



9 May 2020
Media Statement

While TAL is proud of HKRITA's design for the CuMask+™, we would like to clarify our role in the design and production of the masks.

HKRITA first approached TAL in mid-February this year to enquire about our capacity to support the production of the CuMask+™. At that time, TAL was unable to meet this request due to the commitments we had with our existing customers' orders. However, in the spirit of supporting Hong Kong's fight against the pandemic, we instead offered our factory space at To Kwa Wan to HKRITA to let them start their own production lines. The 1400 sq ft space was provided at no cost for 3.5 months – from mid-Feb to end May. Also, on request from HKRITA, we referred retired technicians from TAL to HKRITA, as they required technical sewing expertise. HKRITA hired a few of the retired technicians and sewers directly, without any involvement from TAL.

No payments were made to TAL during the procurement of materials or the manufacture of the CuMask+™.

HKRITA's R&D into the CuMask+™ started in 2017. There were many variations of the mask design, which included the use of various materials available in the market, including Argaman's CottonX anti-microbial technology.

TAL Group invests in many apparel-related technology companies globally and is an investor in Argaman Technologies, an investment made in 2015. Dr Harry Lee, our Chairman, is our representative on Argaman's Board. TAL had declared to HKRITA of TAL's commercial investment in Argaman during HKRITA's research trip to Israel in 2015.

When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out and HKRITA decided to move ahead with the production of the masks, they incorporated different technologies, including Argaman's CottonX technology. All assessments and decisions made during the review, testing of materials, and manufacture of the masks were made independently by the HKRITA project team.

Our Vice President of Garment Processing, Tommy Siu, sits on the Board of Directors at HKRITA. He had no involvement whatsoever in any of the decision-making over the CuMask+™. Tommy is an employee of TAL, and has no privileged information or role in any of the TAL Group's investments, including that of Argaman.

TAL fully supports HKRITA and the mission to protect Hong Kong residents against the Covid-19 pandemic.

#