

# RMG SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (RSC)

## MONTHLY REPORT

October 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 Through” 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 OCTOBER 2023)

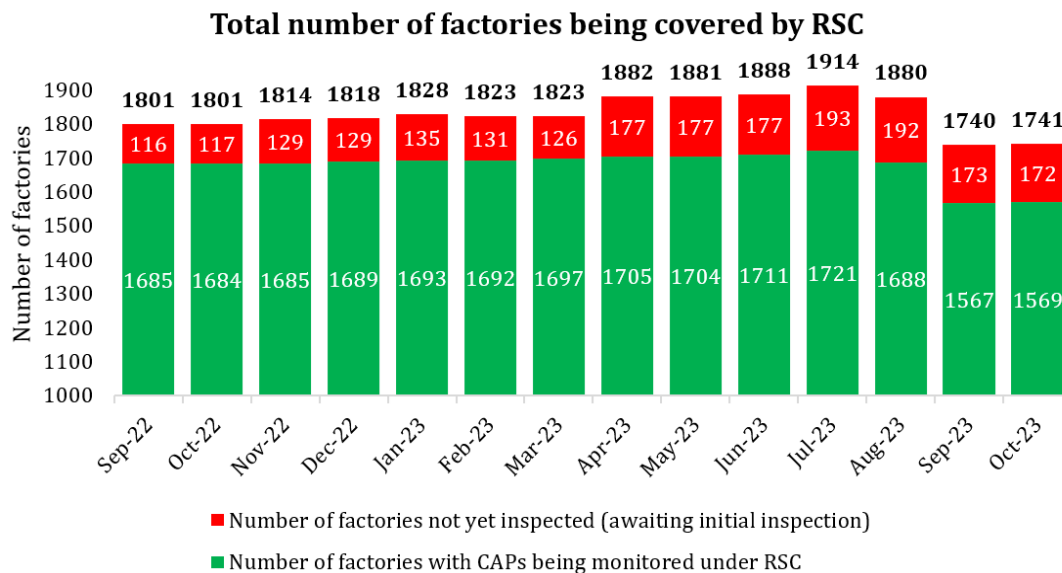
This section represents the total number of inspections the RSC has conducted. The RSC inspection programme consists of Structural, Electrical, Fire & Boiler safety inspections. The RSC carried out **12,740** inspections during the RSC period starting June 2020 till October 2023 (among a total of **58,572** inspections by the safety initiative since 2014).

- RSC engineers conducted **1081 (Covered and Non-Covered Factory)** initial inspections during the RSC period among the total of **7,483** initial inspections.
- RSC engineers conducted **11,659** follow-ups and other safety inspections during the RSC period, among the **51,089** 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 inspections to monitor the remediation processes are duly Completed. Other safety inspection includes post-incident inspections, OSH complaints initial inspections, fire safety inspections, OSH complaints verification inspections, 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 to 4-5 months by March 2024.

## FACTORY COVERAGE

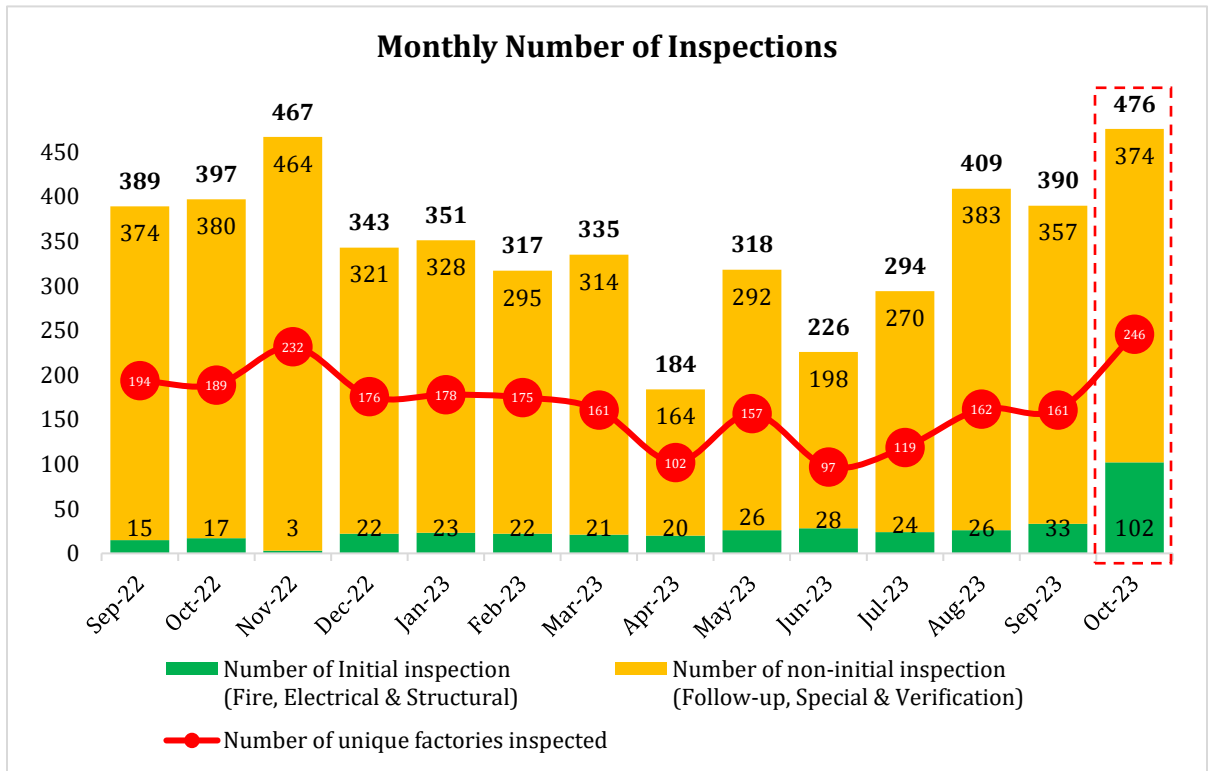
- Covered factory account number: **1741**.
- **20** factories are "independent", that means these factories are listed on their own through the industry (BGMEA & BKMEA) for participating in the RSC's inspection and remediation programme.
- The number of factories awaiting initial assessments increased substantially in the month of **April 2023 & July 2023** when many factory extension buildings were listed as new accounts. As of October **23**, **172** factories were waiting for initial inspection.



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

**INSPECTIONS**

- Total number of inspections: **476** in current month.
- Number of unique factories inspected: **246** in current month.
- The total inspection number is **1.93** times than the number of unique factories covered indicating multiple types of inspections being conducted simultaneously.

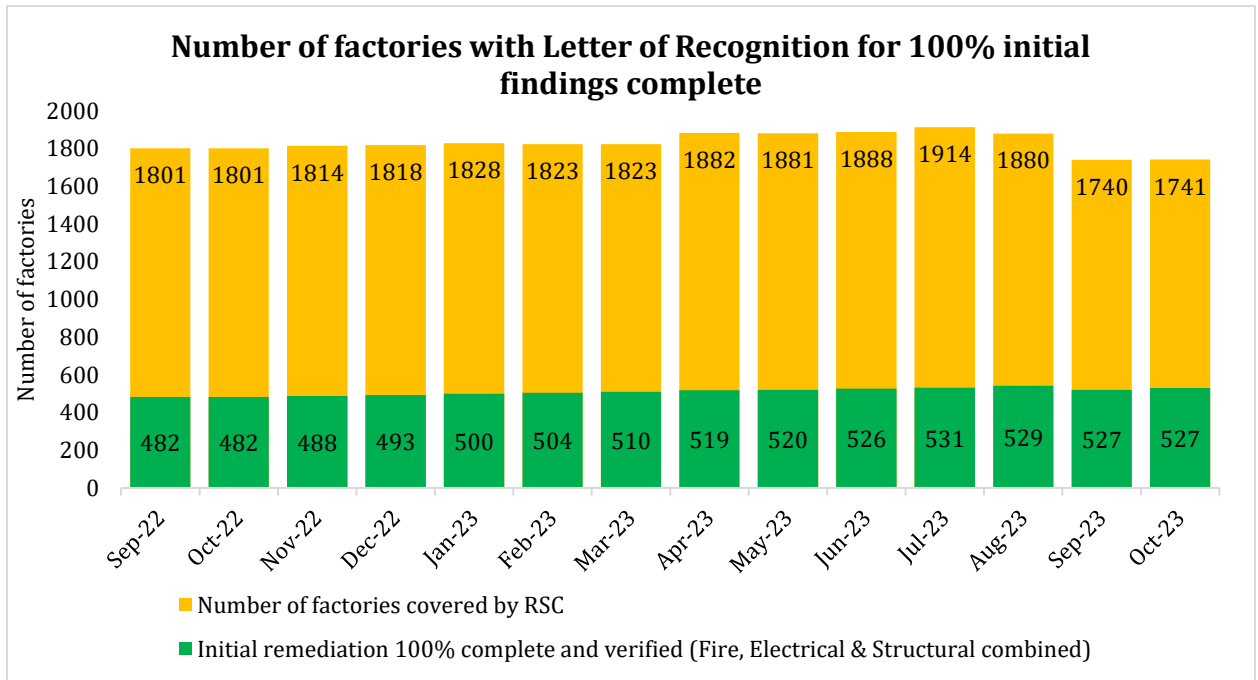


**Figure 2: Number of Inspection conducted by the RSC**

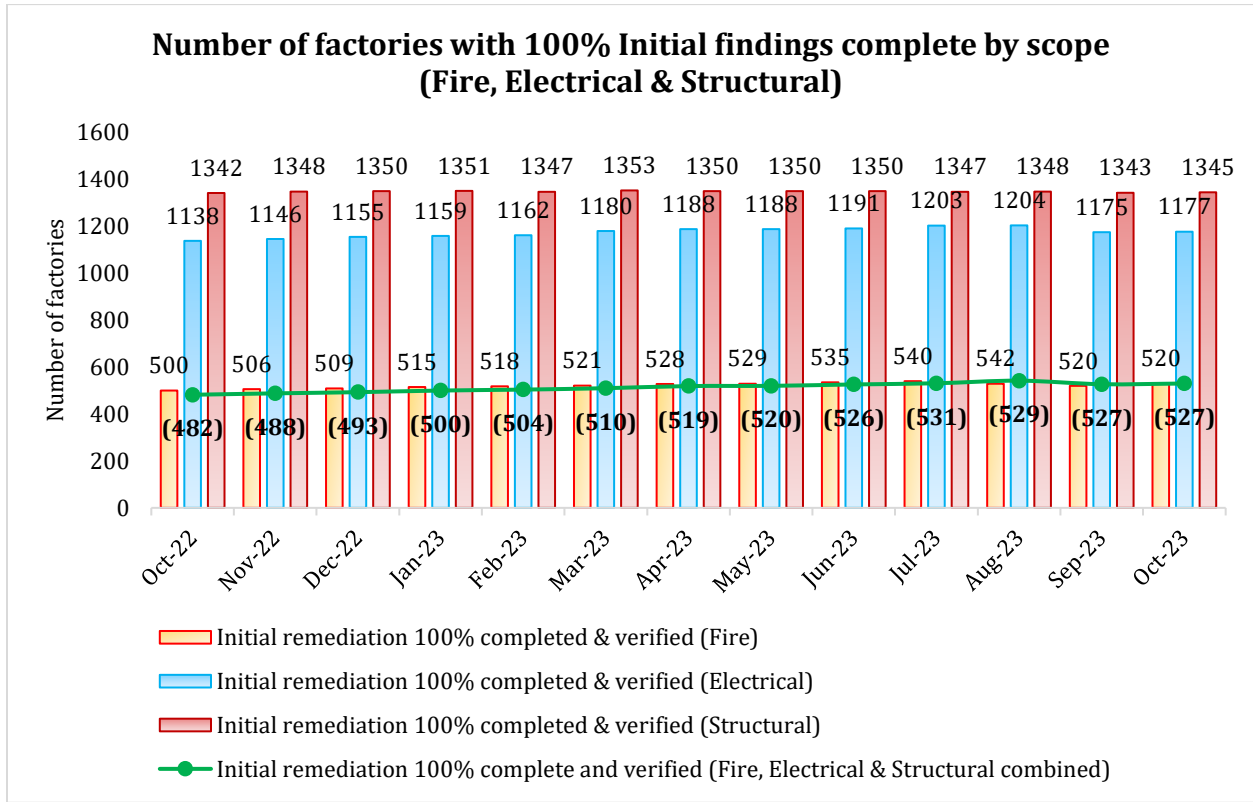
## MONTHLY UPDATE ON SAFETY REMEDIATION

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

- Total number of factories with Letters of Recognition (for 100% completion of Initial findings): **527** out of **1741**.
- 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.



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



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

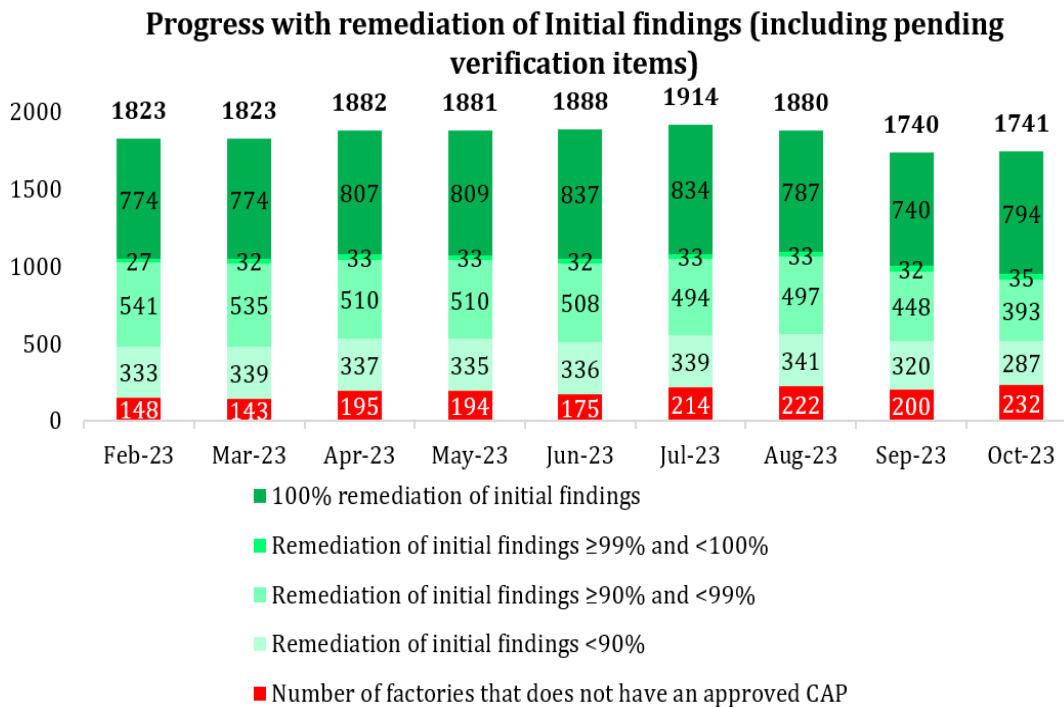


## PROGRESS WITH REMEDIATION OF INITIAL FINDINGS (AS OF OCTOBER 2023)

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 **794** 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.

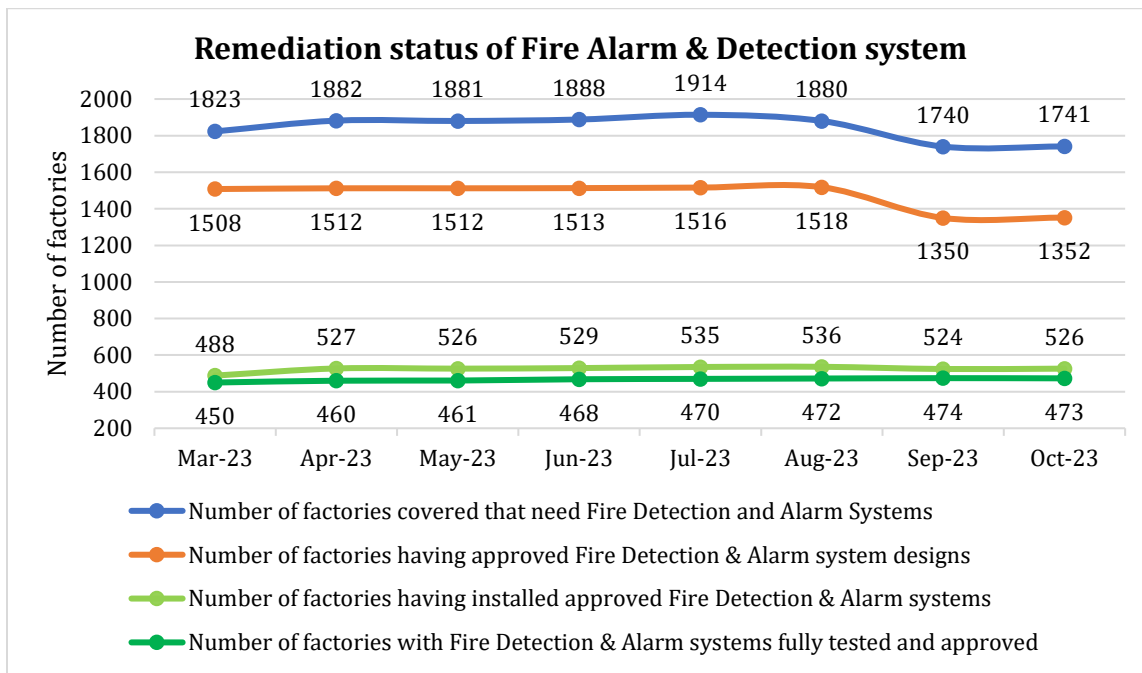


**Figure 5: Initial remediation progress (%) considering pending verification items**

**PROGRESS RATE ON MAJOR ITEMS BY DISCIPLINE**

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

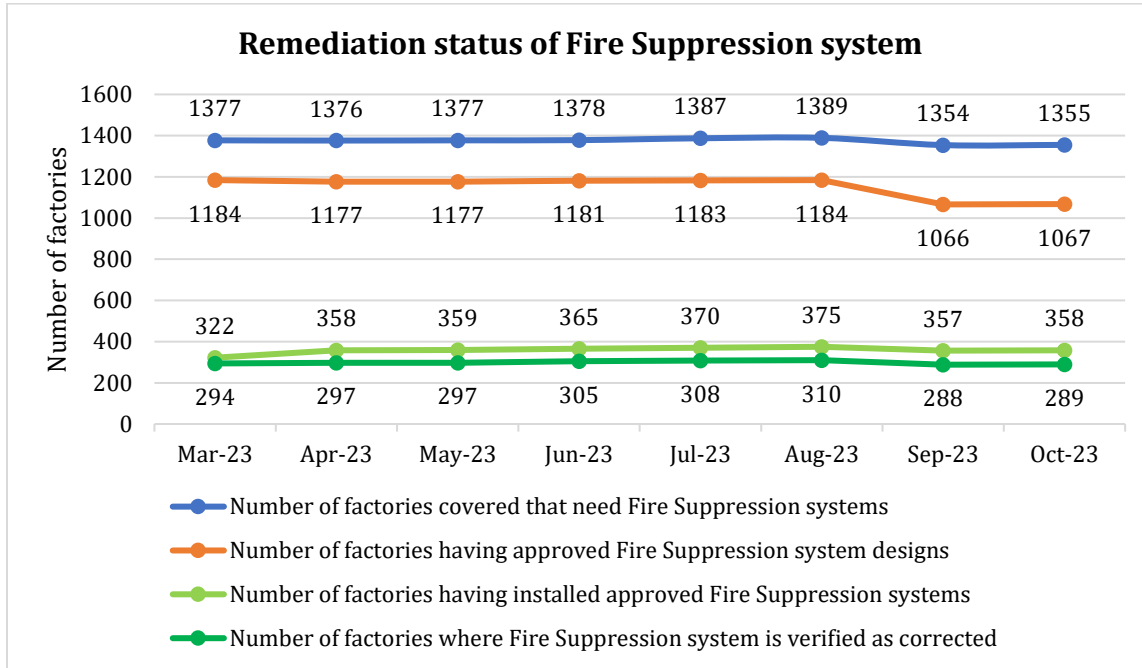
Figure 6 below demonstrates progress over the past 8 months with the three main stages for full testing and approvals of Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (FADS):



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

### Remediation Status of Fire Suppression Systems (As of October 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):

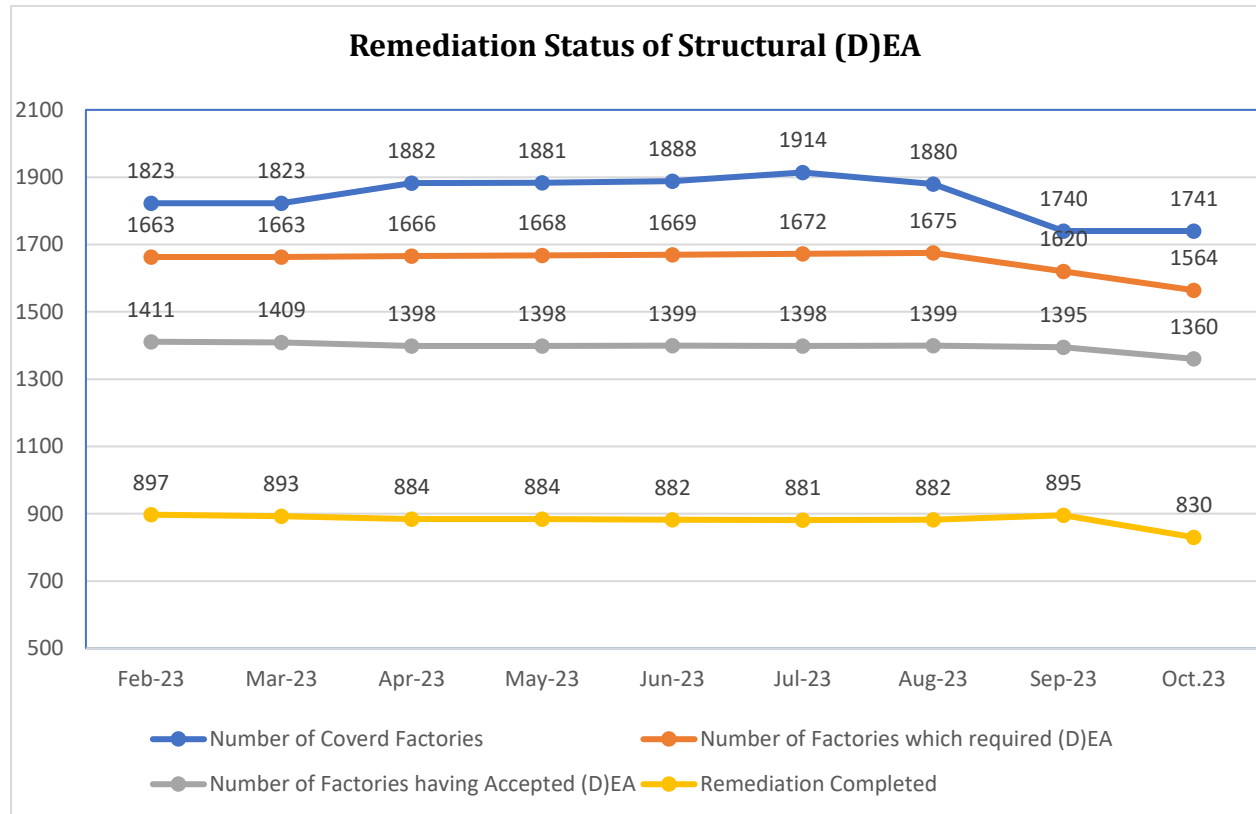


**Figure 7: Remediation status of Fire Suppression System**

**Remediation Status of Structural Items: Detailed Engineering Assessment-(D)EA:**

- **Number of factories having accepted (D)EA: 1360.**
- **Number of factories completed the structural remediation: 830.**

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.

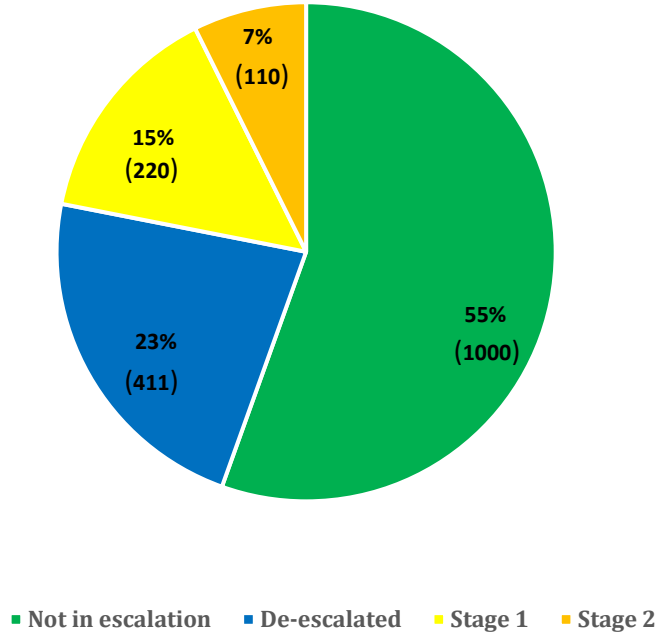


**Figure 8: Remediation status of Structural (D)EA**

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

As of October 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, **1000** have never gone to the escalation process. The percentage of different escalation stages of the RSC covered (**1,741**) 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 OCTOBER 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
10494	Caesar Apparels (Extension)	Stage 3	18 Oct 2023

### **LIST OF FACTORIES THAT RECEIVED RECOMMENDATION OF PARTIAL/ FULL EVACUATION IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 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 October 2023, the RSC didn't recommend partial or Full evacuation to any of its covered factories.

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

Where the RSC becomes aware of an incident in an RSC covered factory, such as a fire or other accident, that has caused death or injury or has potential safety implications for the occupants of the factory, then an incident inspection is carried out immediately to investigate.

A report of the incident is produced, and actions identified that the factory owner must implement to ensure an adequate level of safety is re-established in the building. There were Three such cases during October 2023:

ACCOUNT ID	ACCOUNT NAME	DATE OF THE INCIDENT	INCIDENT SUMMARY
12252	ABM Fashion Ltd.	30 October, 2023	A fire incident at the factory on 30 October 2023 was reported through a media outlet. A loud explosion followed by a fire incident reportedly took place. at ABM Fashion Ltd., (Location: 1143 & 1145, Konabari, Kashimpur road, Gazipur. on Monday (October 30) at around 05:35pm. Upon receiving the news, the RSC immediately dispatched a team of engineers to conduct the post-incident inspection at this factory.
11219	Fortis Garments Ltd.	31 October, 2023	A fire incident at the factory on 31 October 2023 was reported through a media outlet. A loud explosion followed by a fire incident reportedly took place. At <b>Fortis Garments Ltd.</b> Location: Holding No-100/1, Block-B, Saheed Mosarraf Hossain Road, Purba Chandra, Sofipur, Kaliakoir, Gazipur. on Tuesday (October 31) at around 01:30 pm Upon receiving the news, the RSC immediately dispatched a team of engineers to conduct the post-incident inspection at this factory.
23528	ECHOTEX Ltd. (New Building)	30 October, 2023	A fire incident at the factory on 30 October 2023 was reported through a media outlet. A loud explosion followed by. (New Building) Location: Chandra, Palli Biddut, Kaliakoir. on Monday (October 30) at around 07:56 pm a fire incident reportedly took place. At <b>ECHOTEX Ltd. (New Building)</b> Location: Chandra, Palli Biddut, Kaliakoir. on Monday (October 30) at around 12:23 pm Upon receiving the news, the RSC immediately dispatched a team of engineers to conduct the post-incident inspection at this factory.

## MONTHLY UPDATE ON WORKPLACE SAFETY PROGRAMME

### STATUS OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMPLAINTS MECHANISM (AS OF OCTOBER 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 – 31 October 2023)**

Since June 2020, the RSC has received **5,367** complaints out of which **1,285 (24%)** are Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) related complaints and **4,082 (76%)** are non-OSH related complaints.



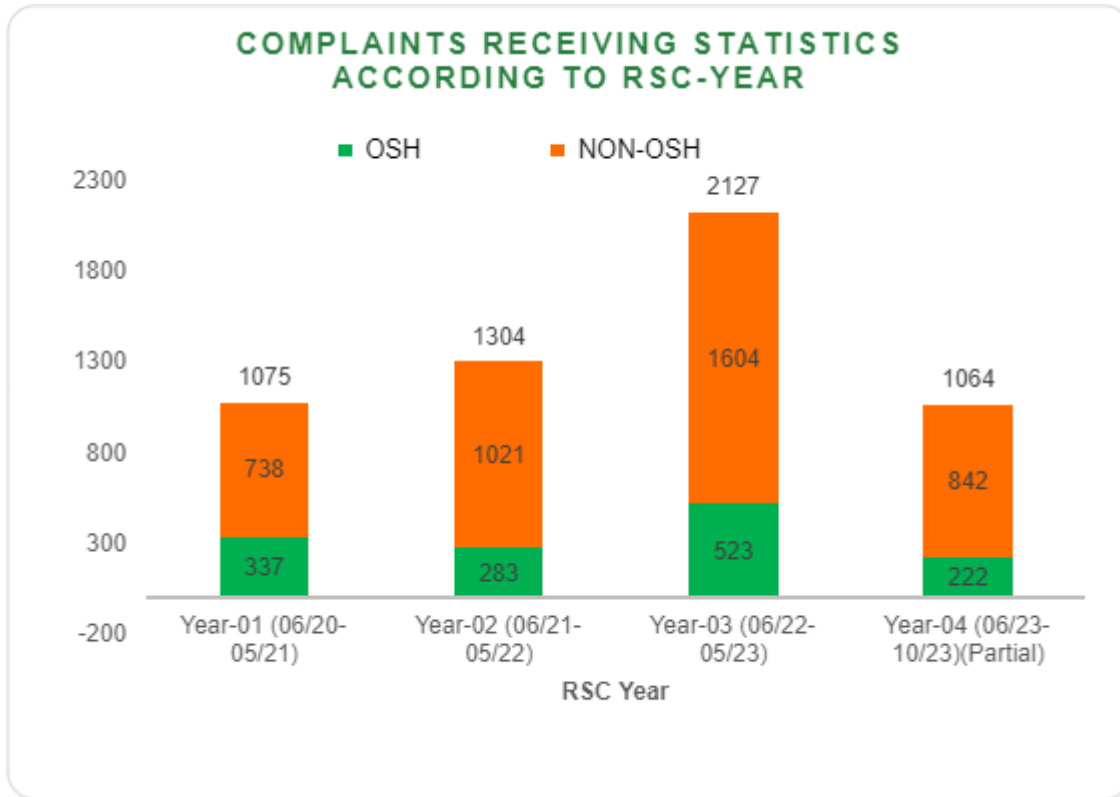


Figure 10: OSH Complaints RSC Period (1 June 2020 – 31 October 2023)

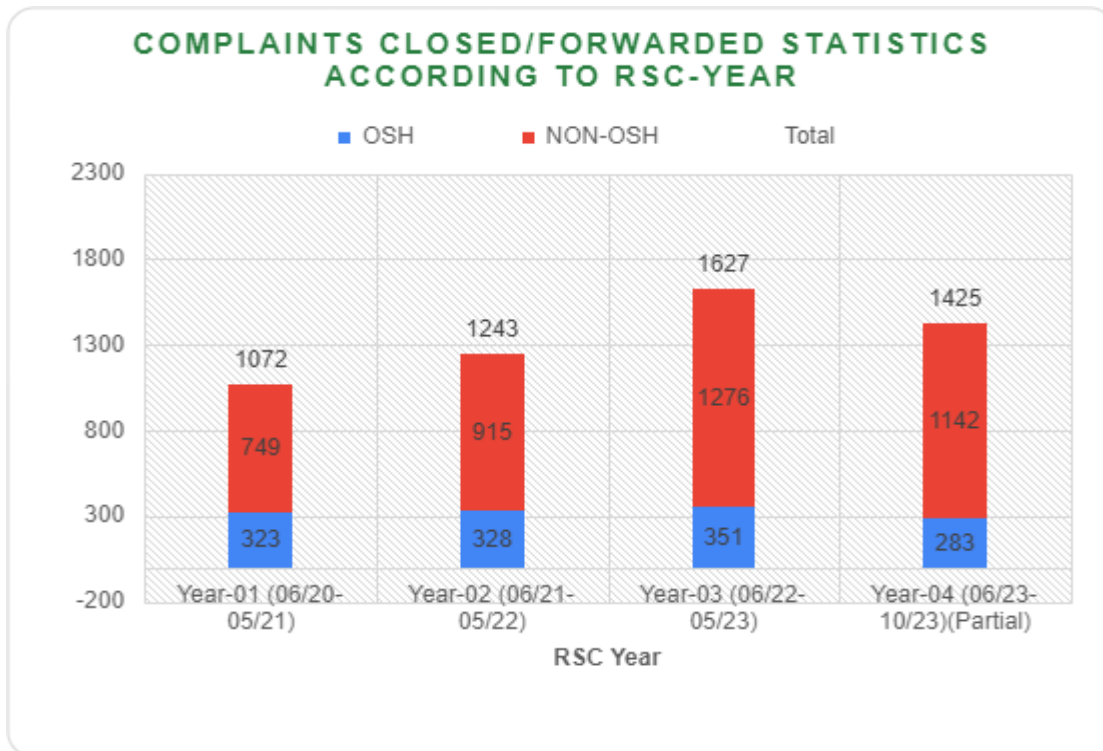


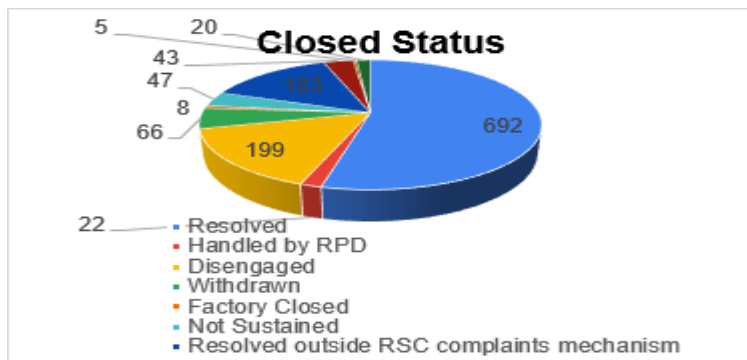
Figure 11: OSH Complaints RSC Period (1 June 2020 – 31 October 2023)

**Total Complaints Closed/Forwarded**

Period	Total OSH Closed	Total Non-OSH Communicated with stakeholders	Total (OSH+ Non-OSH)	Total Pending Complaints
RSC Period (06- 2020 to 10-2023)	1285	4082	5367	224



<b>Resolved</b>	692
<b>Handled by RPD</b>	22
<b>Disengaged</b>	199
<b>Withdrawn</b>	66
<b>Factory Closed</b>	8
<b>Not Sustained</b>	47
<b>Resolved outside RSC complaints mechanism</b>	183
<b>Factory Not Covered</b>	43
<b>Duplicate</b>	5
<b>No Brand Factory</b>	20



## OSH TRAINING PROGRAMME (AS OF OCTOBER 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.

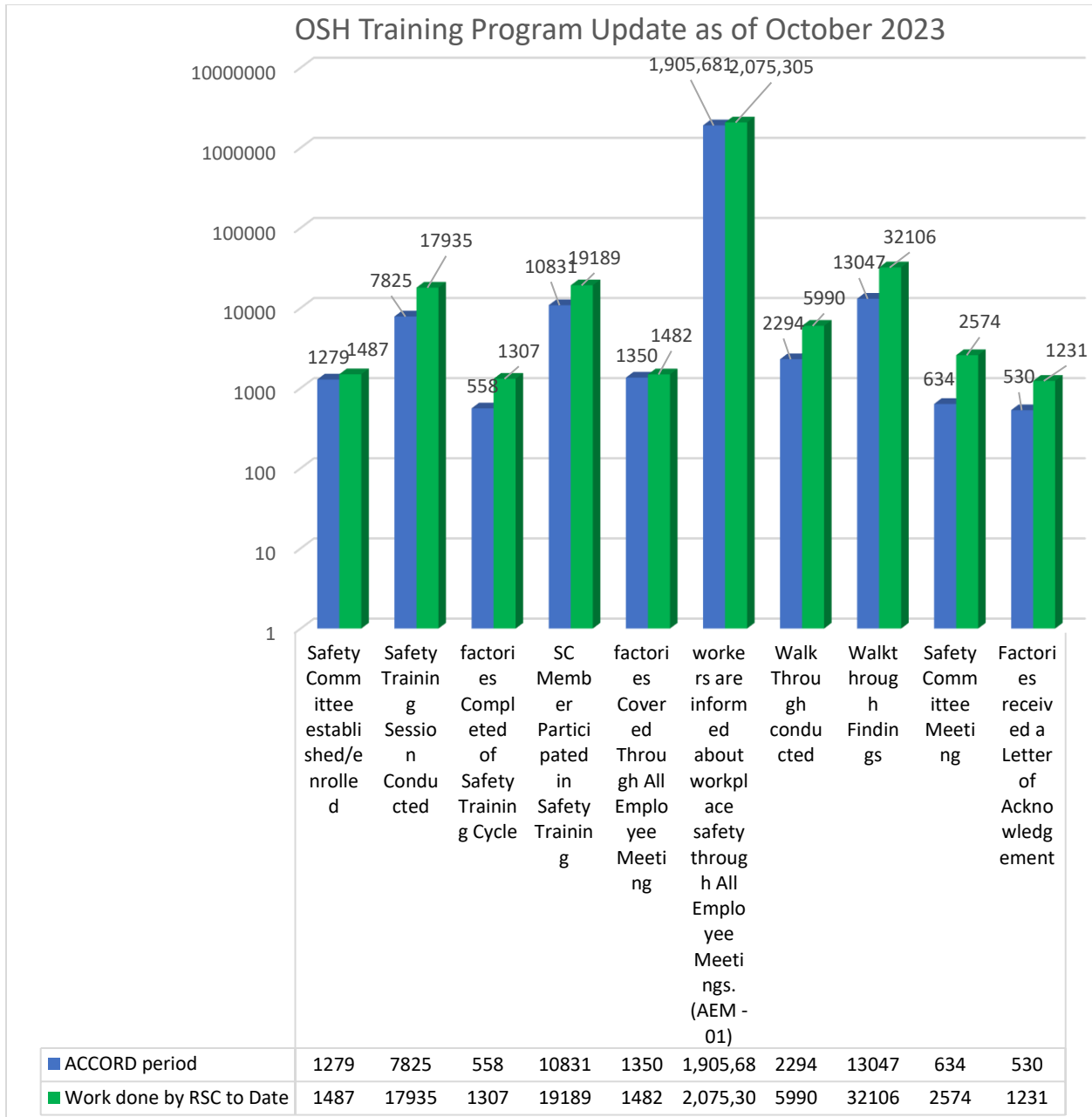
#### All Employee Meetings

- 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 Safety Committee and Safety Training (SCST) Programme.

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

OSH Training Program Update as of October 2023				
SL#	Particular (Number of)	For the month of October	As of Today,	
			Accord (As of 31st May 2020)	RSC (As of 31st October 2023)
1	Safety Committee established/enrolled	15	1279	1487
2	Safety Training Session Conducted	129	7825	17935
3	Factories Completed of Safety Training Cycle	37	558	1307
4	SC Member Participated in Safety Training	932	10831	19189
5	factories Covered Through All Employee Meeting	74	1350	1482
6	workers are informed about workplace safety through All Employee Meetings. (AEM -01)	82685	1,905,681	2,075,305
7	Walk Through conducted	29	2294	5990
8	Walkthrough Findings	164	13047	32106
10	Safety Committee Meeting	8	634	2574
11	Factories received a Letter of Acknowledgement	0	530	1231



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