



FOND OF BAGS joins Fair Wear Foundation

A giant step in the right direction for FOND OF BAGS: The Cologne company, together with its seven brands, has recently become a member of the Dutch FAIR WEAR FOUNDATION (FWF).

“By joining FWF, we are now making a commitment that we could not have been able to afford three years ago with regard to human resources,” declares Sven-Oliver Pink, one of the three founders of the company, which started as ergobag GmbH in Cologne in 2010 and has revolutionized the market for school bags with its “ergobag”. “We are now delighted that we can say that we are a member of the FAIR WEAR FOUNDATION and consequently our efforts toward being a responsible business have become a reality.”

The FAIR WEAR FOUNDATION is a Dutch non-profit multi-stakeholder organization whose goal is to improve the working conditions in the sewing textile industry around the world. As an independent authority, FWF monitors production facilities as well as member companies. FWF’s principles are, among others, payment of living wages, reasonable working hours, occupational safety, and preventing child labor. More information at www.fairwear.org.

Hannes Weber, who as a sustainability expert oversees the issues that concern the FWF, is proud of joining: “With our membership, we are committed to systematically checking compliance with FWF’s rigorous code of conduct at our producers’ facilities – for FWF doesn’t primarily monitor our suppliers – but rather us!” During annual inspections, FOND OF BAGS must demonstrate how purchasing and pricing policies make living wages possible and how forward-looking management decisions in the Far East can prevent excessive overtime hours for the company. The results of these “Brand Performance Checks” will be published on FWF’s website, where they will be accessible to consumers.

“What is unique about FWF is the information hotline, which we will put up in all the sewing plants that are producing for us,” Weber emphasized. The information hotline provides the individual sewer a powerful tool, which functions in this way: If a sewer were to feel unjustly treated, he/she can contact the hotline – anonymously as well – and lodge a complaint there to an FWF employee or a local NGO. The complaint is then forwarded to FOND OF BAGS. From that moment, it’s the company’s job to engage the factory management in a conversation and to resolve the conflict. The FWF will provide advice if needed. The entire incident, along with any progress, will be then be published on the FWF website.

The goal of FOND OF BAGS is to achieve FWF’s “Leader Status” and consequently to show that transparency and social responsibility are being practiced in the company. Only 10-20% of FWF’s member companies can be designated as leaders that monitor more than 90% of their production sites.

FOND OF BAGS meanwhile employs two persons in the “Corporate Responsibility” (CR) staff unit. The company has enjoyed vigorous growth since its founding in 2010. A total of 7 backpack and bag brands have in the meantime come under the umbrella of the company, which has 180 employees.

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Since the company's founding, it has placed utmost importance on the ergonomic functioning of its products, custom design, and outstanding product quality as well as on environmental and social responsibility. From the beginning, FOND OF BAGS has used recycled PET bottles as a source material for a large part of its fabrics.

All corporate responsibility activities, CR reports, and an overview of the production location locations of FOND OF BAGS can be viewed online at www.fondofbags.com/fond-of-corporate-responsibility.

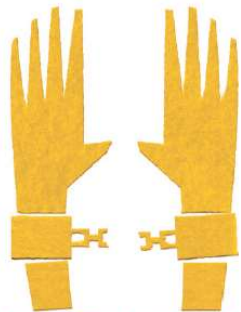
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4 no exploitation of child labour



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6 reasonable hours of work



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8 a legally binding employment relationship

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