



**GROUP**

# Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement 2024

## 1. Our business and background

RS Group plc provides product and service solutions that help our customers design, build, maintain, repair and operate industrial equipment and operations, safely and sustainably. We stock more than 750,000 industrial and electronic products, sourced from over 2,500 leading suppliers, and provide a wide range of product and service solutions to customers.

We support customers across the product lifecycle, whether via innovation and technical support at the design phase, improving time to market and productivity at the build phase, or reducing purchasing costs and optimising inventory in the maintenance, repair and operation phase. We offer our customers tailored product and service propositions that are essential for the successful operation of their businesses and help them save time and money.

Further information can be found on our website [www.rsgroup.com](http://www.rsgroup.com).

Under section 54 of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015, all incorporated businesses with over £36m in annual turnover and conducting business in the UK are required to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement. This statement is for our financial year 2023/24, ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## 2. Our approach

We will not allow any form of slavery or human trafficking to take place in any part of our business. We will not use child labour (in line with the ILO Minimum Age Convention), nor will we use forced labour.

We recognise that slavery, forced and/or compulsory labour and the trafficking of persons for any purpose is a serious global issue and we are taking steps to ensure that this does not take place in our supply chains. Details of the steps we have already made and our future steps are set out below in this statement.

Modern Slavery is managed via our Global Compliance and Ethics programme and our ESG action plan, covering both our own workforce and our supply chain.



## 3. Our framework

### Risk assessment

In March 2023, a geographical risk assessment was completed, using the Modern Day Slavery Index. This has enabled us to identify our higher risk geographies, which we will use to inform our next actions to be taken. This includes ensuring awareness training is targeted appropriately according to risk. We hold a regular Group Responsible Procurement Meeting of internal subject matter experts to examine risks within the supply chain, including Modern Slavery.

### Code of conduct, policy framework and awareness training

We operate a Group-wide [Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy](#) to inform our employees, contractors, supply chain and other stakeholders of our commitment to address Modern Slavery.

The policy gives guidance on identifying and reporting Modern Slavery and is reviewed annually to ensure that it is up to date with current legislation and best practice.

Our [Group Code of Conduct](#) also highlights our stance on Modern Slavery and provides advice on what to do if Modern Slavery is suspected within the workplace or supply chain.

All employees across the Group are required to complete training on the Code of Conduct, which includes a specific section on Modern Day Slavery. This includes information on how to identify a potential victim and how to report it.

### Supply chain

We have a complex supply chain, sourcing products from over 2,500 suppliers and also working with manufacturers to produce RS branded products via our RS PRO business.

As part of our commitment to high ethical and environmental standards we seek to extend our global policies and standards to our suppliers and other business partners. The Group's Ethical Trading Policy sets out our minimum requirements for suppliers and is intended to ensure that RS Group sources products in an ethical and consistent manner while working with suppliers to improve their social and environmental practices. We ask suppliers to sign up to our Ethical Trading Declaration or provide evidence of their own equivalent policies.

We are also members of Sedex to help provide assurance that our supply chain is working to high standards, particular in relation to labour and human rights.

This includes audits on some suppliers which are identified as higher risk and seeking assurances from our supply chain via our Ethical Trading Declaration. We also ask all of our RS PRO suppliers to become Sedex members.

In addition, we hold events with our suppliers as part of our ESG action plan. More details can be found in our [ESG Supplier Handbook](#).

### Governance

We have a dedicated, full time, Head of Group Compliance and Ethics who is responsible for delivering our Compliance and Ethics Programme and maintaining the delivery of our Modern Day Slavery objectives. We also have a regular Responsible Procurement Steering Group to bring together subject matter experts in our company to discuss ethical issues within the supply chain, set standards, policies and processes for our Responsible Procurement agenda.

### Whistleblowing and investigating concerns

We encourage everyone who works for RS Group to report suspected breaches of our Code of Conduct as soon as possible via our Speak Up whistleblowing process. There are a number of ways people can do this, including via our external confidential reporting service. Speak Up operates under a non-retaliatory policy; everyone who raises a concern in good faith is treated fairly, regardless of the



outcome of any subsequent investigation. We provide training to our employees on how to use the process.

Speak Up is also made available to all of our suppliers, via a dedicated email address.

The Speak Up programme is overseen by the Audit Committee and operated by the Group Legal and Compliance team. Where a case can be looked into, it is thoroughly and robustly investigated and is monitored to verify that any corrective action plan or remediation has been conducted.

## 4. Action taken

In the previous year 2023/24 we committed to review higher risk activities and geographies in our supply chain to identify mitigating actions that will reduce the risk of Modern Slavery.

We have continued to carry out inspections of our RS Pro Asia suppliers and there have now been 39 carried out in the last year.

In addition, since issuing our last statement we have had 225 suppliers attend webinars with EcoVadis, sharing best practice on labour, human rights and ethics, among other ESG topics.

We have also continued to evaluate our suppliers against our high ethical standards via a questionnaire at both prequalification and requalification intervals. This includes setting ESG objectives for our strategic suppliers.

Our Joint Venture in India have also received training on Modern Day Slavery as part of their Code of Conduct training.

We also committed to continue to raise awareness around Modern Slavery and forced labour in our organisation and supply chain. This has now become a standard part of our Code of Conduct training, which is now much more widely delivered across our organisation. Our goal is for all of our employees to receive input on Modern Day Slavery.

## 5. Next Steps 2024/2025

In the coming year, we aim to build on this by:

- Providing specialised training for our network of Ethics Champions, who are currently present in 31 countries
- Carry out a series of country Ethics & Compliance reviews across our business, with specific sections dedicated to Modern Day Slavery
- Provide dedicated sessions to our partners in countries that have a high risk profile for Modern Slavery

This statement was approved by the Board of RS Group plc on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2024.

Simon Pryce

Chief Executive Officer  
For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

