

NETEX: GLOBAL COMPACT Communication on Engagement 2017

Participant ID: 17107

Introduction

This “Communication on Engagement” provides an overview of activities by NETEX and her members.

Activities and results

In her role as the Dutch association of textile cleaners, NETEX is focused on developing so called Best Practises for the industry in the fields of quality, labour conditions, sustainability and environmental impact. Best Practices provide state of the art technique and working methods to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable working places and processes.

Basical principles

The association acts according the statutes (Annex A). In general the association attempts to improve the sector and the way its operating. Starting point is respecting the law.

Labour and working conditions

NETEX represents employers. Although professionalism is important and still growing, the sector still offers low-skilled labor and therefore job opportunities for people who have a distance to the labor market like immigrants and disabled people.

1. Innovative techniques and working methods

The industry can rely on innovative techniques and working processes to improve working circumstances and minimize physical strength. NETEX manages a “Catalog on Labour working conditions and safety for Textile cleaning companies”. This catalog contains an inventory of risky and dangerous working circumstances and provides guidelines and protocols to eliminate these. Protocols are available to reduce the impact of physical strain, noise, indoor environment and workload. The “Protocol Working healthy and safe” that prescribes:

- Special mats for working standing/upright
- Special work boots/shoes with springy soles
- Folding tables with right height
- Containers with big wheels
- Containers with variable/automatic adjusting bottom

To help individual companies in controlling and managing hazardous situations, described in the catalog, the sector can use the dedicated webbased tool “Risk inventarisatie & evaluation (RI&E)”, a practical tool that connects to the Labour catalog.

NETEX will publish updated versions of both the “Catalog on Labour working conditions and safety textile cleaning companies” and the “Risk Inventory & Evaluation Textile care” before august 2018. The update ensures that both instruments refer to actual, applicable law/legislations, standards and guideline.

2. Collective Labour Agreement

The CLA is a result of negotiations between employers and employees who are represented by their own associations. The CLA is established by the responsible ministry and employers are required to follow.

The CLA, which is renewed every three years, includes guidelines and regulations to be met by employers to ensure minimal standards of working conditions (salary, working hours, holidays, pension, travel expenses etc.). At the time of this report negotiations are on the way for a new CLA.

Within the context of a new CLA various agreements are respected in the fields of

- Modernization of employment conditions (also in the light of new law/legislation);
- Sustainable employability of employees;
- Update of the Catalog on Labour working conditions and safety textile cleaning companies” and the “Risk Inventory & Evaluation Textile care”;
- Control body compliance CLA (for the industry).

Sustainable employability of employees is a consequence of recent Dutch government policy striving for employment of people for a longer period and retirement at a higher age. This because of the aging of people, the affordability and the shelf-life of the pension system. In years to come less employees have to earn for more retired people. Within Netex initiatives will be developed to support members, in their role as employer, to make the best use of tools and instructions described in the “Catalog on Labour working conditions and safety”.

3. Training

For employees training is important. Training improves technical skills and knowledge and by this safe and sound working conditions.

Training courses are developed and offered by Training Centre Textile Care (TCT) on behalf of social partners like trade unions and also NETEX. E-learning methods make courses and training material easy accessible. Courses cover all aspects of dry cleaning like machine safety and working with various cleaning processes and the specific chemicals used in these processes.

4. Environment

Efforts over the last decades have transformed the industry in a sustainable alternative which is confirmed by research of the independent institute TNO¹ showing that professional textile cleaning is up to three times more environmental friendly then laundering at home. Over the last period it has become evident that washing synthetic textiles at home, causes a enormous problem since every wash cycle releases 200.000 synthetic fibres per liter which become part of the ecological system and food chain. The problem will be even bigger in 2050 when 5 billion people will own a washing machine versus 2 billion people in 2010. Also in this respect professional textile cleaning out performs home washing making professional cleaning the most responsible choice.

Research on new techniques for machineries and chemicals is conducted by the TKT² on behalf of NETEX. Projects cover optimization of cleaning and finishing processes but are mainly focused on the development of solvents and alternatives which have no or a very limited impact on humans and the environment. With Solvetex NETEX offers an international benchmark on the performance of alternative solvents and cleaning methods with a dual purpose. The first is informing the industry about the state of the art. The second is to stimulate suppliers to improve and innovate.

¹ TNO 2012: Duurzaam reinigen II: Vergelijkende vervolganalyse van de milieubelasting van textielreiniging bij huishoudens thuis en bij professionele reinigers, Projectnummer 052.02750/01.01

² TKT: Technological Knowledge centre Textile care (The Netherlands)

5. Certification

Netex manages a certification system which grants an Environmental Certificate and a Quality Assurance certificate when legislation, requirements and guidelines, developed by the sector, are met. A recently introduced program is Cerclean®.

The **Netex Environmental Certificate** focuses on safe and responsible working with detergents and hazardous substances. During audits all relevant control points are checked to ensure that all processes and working areas are safe and healthy for employees and the environment.

- When a company uses PERC, measurements are done to verify that emission of PERC does not exceed health limits established by WHO.
- The Guideline “Cleaner production” forms the basis for the certification program. It provides companies a full overview of law and regulations they have to meet. Also templates and other devices are offered.

The Environmental Certificate is a prerequisite for companies applying for the Quality Assurance certificate.

The **Netex Quality Assurance** certificate is a testimony that all working methods, machineries and tools provide in working circumstances that limit the risks of accidents and sickness. Also the certificate is a guarantee that working methods achieve a good quality level of cleaned textiles.

The international quality management system/scheme **Cerclean®** is an easy approachable program offering textile cleaners world wide a step by step approach to a. learn about quality management and b. develop a quality management system.

Cerclean® is based on international acknowledged best practices and standards including environmental safe and sustainable working methods, labor friendly working conditions and ISO 9001 requirements to ensure constant improvement of business processes. The program provides an e-learning tool which also provides formats/examples which can be used in the company specific quality management system.

Cerclean® offers a worldwide standard for safe and sustainable processing and managing improvement business processes and therefore the quality level.

6. Training and education:

Various courses contribute to environmentally working methods as they make people aware of the characteristics and risks of machineries and chemicals and acquire the knowledge to cope with these risks.

TCT, TrainingCentre Textile Care, offers, all round professional trainings covering all aspects of modern textile cleaning and, in association with CINET, international courses within the World of PTC Business School. These courses bring the textile care industry on a higher level by offering knowledge and support to implement sustainable working methods for the environment but also for employees. Employees can acquire the certificate Master in PTC. Companies are enabled to implement the quality management system Cerclean®. This QMS helps entrepreneurs to improve business/production processes and efficiency, and thus improve quality, and to implement safe and sustainable working methods. With e-learning courses TCT offers full support for everyone interested in becoming a Master in PTC and a qualified “quality assurance manager”.

Annex A brief introduction

NETEX³, the Dutch association for textile cleaners, entered the Global Compact program in May 2012.

The association has a long history of over 90 years. It was founded in 1919. NETEX represents the interests of its affiliated Dutch textile cleaners. These members represent 60% of the Dutch market. NETEX encourages the sector as a whole to become better, more modern, service-oriented and sustainable by improving quality and meeting today's customer demands. Important aspects include research, development and innovation, training, service and certification.

The company size of associated members shows a broad range. On one end of the range you will find small scale companies run by just the proprietor servicing the local area. On the other end large scale companies with a substantial staff servicing the whole country are to be found. In between are companies servicing a regional area. Core business of members is professional textile cleaning mainly for private customers. The B2B-market however is of growing importance.

Annex B

The two clauses from the association's statutes describe the goal of the association and by what means this goal is to be achieved. After the translation you will find a copy of the original text.

“Goal and means”

Clause 4

The association aims to promote textile cleaning companies in general, improvement of the circumstances and relationships in this industry, promoting cooperation of employers in this industry, the union of all companies that can be a member of this association and to represent the business interests of its members in the broadest sense.

Clause 5

The association seeks to achieve this objective through legal ways by:

- Promoting good relations between members;
- Promoting good relations between members and their employees;
- Entering into collective labour agreements;
- Settling disputes between members and between members and their employees;
- Combating unfair competition and countering false conditions that may exist in the trade;
- Issuing an association magazine
- Promoting (technical) training and disseminating general knowledge to craftsman in the trade;
- All other legal means, which may contribute to the goal.”

³ NETEX: Nederlandse vereniging van Textielreinigers, Dutch association for Textile cleaners