

## ANTI SLAVERY POLICY 2022



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OUR ANTI SLAVERY POLICY

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2022

JOHN HULL  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

SIGNED



“Slavery is theft - theft of a life, theft of work, theft of any property or produce, theft even of the children a slave might have borne”

KEVIN BALES

Co-founder and former president of Free the Slaves, the US sister organization of Anti-Slavery International, the world’s oldest human rights organization.

Elite is dedicated to the encouragement of high standards in business behaviour, based on our own values. Modern slavery is an issue which is fundamentally unethical and is of significant concern to our business, given the industry we operate in.

As we pride ourselves on our commitment to values such as dignity, justice, fairness, equality, integrity, respect and responsibility, we remain committed to the prevention of modern slavery within and surrounding our business.

While slavery is illegal globally, it still occurs in every country, even within the UK. Certain industries are more exposed to slavery, including the electronics, steel, automobiles, agriculture, mining, textiles and shipping industries. Given that our production processes involve a number of these sectors, it is of utmost importance that we play our role in opposing the exploitation of labour.

Those subjected to modern slavery are considered ‘owned’ by their employers, usually through recruitment debts or threats. Victims are moved from one country to another in a practice known as ‘human trafficking’. It isn’t just adults that are affected, sadly it’s children that play victim to all sorts of corruption due to their vulnerability. As well as child labour, forced labour, extreme working hours, harassment and violence, discrimination and more occur behind the scenes of modern day slavery.

As a large business, we are aware of the reputational damage we would face if slavery was exposed within our supply chain. The use of exploitative labour, knowingly or unknowingly, could risk us losing consumer confidence and market share. This is why written commitment in the form of human rights policies or a code of ethics is not enough, sufficient checks must be made to detract any kind of slavery.

We are aiming for credentials that demonstrate our procurement decisions are based on ethical above commercial considerations. This yields numerous benefits such as improving employee morale, enhancing local and global communities, as well as exceeding legal requirements. Beyond the reputational and legal risks, the overruling reason for us here, is to do the right thing.



Lack of transparency increases the risk of undetected forced labour and **SLAVERY** somewhere in the supply chain.

Unfortunately, the ways in which we operate can affect the likelihood of slavery being a part of the final product and complex supply chains can allow forced labour to thrive. This is why we allocate sufficient time to our order and installation time, alleviating the pressure on the supplier’s capacity, recognising that if this were not done, suppliers may sub-contract urgent work to factories or workers that are not regulated to the same standards as the supplier.

Pricing can play a significant role too. Buyers may negotiate such low prices that suppliers are forced to push down the price it pays for the materials it needs, which can have a subsequent effect on those involved in the production of raw materials, increasing the likelihood of forced labour.

Companies, including Elite, have a responsibility of ensuring that no forced labour has been used in producing the products they sell. This should apply not only to goods produced in their own factories but also to their suppliers, and partners throughout the supply chain.

It is not always easy, or possible to prove that companies within the supply chain used forced labour at any stage of their production process however, we believe it should be a responsibility of the company to prove that it does not occur.

We believe we have the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of our own workers and those who wish to engage with us, by continuously monitoring and measuring not only our own standards, but those of our supply chain partners. This is governed and audited with continuous communication of our expectations as a business. Our approach is frequently improved and we actively work with our business partners to meet the unique challenges posed within this industry.

A WORD ABOUT COTTON...

At Elite, we are aware of the risks in sourcing cotton based products, due the vulnerability of workers in their place of origin. Because of this, we ensure any textiles are sourced from ethically sound suppliers. The main fabric suppliers that we use are Camira, Gabriel, Kvadrat and Panaz.

The production of cotton effects both the environment and people, typically involving the use of large quantities of water and chemicals, often taking place in regions facing water shortages and climate issues. The suppliers we partner with have made significant effort to contribute back into these communities and support programmes that aim to improve the conditions these communities live in.

In addition, cotton provides a livelihood for many people throughout the world and there is a need to protect their health and ensure that they work in safe, fair conditions.