

# RMG SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (RSC)

## MONTHLY UPDATE

September 2023



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*Delivering world-class sustainable workplace safety programmes*

## CONTACT US

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**We value your feedback on this document.**

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*Cover Photo:* An image of a “Safety Committee Walk Trough” at an RSC covered factory.

## RSC at a glance

The RMG Sustainability Council (RSC) is a safety monitoring body in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. It is a private initiative of the Bangladesh Industry, global brands, and global and local trade unions. The operations of Bangladesh Accord were transitioned to the RSC. Our vision is to ensure workplace safety, enabling sustainable business and developing the supply chain.

Our expertise lies in:

- Fire, Electrical, Structural and Boiler associated hazards identification in accordance with local & international standards.
- Advise remediation plans to mitigate safety risks.
- Communication & follow up on the identified issues and implement a firm warning procedure to ensure the production facilities do not fall behind on remediation.
- Ensuring enough training and capacity development of the safety committee members in the production facilities to identify and manage workplace safety risks.
- Ensure an independent complaints mechanism that ensures the anonymity of the complainant and follow up on their right to a safe workplace. Going forward we will also have a wing where environmental sustainability will be monitored and assessed.

## MONTHLY UPDATE ON INSPECTION PROGRAMME

### STATUS OF INSPECTION PROGRAMME (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

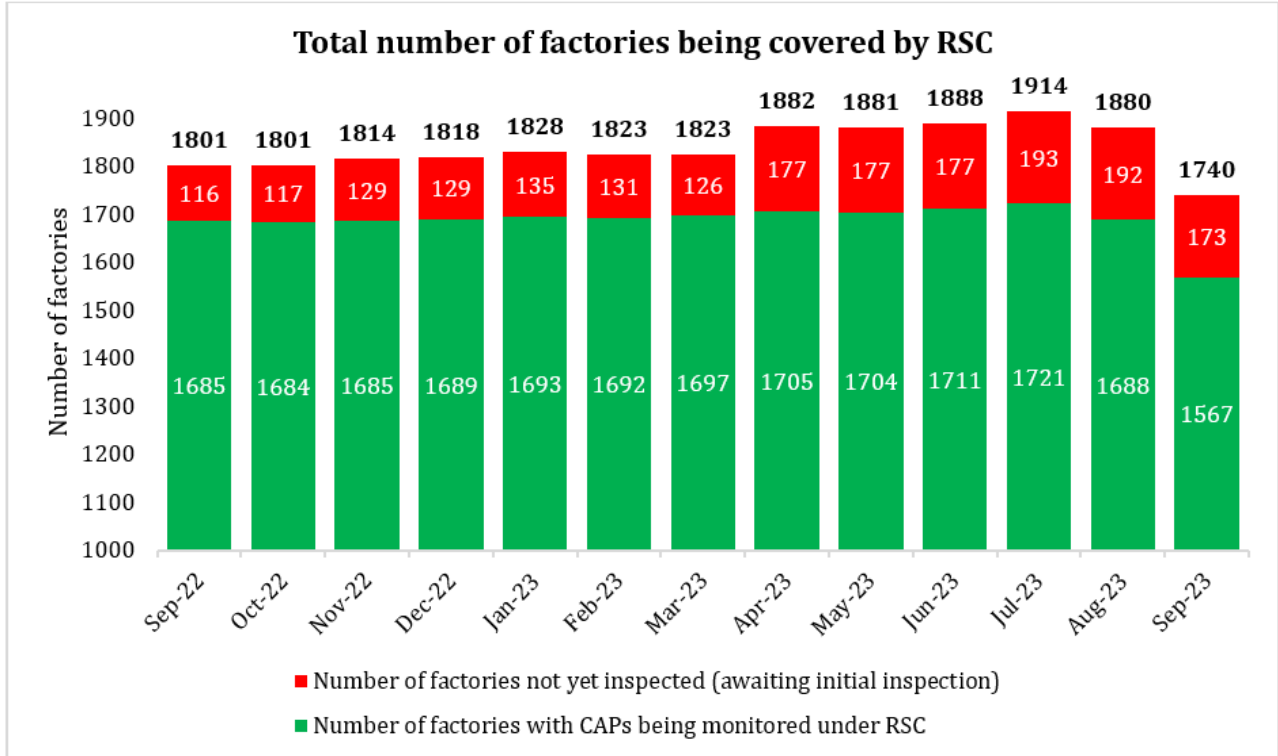
This section represents the total number of inspections the RSC has conducted. The RSC inspection programme consists of Structural, Electrical, Fire & Boiler safety inspections. The RSC carried out **12,284** inspections during the RSC period starting June 2020 till September 2023 (among a total of **58,116** inspections by the safety initiative since 2014).

- RSC engineers conducted **1000 (Covered and Non-Covered Factory)** initial inspections during the RSC period among the total of **7,402** initial inspections.
- RSC engineers conducted **11,284** follow-ups and other safety inspections during the RSC period, among the **50,714** follow-ups and other safety inspections.

Following the initial inspections, the factory and the Brands are tasked with developing a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), which details time-bound remedial actions (based on the severity of the findings) for completion. RSC Regularly Follow-up with the factories on the outstanding CAP's, conducts follow-up inspection to monitor the remediation processes are duly Completed. Other safety inspection includes post-incident inspection, OSH complaints initial inspection, Fire inspection, OSH complaints verification inspection, unannounced OSH complaint inspections, and inspections based on Safety Committee Walk Through. Each factory is inspected on average approximately once every eight months. However, our goal is to minimize it the 4-5 months by March 24.

### FACTORY COVERAGE

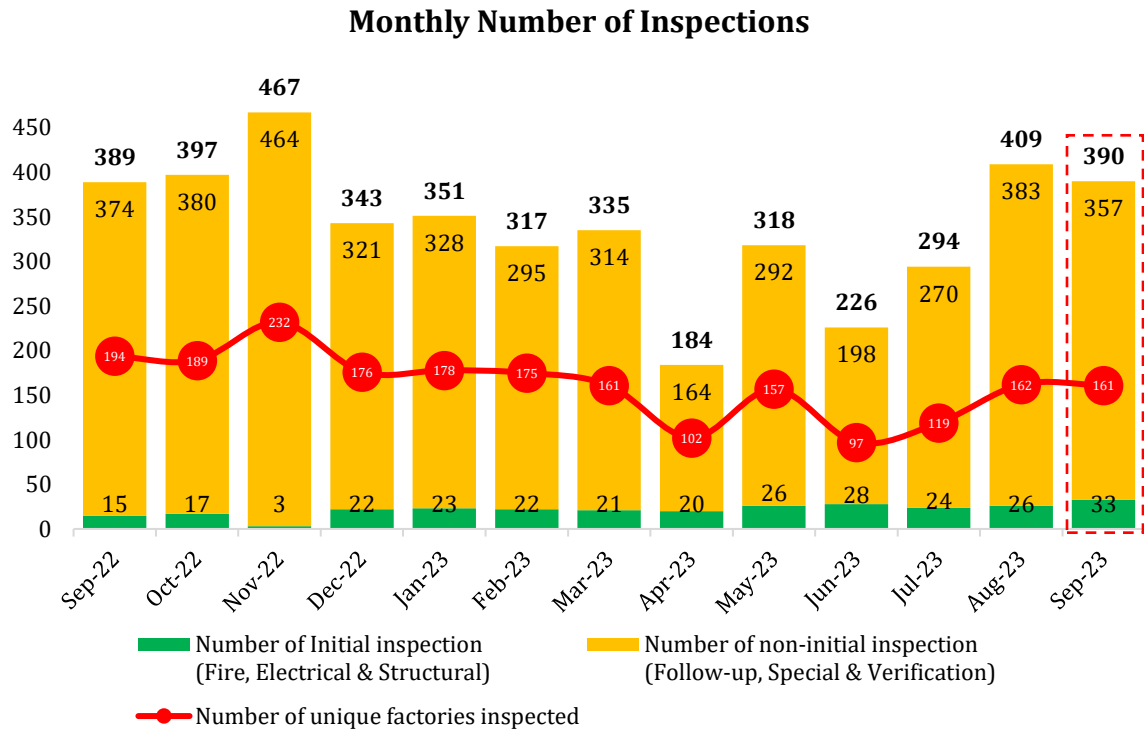
- Covered factory account number: **1740** (The significant drop from **1880** covered factories to **1740** factories in September is the outcome after the delisting, archiving, and transfer of the "RSC No brand factories" to the DIFE).
- **23** factories are "independent", that means these factories are listed on their own through the industry (BGMEA & BKMEA) for participating in the RSC's inspection and remediation programme.
- The number of factories awaiting initial assessments increased substantially in the month of **April 2023 & July 2023** when many factory extension buildings were listed as new accounts. As of September 23, **173** factories were waiting for initial inspection.



**Figure 1: Number of factories covered by RSC**

## INSPECTIONS

- Total number of inspections: **390** in current month.
- Number of unique factories inspected: **161** in current month.
- The total inspection number is **2.4** times than the number of unique factories covered indicating multiple types of inspections being conducted simultaneously.



**Figure 2: Number of Inspection conducted by the RSC**

## MONTHLY UPDATE ON SAFETY REMEDIATION

### REMEDIATION PROGRESS ON INITIAL FINDINGS (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

- Total number of factories with Letters of Recognition (for 100% completion of Initial findings): **527** out of **1740** (The drop from 529 recognised factories to 527 factories in September is the outcome after the delisting, archiving closing and ineligibility).
- The number of 100% recognitions is limited by slow completion of initial Fire safety (Fire Alarm and Detection System-FADS & Suppression System-SUPS) items, which are still present a key challenge. To address this challenge T&C VI process has been updated with a logical sequence of activities followed in the T&C VI process and there are responsible process allocated at each stage of the process.

### Number of factories with Letter of Recognition for 100% initial findings complete

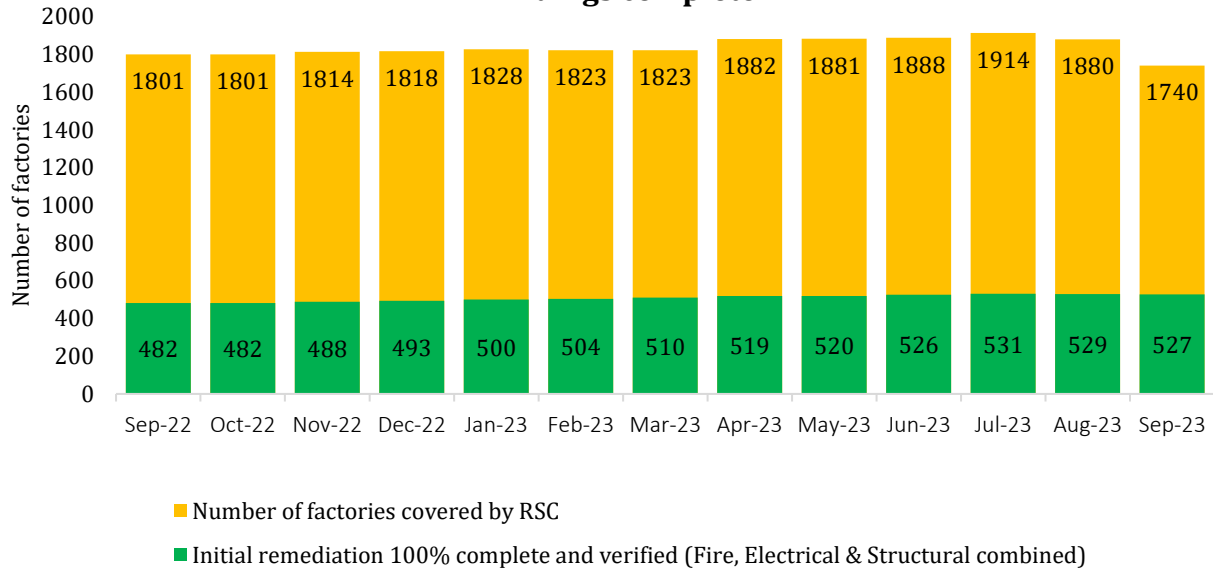


Figure 3: Number of Initial 100% remediated factories (combinedly recognized)

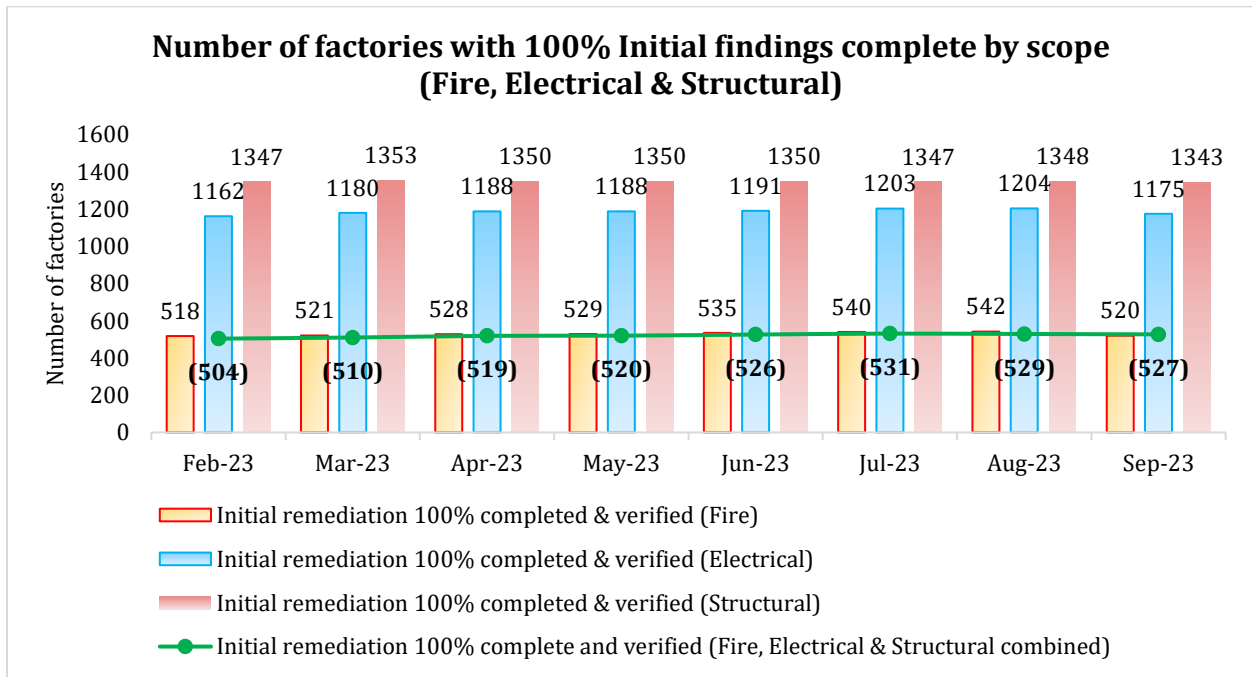


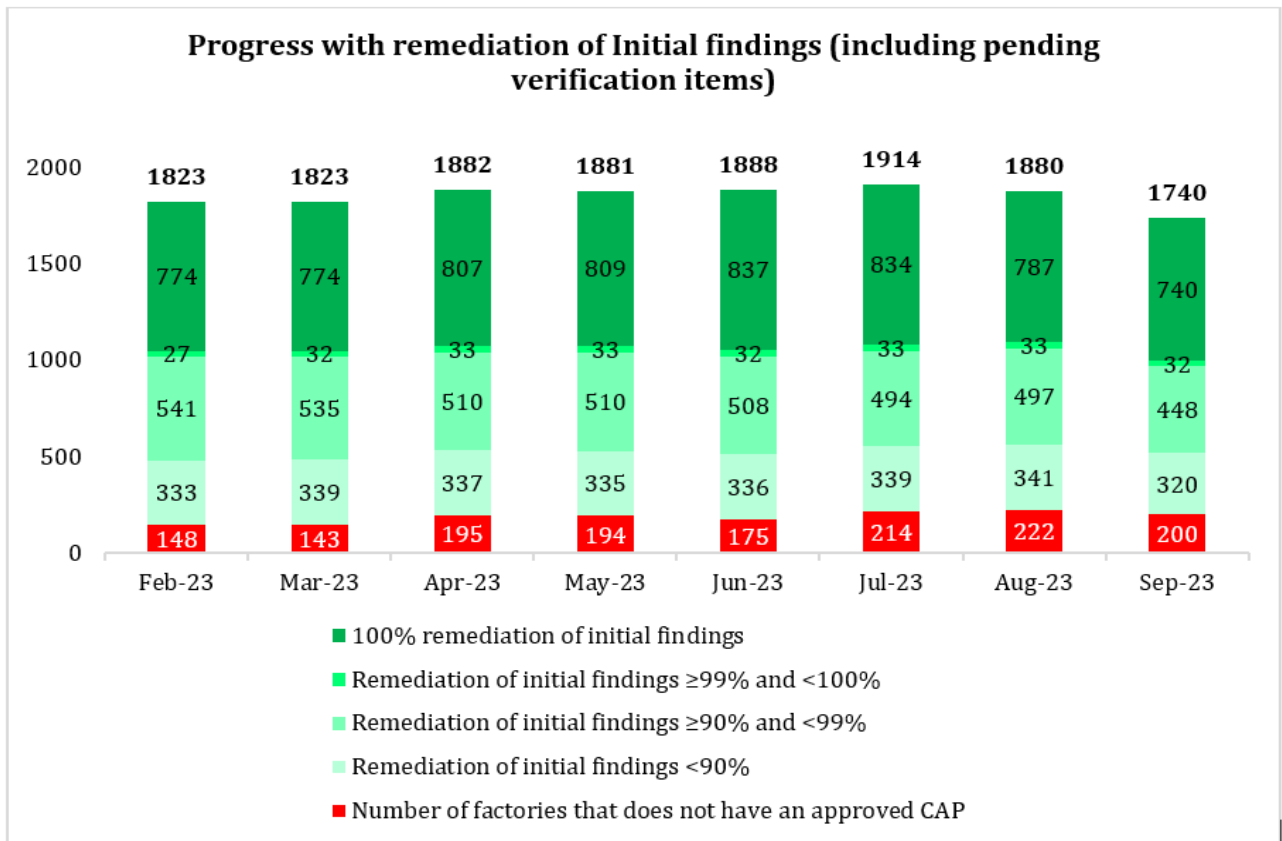
Figure 4: Number of Initial 100% remediated factories by scope (Fire, Electrical & Structural)

**PROGRESS WITH REMEDIATION OF INITIAL FINDINGS ( 2023)**

Progress with remediation is recorded as being at one of the following three stages:

- **In progress:** This is the default status for an inspection finding. It means that remediation of the inspection finding is underway.
- **Pending verification:** The “Pending Verification” status refers to a process where a factory reports to RSC that the finding(s) are corrected, but requires the RSC engineer’s verification through an inspection.
- **Corrected:** The finding has been verified as corrected by the RSC engineers through their follow-up verification inspection and/or testing visits.

The following graph shows the **740** factories that have recorded **100%** initial findings completed (includes Pending verification). From Figure 4 above it can be seen that **527** of these factories have received a Letter of Recognition as having **100%** initial findings verified (Corrected) by inspection.



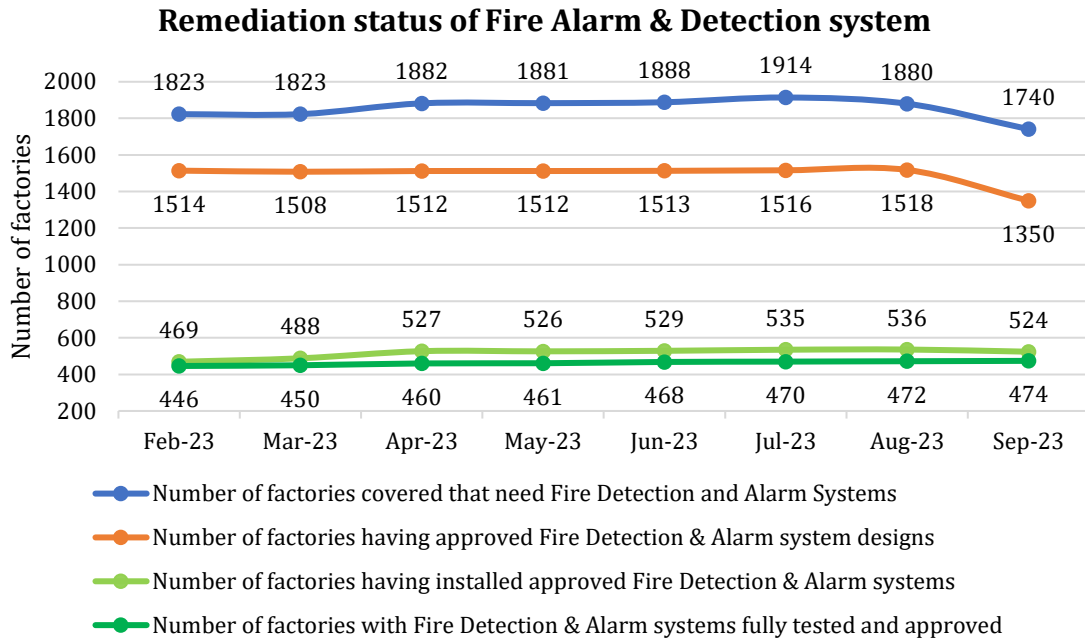
**Figure 5: Initial remediation progress (%) considering pending verification items.**



**PROGRESS RATE ON MAJOR ITEMS BY DISCIPLINE**

**Remediation Status of Fire Alarm and Detection Systems (As of September 2023)**

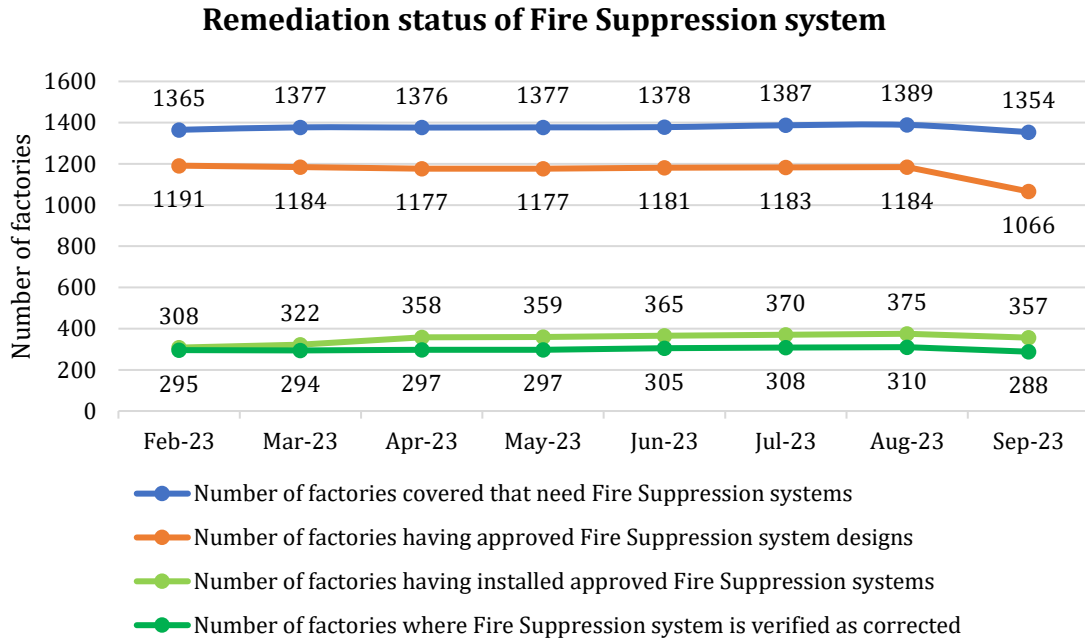
Figure 6 below demonstrates progress over the past 8 months with the three main stages for full testing and approvals of Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (FADS):



**Figure 6: Remediation status of Fire Alarm and Detection System**

### Remediation Status of Fire Suppression Systems (As of September 2023)

Figure 7 below demonstrates progress over the past 8 months with the three main stages for full testing and approvals of Fire Suppression Systems (SUPS):

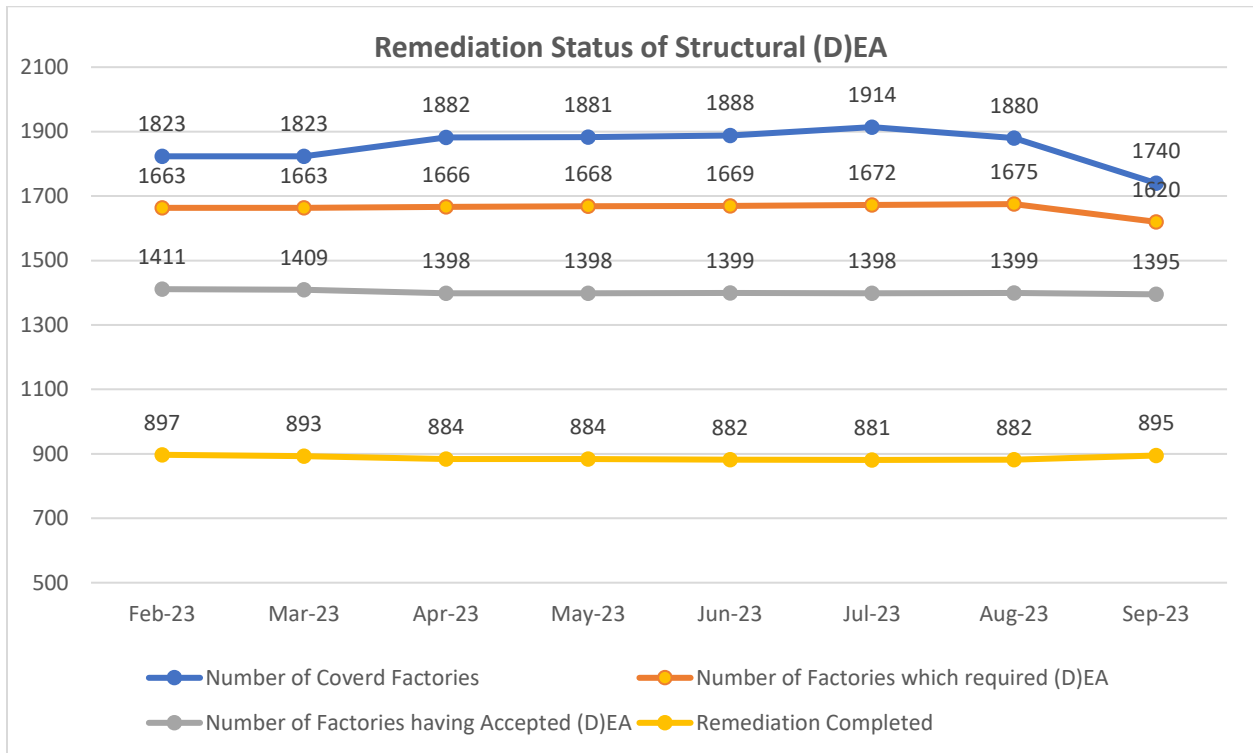


**Figure 7: Remediation status of Fire Suppression System**

**Remediation status of Structural Items: Detailed engineering assessment-(D)EA:**

- **Number of factories having accepted (D)EA: 1395.**
- **Number of factories completed the structural remediation: 895.**

The chart demonstrates the number of accepted (D)EAs, where it can be seen that there is a significant difference between desktop approval and the works onsite as verified by RSC.

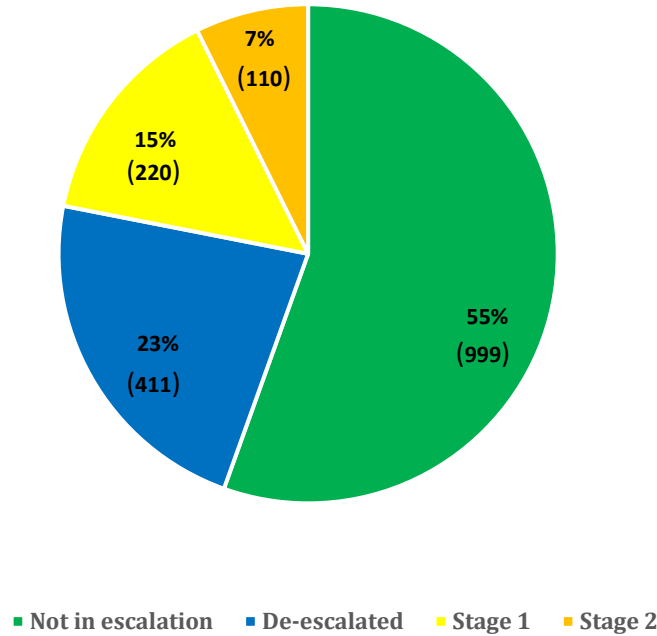


**Figure 8: Remediation status of Structural (D)EA**

**FACTORY ESCALATION STATUS (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)**

As of 30 September 2023, a total of **330** factories have been escalated, **220** to Stage 1 and **110** to Stage 2. There are **411** factories that were de-escalated after the escalation items were verified by the RSC. Out of the total RSC covered factories, **999** have never gone to the escalation process. The percentage of different escalation stages of the RSC covered (**1,740**) factories are shown in the pie chart below.

**Different Escalation Stages of all RSC covered factories**



**Figure 9: Escalation status of factories**

**LIST OF FACTORIES THAT RECEIVED STAGE 3 ESCALATION IN THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2023**

The table below lists the names and account IDs of the factory that were escalated to stage 3. These factories have been made ineligible for business with RSC participating Brands as a result of failure to participate in the RSC prescribed Safety Programme and have been transferred to DIFE.

ACCOUNT ID	ACCOUNT NAME	CURRENT ESCALATION STAGE	STAGE 3 ISSUED ON
10831	Susuka Knit Ltd.	Stage 3	19 Sep 2023

### **LIST OF FACTORIES THAT RECEIVED RECOMMENDATION OF PARTIAL/ FULL EVACUATION IN THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2023**

During a structural assessment if the RSC engineer(s) find an immediate threat to the occupant of the factory building, then RSC could recommend immediate partial/full evacuation for the factory building. In the month of September 2023, the RSC didn't recommend partial or Full evacuation to any of its covered factories.

### **REPORTED FACTORY INCIDENT(S) IN THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2023**

There were no incidents in the RSC covered Factories during the month of September 2023. RSC encourages all covered factories to remain vigilant and report any potential hazards or safety concern.

# MONTHLY UPDATE ON WORKPLACE SAFETY PROGRAMME

## STATUS OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMPLAINTS MECHANISM (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

Workers at RSC-covered factories, and their representatives, have a right to raise complaints with the RSC Safety and Health Complaints Mechanism to remedy safety concerns that are not being effectively addressed at the factory level. Workers at covered factories, and their representatives, can raise concerns about safety and health risks safely, and if they so choose, confidentially, through the Safety and Health Complaints Mechanism. The Safety and Health Complaints Mechanism also protects complainants from reprisal, harassment, threat, or other retaliatory actions for exercising the right to file a complaint. This protection applies regardless of whether the complaint is determined to be OSH or non-OSH.

All complaints are assessed to determine if they fall under the occupational safety and health remit.

Occupational safety and health complaints are processed by RSC staff specialised in investigating and resolving complaints. RSC complaint specialists are responsible for verifying the delivery of the remedy of all complaints. Where complaints affect the safety of all workers/groups of workers, the RSC announces the findings and remediation requirements to all workers at the factory.

Complaints that fall outside of the remit of the Occupational Safety and Health Complaint Mechanism (i.e., non-OSH complaints) are forwarded to Factory Management, responsible brand, and labour signatories.

Complainants alleging issues at factories that are not covered by the RSC are provided with the contact information of the Government's Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE).

### Total Complaints Received (1 June 2020 – 30 September 2023)

Since June 2020, the RSC has received **5,072** complaints out of which **1,223 (24%)** are Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) related complaints and **3,849 (76%)** are non-OSH related complaints. <sup>(OBJ)</sup>

### Complaints Receiving Statistics According to RSC-Year

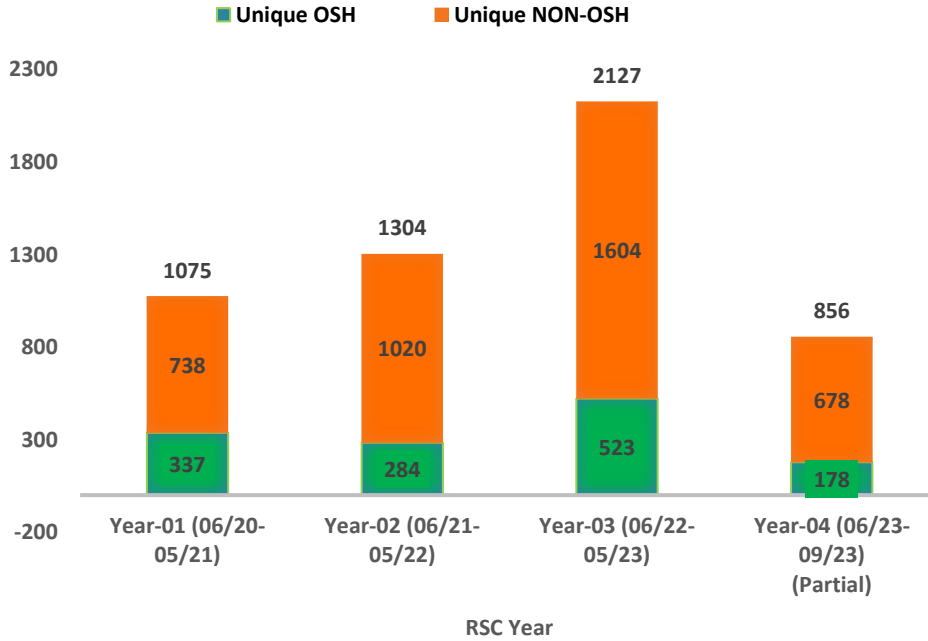


Figure 10: OSH Complaints RSC Period (1 June 2020 – 30 September 2023)

### Complaints Closed Statistics According to RSC-Year

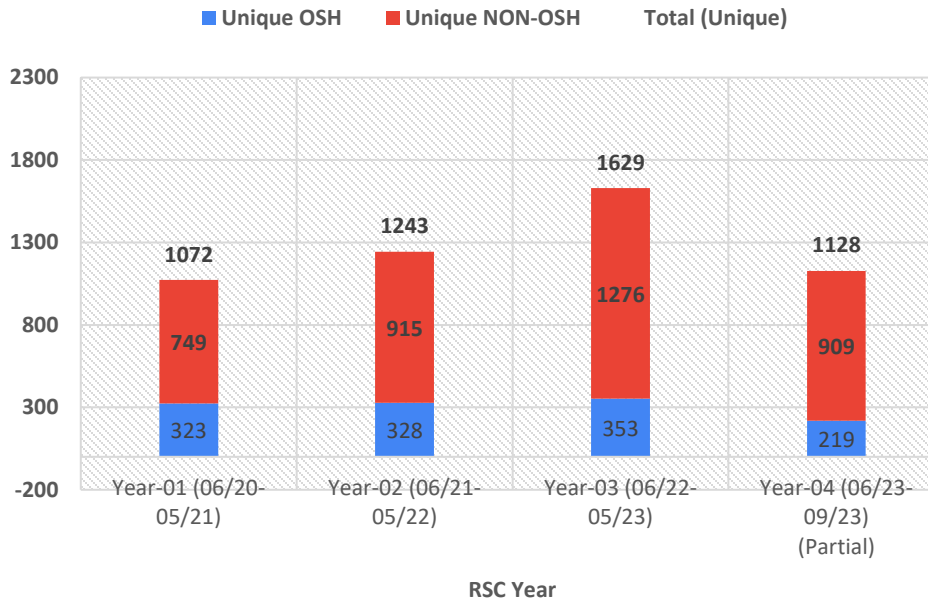


Figure 11: OSH Complaints RSC Period (1 June 2020 – 30 September 2023)

**Total Complaints Closed**

Period	Total OSH Closed	Total Non-OSH Communicated with stakeholders	Total (OSH+ Non-OSH)
RSC Period (June 2020 to Sep 2023)	<b>1223</b>	3849	<b>5072</b>



<b>Resolved</b>	640
<b>Handled by RPD</b>	20
<b>Disengaged</b>	189
<b>Withdrawn</b>	204
<b>Factory Closed</b>	8
<b>Not Sustained</b>	55
<b>Resolved outside RSC complaints mechanism</b>	40
<b>Factory Not Covered</b>	42
<b>Duplicate</b>	5
<b>No Brand Factory</b>	20

<b>Total</b>	<b>1223</b>
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## OSH TRAINING PROGRAMME (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2023)

### Key functions of the OSH Training Programme

#### Facilitation of Safety Training

- The RSC Safety Committee and Safety Training (SCST) Programme currently consists of 8 training modules conducted through 8 sessions for the members of the factory Safety Committee.
- As part of the training programme, the Safety Committee and the RSC OSH Training Programme Specialist conduct Walkthrough (WT) (a type of inspection) at the factory to identify actual or any potential safety and health hazards.

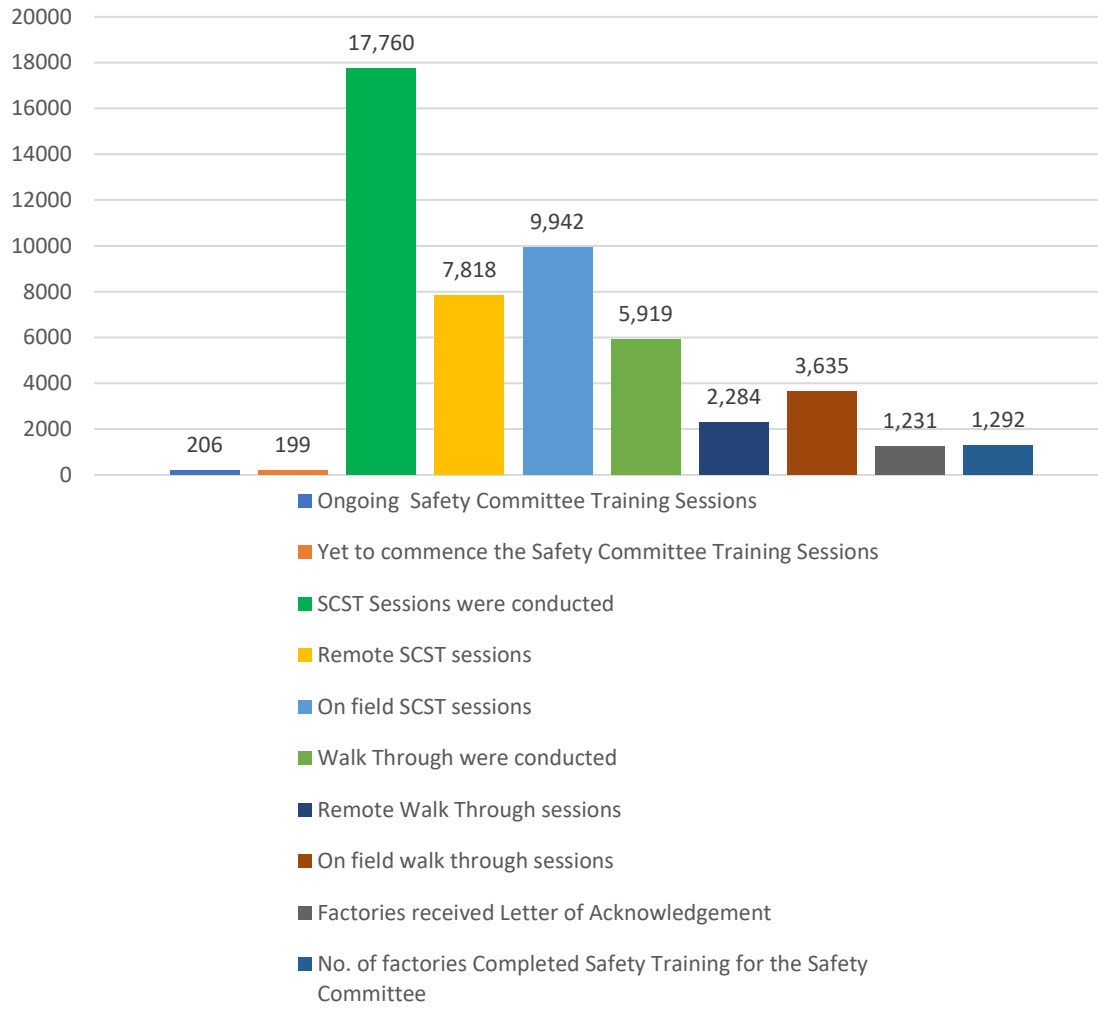
#### All Employee Meetings

- Following a preliminary consultation (Initial Meeting) with the factory management, the RSC OSH Training department schedules 3 “All Employee Meetings (AEM)” on the factory grounds, where all employees of the factory are invited to participate.

A factory receives a **Letter of Acknowledgement** (LoA) from RSC after participating all the activities designed under the OSH Training Programme.

Committee members and conduct investigation immediately after any accidents/incidents take place at any factory.

### RSC OSH Training Department September 2023



**Figure 11: OSH Training Programme in September 2023**

### OSH Training Programme Update Status

<b>OSH Training Programme Features</b>	<b>(As of September 2023)</b>
Ongoing Safety Committee Training Sessions	<b>199</b>
Yet to commence the Safety Committee Training Sessions	<b>199</b>
SCST Sessions were conducted	<b>17,760</b>
Walk Through were conducted	<b>5,919</b>
Remote WALK-THROUGH sessions	<b>2,284</b>
On-field walk-through sessions	<b>3,635</b>
No. of factories Completed Safety Training for the Safety Committee	<b>1,292</b>
Factories received a Letter of Acknowledgement	<b>1,231</b>