

# Fit to Wear 貼心稱身

Safety and quality are undoubtedly top priorities for textile and garment manufacturers and sellers, and Hong Kong's testing and certification industry has established a reputation for working diligently to uphold high standards for consumers around the world.

對紡織和成衣業來說，安全和品質無疑是最重要的環節，香港的檢測和認證服務，素以把關嚴謹著稱，為全球消費者提供必要的保障。

By 撰文：Heath Leisston

## Safe and Comfortable

Hong Kong's testing and certification industry has continued to expand its scope to provide more comprehensive and professional services to textile and garment manufacturers. It's imperative for these industries to have their products tested, as clothes, textiles and garments play an essential part in everyday life and their safety is an important factor for consumers and businesses alike. It is especially vital for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) looking to work with global brands and organisations to ensure

## 安全又舒適

紡織品和成衣是日常生活的必需品，須經過嚴格的測試，以確保消費者的安全。香港的檢測和認證業為紡織品、衣服及鞋履提供大量支援服務，有意與國際品牌及機構合作的中小企，尤其需要藉此確保他們的產品和所用物料安全，並符合相關規定。

優力勝邦檢測服務（香港）有限公司副總裁兼亞洲區消費品及零售服務部總經理馮子科說：「接受檢測和認證，就有如取得進入市場的門票，沒有這門票，其他公司甚至不會考慮與你交易，因為他們無從得知你的產品孰好孰壞。」

that their products and materials used therein are safe and comply with relevant regulations.

“Getting tested and certified is similar to gaining an admission ticket for entering a market and doing business. Without it, companies might not even consider working with you because they won't know if your items are good or not,” Alvin Fung, Vice President & General Manager of UL Consumer and Retail Services Asia, explains.

In addition, there is increased interest for businesses to become more transparent and environmentally friendly. “The demands on garment-testing have risen since the public is becoming more and more concerned about questions like what chemicals are used, where materials such as cotton are sourced, and if the dyeing process of a garment will pollute the environment,” says Howard Wan, Deputy Director of Business Development at Modern Testing Services (Global) Ltd.

## Different standards, different needs

Currently, there is no one standard that applies to all markets for textiles and garments. It is common that each market specifies a set of standards that need to be met before a product can enter that particular market. For the US, major standards for garments and textile manufacturers are AATCC (the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists), ANSI (the American National Standards Institute), ASTM and FTC (Federal Trade Commission) standards, which enforces the Care Labeling Rule for accurate labelling. For Europe, the main standards are the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and EN (European Committee for Standardization) standards. Products entering the UK also need to fulfil requirements in BS (British Standards), while those heading into Germany must also meet DIN (Deutsches Institut für Normung) standards. Over the past several years, more and more American and European brands have been looking to enter the Chinese market, leading to the needs for testing according to GB (Guobiao, Standardization Administration of China) standards.

Tests of textile and garment for meeting regulations and standards include checking fibre content to ensure that items are made from the material claimed, checking if accurate care labels are present, tests for flammability, and a series of chemical tests for azo dyes, lead, formaldehyde and other harmful chemicals. Items for children will also be subjected to child-safety tests for small parts, sharp points and edges, etc. There are also tests to review performance factors, which are factors that might be problematic but are not necessarily harmful or able to hurt users. These include strength tests on fabric and colour



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此外，公司營運要增加透明度和更環保，也是大勢所趨。現代技術（香港）有限公司業務發展總監溫帶灝說：「成衣檢測需求與日俱增，源於公眾愈來愈關注製衣過程中使用了甚麼化學品，棉花之類的物料來自甚麼地方，以至於漂染程序有沒有污染環境等問題。」

## 不同標準 不同要求

目前沒有一套全球通行的紡織品和成衣標準，每個市場都有本身的要求，要進入有關市場，就得符合其所定的標準。就美國而言，紡織和製衣廠商要遵守的主要標準來自美國紡織化學及色料師協會（AATCC）、美國國家標準協會（ANSI）、美國材料和檢測協會（ASTM）和聯邦貿易委員會（FTC），其中一項紡織服裝護理標籤法規（Care Labeling Rule），要求對衣物護理作出明確的標籤說明。在歐洲，主要標準來自國際標準化組織（ISO）及歐洲標準化委員會（EN）；輸入英國和德國的貨物，也要分別符合英國標準協會（BS）和德國標準化學會（DIN）的要求。近年來，愈來愈多歐美公司試闖中國市場，也就需要就中國國家標準化管理委員會（GB）的標準進行檢測。

紡織及成衣的檢測，包括確認所用的材料與聲稱吻合、附有明確的護理標籤、通過防火測試，以及就偶氮化合物、鉛、甲醛和其他有害化學物進行化學檢測。兒童物品更要符合細小附件、尖銳物體和鋒利邊緣等安全規格。此外還有功能水平檢測，這與是否有害無關，但關乎產品的使用功能，如纖維韌力和色澤耐力，會影響產品會否縮水或褪色。兒童衣物和床上用品的規定會更為嚴格。馮子科指出：「有關兒童物品的規定比成人的更多，要進行的化學品和安全測試更繁複，因為全世界都以保護兒童為首要之務。過去幾年，兒童物品的檢測要求有增無減。」



fastness tests to assess the likelihood of garment shrinkage or that colours will run, respectively. Children's clothing and bedding products are subjected to stricter regulations and guidelines. "There are more regulations for children's items than on items for adults. There are more tests required for hazardous chemicals and safety because the safety of children is a priority all around the world. Over the last several years, the testing requirements for children's items have steadily increased," says Fung.

Besides product tests, many testing and certification bodies in Hong Kong, including UL and Modern Testing Services, also conduct in-house factory lab audits, along with other types of audits on social compliance (e.g. whether child labour is used, equal pay is provided and safe factory conditions are present) and capability compliance (whether a factory is able to fulfil orders).

The testing and certification industry sees changes regularly, as guidelines and regulations get updated to match current market trends and needs. With more and more businesses going online, the life-cycle of a garment has also been shortened, causing a dramatic cut-down of the turnaround time to produce and fulfil orders. In order to keep up with the supply chain, Hong Kong's testing service businesses have adapted to conduct tests and produce reports in a shorter period.

By going online, companies have been able to enter more emerging markets. In addition to conducting business there, companies are looking to source from emerging markets, particularly from countries besides the Chinese mainland.

"Not only are SMEs able to find new buyers in emerging markets but they are able to source garments from the Chinese mainland as well as India and ASEAN member countries like Cambodia and Vietnam. SMEs have also started to set up supply chain controls in these countries so service providers have already invested in supporting them by opening labs and offices," says Wan.

Another common trend that both Fung and Wan has seen developing in the industry is the time that testing is being done. "In the past, companies would only do testing on the final product. But if the product fails at that stage, it is very frustrating because it means a lot of wasted resources," Fung explains.



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在產品檢測之外，香港有很多檢測和認證機構，例如上述的優力勝邦和現代技術，也提供廠房審核的服務，以及各種社會責任（如有否僱用兒童傭工、是否同工同酬及工廠環境安全）和履行責任（如能否準時完成訂單）的審核。

各地法規和指引不時修訂，檢測和認證業也自然要與時並進，以配合市場潮流和需要。隨著網上商務日趨頻繁，成衣的生命周期相應縮短，使生產和起貨周期也大為緊縮，為趕及配合供應鏈的需要，香港的檢測和認證機構要在更短的時間內完成檢測和提交報告。

公司可通過互聯網開拓更多潛在市場，也可以在現有地區，特別是中國內地以外物色更多採購來源。

溫帶灝說：「中小企不但可在新興市場找到新的買家，更可以在中國內地以外拓展更多採購地區，如印度和柬埔寨、越南等東盟國家。中小企也開始在這些國家設立供應鏈管理據點，因而不少檢測機構都已在當地投資開設實驗室和辦事處，為中小企提供支援。」

馮子科和溫帶灝同時指出，進行檢測的時序也和以前不一樣。馮子科解釋：「過去，公司只會拿製成品去做檢測，但若在這最後階段才發現不合規，問題便很大，許多資源都會浪費掉。現在許多公司在生產初期便開始做測試，最後才做覆核程序。比如他們會先測試材料，作出必要的調整，然後才開始生產，那便有更大機會通過最後的檢測。」

"So now, a lot of companies are conducting testing in the early stages of the production process before verifying the final product. They'll start testing on the materials and trim before actually going ahead with the manufacturing, which increases their chances of passing the required tests later on."

However, no matter what the changes, Hong Kong's testing and certification industry remains vigilant in ensuring the safety and quality of products available to consumers around the world.

### Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong

Testing and certification is an industry with good development potentials in Hong Kong. Over the years, the industry has established a good foundation, based on a robust accreditation system, high professional standards and an excellent reputation. It plays an important role in support to Hong Kong's extensive trade with other economies (e.g. textiles and garments), and has been providing services at various stages of the overall supply chain ranging from design, sourcing, manufacturing, pre-shipment and retail stage. With high professional standards and in-depth knowledge of international and national regulatory requirement and standards, the industry can provide new services quickly in response to the market need.

To spearhead the development of the industry, the Government established the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification in September 2009 to advise on the overall strategy to support the development of the industry. Since its establishment, the Council has worked closely with the Government and industry stakeholders to reinforce the "Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong" brand.

The Council together with the Hong Kong Association for Testing, Inspection and Certification has published a booklet setting out the testing and certification services for textiles and garments. You can find the booklet and further information about the Council's work through the website, [www.hkctc.gov.hk](http://www.hkctc.gov.hk).

Accreditation helps users to identify reliable testing and certification service providers. You can find service providers accredited by the Hong Kong Accreditation Service and the scope of their services from their website, [www.hkas.gov.hk](http://www.hkas.gov.hk).



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但無論情況如何轉變，香港的檢測和認證業將一如既往，致力為全球消費者把關，確保產品的安全和質量。

### 香港檢測 • 香港認證

檢測和認證業是香港具發展潛力的行業，憑藉健全的認可制度、卓越的專業水平以及優良聲譽，為行業奠定穩固的基礎。行業一直為香港和其他經濟體系的龐大貿易（例如紡織品、衣服及鞋履）提供支援並在整個供應鏈各個階段發揮不同作用，包括設計、採購、製造、裝運前及零售階段。憑著其專業水平及對國際市場的豐富知識，行業可因應市場需要而迅速提供嶄新服務。

為推動行業的發展，政府在2009年9月成立檢測和認證局，負責就行業的整體發展策略提供意見。自成立以來，香港檢測和認證局一直與政府及檢測和認證業緊密合作，推廣「香港檢測 • 香港認證」品牌。

香港檢測和認證局與香港測檢認證協會合作，製作了「紡織品及成衣的檢測和認證服務」小冊子，載列行業就紡織品及成衣提供的服務，小冊子及該局的工作均已上載於香港檢測和認證局網頁([www.hkctc.gov.hk](http://www.hkctc.gov.hk))。

認可資格有助用家識別可靠的檢測和認證服務提供者，欲知更多獲香港認可處認可的服務提供者及其認可範圍的資料，請瀏覽網頁：[www.hkas.gov.hk](http://www.hkas.gov.hk)。