

# ercol

## **Modern Slavery Statement**

This statement is relevant to section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and sets out the steps that Ercol Furniture Ltd has taken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. Ercol Furniture Ltd has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within the business or our supply chain.

### **Our business**

Ercol Furniture Ltd is a medium sized manufacturer who have a well-established British furniture brand. We have circa 150 employees who are UK based, as well as an international supply chain who provide many components, from wood to fabrics as well as finished product. Suppliers are predominantly Europe based, as well as Turkey and China. We work closely with our suppliers, to foster good working relationships, but to also review that ethical approaches and quality levels are in line with our ethos.

### **Our high-risk areas**

Ercol has identified that the high risk areas are predominantly in the supply chain located outside the EU. The lack of proximity, and the fact that the factories are run independently could potentially lead to a limited visibility of day to day practices on the ground. We have several approaches and mechanisms in place to mitigate these risks, which are outlined in this document.

### **Our approach**

We operate a number of internal policies/processes to ensure that we are conducting business in an ethical and transparent manner. These include:

1. Code of business conduct and responsible sourcing policy. This explains the ethical and legal standard we will maintain as an organisation, and how we expect our employees and suppliers to conduct their business operations. This policy sets out the organisation's stance on modern slavery.
2. Recruitment process. We operate a robust recruitment policy, which includes eligibility to work in the UK checks for all employees, to safeguard against human trafficking or individuals being forced to work against their will.
3. Whistleblowing policy. We operate a whistleblowing policy so that all employees know that they can raise concerns about how colleagues are being treated, or practices within our business or supply chain, without fear of reprisals.
4. We work alongside our clients to ensure factories, domestic and abroad, are run ethically and safely. This takes the form of factory visits, with regular internal ethical audits being conducted at each of our main supplier sites.

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A member of the Ercol Holdings group of companies

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## Our suppliers

Ercol Furniture Ltd works alongside well-established businesses and maintains a supplier list available on its business systems. Ercol conduct due diligence on key, high risk suppliers before engaging on commercial activities. This due diligence includes pre work inspections and periodic onsite audits which include a review of working conditions.

As part of our contract with high-risk suppliers going forward, we require that they confirm to us that:

1. They have understood the principles of the Modern Slavery Act, and taken steps to eradicate modern slavery within their business
2. They hold their own suppliers to account over modern slavery
3. They pay their employees at least the national minimum wage / national living wage (as appropriate) in their country
4. We may terminate the contract at any time should any instances of modern slavery come to light

## Training

We circulate information for our procurement/buying team so that they understand the signs of modern slavery and what to do if they suspect that it is taking place within our supply chain, and have information available on our intranet.

## Our performance indicators

We will know the effectiveness of the steps that we are taking to ensure that slavery and/or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain if:

- No reports are received from employees, the public, or law enforcement agencies to indicate that modern slavery practices have been identified.
- Internal and External audits do not highlight or give reason to suspect modern slavery is present.

## Approval for this statement

This statement was approved by the Board of Directors and will be reviewed and signed annually.



Ian Peers Operations  
Director

31st January 2021