

## Complaint – Vaude – China

### Status: Resolved

*FWF is responsible for setting up a complaints procedure in production countries where FWF is active. The complaints procedure allows third parties to make complaints about the working conditions or the way the Code of Labour Practices is implemented in factories which supply FWF members.*

*The responsibility of FWF includes investigating the complaint, verifying whether the agreed corrective action plan is implemented and public reporting. This complaint report gives an overview of a complaint filed to FWF, the investigation and agreed corrective action plan as well as how the outcome is verified. For more information on the complaints procedure see the FWF website. FWF also publishes an overview of complaints received in its annual reports.*

### 1. Member company involved

Vaude.

### 2. Accused party

A factory located in China supplying Vaude.

### 3. Date of receiving complaint

The date was received on 29 January 2016.

### 4. Filing party

A worker representative that is currently employed by the factory.

### 5. The complaint

The complainant claimed that he and his colleagues at the factory heard that the factory is going to relocate to another region. However, workers are not informed of the new location or the exact time of relocation.

Because the workers are going back to their hometown for Chinese New Year very soon, they are afraid that once they return after the Chinese New Year, they will not be able to find the factory again. Workers are afraid they cannot get any severance pay if the factory does relocate, without informing them of the new factory address. The workers representative informed the complaints handler that many workers have been

working at the factory for 10 to 20 years already. If they were to be dismissed because of relocation they would be entitled to severance pay.

According to the worker representative, workers have asked the management team many times for information, but no response was given to them. On 28 and 29 January the entire workforce commenced on a strike, however, the management has not responded yet to the inquiries of relocation.

## 6. Admissibility

FWF decided that the case is admissible on 29 January 2016.

The factory is an active supplier of Vaude, a member of FWF.

The case is relevant to the following labour standards of FWF's Code of Labour Practices:

- Labour standard 8: Legally binding employment relationship

## 7. Investigation

FWF informed Vaude about the case on 29 January. Vaude contacted the supplier and asked for a reply as soon as possible. The supplier informed the member that the management team indeed agreed to move to another place in the same area, but did not know the exact location yet. The plan was not to move right after Chinese New Year, but end of March / beginning of April.

The complaints handler informed the worker representative about this on 2 February. In the first week of April, Vaude was informed by their supplier that middle management informed its workers about their moving plan on 25 March, with details about location and date.

## 8. Findings and conclusions

The workers have been informed about the details of relocation on 25 March 2016, which is one month in advance as per law. By law workers are entitled to relocation compensation when the factory moves to another city. The supplier of Vaude moved within the city and therefore none of the workers were entitled to compensation.

## 9. Remediation

No remediation is needed because the workers have been informed about the relocation plans. FWF advises Vaude to enroll the factory a second time in a Workplace Education Programme training, to enhance dialogue between workers and management.

## 10. Verification

On 8 April the complaints handler asked the complainant whether they indeed have received detailed information about the relocation. The complainant confirmed that workers were informed about the new location and date of moving. FWF's complaint



handler tried to call the complainant again at the beginning of May to check how many workers have already moved to the new location, but could not get hold of the complainant.

## **11. Evaluation by the complainant**

The complainant is satisfied with the information given by FWF complaints handler on 2 February, and the detailed information given by management of the supplier on 25 March about the plans for relocation.