Modern Slavery Act Statement



Shoe Zone is a UK specialist footwear retailer, offering low price and high quality footwear. We operate from our head office in Leicester and from a portfolio of approximately 360 stores in the UK. Shoe Zone employs approximately 2,600 employees.

The Shoe Zone store portfolio consists of 271 original high street stores containing the core Shoe Zone product range and 44 Hybrid high street stores and 45 Big Box, larger retail park stores which also have additional brands such as Skechers, Hush Puppies and Kickers. Shoe Zone has also developed a successful digital platform enabling its customers to order footwear and ancillary items online (together with an ever growing list of popular footwear brands).

This statement summarises the steps taken by the Shoe Zone group of companies (Shoe Zone) during the financial year which ended on 1st October 2022 to uphold its ongoing commitment to the principles set out in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA).

Shoe Zone takes its responsibility seriously in respect of supporting the key the objectives of the MSA, taking a zero tolerance position to modern slavery. Any allegations of malpractice or unethical conduct are taken seriously and we continue to review our practices and procedures across the business.



Shoe Zone respect the human rights of all people both nationally and internationally. We are committed to the prevention of all types of modern slavery and will not use or permit the use of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour or human trafficking in the course of our business. As part of this commitment, in 2022, we have tightened up our checks and procedures in both procurement and recruitment and continued with our training seminars to educate wider staff across all departments of the business to identify and investigate modern slavery.



Shoe Zone appreciate that there is a risk of exposure to modern slavery in our supply chain. In 2022 Shoe Zone continued to improve its due diligence procedures by regularly updating and improving its risk-based register of all suppliers to ensure great care is taken in selecting its business partners and suppliers from the UK and overseas.

When appointing new suppliers or reviewing arrangements with existing suppliers, Shoe Zone has put in place detailed checks. Shoe Zone requires all suppliers to promote and adhere to ethical and responsible business practices. Shoe Zone recognises that due diligence is an ongoing process and procedures need to be continually updated and kept under review.

Shoe Zone's Supplier Manual has been fully reviewed and updated. In 2022 a new updated version was circulated to all suppliers setting out new strict procedures and policies to ensure that all of Shoe Zone's suppliers are contractually bound to comply with the MSA and with our Ethical Sourcing Code, which require suppliers (amongst other things) to:

- respect human rights,
- comply with International Labour Organisation guidelines,
- provide a safe and hygienic working environment,
- comply with all relevant national laws, and
- treat employees fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner.

> **"our suppliers have a clear & thorough understanding of our business values and expectations"**

In addition to our Ethical Sourcing Code, Shoe Zone's Directors have good visibility of the supply chain and work closely to deepen our knowledge of how our suppliers operate. The Directors and Buying team visit international suppliers and are able to view and check labour practices and working conditions on the ground. These checks have taken place over many years, save for when travel has been prohibited due to bans and restrictions following the global spread of COVID 19. Lines of communication have stayed open between the Buying team and suppliers and video calls have been an effective way of communicating while the restrictions are in place.



As part of our recruitment policy, we continue to ensure that thorough identity checks are carried out to ensure that all our employees are legally able to work in the appropriate jurisdiction. Recruitment agencies are also required to provide modern slavery statements and illustrate that they also adhere to strict policies to eliminate the risk of modern slavery in the workforce.



Our employees, our agents and the other key contacts in our supply chain are encouraged to identify and confidentially report any ethical or modern slavery concerns relating to any activities in connection with Shoe Zone's operation. The designated telephone line and email address set up in 2021 is still promoted and available to all

staff to report any concerns in a safe and confidential manner. We are committed to comprehensively investigating all reports quickly and take appropriate action. Posters are continually displayed throughout head office, the distribution centre and all stores across the country explaining what modern slavery is and providing dedicated and confidential support lines to report concerns or get help. Shoe Zone will continue to strive to provide clear practices and procedures giving staff the opportunity to raise concerns confidentially and quickly in a safe and secure setting.



Procurement personnel and management have been trained to understand the principles of ethical and responsible sourcing to ensure they have an awareness of the risks of modern slavery. All of our key staff are fully aware of the principles contained in our Ethical Sourcing Code and the implications that modern slavery has on those who are affected by MSA abuses. These principles have also been communicated to our core suppliers and manufacturing partners. Shoe Zone is also a subscriber to the Retail Trust which provides resources for all Shoe Zone employees, which includes access to further information and guidance around modern slavery.

This statement will be reviewed annually by our Board of Directors.

This statement was approved by the Boards of Shoe Zone Plc and Shoe Zone Retail Limited.



Signed: .....

Charles Smith

Chairman, Shoe Zone Plc
March 2023