

RMG SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (RSC)

MONTHLY UPDATE

MAY 2023



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Delivering world-class sustainable workplace safety programmes

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We value your feedback on this document.

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Cover Photo: An image of an RSC Engineer conducting a safety inspection 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 May 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 **10,946** inspections during the RSC period starting June 2020 till May 2023 (among a total of **56,779** inspections by the safety initiative since 2014).

- RSC engineers conducted **796** initial inspections (**at Covered and Non-Covered Factory**) during the RSC period, among the total of **7,198** initial inspections.
- RSC engineers conducted **10,150** follow-ups and other safety inspections during the RSC period, among the **49,581** 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 detail time-bound remedial actions (based on the severity of the findings) for completion. Follow-up inspections are conducted to monitor the remediation and verify that corrective actions have been completed correctly. Other safety inspection includes post-incident inspection, OSH complaints initial inspection, OSH complaints verification inspection, unannounced OSH complaint inspections, inspections based on Safety Committee Walk Through. Each factory is inspected on average approximately once every eight months.

For the **1,704 factories currently covered by RSC**, the following number of inspections have been carried out:

During the RSC period (from 1 June 2020 up to 31 May 2023)

- Initial inspections: **781 (at Covered Factories)**
- Follow-up inspections: **6,353 (30% structural inspections, 38% electrical inspections, 32% fire inspections)**

Total initial and follow-up inspections (since 2013 up to 31 May 2023)

- Initial inspections: **5,112 (at Covered Factories)**
- Follow-up inspections: **35,513 (23% Structural inspections, 39% electrical inspections, 38% fire inspections)**

MONTHLY UPDATE ON SAFETY REMEDIATION

SAFETY REMEDIATION PROGRESS (as of May 2023)

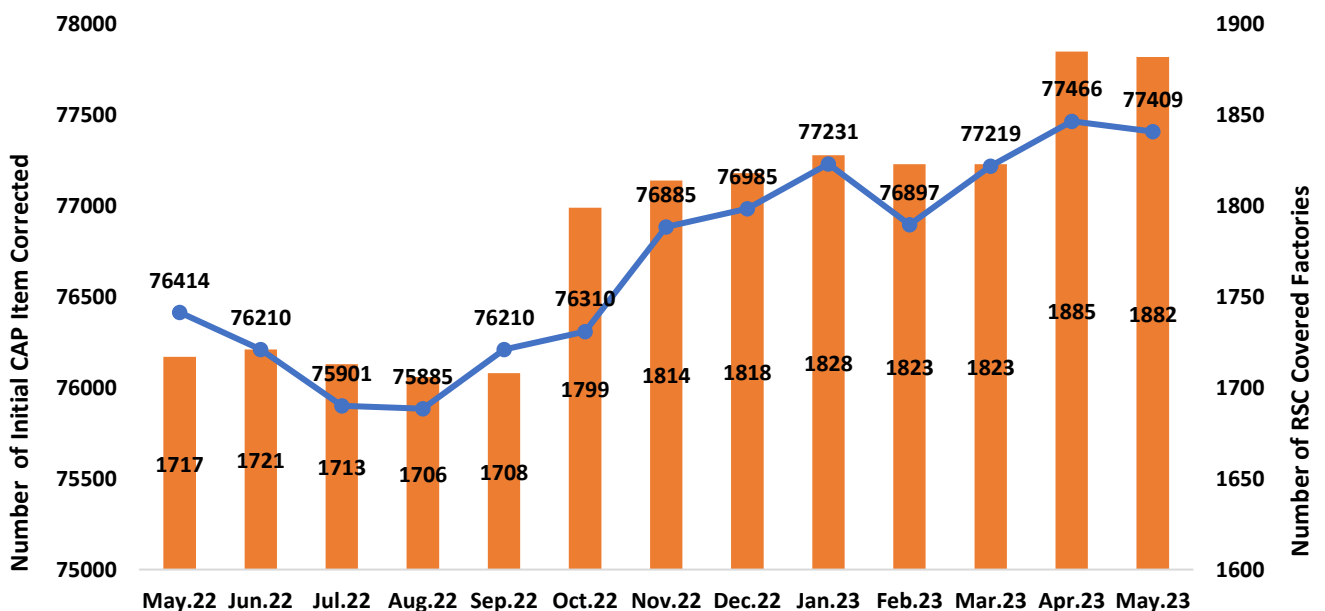
Progress & completion rates of safety remediation at RSC-covered factories:

- The Total number of factories covered by the RSC is **1,881**.
- Among these **1,704** factories have been inspected and **177 newly enlisted** factories are still to receive initial assessment inspection.
- **91.37%** remediation progress of initial findings, overall including structure, electrical and fire.
- **519** factories completed the remediation of initial findings.
- **>90%** remediation of initial findings at **1,320** factories (**801** factories if those that completed the initial remediation are excluded).
- **89.60%** of covered factories received their Fire Alarm and Detection System design approval as part of the remediation plan.
- **85.55%** of covered factories received their Fire Suppression System design approval as part of the remediation plan.
- **78.8%** of factories completed structural remediation based on an Engineering Assessment as part of the remediation plan.

REMEDIATION PROGRESS OF SAFETY ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING INITIAL INSPECTIONS (as of May 2023)

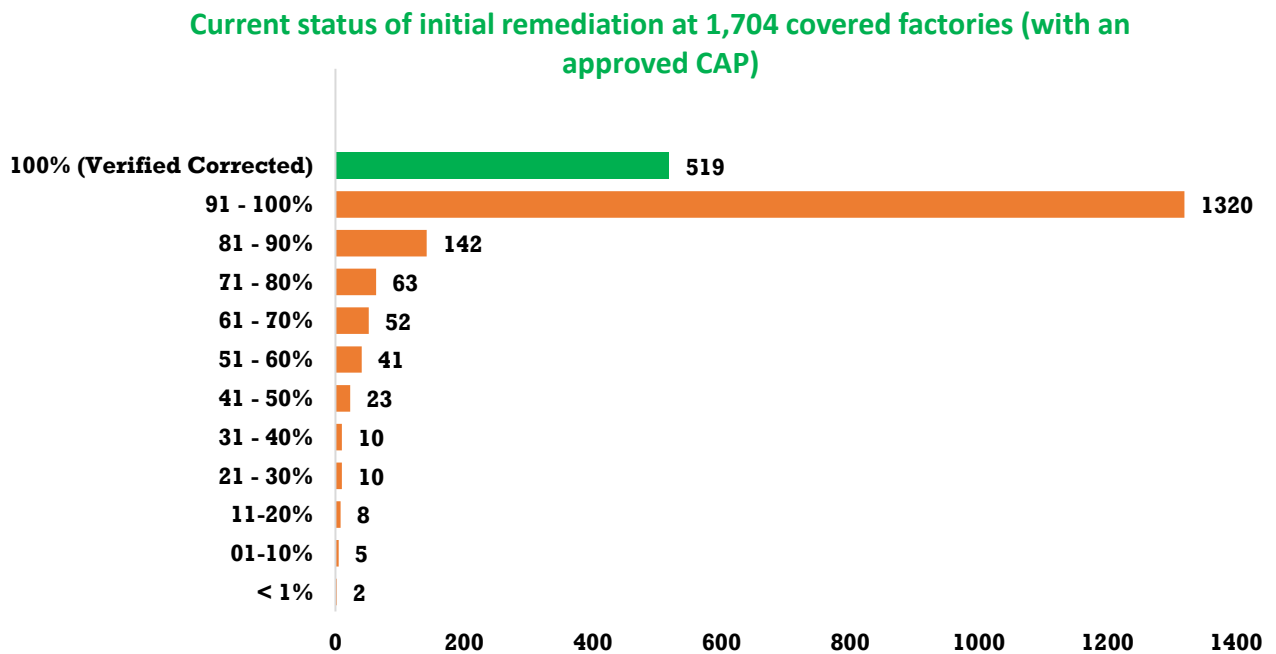
The overall initial progress rate as of May 2023 is 91.37%. It should be noted that the overall progress rate will fluctuate depending on the number of new factories, the number of factories being covered, the inspection outcomes, and updates received from factories.

Initial Findings Progress Per Month (From May 2022 to May 2023)



STATUS OF INITIAL REMEDIATION AT RSC-COVERED FACTORIES (as of May 2023)

The following graph shows the status of the current remediation progress of initial findings in the RSC-covered factories (as of May 2023). Currently, the RSC is working with **1,881** factories. However, out of the total covered factories, **1,704** factories have been inspected during the reporting period. The rest of the factories (**177**) are new factories yet to be inspected. Among the **1,704** factories, a total of **519** have **completed 100%** remediation.



The following charts below provide an overview of the status of **inspection findings** that are reported in the published Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).

In progress: This is the default status for an inspection finding. It means that remediation of the inspection finding is underway.

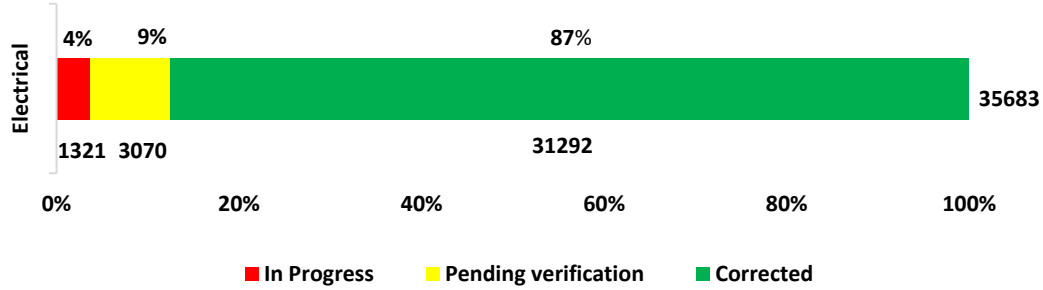
Pending verification: The “Pending verification” status refers to a process where a factory reports to RSC that the finding(s) are corrected, but requires the RSC engineer’s verification through an inspection.

Corrected: The finding has been verified as corrected by the RSC engineers through their follow-up verification inspection and/or testing visits.

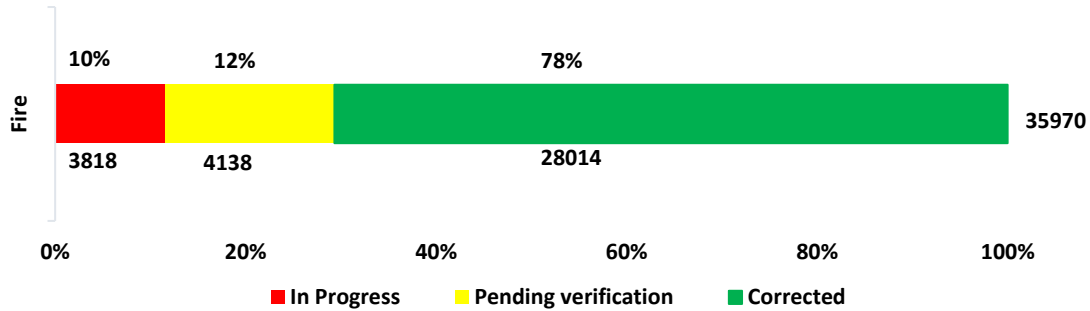
PROGRESS RATE (%) BY DISCIPLINE

Initial findings progress charts by discipline (as of May 2023)

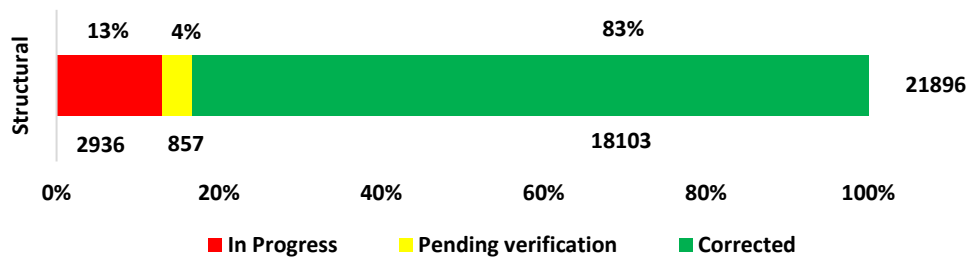
Electrical Initial Findings Progress %



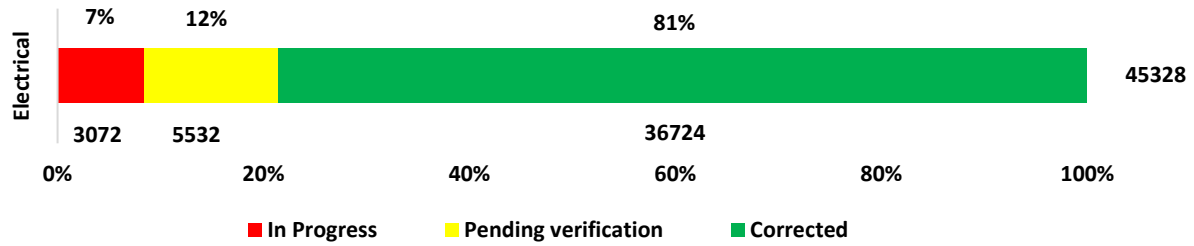
Fire Initial Findings Progress %



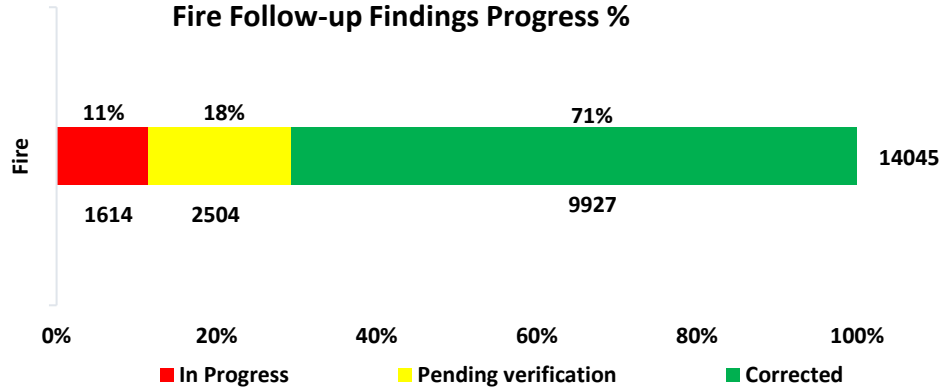
Structural Initial Findings Progress %



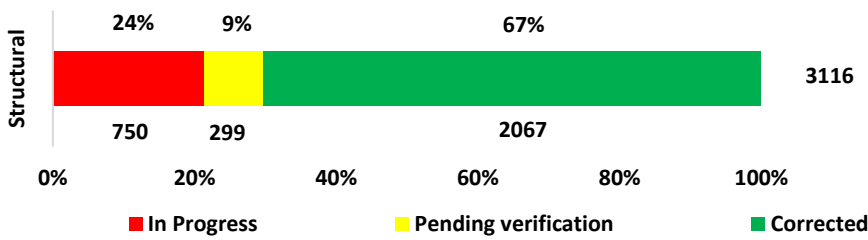
Electrical Follow-up Findings Progress %



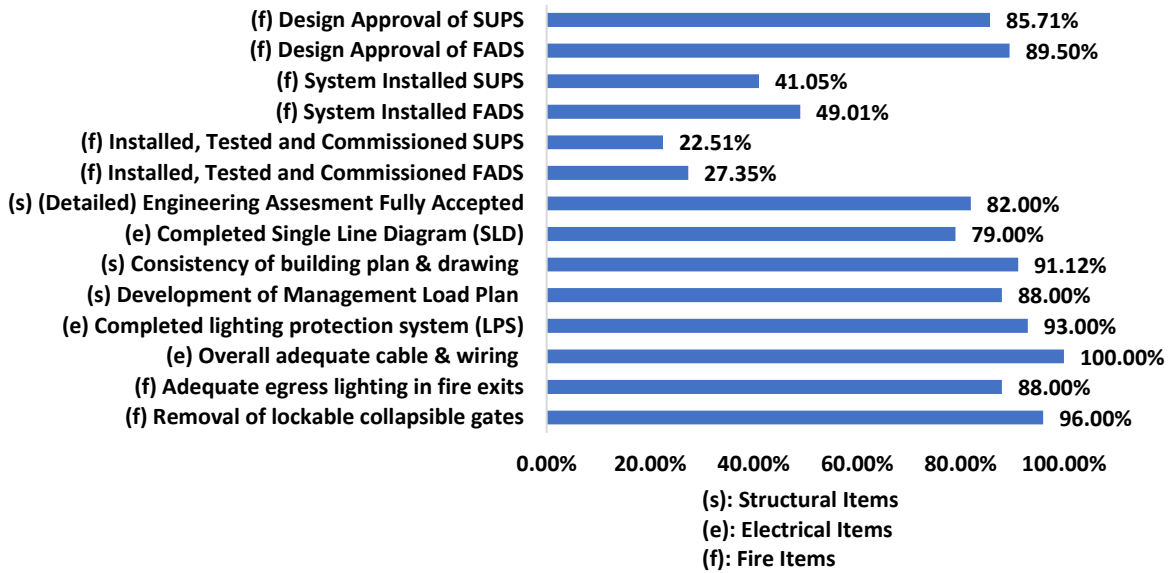
Fire Follow-up Findings Progress %



Structural Follow-up Findings Progress %



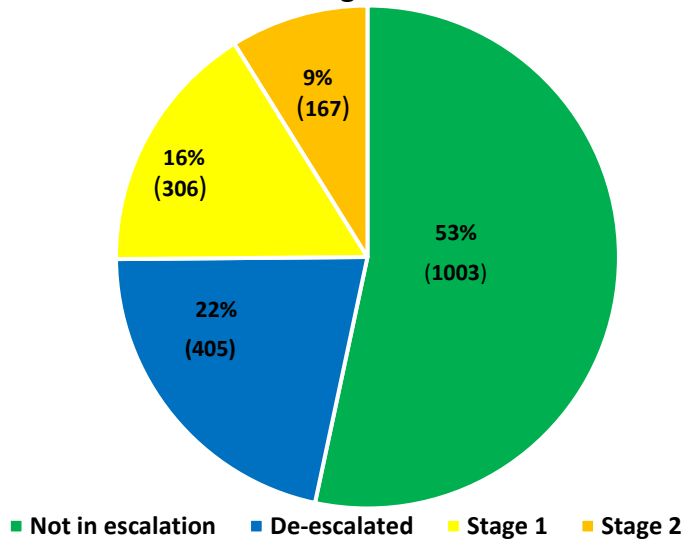
Completion rate of common remediation items



STATUS OF ESCALATION (as of May 2023)

As of May 2023, a total of **473** factories have been escalated; to Stage 1 (**306**) and Stage 2 (**167**). There are **405** factories that were de-escalated after the escalation items were verified by the RSC. Out of the total RSC covered factories, **1003** have never gone to the escalation process. The percentage of different escalation stages of the RSC covered (**1881**) factories are shown in the pie chart below.

Different Escalation Stages of all RSC covered factories



MONTHLY UPDATE ON WORKPLACE SAFETY PROGRAMME

STATUS OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMPLAINTS MECHANISM (as of May 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 May 2023)

Since June 2020, the RSC received **4,507** complaints out of which **1,165 (26%)** are Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) related complaints and **3,391 (75%)** are non-OSH related complaints.¹

Types of OSH Complaints (1 June 2020 – 31 May 2023)

Of the total OSH complaints received during the RSC period:

- Engineering (structural/fire/electrical/boiler safety): **72**
- COVID-19 related: **248**
- Reprisal for having filed a complaint: **25**

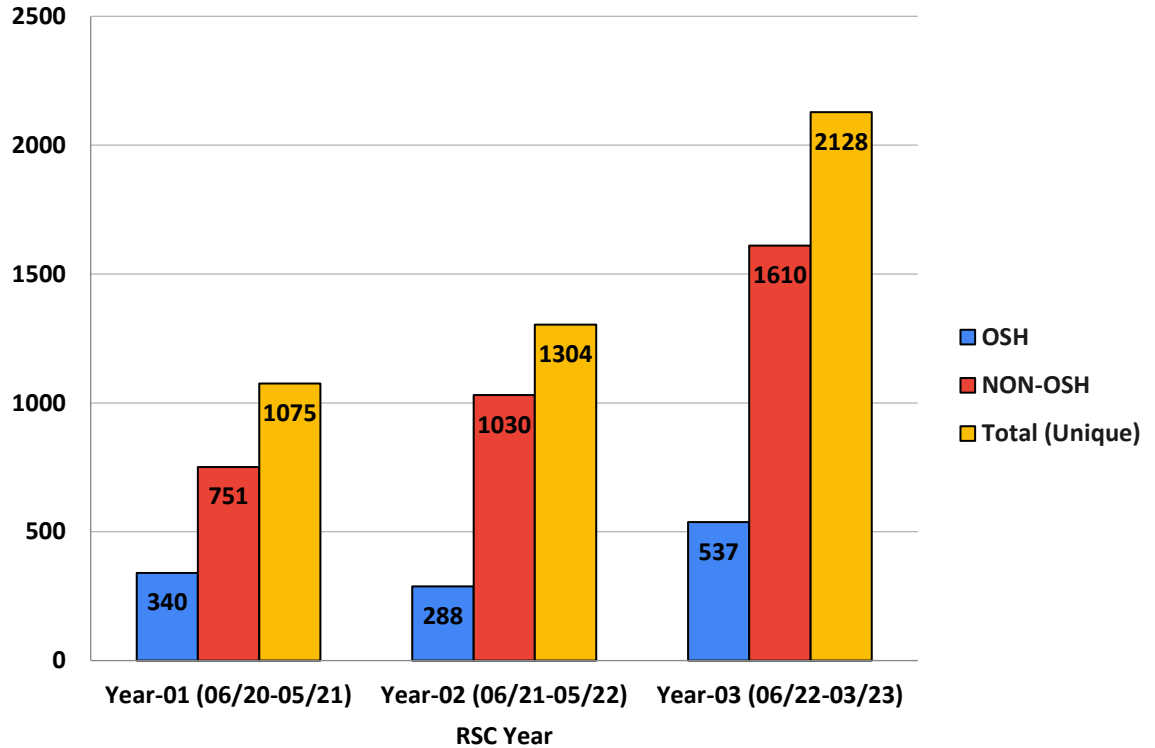
No. of OSH Complaints Resolved

Since June 2020, the RSC has resolved **488** complaints.

¹ A complaint may contain both OSH and non-OSH allegations. Percentages therefore add up to more than 100%.

RSC Period (1 June 2020 – 31 May 2023)

OSH, NON-OSH and Total (Unique)



STATUS OF SAFETY COMMITTEE AND SAFETY TRAINING (SCST) PROGRAMME (as of May 2023)

Key functions of the Safety Committee and Safety Training (SCST) 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. The training sessions address the Safety Committee’s role in identifying and remedying safety and health hazards, handling safety and health-related complaints, and improving communication and joint problem-solving skills. One of the important areas of the training programme is to educate workers and management on the rights and entitlements related to Freedom of Association in relation to protecting their own safety.

As part of the training programme, the factory Safety Committee and the RSC OSH Training Programme Specialist conduct WALK-THROUGH (WT) (a type of inspection) at the factory to identify actual or any potential safety and health hazards. The factory Safety Committee monitor and negotiate with management on the remediation of the safety issues identified during the WTs.

3 All Employee Meetings

Following a preliminary consultation (Initial Meeting) with the factory management, the RSC OSH Training department schedules "**All Employee Meetings (AEM)**" on the factory grounds, where all employees of the factory are invited to participate. Three such "All Employee Meetings" are held with all the workers of the factory. Generally, the AEM-1 meeting is held before the commencement of the training program for the members of the Safety Committee, the AEM-2 meeting at the end of the training-3 program, and the AEM-3 meeting is held after the completion of the full training cycle.

During All Employee Meetings at the factory premises, information related to the role of the safety committee, safe evacuation in case of emergency, and common health and safety hazards identification including sexual harassment and workplace violence are shared with all the workers and members of the management. The RSC developed pictorial IEC materials on a range of occupational safety and health hazards including a guideline on complaints reporting mechanisms. These materials are distributed during the All-Employee Meetings among the participants. Our readers can read the RSC information materials by clicking the links below:

[Booklet for workers I](#)

[Booklet for workers II](#)

[Booklet for workers III](#)

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.

Ongoing Support

To ensure that the Safety Committees are meeting their obligations on factory level safety, the Committees are provided with additional support such as the facilitation of the regular meetings and other ad-hoc basis activities like walk-throughs, coordination with RSC inspection team and Safety Committee of the factory ahead of any inspection, collect first information report from the Safety Committee members and conduct investigation immediately after any accidents/incidents take place at any factory.

RSC SCST Programme at-a-glance

SCST Programme Features	(As of May 2023)
Ongoing Safety Committee Training Sessions	234
Yet to commence the Safety Committee Training Sessions	188
SCST Sessions were conducted	11,315
Remote SCST sessions	7,354
On-field SCST sessions	3,961
Walk Through were conducted	5,390
Remote WALK-THROUGH sessions	2,277
On-field walk-through sessions	3,113
Factories received a Letter of Acknowledgement	1,225
No. of workers are informed about workplace safety through All Employee Meetings and Informational Sessions	20,60,636
No. of factories Completed Safety Training for the Safety Committee	1,248