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The Life and Building Safety (LABS) Initiative is an industry-driven program, in which multiple brands and retailers are joining forces with public organizations to operate a scalable program to eliminate preventable structural, fire and electrical safety risks in key apparel and footwear producing countries in a targeted way.

LABS Initiative encourages factory workers to flag any risk associated issues they are facing within the factory premises. This will be done through an integral part of this initiative, which is the LABS Helpline.

## What is LABS Helpline?

LABS Helpline acts as a centralized toll free number where workers can anonymously report issues primarily related to Structural, Fire and Electrical Safety as well as any other issues.

## What is the objective of LABS Helpline?

LABS Helpline allows the factory workers to raise safety concerns through a toll-free number. This provides an opportunity to the workers to voice their concerns and ensure timely action.

## What is the LABS Helpline number, and what are the timings?

Factory workers can reach out to LABS Helpline by dialling on the toll-free number provided below:

- **India:**
  - LABS Helpline Number: 1800-212-5227
  - Timings: 9 am to 6 pm
- **Vietnam:**
  - LABS Helpline Number: 1800-6342
  - Timings: 8:30 am- 5:30 pm

*NOTE: The calls made to LABS Helpline are completely confidential and there is also a option of staying anonymous while making the call and reporting concerns.*

## How is the awareness of LABS Helpline created in factories?

Awareness on LABS Helpline is created in the factories as per following guidelines:

- LABS team will share a guiding document with factory management for setting up LABS Helpline in the factory
- LABS Factory Coordinator will brief the factory on importance and functionality of LABS Helpline and get buy in of the factory management during the opening meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> follow up visit
- Helpline communication material will be displayed in factory highlighting the helpline number which includes the following:
  - Wall posters: Will be displayed at:

- important places that are used for displaying information for employees such as notice boards.
- places frequented by the workers – Eating areas, canteens, washrooms etc.
- Helpline Standard Stickers: Will be pasted on the sewing machines/workstations
- Dangers: Will be intermittently hung over the factory rows/ aisles
- Pinstripe stickers: Will be pasted on the workers' ID cards
- Details of LABS Helpline will be communicated to all workers by the internal OHS Committees of the factories
- As part of LABS Safety Trainings in the factories, Safety Trainers will convey following to the participants:
  - The calls made on LABS Helpline are completely confidential
  - The LABS Helpline primarily looks after issues related to Structural, Fire and Electrical Safety
  - Mock calls to build greater trust for workers in the LABS Helpline during the Safety Training session

## How does LABS Helpline operate?

The LABS Helpline is operated by professional external business outsourcing partners in India and Vietnam under the management of the LABS Initiative. The Helpline agents are trained by the LABS team to note and escalate reported issues in a systematic approach. The LABS Helpline staff can communicate in following languages:

- India
  - Hindi
  - English
  - Kannada
- Vietnam
  - English
  - Vietnamese

The issues are segregated into two separate categories:

- LABS Related issues: Issues pertaining to Structural, Fire and Electrical safety, as per mandate and objectives of the LABS Initiative
- Non- LABS Related issues: Issues that are not related to structural, fire and electrical safety such as harassment, working condition, etc.

## What are the type of issues that can be reported on LABS Helpline?

- **LABS- Critical Safety Issues:** The LABS- Critical safety issues are high priority issues which can pose an immediate threat to life or building safety and can cause severe injuries. Issues concerning to structural integrity, active fire, exposed electrical

equipments. Eg: Blocked routes or inadequate means of escape, locked exit doors or emergency exits, cracked pillars/ columns or beams, active fire or fire danger inside the factory, exposed wires etc.

- **LABS- Non-Critical Safety Issues:** The LABS- Non-critical safety issues include issues which marks a potential risk or danger to life or building safety and may cause severe injuries. Eg: Occupational safety hazards, Inadequate facilities, inadequate availability of drinking water, active fire outside factory etc.
- **Non- LABS- Zero Tolerance Issues:** The Non- LABS- Zero Tolerance Issues are issues which involve violation of worker rights. Eg: Physical abuse, sexual harassment, Verbal abuse etc.
- **Non- LABS- Non- Zero Tolerance Issues:** The Non-LABS- Non Zero Tolerance Issues involves violation of basic worker rights and practicing of unfair means. Eg: bribery, uninformed termination, compensation of benefits and wages-based complaints etc.

## What is the process of addressing the issues reported on LABS Helpline?

Based on the issue, category type, sub-type and priority level, LABS Helpline team shares the concern with responsible team/ person for their review while also confirming the turnaround time for the issues (depends on the severity of the issue).

The process for addressing the complaints pertaining to various type of issues is as per below:

- **LABS- Critical Safety Issues:**
  - The LABS Country Team is notified on priority by the LABS FFC and Helpline Team
  - The LABS Country Team shares the issue details with the factory management on priority (keeping the brand representative in copy)
  - Factory management has 03 days to investigate and remediate the issue
  - Once the issue has been remediated, factory management shares their finding and remediation results with the LABS Country Team
  - LABS Helpline agents contacts the caller and seek confirmation from the caller on the remediation actions taken by the factory
  - LABS Country Team observes the remedial actions taken during the upcoming factory follow-up visit
- **LABS- Non-Critical Safety Issues:**
  - The LABS Country Team is notified by the LABS FFC and Helpline Team
  - The LABS Country Team shares the issue details with the factory management (keeping the brand representative in copy)
  - Factory management has 02 weeks to investigate and remediate the issue
  - Once the issue has been remediated, factory management shares their finding and remediation results with the LABS Country Team
  - LABS Helpline agent contacts the caller and seek confirmation from the caller on the remediation actions taken by the factory
  - LABS Country Team observes the remedial actions taken during the upcoming factory follow-up visit
- **Non- LABS- Zero Tolerance Issues:**

- The LABS FFC and Helpline Team shares the issue details directly with the Local Brand Office keeping the LABS Country Team and Factory Management in copy)
- **Non- LABS- Non- Zero Tolerance Issues:**
  - The LABS FFC and Helpline Team shares the issue details directly with the Factory Management (keeping the LABS Country Team in copy)
  - Following the requirements of the Brand Participants, LABS FFC and Helpline Team shares weekly/ monthly reports with the Brand Participants with summary of issues reported on LABS Helpline

## What is the Turnaround Time (TAT) for the issues reported on LABS Helpline?

The Turnaround Time for various type of issues is as per below:

Turnaround Time							
Category	Sub-Category	Priority	Case Assigned To	Level 1-TAT	Escalated To	Level 2-TAT	Escalated To
LABS	Critical Safety	P1	AM/FC	4 Hours	CM	4 Hours	PM/PD
LABS	Non- Critical Safety	P2	AM/FC	18 Hours	CM	24 Hours	PM/PD
LABS	Non- Critical Safety	P3	AM/FC	24 Hours	CM	36 Hours	PM/PD
Non- LABS	Zero Tolerance	P1	BLO	24 Hours	-	-	-
Non- LABS	Non-Zero Tolerance	P2	FAS/FU	36 Hours	BLO	-	-

Email Notifications		
Subject	Recipients	CC
Case Assignment (LABS)	AM/FC	CM, LFH, BLO
Case Assignment (Non-LABS) P1	BLO	FAS/FU, CM, AM/FC & LFH
Case Assignment (Non-LABS) P2	FAS/FU	CM, AM/FC & LFH
TAT Missed Level 1 (LABS)	CM	AM/FC & LFH
TAT Missed Level 2 (LABS)	PM/PD	CM, AM/FC & LFH
TAT Missed Level 1 (Non-LABS)	BLO	FAS/FU, CM, AM/FC & LFH

Legends	
<b>AM/FC</b>	LABS Assistant Manager/ Factory Coordinator
<b>CM</b>	LABS Country Manager
<b>PM</b>	LABS Program Manager
<b>PD</b>	LABS Program Director
<b>FAS/FU</b>	Factory Authorized Signatory/ Factory User
<b>BLO</b>	Brand Local Office
<b>TAT</b>	Turnaround Time
<b>LFH</b>	LABS FFC and Helpline Team

## How is the caller notified once the issue reported has been resolved?

Once the reported issue has been resolved, the LABS Helpline agent should inform the caller and seek confirmation about the remediation action taken by the factory as per the following scenarios:

Scenarios	Action	Case Status
Caller answers and confirms that the issue reported has been resolved by the Factory Management	-	Closed
Caller is not reachable	LABS Helpline Agent will call the caller twice a day for 03 days	Closed after 3 attempts
Caller reports that the issue has not been resolved	The case will be re-opened and LABS Helpline Agent will gather the required information from the caller	Re-open

## What is the call handling procedure followed by agents of LABS Helpline?

The call handling procedure involves mandatory and guiding steps to be followed by the call center agents which includes addressing the call, raising a ticket on the CRM and finishing the call.

### The Opening:

Thank you for calling LABS Helpline, my name is (Agent Name), how may I assist you?

*(Caller provides with the information)*

As I understand correctly, *(paraphrase the information given)*.

*(Caller confirms / corrects the agent)*

I will certainly assist you with that, you do not need to worry. To help you accurately I would need a few details from your end.

***\*Disclaimer\* Please note that if you wish to report this concern as anonymised, your information will not be disclosed.***

*(caller agrees)*

### Information:

Can I have your first and last name? *(If caller does not wish to disclose his identity, agent will not force for this information)*

From which factory are you calling from?

Address of the factory?

Have you tried contacting management regarding the issue? (if Applicable)

If yes, can you please mention the name of the person you contacted to?

Details regarding the issue?

**\*\*How many people are getting affected? (for priority 2 and 3 concerns)**

### Resolution and Conclusion:

We have registered the concern you have reported.

**\*For LABS related issues\*** We will assign the task to concern team and they will take care of it at the earliest.

\*For Non-LABS related issues\* \*the caller will be provided with the information (if available)\*  
You may contact us for any other concern in between or to check the status of your concern.  
Is there anything else I may assist you with? *(need to go according to response)*  
Please note the case number for your call today.  
Thank you for calling LABS Helpline, have a nice day.

**Remediation Confirmation:**

Once the reported issue has been resolved, LABS Helpline agent contacts the caller and seek confirmation from the caller on the remediation actions taken by the factory based on the scenarios stated above.

## Annexure: LABS Helpline Workflow

