriously work towards CoLP implementation. Affiliates may be in this category for one year only after which they should either move up to Good, or will be moved to suspended.

Suspended: Affiliates who either fail to meet one of the Basic Requirements, have had major internal changes which means membership must be put on hold for a maximum of one year, or have been in Needs Improvement for more than one year. Affiliates may remain in this category for one year maximum, after which termination proceedings will come into force.

Categories are calculated based on a combination of benchmarking score and the percentage of own production under monitoring. The specific requirements for each category are outlined in the Brand Performance Check Guide.

1. PURCHASING PRACTICES

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
1.1 Percentage of production volume from suppliers where affiliate buys at least 10% of production capacity	0%	Affiliates with less than 10% of a factories' production capacity generally have limited influence on factory managers to make changes.	Supplier information provided by affiliate.	0	4	0

Comment: Mountain Force sources from 1 factory located in China where it buys less than 10% of the factory's production capacity.

1.2 Percentage of production volume from suppliers where a business relationship has existed for at least five years	100%	Stable business relationships support most aspects of the Code of Labour Practices, and give factories a reason to invest in improving working conditions.	Supplier information provided by affiliate.	4	4	0
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Comment: Mountain Force has sourced from the same factory for many years.

1.3 All new suppliers are required to sign and return the Code of Labour Practices before first orders are placed.	No new suppliers	The CoLP is the foundation of all work between factories and brands, and the first step in developing a commitment to improvements.	Signed CoLPs are on file.	N/A	2	0
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Comment: In 2013, Mountain Force did not acquire any new suppliers.

1.4 Company conducts human rights due diligence at all new suppliers before placing orders.	No new suppliers	Due diligence helps to identify, prevent and mitigate potential human rights problems at new suppliers.	Documentation may include pre-audits, existing audits, other types of risk assessments.	N/A	4	0
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Comment: Although no new suppliers were acquired in 2013, Mountain Force was involved in a process to for starting with a new supplier in 2014. In this process, human rights due diligence did play a role by emphasizing the importance of social compliance and FWF membership. This new supplier is located in Lithuania, a low risk country.

1.5 Supplier compliance with Code of Labour Practices is evaluated in a systematic manner.	Yes, and performance improvement is rewarded	A systemic approach is required to integrate social compliance into normal business processes, and supports good decisionmaking.	Documentation of systemic approach: rating systems, checklists, databases, etc.	2	2	0
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Comment: Mountain Force evaluates supplier compliance with Code of Labour Practice in a systematic manner and rewards the factory by maintaining its sourcing relationship there. This is made possible by the close relationship that it has with its supplier in China.

1.6 The affiliate's production planning systems support reasonable working hours.	Strong, integrated systems in place.	Affiliate production planning systems can have a significant impact on the levels of excessive overtime at factories.	Documentation of robust planning systems.	4	4	0
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Comment: Mountain Force continues to have a strong, integrated system in place to support reasonable working hours. Due to the nature of its products, it only has 1 one collection per year, allowing it to plan early and communicate often with its supplier in this process.

The company also works to receive its sales forecasts as early as possible and has incentives for early placement of orders.

Mountain Force introduced a new product this year: tailor-made ski-pants. Also in this process, there was continuous contact with the factory to ensure that the process worked smoothly.

1.7 Degree to which affiliate mitigates root causes of excessive overtime.	Intermediate efforts	Some production delays are outside of the control of affiliates; however there are a number of steps that can be taken to address production delays without resorting to excessive overtime.	Documentation of root cause analysis and positive steps taken to manage production delays or improve factory processes.	3	6	0
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Comment: In 2013, Mountain Force worked to place its Purchase Order earlier on. This did take place, but as Mountain Force is a growing company, there were still processes that needed to be optimized.

It also took steps to define core and non-core styles and place orders for these styles at different times.

1.8 Affiliate's pricing policy allows for payment of at least the legal minimum wages in production countries.	Style-level policy	The first step towards ensuring the payment of minimum wages - and towards implementation of living wages - is to know the labour costs of garments.	Formal systems to calculate labour costs on per-product or country/city level.	4	4	0
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Comment: Mountain Force and its supplier have had a close working relationship for a long time. During this time, Mountain Force and its supplier also participated in a FWF-led project on investigating the effects of raising the wages of workers for various styles. This project showed that the pricing was sufficient for the payment of at least the legal minimum wages.

1.9 Affiliate actively responds if suppliers fail to pay legal minimum wages.	No minimum wage problems reported	If a supplier fails to pay minimum wage, FWF affiliates are expected to hold management of the supplier accountable for respecting local labour law.	Complaint reports, CAPs, additional emails, FWF audit reports or other documents that show minimum wage issue is reported/resolved.	2	2	-2
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1.10 Evidence of late payments to suppliers by affiliate.	No	Late payments to suppliers can have a negative impact on factories and their ability to pay workers on time. Most garment workers have minimal savings, and even a brief delay in payments can cause serious problems.	Based on a complaint or audit report; review of factory and affiliate financial documents.	0	0	-1
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1.11 Degree to which affiliate assesses root causes of wages lower than living wages with suppliers and takes steps towards the implementation of living wages.	Supply chain approach	Sustained progress towards living wages requires adjustments to affiliates' policies.	Documentation of policy assessments and/or concrete progress towards living wages.	6	8	0
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Recommendation: FWF encourages the affiliate to assess the hypothetical cost effects of increasing wages towards benchmarks that are included in the wage ladder. To support companies in this process FWF is developing a calculation model that estimates the effect on FOB and retail prices under different pricing models.

This step can lead to living wages being paid to workers based on pricing.

Comment: Mountain Force and its supplier have had a close working relationship for a long time. During this time, Mountain Force and its supplier also participated in a FWF-led project on investigating the effects of raising the wages of workers for various styles.

Pricing continues to be an area of discussion between brand and supplier, and sometimes this means reducing the margins for certain styles.

1.12 Affiliate sources from an FWF factory member.	Yes	When possible, FWF encourages affiliates to source from FWF factory members. On account of the small number of factories this is a 'bonus' indicator. Extra points are possible, but the indicator will not negatively affect an affiliate's score.	Supplier information provided by affiliate.	1	1	0
1.13 Percentage of production volume from factories owned by the affiliate.	None	Owning a supplier increases the accountability and reduces the risk of unexpected CoLP violations. Given these advantages, this is a bonus indicator. Extra points are possible, but the indicator will not negatively affect an affiliate's score.	Supplier information provided by affiliate.	N/A	2	0

PURCHASING PRACTICES

Possible Points: 35

Earned Points: 26

2. MONITORING AND REMEDIATION

BASIC MEASUREMENTS	RESULT	COMMENTS
% of own production under standard monitoring (excluding low-risk countries)	100%	
% of own production in low risk production countries where FWF's Low Risk policy has been implemented	N/A	FWF low risk policy should be implemented. 0 = policy is not implemented correctly. N/A = no production in low risk countries.
Total of own production under monitoring	100%	Minimums: 1 year: 40%; 2 years 60%; 3 years+: 90% Measured as a percentage of turnover.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
2.1 Specific staff person is designated to follow up on problems identified by monitoring system	Yes	Followup is a serious part of FWF membership, and cannot be successfully managed on an ad-hoc basis.	Manuals, emails, etc., demonstrating who the designated staff person is.	2	2	-2
2.2 Degree of progress towards resolution of existing Corrective Action Plans	Advanced	FWF considers efforts to resolve CAPs to be one of the most important things that affiliates can do towards improving working conditions.	Documentation of remediation and followup actions taken by affiliate.	8	8	-2

Comment: The supplier for Mountain Force located in China is audited on an annual basis. After receiving an audit, it has made significant efforts to resolve the CAP, including addressing more difficult issues related to overtime and living wage.

The supplier has also worked on including its clients in this process, including Mountain Force, a client that it has a close relationship with.

Audits at this supplier have shown significant improvements in working conditions, also related to overtime and living wages.

2.3 Percentage of production volume from suppliers that have been visited by the affiliate in the past financial year	100%	Formal audits should be augmented by annual visits by affiliate staff or local representatives. They reinforce to factory managers that affiliates are serious about implementing the Code of Labour Practices.	Affiliates should document all factory visits with at least the date and name of the visitor.	4	4	0
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Comment: Mountain Force visits its supplier in China numerous times a year.

2.4 Existing audit reports from other sources are collected.	No existing reports/all audits by FWF or FWF affiliate	Existing reports form a basis for understanding the issues and strengths of a supplier, and reduces duplicative work.	Audit reports are on file; evidence of followup on prior CAPs. Reports of quality assessments.	N/A	3	0
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2.5 Audit Report and Corrective Action Plan (CAP) findings are shared with factory. Improvement timelines are established in a timely manner	Yes	FWF audit reports should be shared and discussed with suppliers within two months of audit receipt. Timely sharing of information and agreement on corrective actions is essential for improvement. A reasonable time frame should be specified for resolving findings.	Corrective Action Plans, emails; findings of followup audits; brand representative present during audit exit meeting, etc.	2	2	-1
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2.6 High risk issues specific to the affiliate's supply chain are identified and addressed by the monitoring system.	Intermediate Capacity	Different countries and products have different risks associated with them; monitoring systems should be adapted to allow appropriate human rights due diligence for the specific risks in each affiliates' supply chain.	Documentation may take many forms; additional research, specific FWF project participation; extra monitoring activities, extra mitigation activities, etc.	3	6	0
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Recommendation: A structured approach with clearly defined targets is recommended in order to further address high risk issues specific to the affiliate's supply chain.

Comment: In 2013, Mountain Force only sourced from 1 supplier in China with which it has a longterm relationship. It is aware of the high risk issues that it faces in China and works with the supplier to try and mitigate these risks.

The supplier in China is currently a FWF factory member, and audits have shown improvements in issues such as OT and living wage.

Mountain Force, however, needs to more clearly define targets.

2.7 Affiliate cooperates with other customers in resolving corrective actions at shared suppliers	Information sharing	Cooperation between customers increases leverage and chances of successful outcomes. Cooperation also reduces the changes of a factory having to conduct multiple Corrective Action Plans about the same issue with multiple customers.	Shared CAPs, evidence of cooperation with other customers.	1	2	-1
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Recommendation: Cooperation among costumers increases leverage, the chances of successful outcomes and long term improvements. A first step can be identifying other clients and their commitment to improving working conditions.

In case serious findings cannot be resolved by the affiliate, cooperation is required.

Comment: Mountain Force did undertake some steps in 2013 to cooperate with other customers at its supplier in 2013. There is, however, more room for cooperation on further remediating issues such as OT and living wages.

2.8 Monitoring requirements are fulfilled for production in low-risk countries	No production in lowrisk countries	Low risk countries are determined by the presence and proper functioning of institutions which can guarantee compliance with basic standards.	Documentation of visits, notification of suppliers of FWF membership; posting of worker information sheets, completed questionnaires.	N/A	2	0
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2.9 External brands resold by the affiliate who have completed and returned the external brand questionnaire. (% of external sales volume)	No external brands resold	FWF believes it is important for affiliates that have a retail/wholesale arm to at least know if the brands they resell are members of FWF or a similar organisation, and in which countries those brands produce goods.	Questionnaires are on file.	N/A	3	0
2.10 External brands resold by affiliates that are members of another credible initiative. (% of external sales volume)	No external brands resold	FWF believes affiliates who resell products should be rewarded for choosing to stock external brands who also take their supply chain responsibilities seriously.	Supplier register; Documentation of sales volumes of products made by FWF or FLA members.	N/A	3	0

MONITORING AND REMEDIATION

Possible Points: 24

Earned Points: 20

3. COMPLAINTS HANDLING

BASIC MEASUREMENTS	RESULT	COMMENTS
Number of worker complaints received since last check	0	At this point, FWF considers a high number of complaints as a positive indicator, as it shows that workers are aware of and making use of the complaints system.
Number of worker complaints in process of being resolved		
Number of worker complaints resolved since last check		

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
3.1 A specific employee has been designated to address worker complaints	Yes	Followup is a serious part of FWF membership, and cannot be successfully managed on an ad-hoc basis.	Manuals, emails, etc., demonstrating who the designated staff person is.	1	1	-1
3.2 System exists to check that the Worker Information Sheet is posted in factories	Yes	The Worker Information Sheet is a key first step in alerting workers to their rights.	Photos by company staff, audit reports, checklists from factory visits, etc.	2	2	0
3.3 Percentage of FWF-audited factories where at least half of workers are aware of the FWF worker helpline.	100%	The FWF complaints procedure is a crucial element of verification. If factory-based complaint systems do not exist or do not work, the FWF worker helpline allows workers to ask questions about their rights and file complaints. Factory participation in the Workplace Education Programme also count towards this indicator.	Percentage of audited factories where at least 50% of interviewed workers indicate awareness of the FWF complaints mechanism + percentage of factories in WEP programme.	4	4	-2

3.4 All complaints received from factory workers are addressed in accordance with the FWF Complaints Procedure	No complaints received	Providing access to remedy when problems arise is a key element of responsible supply chain management. Affiliate involvement is often essential to resolving issues.	Documentation that affiliate has completed all required steps in the complaints handling process.	N/A	6	-2
3.5 Cooperation with other customers in addressing worker complaints at shared suppliers	No complaints or cooperation not possible / necessary.	Because most factories supply several customers with products, involvement of other customers by the FWF affiliate can be critical in resolving a complaint at a supplier.	Documentation of joint efforts, e.g. emails, sharing of complaint data, etc.	N/A	2	-2

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

Possible Points: 7

Earned Points: 7

4. TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
4.1 All staff is made aware of FWF membership requirements	Yes	Preventing and remediating problems often requires the involvement of many different departments; making all staff aware of FWF membership requirements helps to support cross-departmental collaboration when needed.	Emails, trainings, presentation, newsletters, etc.	1	1	-1

Recommendation: It is advised to develop a standard procedure for all new employees to get familiar with FWF membership. FWF has material available that can be used to inform (sales) staff.

Comment: Mountain Force is a relatively small company, making it easier to share information across all employees.

COMMENT FOR MF: Please provide more info on how staff is made of aware of FWF membership requirements. If this can be done, more points can be awarded.

4.2 Ongoing training in support of FWF requirements is provided to staff in direct contact with suppliers.	Yes	Sourcing, purchasing and CSR staff at a minimum should possess the knowledge necessary to implement FWF requirements and advocate for change within their organisations.	FWF Seminars or equivalent trainings provided; presentations, curricula, etc.	2	2	0
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Recommendation: A training session on labour standards can be held for purchasing staff. FWF can support or facilitate in providing trainings. In addition, it is recommended to actively take part in training opportunities FWF offers such as: FWF seminars, the FWF annual conference and webinars.

Comment: Mountain Force works to ensure that relevant staff are aware of FWF requirements. Within a growing company, it is important to provide training for staff in direct contact with suppliers.

4.3 All sourcing contractors/agents are informed about FWF's Code of Labour Practices.	Affiliate does not use agents	Agents have the potential to either support or disrupt CoLP implementation. It is the responsibility of affiliate to ensure agents actively support the implementation of the CoLP.	Correspondence with agents, trainings for agents, FWF audit findings.	N/A	2	-2
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4.4 Factory participation in Workplace Education Programme (where WEP is offered; by production volume)	0%	Lack of knowledge and skills on best practices related to labour standards is a common issue in factories. Good quality training of workers and managers is a key step towards sustainable improvements.	Documentation of relevant trainings; participation in Workplace Education Programme.	0	6	0
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Comment: The supplier located in China has not (yet) participated in the FWF Workplace Education Program.

4.5 Factory participation in trainings (where WEP is not offered; by production volume)	All production is in WEP areas.	In areas where the Workplace Education Programme is not yet offered, affiliates may arrange trainings on their own or work with other training-partners. Trainings must meet FWF quality standards to receive credit for this indicator.	Curricula, other documentation of training content, participation and outcomes.	N/A	4	0
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TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Possible Points: 9

Earned Points: 3

5. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
5.1 Level of effort to identify all production locations and update supplier information.	Advanced	Any improvements to supply chains require affiliates to first know all of their suppliers and production locations.	Supplier information provided by affiliate. Financial records of previous financial year. Documented efforts by affiliate to update supplier information from its monitoring activities.	6	6	-2

Comment: In 2013, Mountain Force only sourced at 1 supplier located in China.

5.2 A system exists to allow purchasing, CSR and other relevant staff to share information with each other about working conditions at suppliers	Yes	CSR, purchasing and other staff who interact with suppliers need to be able to share information in order to establish a coherent and effective strategy for improvements.	Internal information system; status CAPs, reports of meetings of purchasing/CSR; systematic way of storing information.	1	1	-1
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Comment: As mentioned earlier, Mountain Force is a relatively small company. The person in charge of sourcing is well aware of FWF membership and the audit results.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Possible Points: 7

Earned Points: 7

6. TRANSPARENCY

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
6.1 Communication about FWF membership adheres to the FWF communications policy	Yes	FWF membership should be communicated in a clear and accurate manner. FWF guidelines are designed to prevent misleading claims.	Logo is placed on website; other communications in line with policy. Affiliates may lose points if there is evidence that they did not comply with the communications policy.	1	1	-2

Comment: Mountain Force provides information about FWF on its website in correct wording.

6.2 Affiliate engages in advanced reporting activities	Yes	Good reporting by members helps to ensure the transparency of FWF's work and shares best practices with the industry.	Affiliate publishes one or more of the following on their website: Brand Performance Check, Audit Reports, Supplier List.	1	1	0
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Recommendation: FWF recommends the affiliate to publish one or more of the following reports on its website: brand performance check, audit reports, supplier information. Good reporting by members helps to ensure the transparency of the affiliate and FWF's work.

Comment: Mountain Force publishes specific information on its supplier on its website. It currently does not publish its Social Report or Brand Performance Check on its website.

6.3 Social Report is submitted to FWF and is published on affiliate's website	Complete report submitted to FWF	The Social Report is an important tool for brands to transparently share their efforts with stakeholders.	Report adheres to FWF guidelines for Social Report content.	1	2	-2
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Requirement: FWF approach requires transparency on affiliates work towards social standards. The social report needs to be submitted to FWF and published on affiliate's website.

Comment: The Social Report 2013 has been submitted to FWF.

TRANSPARENCY

Possible Points: 4

Earned Points: 3

7. EVALUATION

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESULT	RELEVANCE OF INDICATOR	DOCUMENTATION	SCORE	MAX	MIN
7.1 Systemic annual evaluation of FWF membership is conducted with involvement of top management	Yes	An annual evaluation involving top management ensures that FWF policies are integrated into the structure of the company.	Meeting minutes, verbal reporting, Powerpoints, etc.	2	2	0
7.2 Percentage of required changes from previous Brand Performance Check implemented by affiliate	No requirements were included in previous Check	In each Brand Performance Check report, FWF may include requirements for changes to management practices. Adherence to these requirements is an important part of FWF membership.	Affiliate should show documentation related to the specific requirements made in the previous Brand Performance Check.	N/A	8	-4

EVALUATION

Possible Points: 2

Earned Points: 2

RECOMMENDATIONS TO FWF

N/A

SCORING OVERVIEW

CATEGORY	EARNED	POSSIBLE
Purchasing Practices	26	35
Monitoring and Remediation	20	24
Complaints Handling	7	7
Training and Capacity Building	3	9
Information Management	7	7
Transparency	3	4
Evaluation	2	2
Totals:	68	88

BENCHMARKING SCORE (EARNED POINTS ÷ POSSIBLE POINTS)

77

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKING CATEGORY

Leader

BRAND PERFORMANCE CHECK DETAILS

Date of Brand Performance Check:

26-06-2014

Conducted by:

Kees Gootjes

Interviews with:

Werner Matzner, CFO Mountain Force AG

Audit Summary:

Publication of the audit summary section previously included in Brand Performance Checks has been suspended while Fair Wear Foundation develops a new information system to manage and summarize the data. Future Brand Performance Checks will include improved usability and transparency for audit data.