

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System: Trademark Licensing and Innovation Credits Call Notes (AF Credits 33-34; IN Credits 1-4)

October 30, 2008

AF Credit 33: Independent Monitoring of Logo Apparel

One caller mentioned that she does not know where to start to find this information. Universities' trademark and licensing office or equivalent, should be able to provide information for this credit. Schools can also check the websites of the Worker Rights Consortium and the Fair Labor Association, as both have a list of college and university affiliates posted (see www.workersrights.org/about/as.asp and www.fairlabor.org/participants/colleges).

One caller noted that her institution has a secretariat that is responsible for the use of her institution's logo, but due to decentralization, this screening system does not always work.

One caller commented that the Trademark and Licensing credits apply only to apparel and noted that her institution sells a wide array of other items that bear the institution's logo, such as notebooks and stuffed animals. These credits are limited to apparel because the Worker Rights Consortium and the Fair Labor Association cover apparel only.

One caller noted that her institution sometimes uses a small supplier such as a local non-profit organization with strong social responsibility commitments. One caller mentioned that her institution has a list of suppliers that are known to be violators of workers' rights and warns all purchasing entities not to buy from these suppliers. AASHE said that the use and avoidance of such suppliers would be a great thing to report on, though it wouldn't fit with the credits as they are currently written, it fits with the spirit of the credit and will be considered for future versions.

The group questioned the scope of the Fair Labor Association and the Workers' Rights Consortium, and wondered if they have Canadian affiliates. Both organizations have Canadian university affiliates.

One caller mentioned that her institution's Office of Trademark Licensing mentions these organizations in its Trademark Policy.

AF Credit 34: Designated Suppliers Program

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

Innovation Credits

One caller asked if innovation credits would be judged on the difficulty that it took to achieve them. This caller mentioned that her university's single occupancy vehicle percentage was very low, but they did not have to work very hard to achieve this. Callers questioned whether innovation credits are intended to be innovative in comparison to other institutions or in comparison to their local circumstances. In general, credits are not given preference based on how hard they are to achieve or regional variations, but are based on the impact of the outcome. AASHE welcomes further feedback on this issue, both for innovation credits and the system generally.

A caller noted that her university created an energy management system in the late 80's early 90's that was innovative for its time and is still extremely efficient by today's standards. Since the energy efficiency credit included in the pilot version of STARS is based on a three-year trend, efficiency upgrades that occurred more than three years ago aren't recognized by the system. The institution asked whether events that took place more than three years ago are eligible for earning innovation credits. The Guidelines for Innovation Credits specify that events have to have occurred during the performance period (the previous three years), but the ongoing operation of this efficiency system may be considered an ongoing practice and not a one-time installation event. AASHE welcomes feedback on whether or not this timeframe should be modified.

AASHE encourages institutions to complete the innovation credits as they best see fit in order to inform the decisions around what type of criteria need to be developed.