International Trade Centre

Fair Labor Association - FLA

At a glance

This document provides an overview of the Fair Labor Association standard system.

The Fair Labor Association is one of the several standard systems that are referenced in Standards Map, the interactive web-based tool on private standards developed by the T4SD program of ITC.

What is FLA

The Fair Labor Association (FLA) is a non-profit organization committed to protecting workers' rights, ending sweatshop labor, and improving working conditions worldwide. It is a multi-stakeholder effort of colleges and universities, socially responsible companies, and civil society organizations.

FLA works as a brand accountability system that holds its affiliates to its Workplace Code of Conduct. This code was developed based on the International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions and it outlines what are acceptable and fair working conditions in factories.

What products are covered by the standard system

The FLA Code is not restricted to any sector or product in particular.

What are the key features of the standard system

- FLA's sustainable compliance methodology emphasizes monitoring by partnership rather than policing.
- Affiliates commit to meeting the 10 Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing and adopting and implementing practices that meet or exceed the FLA Workplace Code of Conduct, which includes conducting internal monitoring of their supply chains, remediating noncompliance, and consulting with the civil society. Transparency is a core FLA value. For example, reports of all unannounced audits conducted are posted on the FLA website annually.
- FLA does not certify or accredit companies themselves but rather accredits the company's labor compliance program. FLA Company Affiliates commit to enforcing the FLA Code in the domestic and international factories that manufacture their products. Accreditation does not imply full compliance with the FLA Code but that a company has implemented mechanisms and procedures to increase its awareness, monitor, remediate and prevent persistent noncompliance.
- FLA Affiliates or Licensees are distinguished in 5 categories: Participating Companies, Participating Suppliers, Category B licensees, Category C licensees, and Category D licensees. While Participating Companies submit their entire supply chains and factories for monitoring, the other categories only submit their collegiate factories. More information can be found here: http://www.fairlabor.org/fla/go.asp?u=/pub/mp&Page=CollegiateLicensees.

FLA: facts and figures

- FLA was formally established in 1999 and evolved from the Apparel Industry Partnership, a taskforce made up of representatives of industry, government, non-governmental organisations and trade unions, convened by President Clinton in 1996,
- 31 leading brand-name companies are Participating Companies. Currently, there are 14 Participating Suppliers in addition to 58 Category B Licensees, 1,028 Category C Licensees, and 1,992 Category D Licensees.
- Nearly 200 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada are currently affiliated with FLA.

Support

The FLA Training Portal has been specially designed with the objective of conducting Internet-based and Internet-supported training. The Training Portal is an important tool being used in FLA's sustainable compliance methodology, to help implement capacity building efforts for factories participating in the program. Guidance material for FLA-affiliated collegiate licensees is also available through this portal.
FLA is in the process of introducing the Sustainable Compliance Initiative (SCI). SCI represents a new approach to social compliance, where the paradigm is shifted away from snapshot auditing and quick fixes at the factory level and towards collaboration between multiple stakeholders to bring sustained improvements. By focusing on the workers' employment cycle, starting from when workers are hired to when they leave the company, SCI assessment tools are created at each stage to identify labor violations and evaluate management systems. FLA has also developed an assessment portal that is accessible online, where affiliates can monitor their own compliance.

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The FLA standard system is applicable to producers in all countries.

In 2010, certification services were operational in the following 133 countries

Detailed maps highlighting countries where certification / verification is possiblel and countries where certified products / services are sold can be generated on ITC's Standards Map website.

ASIA Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen **AUSTRALIA & OCEANIA** Australia **CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARRIBEAN** Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua **EUROPE** Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom **NORTH AMERICA** Canada, Mexico, United States of America **SOUTH AMERICA** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru

How to join FLA

Companies, suppliers, colleges and universities, licensees, and NGOs are invited to contact FLA to receive more information on how to join. More information is provided on http://www.fairlabor.org/fla/go.asp?u=/pub/mp&Page=ResourceCenter.

Source: Standards Map, Market Analysis Tools, International Trade Centre and the Fair Labor Association, http://www.fairlabor.org. Last up-date: June 2011
For more information, visit Standards Map or send us an e-mail: standardsmap@intracen.org.

What areas does the FLA standard system cover

The following table provides an overview of FLA principles and requirements and related compliance policies covering social, environmental and economic areas applied in production, processing and trade.

Explanation of Standards Maps interpretation of compliance policies in the FLA Workplace Code of Conduct:
Immediate Requirement: Accreditation by the FLA code is a gradual process. Participating companies choose either a two or three year implementation period during which they must adhere to FLA's ndependent external monitoring, remediation and verification. Upon conclusion of the implementation phase and accreditation however, all the requirements become mandatory.
Recommendation: In addition to substantive benchmarks, which set out the level of compliance required to be in conformity with the rights and duties contained in the FLA Code, tehre are procedural benchmarks, which define a course of action to be taken in order to increase the probability that the rights and duties contained in the FLA Code are respected and fulfilled..

	Environment	Social	Economic
Immediate requirements		**Social/Human Rights** Gender issues Health and safety of women Cultural/religion rights (ILO 169) Minority rights **Work/Labor Rights - Conditions of Work** Conditions of work Safety at work (ILO 184) Training on safety issues Safe work environment Safety equipments and emergency kits Safe handling chemicals Healthy work conditions Access to safe drinking water No forced labor (ILO 29&105) No use of physical violence Child labor prohibited (ILO 182) **Work/Labor Rights - Conditions of Employment** Condition of employment Contract labour policies and practices Written contracts Leave days clearly specified Timely payment of wages Minimum wage requirements Level of wage Child labor and minimum age (ILO 138) Equal remuneration (ILO 100) Maximum number of working hours set **Work/Labor Rights - Empowerment of Workers** Freedom of association (ILO 87) Collective Bargaining (ILO 98) No discrimination at work (ILO 111)	Continued on next page.

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For more information, visit Standards Map or send us an e-mail: standardsmap@intracen.org.

	Environment	Social	Economic
Recommendations		**Work/Labor Rights - Conditions of Work** Conditions of work Access to sanitary facilities at work Access to medical assistance/ insurance **Work/Labor Rights - Conditions of Employment** Condition of employment Contract labour policies and practices Transparency of employment practices	