

Complaint – Blackout AG – India

Status: Closed

FWF is responsible for setting up a complaints procedure in production countries where FWF is active. The complaints procedure allows third parties to make complaints about the working conditions or the way the Code of Labour Practices is implemented in factories which supply FWF members.

The responsibility of FWF includes investigating the complaint, verifying whether the agreed corrective action plan is implemented and public reporting. This complaint report gives an overview of a complaint filed to FWF, the investigation and agreed corrective action plan as well as how the outcome is verified. For more information on the complaints procedure see the FWF website. FWF also publishes an overview of complaints received in its annual reports.

1. Affiliate involved

Blackout AG (hereafter: Blackout)

2. Accused party

A factory located in India supplying Blackout.

3. Date of receiving complaint

The complaint was received by FWF through its local complaints handler in India on 18 May 2014.

4. Filing party

A worker that is currently employed by the factory, details of the identity are known to FWF.

5. The complaint

The complainant claimed that there are workers in the factory who the plaintiff considers children at work. The plaintiff him-/herself is above 18 years old and claims to be ok, but concerned about some co-workers.

6. Admissibility

FWF decided that the case is admissible on 20 May 2014.

The factory is an active supplier of Blackout, an affiliate of FWF.

The case is relevant to the following labour standards of FWF's Code of Labour Practices:

- No exploitation of child labour

7. Investigation

FWF informs Blackout about the case. FWF requested Blackout not to inform the factory to avoid that factory management sends the children away in case found.

To investigate the complaint, FWF has asked the complaints handler and an expert in worker interviews to speak to the plaintiff in person and also to conduct off-site interviews with other workers from the same factory.

8. Findings and conclusions

The complaint is not grounded.

None of the workers interviewed confirmed child labour at the factory. Both investigators have observed the factory from very early in the morning when all workers were going in until the very evening until lights were shut off at the factory. No young/child labour was noticed going in or out of the factory. The plaintiff stated that (s)he was upset with the factory management and supervisor because of unreasonable production targets.

Observations have highlighted again issues which have been brought up already during the FWF audit conducted on 12&13 May 2014.

1. Some workers spoken to stated that friends have been illegally dismissed without 1 month prior notice of why they are dismissed.
2. Many workers are unregistered.
3. Working hours do not corroborate with the management interviews. They conduct excessive overtime as the team has observed the workers going in before the official working hours start and returning much later.

9. Remediation

As the case is not grounded, no remediation with regard to child labour is asked for.

However FWF highlights the importance to seek for remediation of the audit report findings focusing on the observations during the investigation of the complaint.

Further a FWF Workplace Education Programme Training at this factory could be of help to overcome the problems found.

10. Verification

N/A



11. Evaluation by the complainant

N/A