

ESPRIT

Ratingen, 23 November 2012

ESPRIT Commits to Zero Discharges of Hazardous Chemicals

Esprit, the global brand for clothing and life style products, herewith declares that its products are safe.

Recently, Greenpeace tested nine of our garments.¹ All items tested prove safe and within legal limits and are not harmful to our customers. Esprit goes beyond legal limits and follows its own standards. Each Esprit style and each colour is checked for both physical and chemical tests through a stringent process to assess all risks. In addition, Esprit works closely with independent external testing agencies and the chemical industry. In two of the nine tested items by Greenpeace, we have unfortunately exceeded our own limits but stayed within legal limits. We regret the incident of these two fails and will continue to deliver only 100% safe garments to our customers.

In line with Esprit's long-term sustainability program, we recognise that the fashion industry still lacks a common standard in the use and discharge of chemicals in textile manufacturing. This is not acceptable and satisfying for Esprit. According to our approach in support of the precautionary principle, Esprit herewith confirms that it is committed to phase out all hazardous chemicals from the whole life cycle and especially all production steps that are needed for the manufacturing of the entire apparel & footwear products of Esprit. That is why we will join Roadmap to Zero², the apparel and footwear industry initiative that is committed to Zero Discharges of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) by 2020.

Esprit maintains an extensive Restricted Substance List (RSL) which can be found on our website³. This RSL controls any chemical content beyond meeting any legal requirements of international governments and regulatory bodies (for example: REACH⁴) and removing any health risk. Esprit is an active member of the AFIRM Group⁵ (Apparel and Footwear International RSL Management Group), which provides a tool kit for a constant updated RSL and a platform for introduction of alternative chemistry to accelerate the elimination of suspected harmful chemicals.

We also continue our work with the Sustainable Apparel Coalition⁶ and are implementing the Higg Index⁷ across our entire supply chain to ensure the safety of our products - and our customers.

"Esprit collaborates with other brands of the apparel and footwear industry as well as with other stakeholders, such as the chemical industry, NGOs and material suppliers to ensure the success of this ambitious project and fully commits to the content, actions and timelines outlined in the joint ZDHC roadmap," states Charles Dickinson, Senior Vice President, Head of Global Quality Management & Sustainability, Esprit.

¹ <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/Global/international/publications/toxics/Water%202012/ToxicThreads01.pdf>

² <http://www.roadmaptozero.com/joint-roadmap.php>

³ Esprit Restricted Substances List (RSL) - <http://www.esprit.com/press/rsl.pdf>

⁴ REACH is the European Community Regulation on chemicals and their safe use (EC 1907/2006). It deals with the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical substances
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/reach_intro.htm

⁵ <http://www.afirm-group.com/>

⁶ <http://www.apparelcoalition.org>

⁷ <http://www.apparelcoalition.org/higgindex/>