



**RESPONSIBLE
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INITIATIVE**

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WFSGI OPENS UP RSI PLATFORM FOR JOINT CSR APPROACH

The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) is opening up the Responsible Sport Initiative (RSI), a platform that helps sporting goods companies to efficiently implement unified corporate and social responsibility standards.

The RSI was launched last year at the initiative of bicycle companies in the WFSGI, and this year the federation is encouraging companies from other sectors of the sporting goods industry to take part. “We see huge potential for sports companies to work together, to sustainably promote and monitor corporate and social responsibility standards throughout the industry,” says Marc Magnus, trade and corporate responsibility manager at the WFSGI.

The RSI functions with a system of audit-sharing that makes it more practical and affordable for companies to thoroughly check the compliance of their suppliers. The audits are conducted by independent, third-party audit service providers approved by the RSI, working with standards that are aligned with the WFSGI Code of Conduct. Participants may administer their audits on the RSI platform, or request the WFSGI to take care of the administration.

The audit-sharing leans on Fair Factories Clearinghouse (FFC), a platform created by a non-profit and membership-based software provider. FFC runs an online service where members may find audits of their suppliers conducted by other (unidentified) members. However, the RSI has created its own system within the FFC and it pro-actively creates links between companies that are planning audits at the same factories.

As Magnus explains, RSI requests participants to compile a list of their planned audits twice per year. It then conducts an overlap assessment and provides the participants with a list of their factories where other companies are considering audits. This allows the participants to re-evaluate their audit list, in order to take more advantage of shared initiatives.

The system developed efficiently with bicycle companies last year is that RSI appoints a “lead brand” for each of the shared audits. This lead brand is the factory’s contact for any corrective action plan. This lead brand is the factory’s contact for any corrective plan and it has an obligation to share the results of the corrective actions.

The audit costs are split equally between the companies that agreed to share the audit.



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Exchanges on audit-sharing, the results of audits and corrective measures are all communicated on the RSI platform. Participants may also use the FFC as their in-house IT solution to manage their supply chain beyond the audit-sharing feature.

“The entire system helps companies to save money and human resources, and to reduce audit-fatigue among their suppliers,” said Erik van der Hout, Chair of the RSI Steering Committee and CSR Manager of the Accell Group. “For smaller companies that may not have their own corporate and social responsibility standards and teams in place, it may also help them to gain traction in this area.”

The RSI turned out to be efficient for bicycle companies because they share many suppliers and adopted a strongly collaborative approach. The broad support for the RSI in this sector provided increased leverage. The RSI could thus have the most significant impact in other parts of the sporting goods industry that operate with clusters of manufacturers working for the same brands, such as team sports ball production.

Participation does not require WFSGI membership and is open to any interested party.

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About the RSI

The RSI-Bicycle is the product of over three years work by members joining forces under the umbrella of the WFSGI – World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) to address issues of Corporate Responsibility. The product of this work is a centrally administrated and coordinated social auditing tool based on a commonly held set of standards & protocols.

About the WFSGI

Global solutions through international teamwork – The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) was founded in 1978 and is the world authoritative body for the sports industry officially recognized by the IOC as the industry representative within the Olympic Family. The WFSGI is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental association formed by sports brands, manufacturers, suppliers, retailers, national federations and other sporting goods industry related businesses. The WFSGI plays a strategic role in the support and promotion of the sporting goods industry worldwide. The WFSGI promotes free and fair trade and provides platforms for the intergovernmental cooperation with regards to the International Organizations interested or affected by sports. Its aim is also to expand the cooperation on the protection of intellectual property rights and improve human rights issues related to working conditions. All this can be done through contacts with International Organizations such as the ILO, WTO, WHO, UN but also through International Sports Federations (FIFA, IAAF, FIVB, etc.) and the IOC, via the exchange of information and clearing house on issues and topics developed by WFSGI’s various committees.