

Statement on Fighting Against Child and Forced Labour

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Federal guidelines for the fiscal year ending December 31st, 2023.

Introduction

Western Restaurant Franchises Inc. (WRFI) is an entity which owns and operates 36 A&W restaurants throughout BC., Alberta and Saskatchewan. The franchisor, A&W Food Services of Canada Inc. provides guidance and services impacting all aspects of the operation and business, as defined in the Franchise Agreement. To this end, the franchisee is compelled to adhere to the franchisor's prescribed ingredients - including sourcing and specifications, production and operating procedures, equipment procurement and facility design, construction, and so forth. This is to say, as is the case for many large and successful franchise brands, the franchisor controls the supply chain and administration thereof for virtually all aspects of the Brand management and ensuing operation.

Corporate Structure

WRFI was incorporated in December of 2013 and is a privately owned company held by Fulmer & Company based in Vancouver, BC. The principal, Yuri Fulmer, has been an A&W Franchisee for 26 years and has enjoyed much success while expanding the business to its current state of 36 restaurants as of December 2023.

WRFI employs c.600 people across three provinces in which it operates A&W restaurants. There is also an executive management and administrative team at the head office in Vancouver, BC.

A&W Supply Chain

The A&W Franchise System is designed to ensure that consistency and compliance exists among all franchise operators. The supply chain is overseen by the franchisor (A&W Food Services of Canada Inc.) and franchisees cannot and do not exert any influence or contravene from approved supplier contracts for all products and services provided. To this end, franchisees are reliant on A&W's vetting process and supplier relationships to ensure adherence to the high ethical standards demanded, particularly as it relates to Child and Forced Labour.

In most cases where a WRFI restaurant is required to go "outside" the approved supply chain for emergency supplies, such purchases are authorized by the manager for one-off situations and primarily transacted with large retail chains, i.e.. Costco for canned pop.

Western Restaurant Franchises Inc. - Employment and Labour Practices

WRFI operates restaurants in three provinces and is compliant with labour codes and regulations in each province. The Company payroll system is maintained by an in-house payroll administrator using current payroll software applications to ensure pay practices are in accordance with provincial codes and regulations. The ability to manipulate the system and abuse employees' rights to fair pay, hours worked, vacation entitlement, severance and termination are mitigated as such and carried out per code.

WRFI also employs Temporary and Foreign Workers in each of the provinces it operates restaurants. The company is compliant in all its dealings with foreign workers and ensures all records and transactions are managed in strict accordance with the contractual obligations and audits required by Services Canada. WRFI does not work with any immigration lawyers or consultants having a history or record of exploiting workers through onerous fees and upcharges for submitting applications or securing access to prospective employers.

WRFI participates in various franchisor mandated initiatives designed to engage with the restaurant teams to foster trust and bi-lateral communication. The intent of the initiatives is to provide opportunities for employees to have a voice and speak freely to issues, concerns, or simply celebrate with one another in a structured and respectful way. Both franchisor and franchisee recognize the importance of creating a workplace environment offering a safe and equitable exchange of ideas and services – both to attract and retain high quality employees in a challenging industry.

There is also a provision for anonymous input / feedback to contact the president of the company in the event an employee wishes to express concern for onerous practices or situations which can occur from time to time. In such circumstances, the president is required to follow up through safe channels to encourage understanding and dialogue for resolution. WRFI will not tolerate any situation which puts an employee at risk or takes advantage of a situation having potential for exploiting or abusing Child Labour and Forced Labour practices.

Conclusion

WRFI acknowledges the need for greater awareness and training to ensure understanding and upholding zero tolerance for Child and Forced Labour Practices. As we consider the impact of creating a better workplace and environment, notwithstanding the discussion presented in this report, there is always a desire to learn and improve.

Attestation

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, and in particular section 1.1 thereof, I attest that I have reviewed the information contained in the report for the entity listed above. Based on my knowledge, and having exercised reasonable diligence, I attest that the information in the report is true, accurate and complete in all material respects for the purposes of the Act, for the reporting year listed above.



Yuri Fulmer, OBC

Chairman and Director

May 6th, 2024

I have the authority to bind Western Restaurant Franchises Inc.