



Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh
Advisory Board Meeting Report
3 April 2014 Meeting (10:00 am – 12:30 pm)

The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (Accord) held its first Advisory Board meeting on 3 April 2014 in Dhaka. Representatives from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) - Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), factory owners, IndustriAll RMG trade union federations (IBC-RMG), brands, suppliers, and Bangladesh NGOs/CSOs participated as members. The ILO Country Director served as the neutral Chair of the meeting of the Accord Advisory Board.

After inviting the board members to introduce themselves and recognizing the accomplishments of the Accord to date, the Chair led discussion on the work of the Advisory Board and on how the discussions of the Board would be reported to the Steering Committee for their deliberations. The Chair requested members to provide feedback on the Board terms of reference. The feedback consisted of the following:

- Add a representative to the Board from the Fire Service and Civil Defense, the Public Works Department, the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF), and the National Coordinating Committee on Workers Education (NCCWE).
- Change the heading of “buyers/agents” to “suppliers” and change the heading “suppliers” to “factories”.
- Secure the active membership of BGMEA and BKMEA as important national elements to the permanent success of the Accord.
- Confirm the 2 remaining factory owner members of the Accord. Follow up with BGMEA and BKMEA to obtain their nominees.

The Accord Executive Director-Bangladesh Operations and Chief Safety Inspector presented update on the Accord work in Bangladesh. Topics covered were:

- Ongoing initial safety assessments
- Communications protocols with owners, brands, IBC-RMG
- Lead brand and worker representative protocols
- Initial reports, remediation/corrective action plans, public reporting
- Common findings of fire, electrical, and structural safety assessments
- Processes for verification of completion of corrective action.

During feedback and discussion the following points were highlighted by Board members:

- Importance of getting a positive message out about the work of the Accord. Especially in light of the recent critical findings of cases which resulted in temporary suspensions of operations.

- Correct errors to the names of and add missing IBC RMG federations to the list of signatory unions on the signed Accord document.
- Clarifying the remediation, payment of wages, and brand commitment to the affected factory(ies) obligations under the Accord; especially in critical findings cases.
- Establish and maintain a strict and rapid communications to affected parties; especially workers (also include in worker training programs), in critical findings situations.
- Gather information on financing instruments being developed or accessible for remediation. Consider outreach to local banks to explain Accord inspections and remediation (so banks do not perceive as a negative from a credit risk analysis).
- Continue efforts to ensure BGMEA and BKMEA become active in the Advisory Board and the work with Accord.
- Working to ensure initial inspections reports are released within communicated timelines.

Recommendations to the Steering Committee:

- Re-double effort to secure BGMEA and BKMEA active membership on the Advisory Board and on-the-ground execution of the Accord.
- Consider expanding the composition of the Advisory Board as elaborated above under the Advisory board / ToR agenda item.
- Secure buy-in and support from BGMEA and BKMEA to help ensure payment of wages during periods of suspended operations / during critical findings situations.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned. Next meeting to be held in early July 2014.