



Shared Building Policy

Purpose

Sharing of factory buildings is becoming an increasingly prevalent issue in supply chains today and although it offers a practical solution for smaller factories it can in cases raise risk levels through a lack of full control.

Recent tragedies in Bangladesh and elsewhere have led retailers to put an increasing emphasis on construction and fire safety of suppliers' manufacturing facilities.

This Policy is intended to help all The Very Group suppliers and factories understand our minimum requirements for factories within shared buildings.

Definition

A shared (or multi-use) site is defined as a multi-storey or flat building where part(s) of the building are occupied by someone other than yourself, for example with another factory, manufacturing site, commercial business or residential housing.

A 'sister concern' is defined as a shared site where different parts of the building are used by separate businesses but managed by the same owner. These tend to be lower risk but must still be risk assessed.

Requirements

- The Very Group require all factories in shared buildings to be flagged to the Responsible Sourcing Team by the supplier at point of set up so further investigation can take place. All facilities with shared premise are "Pending" for ethical audit grading until the additional assessment is completed.
- The Very Group Responsible Sourcing Team will carry out a desktop risk assessment based on information provided by the supplier to decide the next course of action.
- If this shows the site to be deemed as high risk e.g. being on the top floors of a building, having no separate fire exits, sharing the building with factories involved in hazardous industry etc. or if the factory has a combination of these issues then an onsite risk assessment will be conducted to better assess the facility.
- Following the onsite risk assessment we will advise a corrective action plan to ensure the factory meets with our requirements.
- As a minimum The Very Group expect all factories in shared buildings to have a centralised fire alarm system and conduct regular joint fire drills and keep records of these. It is also the responsibility of the factory to ensure that any shared exit routes are kept clear at all times.
- Any existing factories that do not meet with The Very Groups minimum requirements will be suspended until relevant improvements have been made, any proposed factories will not be set up until they meet The Very Group requirements.
- Any changes in the shared building situation must be notified to the team so further assessments can be conducted if needed. This can include but is not limited to the factories around yours changing, your factory taking additional or less space within the building, construction work being undertaken, changes in landlord etc.

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