

# FRENCH CONNECTION

## **Modern Slavery Statement 2024**

This Modern Slavery Statement (“Statement”) is published by French Connection UK Limited and MIP Holdings Limited (“French Connection”) in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and California Transparency in Supply Chains Act 2010. This Statement sets out the actions taken during the financial year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and steps we intend to take going forward in order to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking throughout our business and supply chain.

It continues to be a priority for French Connection to ensure we trade ethically, source responsibly and work to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking throughout our organisation and in our supply chain. French Connection is committed to maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all our dealings, wherever we operate and have a zero-tolerance approach to bribery, corruption, the use of child or forced labour and human trafficking.

### **The Business**

French Connection is a design led, medium sized fashion group which consists of three brands; French Connection, Great Plains and You Must Create. We operate retail, wholesale and licensing businesses across the UK, Europe, North America, Middle East, Asia and Australasia.

We use third party production facilities around the world to manufacture the goods, with the main countries of origin being China, India, Bangladesh and Turkey with specialist products also manufactured in other European and Asian countries supervised by local buying offices. Product development, materials sourcing, production planning and control and quality assurance are all directly controlled by French Connection.

### **Policies**

French Connection requires all our product suppliers, including those involved in any subcontracted processes, to abide by the guidelines contained in our Supplier Manual Code of Conduct. Our Supplier Manual contains the employment standards required of our suppliers and is in accord with industry standards including inter alia that employees should be given a safe and healthy environment to work in, be given the right to free association, be paid a fair wage, not be forced or bonded labour, be of an appropriate age, and work only reasonable hours.

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## **Due Diligence Process**

French Connection undertakes due diligence when considering new suppliers and will not work with suppliers where the employment or environmental practices are below acceptable standards. New suppliers undergo a comprehensive review process, which includes reviewing third party audits previously performed with the supplier.

Our own staff visit the factories we use for garment production and consider the environment and work practices during those visits. We do not use third-party verifiers but conduct our own surveys which are designed to investigate and document factory operations, in addition to inspecting any third-party audit documentation held by the factory. In Hong Kong, India, Turkey and Poland we also have buying offices staffed with French Connection employees which allows us to further monitor standards of factories directly. In addition, senior staff from the UK head office visit factories to provide an additional level of oversight on the day-to-day operations.

French Connection recognises that it is not possible to provide absolute assurance that the standards expected of our suppliers are adhered to, however where transgressions are identified we would work with the supplier to develop an appropriate reform programme if appropriate. In addition, we will not hesitate to stop using any supplier who we identify that continues to operate in contravention of our standards or failing to implement agreed reform programmes.

## **Risks**

We are not aware of any instances of modern slavery or human trafficking having taken place in our supply chain, nor have we had any issues with policy compliance over the past year.

The areas of our supply chain where there is most risk of modern slavery and human trafficking is where product is sourced through suppliers not directly controlled by French Connection which is particularly prominent in our licensing business. To manage this risk we work with trusted partners who are required to sign licensing agreements which contain extensive anti-bribery and modern slavery provisions to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

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## **Further steps to prevent Modern Slavery**

French Connection has several policies in place which support human rights principals which include:

- Supplier Code of Conduct
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Statement
- Anti-Bribery Policy

French Connection is committed to ensuring we maintain high ethical standards and we have due diligence processes in place which aim to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain. Though French Connection does not provide specific training on human trafficking and slavery we assess the risk of modern slavery in our business on a continuous basis and aim to further strengthen relationships with suppliers in the coming year, while working towards implementing a formal audit procedure.

This Statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 30 June 2023.



**Neil Williams,  
Chief Operating Officer**

**April 2024**