Bangladesh Sharing Database from NRF and FFC – Q&A from Peter Burrows of FFC

1. What information should we share? The FFC has standard protocols of what can and not be shared by direct competitors spelled out in an attachment in our standard member agreement. This is part of the agreement the FFC when FFC received the Department of Justice business review letter. To protect our IP for our software, FFC will require each retailer or brand to sign a member agreement, and it would be very wise for your group to want to do this as well for anti-trust reasons. We will need to come up with a new agreement to cover this situation because there will be no fee for use. The FFC sharing platform allows sharing of any document type, and can share specific data field findings from audits that are conducted using the FFC audit system. One question you should consider is if your group wants to have a single audit questionnaire to cover the situation in Bangladesh. The FFC can create new custom audit types without programming. Audits done on our platform can be done in dual language so you could have inspections done in local language so the questions are properly understood, and then someone more proficient in English do the translation to a common language. Audits done on our platform can also have attached evidence of any fie type. This can include photographs, word documents etc. This could also be used to store inspection certificates. In the sharing platform users can post documents of any type as well so audits already done can be posted as word document or excel for example.

2. Is there specific software the brands or retailers need to use to download the FFC database? No. The FFC is a cloud based application and all the user needs to access is any one of the popular web browsers. As I said earlier we would need to have a signed member agreement. We could also consider making this a check off agreement as the company signed on for the first time. Or we could have the agreement be with NRF or GAFTI or other participating trade associations and you then have agreements with your members. We can send you the standard agreement we have now and you should look at the attachment that speaks to anti-trust behavior.

3. How do we share the information? It may be easier to show you this than explain it. There are a couple of foundation things that are important for sharing to work. The FFC can confidently match any number of brand or retailer supply chains. We can import a company's entire supply chain (with a simple excel file) and we match it against our supplier data base. We use sophisticated fuzzy computer

logic to look for possible duplicate suppliers. Once a match is made we can begin to develop a record of what brands and retailers are sourcing in the same places. Each brand can remain hidden if they do not want to acknowledge their use of a supplier and in these cases the FFC would never disclose this information. We do have a double blind communication system that allows members to contact others that source in the same place including companies that are hidden. However a hidden company does not need to respond and unless they disclose themselves, no one will know who they are. Once supply chains are matched there are three ways members can share. This first is post information on the supply to the "Sharing platform" where anyone else that sources there can see it. The second way is to allow one or more other brands to access an audit you have done on the FFC. Yu do this by role based security. The third way is two or more companies can conduct a joint audit using the FFC audit tools. Hidden members can post information for sharing, however as you said it is not as transparent and trustful if you see a posting from someone who is hidden.

4. Should the database be public? It is probably not a good idea to have public access to the raw data. However, we do have standard tools that allow us to aggregate data by city, province, and country so we might be able to create a public view to how many suppliers are now in the database, and a high level view as to findings or progress.

5. I agree, a steering committee would be very useful to get this off the ground. We would be happy to conduct a series of on-line demos to a steering group to show people how the system works and the options you can have. We should probably have a couple of really experience FFC users on a working group as well. Someone like Phil from VF for example.

6. The FFC is built on role based security. A brand can have many roles that are created and controlled by a member administrator. Each role can have different systems permissions. You can have a role that can only see certain information, while other roles can update.