

ETAG's proposals to improve VANOC's BuySmart program

The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) BuySmart program is based on four approaches to companies associated with the Olympics:

For licensees, VANOC will require adherence to a Licensee Code of Conduct which sets out minimum labour and environmental standards, and will require third-party auditing of licensees' supply factories;

For sponsors, VANOC will encourage them to align their practices with the Code but it will not be a condition of sponsorship;

For suppliers, VANOC will try to identify readily-available alternatives which improve environmental, ethical or aboriginal participation performance and will make those a condition of supply contracts with VANOC. Suppliers will also be required to affirm their adherence to the VANOC Code of Conduct.

Where VANOC is not able to identify readily-available alternatives which improve environmental, ethical or aboriginal participation performance amongst potential suppliers, they will expect potential suppliers to identify any added value in these areas through a questionnaire, and potential suppliers will gain points in the bid process for above-average environmental or ethical standards or aboriginal participation.

In June 2007, ETAG wrote to VANOC with a series of concerns regarding its BuySmart program. ETAG's principal concerns with the program were:	In response, VANOC promised to improve its program. Specifically, it promised to:	In addition to these promises, ETAG believes VANOC needs to make its program more comprehensive, effective and transparent. ETAG is asking VANOC to:
VANOC's Code of Conduct for Licensees should be strengthened in its hours of work and wages provisions;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alter the hours of work provision in its code of conduct to be more consistent with ILO Conventions (although we have not yet seen the final code); 	
Factory auditing should include off-site worker interviews;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● include off-site worker interviews in its factory auditing process; 	
The worker rights standards in VANOC's code should be applied to suppliers;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply the worker rights standards in VANOC's code of conduct to suppliers; 	
The BuySmart questionnaire should be altered to better reflect worker rights concerns;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alter their BuySmart questionnaire to include better questions on worker rights concerns (although we have not yet seen the final questionnaire) 	
VANOC should increase transparency on auditing methodologies, findings and corrective action taken;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide information on audit methodology, including the name of VANOC's auditing organization(s), upon request; and 	Increase transparency on auditing methodologies, findings and corrective action taken;
Licensees should be required to publicly disclose factory locations;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	Require licensees to publicly disclose factory locations;
Licensees should be required to initiate worker rights training in supply factories;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	Require licensees to facilitate worker rights training in supply factories;
Mechanisms should be created for workers and interested third parties to file complaints if there is credible evidence that the policy is not being followed in a supplier factory, and for independent investigations into credible complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	Create mechanisms for workers and interested third parties to file complaints if there is credible evidence that the policy is not being followed in a supplier factory, and for independent investigations into credible complaints; and
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct unannounced audits, although this will happen within a two-week window for which the factory will be given advance notice. 	Include a living wage standard in their Code of Conduct.

It may not be possible to implement some of these changes in the two years remaining before the 2010 Games. However we urge VANOC to, at minimum, include these changes as recommendations to other Organizing Committees, the Canadian Olympic Committee, and the International Olympic Committee so that future programs are more comprehensive, effective and transparent than VANOC's current program.

For more information on the Play Fair campaign and ETAG's concerns about the VANOC program, visit <http://www.maquilasolidarity.org/currentcampaigns/Olympics>