

Public Letter to The Just Group

Dear Mr McInnes,

I understand the men and women who operate denim sandblasting equipment face serious health risks from this process.

A number of The Just Group brands sell denim clothing, including Just Jeans, Dotti, Jay-Jays, Portmans and Jacqui.E. Some of these brands describe their products as sandblast denim. This worries me because sandblasting is known to cause silicosis – a potentially deadly pulmonary disease.

In Turkey alone, denim sandblasting has caused more than 45 deaths in recent years. Many thousands of denim workers throughout the world remain at serious risk of contracting this illness. A recent report has found that denim sandblasting occurs in countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia China, Egypt, India and Mexico.

I want The Just Group to stop this debilitating production method immediately. I also call on The Just Group to:

1. Publish a policy stating that sandblasting will not be used in The Just Group supply chain.
2. Enforce the ban of sandblasting throughout your entire supply chain by using adequate monitoring processes in co-operation with local /factory-based trade unions and NGOs.
3. Ensure that all workers who have worked at facilities sandblasting Just Group products are contacted and receive medical checks.
4. Ensure that workers in The Just Group supply chain who have been affected by silicosis urgently receive medical care and are provided with financial compensation.
5. Ensure that all workers who have worked in sandblasting in The Just Group supply chain and stand to lose their jobs with the banning of this practice are prioritised for re-hiring and receive re-training if necessary.
6. Perform adequate risk assessments when new production methods are introduced.

In addition to the sandblasting issue, a recent investigation by the Herald Sun has revealed that women producing The Just Group's products within Australia work in sub-standard conditions and are paid as little as \$2 an hour. Other reports have shown that The Just Group's overseas sourcing agent, Li & Fung, has a poor record on transparency, auditing and responding to workers' rights violations.

I ask that The Just Group take immediate action to ensure that all workers producing for the company receive a living wage, are provided with safe working conditions, and have full access to their rights at work. I look forward to hearing how you have been able to address these serious issues.

Yours sincerely,

(The signatures of more than 500 supporters have been delivered to The Just Group)