



An Investigative Report on Dongguan Dongwon

March 11, 2019

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Executive Summary

On November 21, 2018, China Labor Watch received a complaint from a worker at Dongguan Dongwon Electronics regarding the working conditions at the factory. The worker mentioned that workers were putting in 170 hours of work a month, were given only 15 minutes for meal breaks and the factory employed a large number of dispatch workers that was well over the legal limit. After receiving the complaint, China Labor Watch sent in an investigator into the factory to conduct an undercover investigation. The investigator worked on the production line and interviewed workers. This is CLW's first investigation into Dongguan Dongwon Electronics.

Located in Guangdong province, Dongguan Dongwon Electronics is a key supplier of Huizhou Samsung Electronics and predominantly manufactures mobile phone chargers and car chargers. The factory employs approximately 500 workers.

The investigator worked at the factory for several weeks and found a host of rights violations at the factory:

- No pre-job safety training. The investigator only received a three-minute demonstration on how to operate the machine in his work position
- Wages are not cleared on the day of resignation. Whether a worker is employed or has resigned, wages are paid around the 28th of every month
- Workers sign blank contracts
- Workers usually work approximately 55 overtime hours a month, and during peak season, workers put in more than 100 overtime hours a month
- Temporary workers do not receive overtime pay. They are paid 15 RMB/hour (\$2.23 USD/hour) regardless of whether they work regular hours or overtime hours.
- Workers are not provided with adequate labor protection equipment. The soldering position creates hazardous smoke, and the stamping position generates a lot of noise. However, workers in these positions do not receive any labor protection equipment.
- Bed bugs in the investigator's dormitory room
- The factory did not have any information regarding a union and workers are unsure whether it exists. The investigator did not hear about a worker hotline. If workers have issues, they can only speak to the line leader or the workshop foreman.

Company Profile

Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co.,Ltd. is a subsidiary company of a well-known Korean company called Dongyuan Yingken Company. Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co.,Ltd. is a key supplier of Huizhou Samsung Electronics Co.,Ltd.. It was founded in June 2002 with an authorized capital of 15 million Hong Kong dollars. The company is located in Fuzhushan Industrial Zone, Liaobu Town, Dongguan City. With the expansion of its production scale, the company invested in establishing factories in other places such as Shandong, Weihai and Vietnam. The major products of the company are mobile phone chargers and car chargers. Its main clients include Korea Samsung, Huizhou Samsung, Tianjin Samsung, Vietnam Samsung¹.



Factory Name: Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co.,Ltd.

Main Products: Samsung mobile phone charger

Corporation Representative: He Bingchao

Address: Fuzhushan Industrial Zone, Liaobu Town, Dongguan City, Guangdong Province

Contact Information: +86 0769-83228000

Main Clients: Samsung Korea, Samsung Huizhou, Samsung Tianjin, Samsung Vietnam

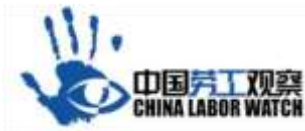
Total Workforce: approximately five hundred

Male to female ratio of workers: approximately 1:1

Number of workers interviewed: approximately 30

Male to female ratio of workers interviewed: 2:1

¹ Information sourced from company's profile on jobcn.com and job5156.com.



Department of the workers interviewed: No.2 Production Department

Form of Interview: Anonymous interview

Section 1: Recruitment and Resignation

Hiring Policy

Hiring Requirements:

According to the hiring advertisement, the factory does not have any requirements for applicants: “Male and female workers who are at the legal working age with a valid identification card are welcome to apply.” However, the entrance to the production workshop has an “Announcement regarding Rewards for Internal Referrals” notice affixed, and clearly states that qualified candidates should have graduated from middle school. Male workers should be between 18 and 38 years old and female workers should be between 18 and 40 years old.”

Hiring Process:

The recruitment poster is affixed to the gate of the factory. Interviews are scheduled every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning. Applicants need to inform the security office, which is located near the gate, and the security guard will call the human resources staff to meet the applicants at the gate. The human resources staff asks several basic questions such as: “How did you hear about our factory? Do you have acquaintances from your hometown who are now working in our factory?”, “What work experience did you have?”, “Have you ever worked for an electronics factory?”, “Are you married?”, “Do you have any relative or friend living nearby?” Then the staff takes applicants to the factory. They go through the recruitment procedures on the first floor of the dormitories, at the office located on the south side. Applicants are required to provide their ID cards to check the validity of their ID information on the internet. Each applicant then receives an “Employee Information” form and the workers are taken to the cafeteria next to the office to fill out the form. After the completed forms are collected, the staff gives the applicants blank paperwork which has been stapled together, to sign the forms according to the template. The paperwork includes an “Employee Commitment Form”, “Confirmation of Employment Conditions”, “Notice of Occupational Hazards”, “Announcement of Overtime Work”, “Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co., Ltd. Employee Agreement”, and “Labor Contract Supplemental Agreement”. Upon completing the paperwork, HR staff tell applicants to take a pre-job physical examination at the outpatient department of Quantang People Hospital. Applicants return to the factory from the hospital at 2pm and hand in their results, after which they can sign contracts.



HAEM 东莞东原电子有限公司

一、公司简介

- 东莞东原电子有限公司系韩国著名企业东原应肯株式会社在中国大陆投资兴办的外商独资企业，于2002年6月成立，占地面积10000M²，现有员工600人。
- 主要产品：手机充电器。

二、薪酬福利

- ◆ 公司实行正班5天8小时工作制，每周至少休息一天。
- ◆ 底薪**1770元/月**（即正班10.17元/H）
 平时加班15.26元/H，周末加班20.34元/H，法定假日加班30.52元/H。
 每月26日准时发放上月工资。
- ◆ 包吃住，不扣任何费用；每周三、周五饭堂加餐。
- ◆ 工作满一年者享受工龄津贴70元、按工作年限递增。
- ◆ 员工享有法定有薪节假日11天，工作满一年享有5天有薪年假。
- ◆ 公司为员工购买养老、失业、工伤、医疗、生育等保险。




大量招聘普工

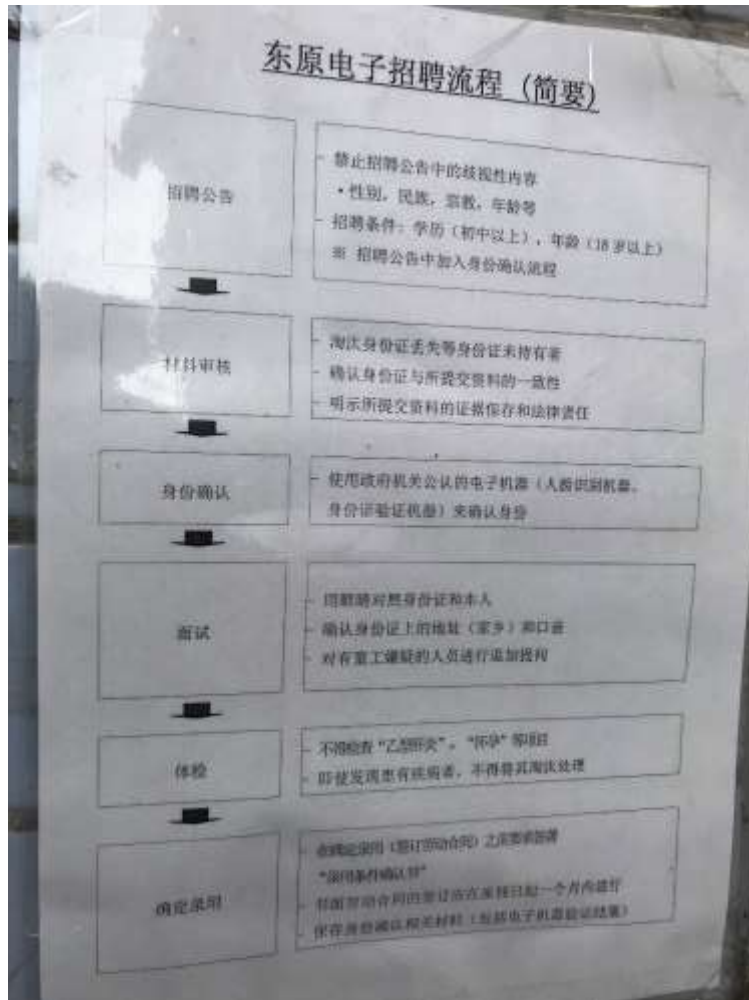
要求：男女不限，符合法定工作年龄，具有本人有效身份证件。
 面试须知：周一、三、五早上08:30-09:30携带身份证到公司门口面试。
 地址：东莞市寮步镇浮竹山工业区（浮竹山加油站附近）
 电话：0769-83228000- 奉小姐
 （本公司承诺员工进厂不押证件、不收取任何介绍费，同时入厂需采用人脸识别仪器确认身份）

有限公司

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 2010年11月20日
 105 24 20

Recruitment poster



The factory's hiring process

After handing in the results of the physical examination to the staff and signing two contracts, the staff begins to distribute factory labels and allocate dormitories. Staff then tells new employees to check in and have their fingerprints collected at the administrative office, on the second floor of the office building. Three fingerprints are collected for each person. All the new workers then return to the human resource office, where they receive their work garment, including a pair of sleevelets, a blue short-sleeve anti-static jacket, a blue anti-static hat and a pair of slippers. After that, the staff leads the new workers to the north side of the workshop building to allocate shoeboxes. All of the new workers put on an anti-static hat and shoes, and are led by a workshop management staff to the rest area on the second floor, waiting to be allocated to work positions.



Factory Card



Anti-static garment guide

Entry Methods:

Direct hires, hiring through dispatch companies, and internal referrals

Position Assignment:

Workers are allocated to work positions. Generally, less strenuous job positions are allocated to female workers.

Underage Workers:

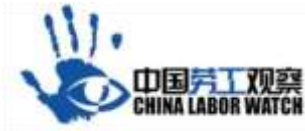
ID cards are required to be verified during the recruitment process, as such, it is difficult for underage workers to be employed at the factory. The investigator did not find any underage workers at the factory. The majority of the workers are older than 35 years old. The management staff of workshops and production lines are relatively younger and many of them are in their early 20's. Based on interviews with middle management, previously, the factory recruited student workers who were sent by agencies during fall and winter. However this year, the agencies sent a large number of temporary workers, most of whom were older than thirty years old. Therefore, the factory did not recruit student workers this year.

Physical Examination

Applicants receive a physical examination form and pay 50 RMB (\$7.44 USD) for the examination. After filling out their personal information, the new workers go to the second floor for a physical examination, which covers a blood test and electrocardiogram. The results are printed out right after they finish the examination, and the doctors then sign and complete the form. The physical examination fee is paid by the workers, but it will be refunded by the factory along with workers' first month's salary. Additionally, the workers do not undergo a physical examination upon resignation.



Receipt for physical examination



Training and Orientation

The factory does not provide pre-job training. According to the investigator, he only received a three-minute demonstration on how to operate the machine used in his work position.

Probation

A worker's probationary period is three months. If a worker wishes to resign during this period, he or she should notify the factory three days prior to resignation and complete a resignation form.

Resignation

If a worker wishes to resign during the contract period, he or she must notify the factory a month prior to resignation. The factory only processes resignations on Wednesday. The worker's wages will not be paid on the day of resignation. Whether a worker is employed or has resigned, the wages are paid into the workers' bank card around the 28th of every month.

Section 2: Labor Contract

Signing Process

After handing the results of the physical examination to the human resources staff on the day of recruitment, applicants sign two contracts with the factory. Applicants are immediately required to complete their personal information, sign on the last page, and leave a fingerprint. Several applicants asked how to fill in the blank spaces in the contract and the staff said: "Never mind that. We will fill in the blanks after collecting your contracts." The contracts are retrieved right after the new workers sign. Generally, a copy of the contracts will be returned to the workers after the worker works for a month. As the investigator worked at the factory for less than a month, he did not receive a copy.

Contract Terms

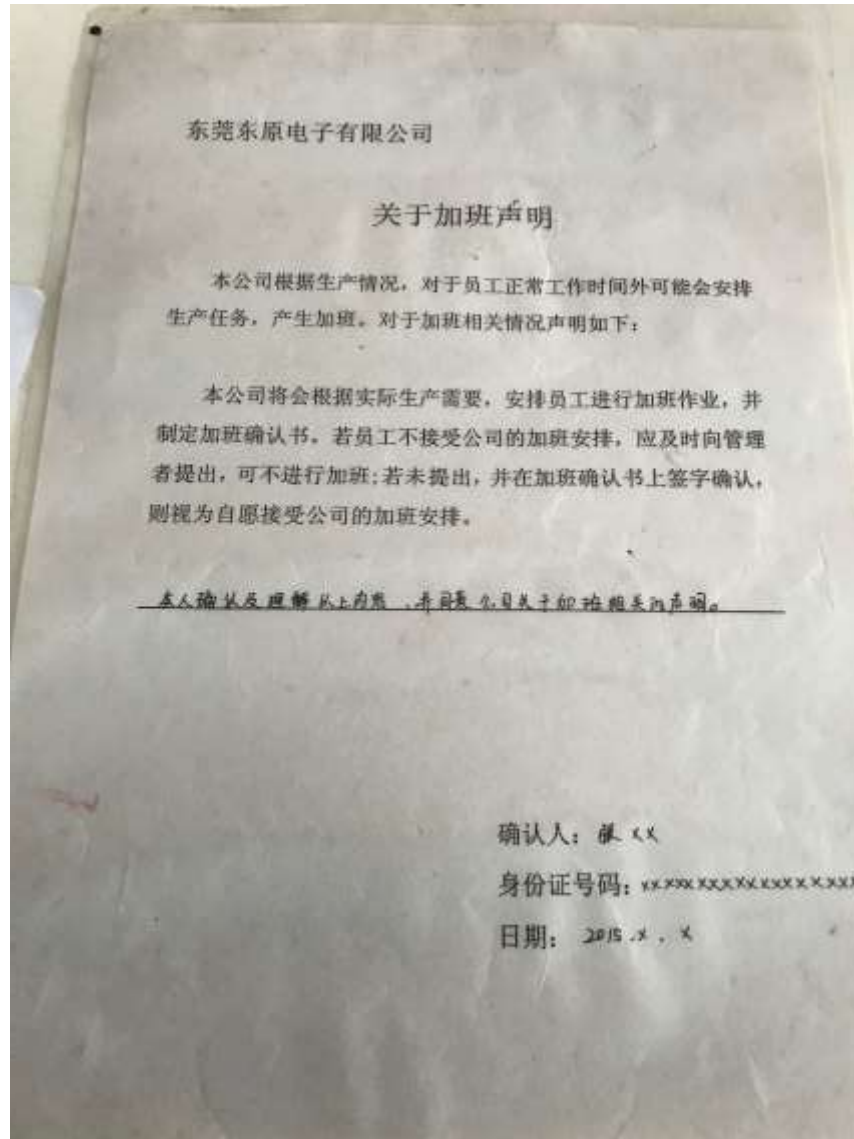
The process of signing the contracts lasts about five minutes. Since the staff always kept an eye on the workers during the whole signing process, the investigator did not have the chance to take photos of the contract. Therefore, we do not have detailed information regarding the contract terms.

Section 3: Working Hours

Working hours

Normally, workers work eight hours a day, five days a week, 22 days a month. In most cases, workers work overtime for two hours and do not work overtime on Friday. Some workers on the day shift sometimes work even longer, putting in four hours of overtime. They work one day on weekends occasionally, and workers are paid overtime for this. In total, workers work overtime for approximately 55 hours a month in total. Peak season is usually during September and October, workers often work overtime for four hours a day, and in total, more than 100 hours a month. If a worker is not willing to

work overtime, he or she can verbally notify the line manager. Generally, workers at this factory have ten hours to rest every day and have at least one day off on weekends. Workers switch between the day shift and the night shift on a monthly basis. They have 24 consecutive hours to rest when switching shifts. Both shifts have one hour for meals.



Announcement about overtime work

联络单						决	立案	审核	决定
文件编号: 6-QR-049-090						裁	郭淑婷	-1	1/21
日期	2018-12-21	部署名	生产2部	作成者	郭淑婷		12/21	1	12/21
题目	关于周末安排的联络事宜			接收单位	各部门				
<p>内容: 生产二部本周安排如下:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* 12月22日 (周六) 全体休息</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* 12月23日 (周日) 全体加班 10 H</p> <p style="text-align: center;">以上。请相关部门知悉!</p>									
DW-Q&EF-404-01 (版本: C/0)				DW东原电子			A4 (210×297mm)		

Notice about overtime work

Our investigator worked in the assembly workshop, which has seven production lines. All seven lines operate during the day shift, while only three lines operate during the night shift. Therefore, there are four lines available for overtime work for the day shift.

If workers in the night shift need to work overtime, it normally lasts for two hours, and two and a half hours at maximum. Therefore, night shift workers finish work before day shift workers begin working. The subsidy for the night shift is 18RMB (\$2.68 USD), which is the equivalent of working one hour of overtime. If the total working hours are the same for day and night shifts, then workers in the night shift will earn 500RMB (\$74.40 USD) more than those in the day shift, which can upset the workers on the

day shift. In that case, some workers may want to work several months consecutively on the night shift. Therefore, in order to keep the wages of day and night shifts the same, the factory sometimes arranges three-to-four-hour overtime work for the day shift on purpose.

Daily routine

	Morning (first half of the night)	Afternoon (second half of the night)	Overtime work
Day shift	8:00am—10:00am 10:10am—12:00am	1:00pm—3:00pm 3:10pm—5:00pm	6:00pm—8:00pm
Night shift	8:00pm—10:00pm 10:10pm—12:00am	1:00am—3:00am 3:10am—5:00am	6:00am—8:00am



Workers outside cafeteria during noon break



Workers taking a nap during the break

Different production targets are set for different production lines according to the degree of automation. The production target for the production line that the investigator worked on was 10,000 to 11,000 chargers. Some production lines have a high degree of automation and more workers and hence, their target is 17,000 chargers, which can be achieved as long as the machines are functioning normally. If the stamping machines malfunction, it normally takes more than half an hour to repair, which makes it difficult to achieve the target. Some chargers are quite small, and workers aren't able to install the circuit boards efficiently. This slows down the speed of the production line, so the production target is impossible to achieve. When this occurs, workers' fingers become quite sore, and the skin also starts to peel. Workers have to rest or take turns working.

According to workers, there are no punishments if they are unable to complete the targets. When certain production lines aren't able to reach the target on multiple days, the manager may not arrange overtime for workers on the line. This results in workers not earning overtime, and they will receive only the base

salary. During the investigation period, the investigator did not come across an instance where workers were unable to complete the target. In most cases, they were able to complete the production target before 6.30pm.

Due to the two-shift system, workers do not start work early or finish work late. Workers record their work hours by punching in with their fingerprints. Since there aren't many workers in the factory, the queueing normally takes less than two minutes. The record printed out by the line manager is presented to every worker on the production line. If workers identify any mistake of the record, he or she can inform the line manager and ask the administrative staffs to make corrections. Meetings are held on a weekly basis, and every meeting will last no longer than five minutes. Also, the meeting time is included in workers' working hours.



Workers waiting to punch in

Taking the overtime-work summary of line seven of February 2019 as an example (as shown in the photo below), the line has 22 workers, among whom 20 are new workers that started working from February. In February, workers worked overtime for four hours in most circumstances on weekdays. If workers work during weekends, it will be counted as overtime work hours. Half of them are dispatch workers, who are sent by Jiaxin, Zhongcai, Hongcheng, and Xinda companies.

员工加班统计表

注意：请各位抓紧时间认真仔细核对好自己的出勤天数及加班工时。请在3月5日前核对完毕，过期不在更改！！

姓名	性别	部门	岗位	入职日期	合同期限	合同到期日期	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	备注
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An overtime work summary of production line seven for February 2019

Section 4: Labor Remuneration and Benefits

Wages

For regular workers, the monthly wages are around 3000 RMB (\$446.40 USD), and workers earn an hourly wage. This includes a base wage of 1770 RMB (\$263.38 USD), which is approximately 10.17RMB/hour (\$1.51 USD/hour) and overtime wages. Regular overtime wages are 15.26 RMB/hour (\$2.27 USD/hour) and weekend overtime wages are 20.34 RMB/hour (\$3.03 USD/hour). Workers receive a night shift stipend of 18RMB/day (\$2.68 USD/day), and after working a year, they receive 70 RMB (\$10.42) every month as a seniority allowance. There are no rewards or stipends for full attendance. The factory distributes wages on the 28th of every month and the wages goes straight into the workers' bankcard account.

Wages for temporary workers are distributed by dispatch companies. Wages are usually paid with cash or to the worker's Wechat account. Temporary workers earn 15 RMB/hour (\$2.23 USD/hour), regardless of whether or not they work overtime. Dispatch companies promise temporary workers that they will earn at least 3,600RMB/month (\$535.68 USD/month). This means that normally, if workers work more than 240 hours a month at the factory, the amount they receive will be more than 3,600RMB (15RMB x number of working hours). If workers work less than 240 hours a month due to the working schedule or if orders have decreased, they will still receive 3,600RMB (\$535.68 USD/month), on the premise that workers do not have a leave record or break the regulations. If a worker puts in less than 240 hours of work a month and has taken leave, then they would be paid an hourly wage of 15 RMB/hour (\$2.23 USD/hour), and their wages would be less than 3600 RMB (\$535.68 USD) a month.

Regular workers receive pay slips, but temporary workers do not receive pay slips. During the investigation period, the investigator did not receive a payslip and is unsure of the details regarding wages.

According to interviews with senior workers, the investigator found out in 2018, workers earned around 3,000 RMB (\$446.40 USD) the majority of the time. In September and October when there were a lot of orders, workers earned around 4,700 RMB (\$699.36 USD) in wages. As wages were low, the worker turnover rate is high, and many workers resign after working for a few months. There are a small number of workers who work at the factory for some time, and are promoted to line manager. Line managers earn a base wage of 2,800 RMB (\$416.64 USD), and can earn over 5,000 RMB (\$744 USD) in a month.

Leave Policy

Holidays

Workers do not work on statutory holidays and are paid the base wage. After working at the factory for a year, workers have five days annual leave and during this time, they receive the base wage. The factory does not have an employee handbook, and during the investigation period, the investigator did not obtain additional information regarding sick leave, marital leave, bereavement leave or maternity leave.

Social Insurance

Individual contributions for social insurance total 276 RMB (\$41.07 USD), which is deducted from workers' wages. The factory purchases social insurance for workers, which includes pension, health, unemployment, work-injury and maternity insurance.

Recreational Facilities

The only recreational facility at the factory is a basketball court, and there is only one basketball hoop which is located at the entrance of the administrative department. The photo below shows the fire drill taking place, and workers are gathering at the basketball court. The manager spoke about fire safety knowledge and the yellow building in the background is the administrative office.



Workers are lectured on fire safety at the basketball court

Section 5: Dining and Accommodation

Dining Conditions

The factory provides meals for free. The quality of the food at the cafeteria is mediocre, and there is not enough rice. Workers serve their own meals. The meals do not have much meat and oil, and the taste is quite bland. Some workers may bring their own pickled vegetables or buy chili sauce and bean curd and bring it to the cafeteria. Workers can choose whether they want to have meals at the cafeteria or live at the dormitories. If they do not eat at the cafeteria, the factory does not provide a stipend. The surrounding area of the factory is barren, and there aren't any shops or restaurants. As such, the majority of workers have no choice but to eat at the cafeteria. Some workers who own a motorcycle or an electric bike are able to leave the factory grounds to have meals at home.



Food provided by the cafeteria



Inside the cafeteria



Inside the kitchen

Accommodation Conditions

Food and accommodation is free. Eight workers share a room, and there are four iron bunk beds and two electric fans. There are two shower rooms and two bathrooms. If workers choose not to stay at the dormitories, they will not receive a stipend. The majority of workers rent an apartment at a village close to the factory where the rent for a one bedroom, one living room apartment is 300 RMB (\$44.64 USD).



Restroom of the dormitory

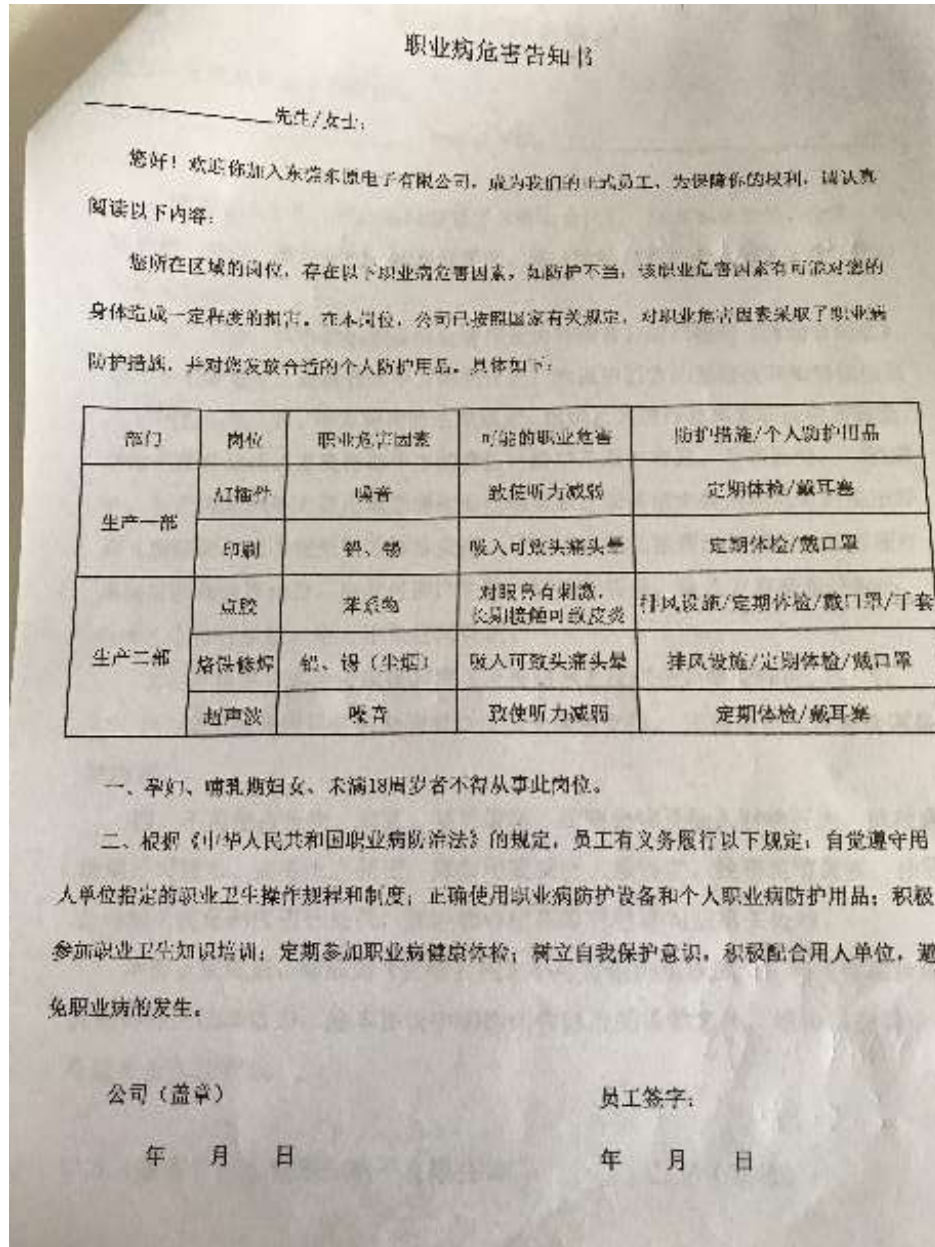


Inside the dormitory



Sink area of the dormitory

Section 6: Occupational Safety and Labor Protection



Notice about Occupational Hazards

Safety Equipment

The workshop is open air style. There is no air conditioning, and the doors and windows are open all the time for ventilation. There are air conditioners in workshops but they are seldom used. Some work positions such as the soldering position are equipped with ventilation machines. The passages are clear and the workshops are well-lit and clean. The workshop temperature is usually around 30 degrees Celsius, and it is quite hot. During winter, the temperature sometimes drops to 16 degrees Celsius, and the windows have to be closed to keep the cold out. As shown in the photo below, the workshop has a first aid kit, and despite having a medicine list, the box is empty. If the worker wants to use the medicine, they must go to the workshop office to find the manager.



First aid kit

Personal Protective Equipment

The soldering position creates a lot of hazardous smoke, and the stamping position generates a lot of noise. The corresponding sign and hazard notification will be hung above the work position. However, workers in both these positions do not receive any labor protection equipment. As shown in the photo below, workers in the stamping position do not have ear plugs or ear muffs. Workers in the soldering position also do not wear protective goggles or masks. Workers in other work positions receive gloves every day and if there is wear and tear over time, then they can ask for a new pair of gloves. No other protective equipment was provided.



Notice about hazards



There is a sign right in front of the worker that says “must wear masks”, but the worker did not wear one



A sign that says “Danger! Compressed Air. Technicians only!”



A sign that says “Danger! Pinch point. Watch your hands”



Protective gloves provided by the factory

Environment, Health and Safety Committee

Workers have not heard of an environment, health and safety committee, nor did they receive any pre-job training.

Work Injury

The investigator did not find information regarding work injuries. During the investigation period, there was a death at the Xiangzhi Electronics factory on December 20, a factory that supplies the electrical casing for Dongwon². According to workers, the deceased was a chauffeur, and he passed away after drink driving. The investigator inquired about the incident several times, but was unable to obtain additional information.

Section 7: Fire Safety

The workshop and dormitory passages and emergency exits are clearly marked and there is sufficient lighting, and there is nothing obstructing the path. The workshop and dormitories have a number of fire hydrants and the fire extinguishers are regularly inspected. The factory has a fire drill once every six months. The most recent fire drill occurred on December 14 between 8:00pm to 8:40pm.



Fire safety equipment

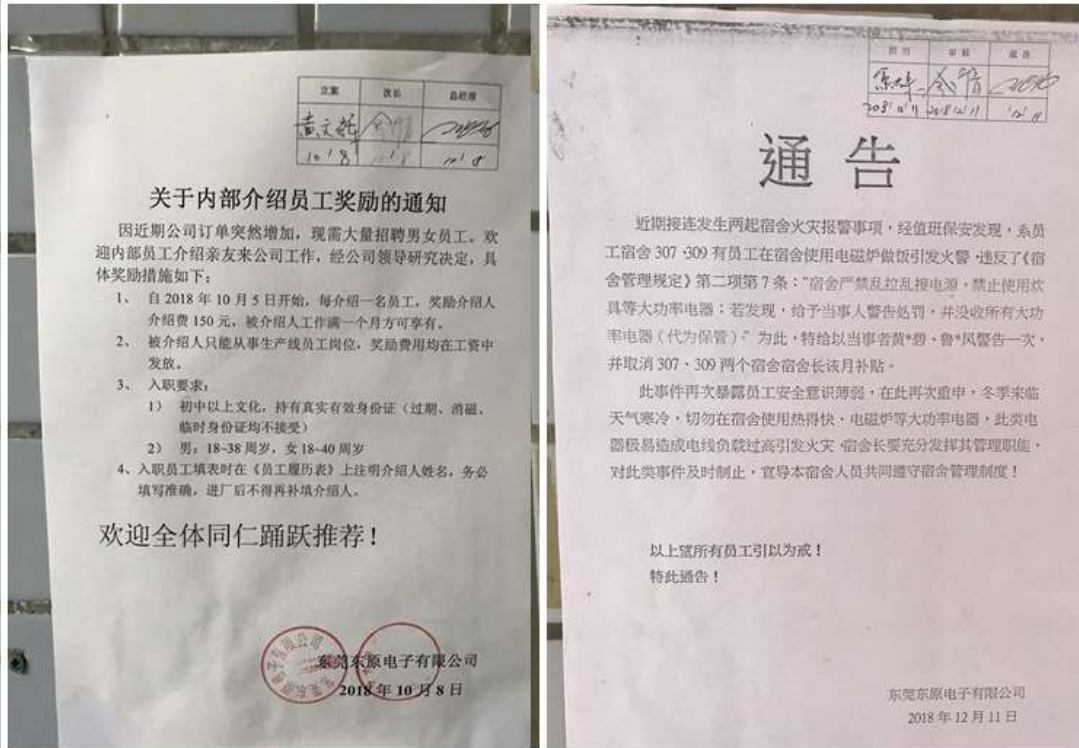
² From the registration information, Xiangzhi Electronics factory and Dongguan Dongwon Electronics factory are, legally, two separate factories. However, both of them are invested by Korean businesses and they share the same address. The entrance only has a sign for Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co.,Ltd.. Therefore, the workers seem to consider Xiangzhi Electronics factory as a branch or subsidiary of Dongguan Dongwon Electronics factory.



The fire drill

Section 8: Rewards and Penalties

The factory does not provide an employee handbook, and does not publicly disclose the rules and regulations. The workshop entrance has a “Notice regarding rewards for internal referrals” affixed to the wall. Workers will receive 150 RMB (\$22.32 USD) for every friend and relative they introduce into the factory. According to a fire alarm incident announcement, the factory has “Dormitory Management Rules and Regulations”. The allowance for dormitory managers in two dormitories was cancelled because the smoke alarm was triggered by an induction cooker. The factory only has dormitory managers for the female dormitories and they receive a stipend of 30 RMB (\$4.46 USD). They are in charge of the dormitory’s cleanliness and safety regulations. The male dormitory does not have a manager.



Left: Notice regarding rewards for internal referrals; Right: Fire alarm incident announcement

Section 9: Labor Union and Grievance Procedures

Labor Union

The factory did not have any public information regarding the union and workers do not know whether a union exists. The investigator did not hear about any union meetings or a worker hotline.

Grievance Procedures

If workers have issues, they can only speak to the line leader or the workshop foreman.

Section 10: Other

Employee Relations

There were no strikes or audits during the investigation period. Workers are not searched, and their bags are not checked either. The line manager directly supervises the workers. They have good relationships and there haven't been any conflicts. But to workers, people of higher level of management are stricter. Some workers wear earphones to listen to music whilst working. They may be scolded by the workshop manager and asked to take off their earphones.

Worker Satisfaction

Barely anyone is satisfied with the cafeteria and living conditions. Quite often, some workers show a disappointing face when they see the meals. They may go to grocery stores to buy instant noodles. The factory offers no benefits. When talking about the full attendance award, some workers said: "This factory

never gives full attendance awards." Normal workers do not have the opportunity to deal with management and administrative staff, and are apathetic towards them. The working environment is generally satisfying. The overall environment is relatively quiet except for the noises of the machine.

Personal Freedom

If workers need to drink water or go to the bathroom during work hours, they must notify the line leader who will take over the worker's work position. The speed of the production line and the production target is basically fixed, and if there is a worker missing at a work position, then this would cause the production speed to slow and affect the entire operation of the production line. As such, when a worker steps away, someone else will have to take over to pick up the workload, and this is usually the line leader.

Workers are not searched when entering and exiting the factory and workshop. The workshop entrance has a security screening, and security guards are stationed. When workers pass through the security screening, the guards would scan each workers with a metal detector. As the photo below shows, there is a notice affixed to the entrance of the workshop. Article four of the notice says:" As all metal objects will cause an alarm to go off, when going through security, please place all cell phones, keys and other metal objects in the chute next to the security screening. We advise everyone to switch to wearing belts with plastic buckles and wireless undergarments to avoid false alarms. When the alarm sounds, please cooperate with the security guard for an inspection.

The investigator did not find any issues with physical and verbal abuse or sexual harassment during the investigation period.



Left: Security Check; Right: Notice regarding security check

Investigator's Journal Entry

On my first day at Dongguan Dongwon Electronics Co.,Ltd., after going through the recruiting process and being allocated a dormitory room, I went to buy a mattress, pillow, blankets and etc. my new colleagues. The factory is surrounded by wild grasslands and forests. The security guard at the gate told me that I needed to walk for five minutes through the underground tunnel beneath the highway on the opposite side of the road, to Fuzhushan Village, where there are small grocery stores and restaurants along with hundreds of factories. After getting everything I needed, I treated my colleagues to dinner and afterwards, we returned to the factory together. I chose a lower bunk and made my bed. Then I washed my face and brushed my teeth, and went to sleep. Less than half an hour passed before my body felt extremely itchy, so I got up and tried to catch the bugs. A bed bug suddenly fell on my sheet. I was very shocked. I checked my bed immediately and saw several bed bugs crawling. I killed them right away, but then I saw more bed bugs on the wall. I had no choice but to pull the blankets and mattress from the bed, patting and shaking them on the balcony, making sure that there were no more bed bugs. I put them back to an upper bunk, where I could finally get some sleep. When I first came into the dorm room, I was wondering why no one was sleeping on the lower bunks. All the workers were sleeping on the upper bunks. No wonder. They were trying to avoid bed bugs. The upper and lower handrails and the ladder and the overall bed frame were painted so they were very slippery, which made it impossible for the bed bugs to climb up to the upper bunks. The bugs could only stay in the small space between the wooden boards of the lower bunks.



A bedbug on the wall of the dormitory

The next day I started working at eight in the evening. I was assigned to the testing position at the assembly line. The line manager took me to the position and demonstrated how to operate the testing machine. The training lasted for three minutes and then the manager asked me to get started right away. At the beginning, I worked relatively slowly. The line manager came to me many times to urge me to work faster: “You need to work faster when testing the products!” I answered: “I just started working and I definitely need time to adapt. I have to practice more before I can work faster!” He said: “There is no time for you to adapt because we have a production target!” The managers continued to urge us to work faster, which put a lot of pressure on new workers. Some couldn't stand it and started to complain: “We are paid an hourly wages, not piece wages, so is there a need to push us to work faster?” Later I learned from senior workers that, although we were paid hourly wages, the production lines were expected to

manufacture as many products as possible and as fast as possible. Because this is a major criterion in evaluating the work of the line managers and other management staff. Line managers will be criticized by upper management staff if their production line produces the least amount of products at the end of the month.

CODE 2 7 6 2 A	制 品 名	充电器 (TA)
	型 号 名	EP-TA50EWE
	C O D E	GH44-02762A
	数 量	(40) EA
	生 产 日	
	制 造/出 货	东原电子 - 三星
	模 具 次 数	TOP: 次/ BOTTOM: 次
	颜 色	BLACK
		ROHS FREE
		Hf PC Pt. Be sb

Production label

After two hours of messy and busy work, I still couldn't keep up with the speed of the production line. I had dozens of chargers waiting to be tested in front of me. The line manager let me rest for a moment and took over for a while at my position. He was amazingly fast and skillful and finished testing the chargers in only five minutes. According to the regulation of the workshop, workers can take a ten-minute break every two hours. The whole line stops working during the breaks. My shoulders felt sore and I told the worker who worked next to me. He said: "Before you came, I worked at your position once and my shoulders were extremely painful. That's just how the work position is. I know someone who worked at your position for three months. He was able to endure it. And so can you." Then he showed me his peeled fingers. There was a deep cut on it, I could even see the flesh. He said: "My work is all about installing the cover. All I need to do is press the cover. One press for one cover. Easy huh? But there are ten thousand covers every day. How could my finger survive this? How couldn't it be painful? Everytime I take a bath and my finger touches water, I cry out loud because of the pain. But even if my finger hurts, I still need to continue working, or else what can I do for a living?"

After the ten-minute break, the production line started to work again. I tried to put up with the pain in my shoulders and continued to test the chargers. Gradually, I began to know how to save time and energy. I tried to do my work as fast as I could to keep up with the speed of the production line. Generally, I sat when I did testing, the posture is similar to when you are sitting and typing. I relied on my shoulders to extend my arms towards the socket, inserting the charger into and out of the socket with my hands. Half of my energy was wasted lifting my arms, and my shoulders became sore after repeating this process a dozen of times. If I changed my posture and stood up, my arms naturally hang by my sides and I just used my hands to test the chargers, which could free up my shoulders. Therefore, when there were relatively more chargers awaiting to be tested, I would stand up so that I could easily keep up with others. However, standing was not a perfect solution. I had to stare at the screen and see if the number was within the right scale. So if I stood, I had to lower my head in order to look at the screen. If I kept this posture for more than ten minutes, my neck would become sore. If I sat, I could easily see the screen. As a result, I still chose to sit while testing, and only stood when there were too many chargers accumulated in front of me, or the overall speed of the production line became faster. All in all, I could choose to either have sore shoulders, or have a sore neck and feet.



Inside the factory



Inside the factory



A worker at their work station



Machine at the work station

At twelve o'clock, the bell rang and we left work and went for dinner. After dinner, the workers either smoked and chatted downstairs, or sat and play games on their mobiles or watched videos on the Douyin app (Chinese Tik Tok). A small number of workers slept in the rest area of the workshop. When it was almost one o'clock, workers came back one after another to punch into work. The whole workshop was relatively quiet during the early hours. Everyone was a little bit sleepy. We all silently did our own work. The overall speed slowed down. There was only the sound of the machine. There were breaks at three o'clock and at five o'clock, during which many people took a nap at their work position and slept for a few minutes. By half past five, many people yawned with tears in their eyes. The line manager went back and

forth to encourage us: "Don't sleep! We are about to achieve our production goal. Cheer up! We can finish work at half past six." Normally we could achieve the goal by half past six. To "finish work" means to stop the production line, clean the materials, calculate our daily production, and get ready to leave. Even if the goal was achieved prior to seven o'clock, we couldn't leave early because we must punch out and leave at seven. Once, workers were chatting and waiting to leave and a manager of the factory saw and scolded the workers, asking us to continue working until seven. Some workers complained that we had already achieved the production target, which meant that we could rest. The manager denied that and said "It's nothing about the production target. It's working hours now. You must work at your positions. Get back to work right now!" The line manager then started the line, and brimming with anger, the workers worked until seven. By seven o'clock, we exceeded the daily production target by nearly a thousand.



Peeling skin on a workers' hand

We finished work at seven o'clock and gathered at the canteen for breakfast. We had a meal at twelve and by seven o'clock, this meant we hadn't eaten anything for six hours. We were all starving. The canteen normally provides instant noodles, or egg-fried-rice, or rice noodles for breakfast. After breakfast, we came back to the dorms to sleep. There was a worker who was also new here. I saw big blisters on his left index finger and middle finger, and he said it was really painful. A worker next to him said: "It's normal for new workers. The blisters will disappear in a week and you will get a thick callus later. Try to put up with it for now."