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Agriculture and Modern Slavery Act Reporting

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While this report will discuss issues of modern slavery, it will not explicitly discuss any cases and therefore should not include any distressing material.



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Introduction

The agricultural sector is considered high risk for forms of labour exploitation, including modern slavery. The International Labour Organisation places agriculture, alongside forestry and fishing, as the sector with the fourth highest proportion of victims of forced labour worldwide. Within the UK, there is a lack of formal data on the prevalence of slavery within agricultureⁱ. However, the characteristics of work within this sector – tasks which are easily replicable and labourers thus easily replaceable, and a reliance on low-skilled seasonal labour – create vulnerability to modern slavery and other forms of exploitation.

A review of the Seasonal Workers Pilot noted that,

- “Out of 17 compliance visits to farms conducted by the Home Office, almost half identified workers that had not received their employment contract in their native language.
- 15% of workers on the scheme, responding to a survey conducted by Defra, said that their accommodation was neither safe, comfortable, hygienic or warm, and 10% that it had no bathroom, running water or kitchen.
- 22% of those who answered the survey alleged ill treatment by farm managers, including racism, discrimination, or mistreatment on grounds of nationality”ⁱⁱ

Other investigations have produced evidence of poor recruitment standards; structures resulting in the impossibility of leaving an employer; and people working under duress.

Supporting this, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) reports that until Q2 2023, where there was a surge in social care cases, most of its intelligence relates to the agriculture sector and states that workers report paying work-finding fees and working some of the longest hours weekly across sectors. These conditions are combined with pressure on food prices from food retailers as they seek to gain competitive advantage which can push down wages and enable the conditions for slavery to occur. It is important, therefore, that the UK agricultural sector adheres to the Modern Slavery Act’s reporting requirements and takes meaningful steps towards ensuring decent labour standards within its supply chains.

This study interrogates how the sector has engaged with section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act, which requires businesses with a turnover of £36 million or more to publish an annual modern slavery statement explaining what steps, if any, they are taking to address modern slavery within their operations and supply chains. These statements must be signed by a director, approved by the board and linked from the company’s homepage.

The study has asked five key questions:

1. How many agricultural companies within scope of section 54 have produced Modern Slavery Statements?
2. How compliant are those statements with the requirements of the law?
3. What quality are those statements, measured against government guidance?
4. Have statements – in terms of both compliance and quality – improved over time?
5. How does this compare to other high-risk sectors?

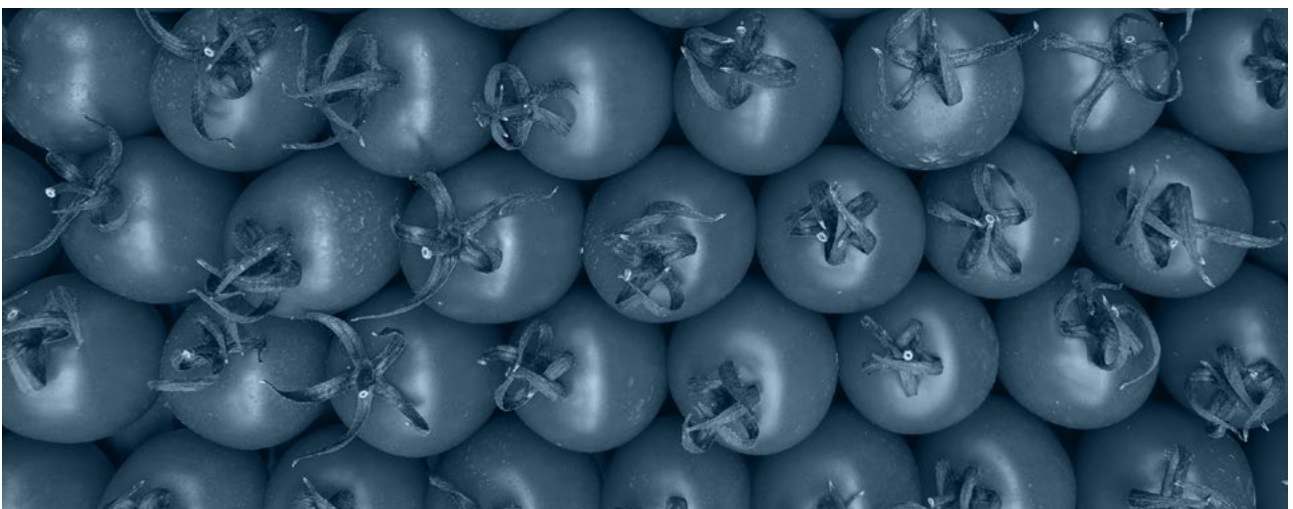


Key facts

- There was a total of 50 agricultural companies which were identified as requiring to provide a modern slavery statement under the Modern Slavery Act in 2021.
- 80% of agricultural companies which fall within scope of the Modern Slavery Act's corporate reporting requirement had published a modern slavery statement by December 2022, although 5% of companies had an out-of-date statement and were thus no longer complying.
- Of all enterprises reviewed, 12% were categorised as 'Date Changer', offering no valuable revision to their statement beyond updating applicable dates.
- 45% of companies within scope were fully compliant with legal requirements – though quality of content varied.
- 'Business and Supply Chain Structure' and 'Policies' showed an increase in quality since 2019, 'Risk and management' saw a small decrease in quality on average while 'Due Diligence' and 'Measured Effectiveness and Performance Indicators' remained stagnant from 2019.
- There was an overall increase in enterprises categorised as 'Improving' from previous years.
- 8% of all reviewed enterprises were 'Back in Population' while 20% of all reviewed enterprises were 'New Above Threshold', with their most recently available turnover equating more than £36 million.
 - Only 1 enterprise which re-entered consideration failed to produce a statement.
 - Of those enterprises 'New Above Threshold', 80% were 'non-engagers' and 20% were 'New Engagers'
- Poor statements continue to show a tick-box approaches, providing generic comments under some of the recommended areas. Details or measurements in these statements were not provided to show ongoing development or tracking.
- Our study has found that the Modern Slavery Act achieves high level compliance but fails to achieve strong operational structuring. The agricultural sector however is still high risk for forced labour and labour exploitation as highlighted by the Seasonal Worker Scheme. Therefore, further legislative developments are needed. [See [Recommendation 30](#)]

Recommendations for business

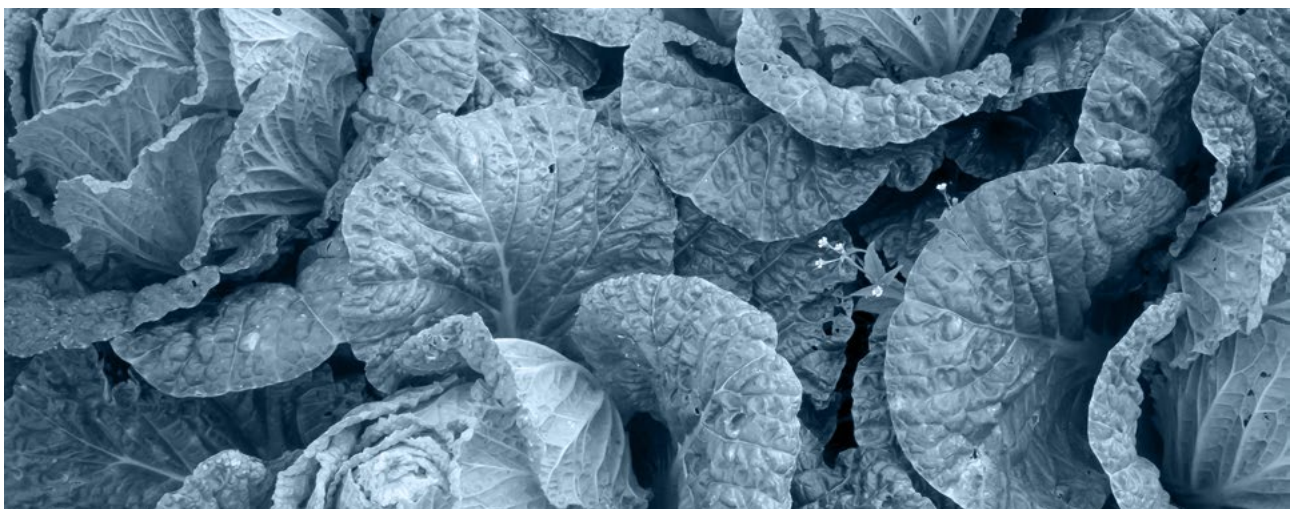
- **Check your suppliers' MSA compliance beyond headline compliance.** Our study shows that although 80% of agricultural companies in-scope of the Modern Slavery Act have a Modern Slavery Statement, only 45% comply with all the Modern Slavery Act's reporting criteria of director sign-off, board approval, and public visibility.
- **Completeness.** Section 54(5) of the Modern Slavery Act recommends that statements cover six areas. Our study showed no correlation between business turnover and quality of reporting. Check that you and your suppliers cover all the six content areas to a high quality. There is also a range of helpful advice both from Government, see [here](#) and [here](#), and from charities/ consultancies: [CORE](#), [BHRRC](#), [ETI](#), [Ergon](#), [Modern Slavery Registry](#), [TISC Report](#), and [Stronger Together](#)ⁱⁱⁱ.
- **Ask for details on operational approaches.** Despite the 80% overall compliance, few statements mention action and operational approaches. The revelations around the Seasonal Workers Scheme show that the agriculture sector continues to have very high of modern slavery risks. Ask your suppliers how they operationalise their ambitions against modern slavery and how they implement anti-slavery approaches.
- **Action and reporting.** A Modern Slavery Act statement should ideally reflect the organisation's action plan against modern slavery and its progress against it. Compare if your suppliers achieve progress over time and identify shifts in their risk exposure, or only change dates on their statements.
- **Performance indicators.** This continues to be by far the weakest area of Modern Slavery Act statements. Although performance against modern slavery may be difficult to measure, businesses can measure progress and delivery against activities such as training, inspections, or responsiveness to whistleblowing.
- **Coming into scope.** Of businesses who come into the scope of Modern Slavery Act reporting, many engage only in their second year of coming into scope. Businesses should prepare before coming into scope. Engage with suppliers who are likely to come into scope and provide them with information and training.
- **Be complete and revisit.** Section 54(5) of the Modern Slavery Act recommends that statements cover six areas, so address them all. If they aren't relevant, explain why (for example, a particularly flat supply chain). And there is a requirement to produce a new statement each year. Update the statement, do not just re-date it.



Recommendations for government

To increase and improve modern slavery reporting in the Agricultural sector we support, in particular, the following recommendations made in the final report of the Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act^{iv}:

- **Recommendation 15:** Government should establish an internal^v list of companies in scope of section 54 and check with companies whether they are covered by the legislation.
- **Recommendation 17, section 54(4)(b):** which allows companies to report they have taken no steps to address modern slavery in their supply chains, should be removed.
- **Recommendation 18, section 54(5):** ‘may’ should be changed to ‘must’ or ‘shall’, with the effect that the six areas set out as areas that an organisation’s statement may cover will become mandatory. If a company determines that one of the headings is not applicable to their business, it should be required to explain why.
- **Recommendation 19:** Statutory guidance on transparency in supply chains should be strengthened to include a template of the information organisations are expected to provide on each of the six areas that a statement might cover.
- **Recommendation 26:** There should be a central government-run repository to which companies are required to upload their [modern slavery] statements and which should be easily accessible to the public, free of charge. A government-run repository was created in 2021 for companies to upload their Modern Slavery Statements and which is easily accessible, free of charge. It is not, however a requirement, which does not increase accountability in firms with low engagement and poor compliance.
- **Recommendation 30:** Government should make the necessary legislative provisions to strengthen its approach to tackling non-compliance, adopting a gradual approach: initial warnings, fines (as a percentage of turnover), court summons and directors’ disqualification. This recommendation should be taken into special consideration when developments of a Single Enforcement Body progress in the UK. While the UK Government has announced commitments^{vi} to implement civil penalties for non-compliance, there is currently no legislative framework to enforce this.





Performance of the agricultural sector in detail

Section 54 (4)(a) says companies must produce “a statement of the steps the organisation has taken during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place (i) in any of its supply chains and (ii) in any part of its own business, or (b) a statement that the organisation has taken no such steps.”

All UK-registered agricultural companies with a turnover of £36m or more were reviewed. This was a two-stage process, first to consider compliance (existence of a statement and conformance with the three requirements of section 54 – visibility, sign-off and board approval), and second to consider the quality of the statement. The quality of the statements was assessed each year using the same grading scheme represented in Table 1. Each statement could score between 0 and 30 for quality. This process started in June 2017, one year after the Act came in to force, and was repeated in June 2018, June 2019 and again in 2021.

Category	Points					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation structure, business and supply chains	No information	Some description of business structure, services, products and customers	Detailed description of business structure, services, products and customers	As 2 plus some description about first tier suppliers	As 2 plus detailed description about first tier suppliers	As 2 plus description of second tier and beyond
Modern slavery policy	No policy	Formal or informal policy under which business with unethical suppliers is not to be conducted	Relevant modern slavery policy	As 2 plus code of conduct	Relevant and specific modern slavery policy and code of conduct	As 4 plus for the organisation and its supply chain
Due diligence	No steps taken	Modern slavery is / to be included in the organisations risk assessment processes	New internal processes detailed for the organisation	As 2, but extended to its suppliers	As 3, including organisational-wide grievance mechanisms in place for targeted workers	As 4, including suppliers and their workers
Risk assessment	No assessment	Risk assessment conducted based on the nature of goods/services supplied to the business	As 1, plus supply chain	Risk assessment focussed on modern slavery and labour risks in its own business	As 3, plus supply chain	Assessment to include potentially effected rights holders and other stakeholders
Effectiveness	No measures	General statement re: numbers trained, complaints from whistle-blowing mechanisms	As 1, plus figures	General KPIs used	As 3, plus figures	Detailed KPIs and figures relevant to modern slavery
Training	No information	General training on ethical practice provided to employees	Training on human rights provided	Training on modern slavery provided	As 3 plus details of specific groups of employees targeted	As 4 plus annual update

Table 1 Modern Slavery Statements Grading Scheme devised by Dr Caroline Emberson (2017), Rights Lab, University of Nottingham.

It is encouraging to note that the non-engaged group has reduced significantly year on year. A few companies which engaged in 2017 have done nothing with their statement since then, but a greater number have revised their statements in each subsequent year.

The set of companies which were required to report changed between 2019 and 2021 for three reasons:

1. some companies fell out of scope because their turnover dropped below £36m while others came into scope because their turnover grew above £36m;
2. some companies re-entered scope because their turnover grew above £36m;
3. corporate reorganisations saw some companies merging into other corporate groups.

Conformance

To conform a statement must have:

1. **Visibility:** the statement must be published on the organisation’s website with a prominent link from the home page (s54(7)), or if no website exists, the company must respond to a written request to provide a copy of the statement within 30 days (s54 (8));
2. **Sign-off:** the statement must be signed by a director (s54 (6)(a)); and
3. **Approval:** the statement must be approved by the board of directors (s54 (6)(a));

All aspects of conformance (visibility, sign-off and board approval) have decreased since 2019.

Visibility means that companies that have produced a statement have;

- a website,
- a link to that statement on the homepage or obviously accessible from it (for example, via a drop-down menu under clear label: Corporate Responsibility / Statements).

Where in 2019 92% of companies had a visible statement, 90% of statements were signed by a director, and 54% had board approval, 2021 saw a decrease across the board. 76% of statements were visible, 87% were signed-off by director, and 68% received board approval. Board approval remains the poorest element of conformance, with only 12% increase since 2017. The overall conformance rate (i.e., met all three criteria) was 45%. This was a minimal decrease on the year before and remains only 7% higher than 2021.

The conformance figure mentioned above shows that over half of all companies that are producing statements, are not doing so in a way which publicly demonstrates active involvement of the company into anti-slavery practises. An example of a company taking their obligations seriously is one with a statement which was revised and improved for 2021, and which is now signed by seven board members, including the CEO and country/divisional MDs, and the directors of HR, finance, and procurement.

	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %	2021 %
Visibility	67	73	92	76
Sign-Off	75	80	90	87
Approval	50	40	54	68
All three	38	30	46	45

Table 3 Conformance of Existing Statements to Requirements

Compliance

To comply, a company must have a statement, that statement must be in-date, and it must conform to the requirements of s54. Combining the existence and conformance data shows that overall compliance has doubled, from 19% in 2017 to 41% in 2019, but still less than half of companies are complying (45%).

Official guidance says that websites should include all Modern Slavery Statements, not just the current year, so that the public can compare statements and monitor progress within an organisation over time. Only two companies complied with this, albeit this is up from none in 2018.

Since this research was started, another example of mandated Corporate Social Responsibility, the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 (GPG), came into force. This requires companies with more than 250 staff to report gender pay gap data online to the

Government Equalities Office and publish this on the company’s own website. Unlike the Modern Slavery Act, which has none of the following features, the GPG regulations mandate a single public repository for organisations’ data;

- public sector bodies are required to report;
- there is a government list of companies required to report;
- and a single government agency has oversight.

Slightly more than 10,000 companies had reported by the deadline of 4th April 2018. Those that hadn’t reported by the deadline (estimated by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to be around 1,500 companies) were to be contacted by the EHRC within a week, requiring them to report within a month. Non-compliance was to be met with naming and shaming, court action and potentially unlimited fines^{vii}.

These results suggested a compliance rate of 87% for GPG on day one in the first year of reporting, which will have increased as the EHRC contacted non-compliant firms. This compared to a 50% response (existence) rate and a 19% compliance rate within the agricultural sector with the minimum requirements of section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act more than one year after the legislation came into force. The data to be disclosed under GPG is much more circumscribed and statistical, but the discrepancy between compliance rates raises questions about the extent to which the features present in the GPG regulations and its enforcement are needed for section 54.

Quality of Content

The Home Office published and updates statutory guidance on how to approach producing a modern slavery statement, this lays out six suggested content themes covering s(54) of the Modern Slavery Act (Home Office, 2015). They are as follows:

1. the organisation’s structure, its business, and its supply chains;
2. its policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking;
3. its due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in its business and supply chains;
4. the parts of its business and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking taking place, and the steps it has taken to assess and manage that risk;

Assessment of Quality

Published statements or those received upon request within 30 days were analysed and graded against the six content areas recommended in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and in the government guidance for Modern Slavery Statements. The same criteria has been used each year.

In each area, a statement could receive a score running on a scale from 1-5.

The content areas of relative strength and weakness have remained fairly consistent across the years:

The creation of the Government’s Modern Slavery Statement Registry in 2021 is a notable development which made easier the process of checking for the existence of statements for companies without websites. In support of this, the proposal made in the Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) House of Lords Bill that “The Secretary of State must publish a list of all commercial organisations that are required to publish a statement under this section.” would help to make identifying the dataset more transparent.

5. its effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in its business or supply chains, measured against such performance indicators as it considers appropriate;
6. the training and capacity building about slavery and human trafficking available to its staff.

Home Office guidance says that it is expected that organisations will “build on their statements year on year and for the statements to evolve and improve over time”^{viii}.

- ‘Due Diligence Processes’ was the strongest scoring area in 2017, and remains the highest scoring area in 2021, however no improvement in average scoring has been seen since 2019;
- ‘Policies’ has seen the greatest improvement since 2019, with companies providing more details regarding what the policies include and having an effect range of policies to tackle the relevant issues;
- ‘Measured Effectiveness and Performance Indicators’ was the least well addressed area in 2017, 2019, and 2021 with average scores stagnant.
- Staff training has also seen a small decrease since 2019.

Content Area	Average Score		Movement
	2019	2021	
C1 Business and Supply Chain structure	1.8	2	+0.2
C2 Policies	2.1	2.6	+0.5
C3 Due Diligence Processes	2.6	2.6	0.0
C4 Risk and Management	2	1.8	-0.2
C5 Measured Effectiveness and Performance Indicators	0.8	0.8	0.0
C6 Staff Training	2.3	2.2	-0.1
Total score average	11.8	11.9	+0.1

Table 4 Quality Compliance of Existing Statements

C1 - Business and supply chain structure

“the organisation’s structure, its business and its supply chains” s54(5)(a).

The average score in this category was 2.

High scoring statements included data about the company – its products, processes, location, customers, and structure – and information about tier 1 suppliers, so as to give a sense of the supply chain. Two companies scored 5 in this category for mentioning the sourcing countries of its second-tier suppliers. This may be explained by the typically flat supply chains found within the agricultural sector. Eight companies were graded with four points in this category, they clearly explained their own organisational structure, the nature of their business and first tier suppliers but failed to mention suppliers beyond tier 1. If a company’s supply chain is flat and have no supplier beyond tier 1 – they should mention that structure within their statements.

Statements with a score of 0 failed to discern the products or services rendered, customers, locations of facilities or any mention of suppliers, after reading their statement it may not even be clear what industry they operated in. Once written, few companies have revisited the information provided on their business and supply chain structure. Poor statements thus remain poor, suggesting many companies are not looking at best practice statements.

C2 – Policies

“policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking” s54(5)(b).

The average score for this category was 2.6

This was the joint highest scoring among the themes analysed. High scoring statements consisted of clear and relevant policies related to modern slavery and human trafficking alongside a code of conduct, both for the organisation itself and extended to supplier relationships.

A common example was a whistleblowing policy to protect employees, agency workers and contractors. One of the high scoring companies had established its own Ethical Trade and Human Rights Committee, which includes the Group Technical Director, HR Director, and a representative of each function.

To achieve top scores in this area, a company must have, inter alia, a modern slavery policy in place not just for itself but which it extends into its supply chain, including a supplier code of conduct.

Low scoring statements included general policies not related to the problem of forced labour and generic comments about a zero-tolerance position on modern slavery in the business and its supply chain without any further explanation.

While this area had been declining due to weak new engagers, there was an improvement in the quality of policy statements since 2019. Half of all new engagers in 2021 began with scoring either 4-5 which may speak to organisation learning from existing examples and seeking best practises to build their statements from when meeting requirements.

C3 – Due Diligence

“Due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in its business and supply chain” s54(5)(c).

The average score for this category was 2.6.

This was the joint high scoring theme: 40% of companies scored either 4 or 5, 16% scored 3.

The highest scorers subscribed to membership with Ethical Trading initiative (ETI) and/or SEDEX. Conducting both internal and external audits of their supply chain partners through ETI and SEDEX was a key process in engaging with suppliers. Furthermore, when selecting third party labour providers, the use of GLA was always a requirement and some organisations utilised the GLAA Active Check service as a continuous process for verifying the ethics of labourer providers.

Poor statements gave no indication of any specific due diligence processes, again using generic, aspirational comments, for example: “We strive to ensure that we, and our supply chain, act in compliance [with the Act] and have continued to monitor such compliance.”

Only one company scored a 0. This company scored between 0-2 in any given category, making no valuable statements with detailed information regarding its practises to engage with the responsibility of combatting human trafficking.

Notably, due diligence in some cases was impacted by regulations introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Safety precautions and restricted travel meant some companies were unable to engage with in-person audits of suppliers, especially for those overseas. One statement produced by an organic produce company included a section specifically addressing this issue. They reiterated their commitment to due diligence and risk assessment despite the restrictions and conducted ‘virtual’ site visits using video calls when site visits were not an option.

C4 – Risk and Risk Management

“The parts of its business and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking taking place, and the steps it has taken to assess and manage that risk” s54(5)(d).

The average score in this category was 1.8.

36% of companies scored a 0 or 1 in this category, for failing to outline any risk assessment process, or briefly mentioning a process but not being able to provide any relevant details. 26% of companies scored 4 or 5 for their risk assessment process, showing a clear divide between the top and low scorers.

Similar third-party organisations can support companies in their risk assessment analysis as used for due diligence processes. For example, SEDEX has developed its own Radar risk assessment tool and conducts its own SMETA audits of suppliers and operations. SMETA is a widely used social audit assessing working conditions, it involves a documentation review, site tour, interview with management and interview with workers. Some companies were able to score highly by utilising this audit process since it directly involves assessing the risk to workers in its own organisation and suppliers through direct interviews.

C5 – Measured Effectiveness and Performance Indicators

“Its effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in its business or supply chains, measured against such performance indicators as it considers appropriate” s54(5)(e).

The average score for this category was 0.8.

This was easily the worst scoring theme. 46% of the statements scored a 0, making no reference to measuring the effectiveness or development of their policies and processes to mitigate modern slavery in their business. Those statements with a score of 1 (14%) mentioned general metrics, such as the number of employees trained in modern slavery awareness but provided no figures.

Only one company scored 5. Its statement provided detailed KPIs for staff training, intelligence management, survivor care, supply chain due diligence and engagement/leadership, alongside figures and an annual update. Perhaps notably, this company was the second highest scoring across all 6 categories, while being below the median turnover.

Companies should consider this section of their statement as providing the ‘evidence’ to their stakeholders that they are taking their legal requirements seriously and actively enforcing the listed policies and procedures. Measurement Indicators should be naturally derived from the company policies and will promote understanding the efficacy of activities and highlight learning which will then support an appropriate annual review and development of the Modern Slavery Statement.

C6 – Staff Training

“The training about slavery and human trafficking available to its staff” s54(5)(f).

The average score in the final category was 2.2.

56% of companies scored 3 or above. Companies that were proactive in this area discussed active training programmes targeted specifically at relevant employee groups, including supply chain managers, supervisors, procurement officers and human resources staff. They also brought attention to modern slavery awareness raising initiatives, which involved presenting information about red flags and help hotlines via posters and leaflets around facilities. In some cases, statements outlined the challenges of engaging with training programmes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring the safety of their workers. A common solution was to make use of e-learning resources and online training.

Many organisations mentioned affiliations with Stronger Together, a multi-stakeholder initiative to eliminate modern slavery by providing guidance and support in multiple languages. They offer workshops designed for different employee groups (e.g., Tackling Modern Slavery through Purchasing Practices) and courses for a variety of sectors.

24% of companies with a statement gave limited or no details about training procedures put in place to specifically target modern slavery in the organisation.

Additional insights

Correlations

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
C1		0.79	0.69	0.54	-	-
C2			0.87	0.66	0.53	0.63
C3				0.72	-	0.72
C4					0.63	0.79
C5						0.63
C6						

Table 5 Correlation Coefficients between Quality of Compliance Requirements [cells marked '-' had no significant correlation]

Measured Effectiveness and Performance Indicators are consistently the weakest performance area for business' Modern Slavery Statements. Table 5 provides the correlation coefficients between each of the required categories. There is a strong association between policies and due diligence processes as well as due diligence, risk management and staff training. This is not particularly surprising considering the overlap between these issues in practise; for example, company policies should include a requirement for a due diligence process and a due diligence process should include planning for risk management and training. Therefore, the existence and quality of a due diligence process will be associated with the existence and quality of risk management planning and staff training.

Due diligence processes are most supported by external organisations, this could account for why it is consistently the highest-ranking category. However, this is not strongly associated with measured effectiveness and performance indicators. This suggests a disconnect between agricultural enterprises stating their planned activities to tackle the presence of modern slavery, and their impact measurement of the activities. To engage seriously with their role in modern slavery prevention, effectiveness and performance must be measured to allow for continual development and improvement. Businesses should consider continuing third-party support once their base Modern Slavery Statement has been developed.

There was no correlation between turnover and quality of statements, suggesting that an enterprise does not need substantial additional resources to provide high quality statements, year on year.



Recent developments

Since the previous reports in this series, there have been several notable developments. This includes the introduction of the Modern Slavery Intelligence Network (MSIN) in 2021 creating a collaborative network of organisations within the food and agricultural sector supported by Professor Dame Sara Thornton, while in role as Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC). As well as the MSIN, Dame Sara Thornton also supported facilitating a roundtable in 2022 to explore the practical and cultural challenges of long-haul recruitment in the agriculture and care sectors in partnership with the UK BME Anti-Slavery Network (BASNET)^{ix}. As this report was prepared for publication, a new IASC was selected on the 11th October 2023 following an 18 month pause in appointment.

One theme throughout our assessments in this series of reports has been that section 54 is not strong enough to achieve the legal compliance and accountability amongst the UK agricultural industry^x. This will become increasingly significant considering the developing landscape of UK immigration policies which increased risk of labour exploitation, especially within the context with agriculture industry^{xi}. There are efforts through the Stronger Together Seasonal Workforce Scheme to produce increased guidance with more resources to come out in 2023/2024 on practical training, resources, business services and collaborative programmes, however effective enforcement still remains to be seen.

The changing landscape of UK immigration policies, such as Nationality and Borders Act (2022) and Illegal Migration Act (2023), has faced a wave of criticism from the anti-trafficking sector for the threats it presents to victims, at-risk individuals and failure to consider UK obligations to protect, prevent and prosecute modern slavery^{xii}. These changes to legislation sit within a broader context of a sidelining reviews of the UK labour inspectorate structure – not wholly unreasonable in light of recent pressures on the UK within and following Covid-19. However there has been a slow return to the idea of designing a Single Enforcement Body (SEB) to improve the UKs current system. Developing a SEB needs to remain a priority issue^{xiii}. The potential restructure can serve to support high quality compliance to the UK Modern Slavery Act and must be seriously considered. For example, it could potentially form a point for consideration by Eleanor Lyons within the strategy of the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.



Endnotes

- i <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1220/modern-slavery-act-and-agriculture-poor-performance-briefing.pdf>
- ii <http://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/news-insights/iasc-raises-concerns-over-labour-exploitation-risk-for-migrant-agricultural-workers/>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/seasonal-workers-pilot-review>
- iii <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publish-an-annual-modern-slavery-statement#best-practice> ; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-in-supply-chains-a-practical-guide> ; <https://corporatejusticecoalition.org> ; <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/> ; <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/issues/modern-slavery/modern-slavery-resources> ; <https://ergonassociates.net/> ; <https://www.modernslaveryregistry.org/> ; <https://www.stronger2gether.org/> ; <https://tiscreport.org/>
- iv <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-the-modern-slavery-act-final-report>
- v We recommend that the list be made public rather than it just being an internal list, to allow civil society and the public to continue to play a role in holding businesses to account.
- vi https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f69c90ed3bf7f723e21c152/Government_response_to_transparency_in_supply_chains_consultation_21_09_20.pdf; Annex D
- vii https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803406/Independent_review_of_the_Modern_Slavery_Act_-_final_report.pdf?_ga=2.83368661.213892906.1566658645-1058539684.1552387816
- viii Ibid.
- ix <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1796/iasc-annual-report-2021-2022.pdf>
- x See also this recent report produced for MSPEC on 'Effectiveness of Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act' 2021 which reviews from a broader lens.
- xi Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) annual report, 2021 (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk); refer to other endnotes
- xii <https://www.ecpat.org.uk/news/the-nationality-and-borders-act-received-royal-assent-this-week-after-a-hard-fought-battle-to-increase-rights-and-protections>; <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/beacons-of-excellence/rights-lab/resources/reports-and-briefings/2021/october/consideration-paper-nationality-and-borders-bill.pdf>; <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/43467/documents/889>; [https://www.antislavery.org/latest/the-illegal-migration-act-has-passed-into-law-how-did-we-get-here-and-what-should-come-next/#:~:text=Implemented%20as%20part%20of%20a,asylum%20or%20modern%20slavery%20support.](https://www.antislavery.org/latest/the-illegal-migration-act-has-passed-into-law-how-did-we-get-here-and-what-should-come-next/#:~:text=Implemented%20as%20part%20of%20a,asylum%20or%20modern%20slavery%20support.;); <https://www.jcwi.org.uk/joint-statement-on-the-illegal-migration-act>; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/29/europe-human-rights-watchdog-warns-uk-over-migration-bill>; <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/07/un-experts-urge-uk-halt-implementation-illegal-immigration-bill>; <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/beacons-of-excellence/rights-lab/resources/reports-and-briefings/2023/march/briefing-assessing-the-potential-impact-of-the-illegal-migration-bill-on-victims-of-modern-slavery.pdf>
- xiii <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/new-research-restates-the-case-for-a-single-enforcement-body>



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