

The Vogue Development Co (Kent) Ltd

MANAGEMENT - INFORMATION ALERT

UK MODERN SLAVERY ACT 2015

TO: ALL SENIOR & SITE MANAGERS

DATE: 01/05/17

**READ THROUGH AND ACTION – SIGN OFF FOR USE BY MANAGERS TO
PROVIDE EVIDENCE UNDERSTOOD – NOT TO BE GIVEN AS TBT**

We are now being asked in PQQs for evidence that our Managers understand the above Act and have had some training with regard to its provisions.

As a Company we have an obligation to ensure SLAVERY and HUMAN TRAFFICKING is not taking place but many of the Companies that we work for have to report this Annually in their Accounts.

Any Company turning over £36m has to produce a statement of how they are complying with the ask and this includes evidence that their supply chain “ie us” are also complying.

It is call TRANSPARENCY in SUPPLY CHAINS.

Therefore have attached the Government Guidance which you are requested to read and confirm this on the sign off sheet.

TRANSPARENCY IN SUPPLY CHAINS – A PRACTICAL GUIDE

In addition we do need to make sure that we are complying with the Act and that modern slavery and exploitation is not taking place.

Some practical steps follows:

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Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is a brutal form of organised crime in which people are treated as commodities and exploited for criminal gain. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 21 million men, women and children are working in conditions of modern slavery-including trafficked persons. The vast majority of these people are in the supply chains of legitimate industries.

Modern Slavery Act

- Consolidates and clarifies the existing offences of slavery and human trafficking whilst increasing the maximum penalty for such offences,
- Provides two new civil preventative orders,
- Introduces new enforcement powers in relation to ships,
- Establishes an office of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner,
- Introduces measures focused on supporting and protecting victims,
- Requires certain businesses to disclose activities they are undertaking to eliminate slavery and trafficking from their supply chains and their own businesses,
- Requires the Secretary of State to publish a paper on role of Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

Commercial Organisations with a global group turnover of £36m per annum are required by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, to prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement per financial year. The purpose of the statement is to set out what an organisation has done to prevent modern slavery in their own business and supply chain. It is not a statement confirming there is no modern slavery anywhere in the business or supply chain.

Clear organisational policies demonstrate an organisation's commitment to this issue and ensure that appropriate and coordinated action is taken throughout the business. Clear policies

should include a provision that all employees in the organisation and the organisation's supply chain know how, and are resourced to prevent or identify exploitation. They should provide information about the first steps when modern slavery is identified and broadly how and with whom to contact.

Labour Exploitation

Subcontractors and suppliers should also

- Afford their employees the freedom to choose to work for them. Employees should be free to leave their employer after reasonable notice is served. Suppliers should not use forced, bonded or non-voluntary prison labour;
- Demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity for individuals and groups enabling them to live their lives free from discrimination and oppression;
- Offer working hours to their staff which are compliant with national laws or industry standards;
- Under no circumstances abuse or intimidate employees and have appropriate disciplinary, grievance and appeal procedures in place;
- Work within the laws of their country;
- Take appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of their workforce and the wider public;
- Offer wages and benefits that at the very least meet relevant industry benchmarks or national legal standards.

Protect your business by following some straightforward checks:

All employers involved in the construction industry should make proper background checks on the agencies who supply them with labour, including where the agency is operating in a supervisory role. The Association of Labour Providers and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation are the two main recruitment industry associations, and working with the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to tackle slavery.

Contracts of employment:

Check that all staff, including agency workers, have a written contract of employment and that they have not had to pay any direct or indirect fees to obtain work.

Right to work: Make sure staff are legally able to work in the UK. Does the recruitment agency provide assurance that the appropriate checks have been made on the person they are supplying?

Wages:

Make sure the wages you pay go to the workers. Avoid cash in hand and cheque arrangements. Be aware that workers may be forced into debt and have bank accounts controlled by exploiters.

Shared occupancy:

Check the names and addresses of those working for you. If you have a number of people listing the same address it may indicate high shared occupancy, often a factor for those being exploited.

Statutory rights:

Make sure your workers know their statutory rights including sick pay, holiday pay and any other benefits they may be entitled to.

Assess quotes and fees:

Use indicative pricing statistics to assess quotations and fees from agencies offering or charging suspiciously low rates

Signs to spot potential victims:

Legal documents: Is the person in possession of their legal documents (passport, identification and their own bank account details) or are these being held by someone else? Victims will often be forced to use false or forged identity documents.

Pay:

Are there a group of workers who have their wages paid into the same bank account? This may be sign of an illegal gangmaster collecting all their wages. Are they having wages taken off them for accommodation, food or to repay supposed debt?

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Transport:

Are a group of workers dropped off or picked up at unusual times of the day, are they all taken to the same property?

Appearance:

Does the person look malnourished, unkempt, or appear withdrawn? Are they suffering physical injuries? Do they have few personal possessions and often wear the same clothes? The What clothes they do wear may not be suitable for their work.

Behaviour:

Is the person withdrawn or appears frightened, unable to answer questions directed at them or speak for themselves and/or an accompanying third party speaks for them? If they do speak, are they inconsistent in the information they provide, including basic facts such as the address where they live? Do they appear under the control/influence of others and rarely interact with colleagues?

Medical care:

Does the person have old or serious untreated injuries? Have they delayed seeing a healthcare professional? Are they vague, reluctant or inconsistent in explaining how the injury occurred?

Fear of authorities:

Is the person afraid of the authorities (police, immigration, the tax office)? Are they scared of removal or what might happen to their families?

Debt bondage:

Does the victim perceive themselves to be in debt to someone else or in a situation of dependence?

The above factors may be evident when engaging agency labour or crews

In conclusion your responsibility is to be observant of the factors above and report findings to a DIRECTOR.

