

Fresh Investigation Reveals Deterioration of Mattel's Labor Conditions

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK - China Labor Watch (CLW) has released an [investigative report on the labor conditions at one directly-owned Mattel factory and three Mattel supplier factories](#) which also supply toys for companies like Disney, McDonald's, and Hasbro. Investigators, who entered the factories as production workers or carried out interviews, revealed a long list of illegal and unfair labor treatment at these four factories.

Such violations exist in Mattel's supply chain despite it being one of the first brand companies to establish Global Manufacturing Principles. The past 15 years have been a period of deterioration for labor conditions in Mattel's directly-controlled and supplier factories as the company's system of monitoring and reform has weakened.

The result is abuse throughout Mattel's supply chain, directly affecting the safety and livelihood of tens of thousands of workers. CLW's investigation revealed at least 15 sets of violations in four factories together employing about 10,000 workers: illegal overtime pay, excessive overtime, forced labor, myriad safety concerns, a lack of safety training, a lack of physical exams, inability to resign from work, blank labor contracts, unpaid work, a lack of social insurance, use of dispatch workers, a lack of a living wage, poor living conditions, unreasonable rules, and a lack of effective grievance channels.

Many of these violations have legal implications in China. For example, at a Mattel supplier called Winty Industries Corporation in Shenzhen, CLW's investigator learned that formal workers were only being paid 10 RMB (\$1.6) and dispatch workers only 7.5 RMB (\$1.19) per hour of weekday overtime despite local labor law which stipulates an hourly minimum overtime wage of 12.8 RMB (\$2.05). This could have implications for millions of dollars in wage arrears.

Another example is overtime. All four factories maintained monthly overtime hours two to six times in excess of the 36-hour legal limit, with workers at Dongguan Dong Yao Toys consistently working between 180 and 210 hours of overtime per month during peak seasons, averaging out to over 13 hours of work per day every day of the month.

Safety is also a major concern. Toy production involves chemicals that are harmful to a person's health. But many workers at the factories in this investigation were not required to wear safety equipment, including those that spent ten hour or more hours every day spray painting toys.

CLW is cooperating with French labor group [Peuples Solidaires](#) and other European partners to launch an international Urgent Appeal to demand that Mattel immediately begin to rectify the illegal and unfair treatment that has been exposed in this report as well as take steps to strengthen the respect for labor rights in the long-term. These measures include changing Mattel's buying practice by increasing pay to factories and increasing time given for delivery, establishing independent worker hotlines, worker committees, roundtable discussions, and increasing production transparency .

Director of China Labor Watch, Li Qiang, said, "Based on this report, we can see that Mattel's entire system has serious problems, and this reveals a lack of concern by Mattel for its production workers."

[Read the report.](#)

UPDATE on December 1, 2012, 11:55 AM: Mattel recently responded to media saying that they have not worked with Witty Industries, one of the supplier factories in this investigation, since 2009. But in October 2012, our investigator found Mattel boxes and Mattel products in the production facility of Witty Industries. In China, factories that have passed the audits of foreign multinational companies will subcontract the manufacturing of those companies' products to factories who have not passed such audits. This is a common phenomena in Chinese supply chains.

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