

ECOPEL™

FAUX FUR ARTISAN

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson, MP
The Prime Minister, United Kingdom

3 February 2022

Via e-mail: boris.johnson@parliament.uk

Dear Prime Minister:

I'm writing from ECOPEL, a global faux-fur manufacturer founded by my father almost 20 years ago to replicate the beauty of animals and persuade companies to turn their backs on the cruel fur industry. We've produced fabrics to the satisfaction of more than 300 of the world's top companies, but I fear we've finally met our nemesis in the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD).

It has come to my attention that the MoD has shared untrue statements concerning the world's first faux bear fur, created by ECOPEL to replace the real bear fur used for your Queen's Guard's caps. These inaccurate claims have now been repeated in the media and even by yourself in correspondence. I'm writing to set the record straight and ask that a retraction be issued.

I first became involved in this project when PETA approached me after a meeting with the MoD, during which then-Minister for Defence Equipment Peter Luff confirmed that the final obstacle to ending the government's financial support of the slaughter of black bears in Canada was to find a faux fur that would match the unique 9.5-centimetre length of bear fur. ECOPEL got to work, donating our time and resources and even making purpose-built machinery – all free of charge – and in 2017, the world's first faux bear fur was ready. That was *five years ago*. The MoD has disgracefully reneged on its promise to PETA, and to this day, it has refused to meet with ECOPEL and denied our request to work directly with its cap makers.

Contrary to your belief that “the Ministry of Defence recently conducted tests on a fake fur fabric”, no MoD official has ever *seen* the fabric! It has been left to PETA, a charity, to employ the services of a fabric technologist and pay for an MoD-copyrighted test to be conducted on the faux fur at an accredited laboratory used by the ministry. The test confirmed that the lined faux fur is 100% waterproof to the MoD's standards.

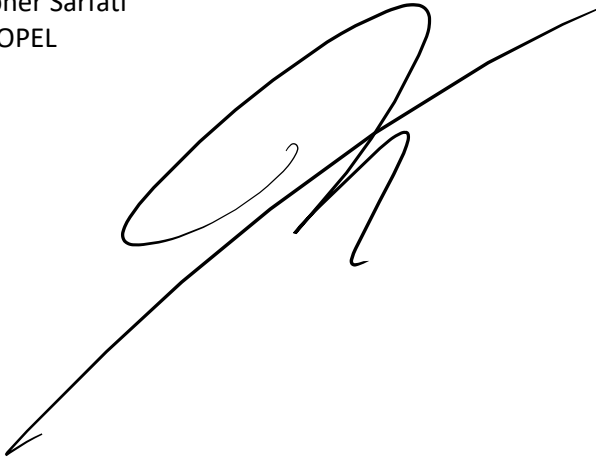
The faux fur did not show “unacceptable rates of water shedding”, as you state. The water shed from the faux fur in much the same way it does from real bear fur, as shown in an earlier test conducted on the real bearskin by the same laboratory. The test images also belie your claim that the faux bear fur “performed poorly on visual assessment”. To the naked eye, the faux fur and the real fur look virtually identical.

ECOPEL's faux fur can withstand the worst British downpour and is also lighter than real fur – hopefully meaning fewer fainting guards in the summer. It matches the length and lustre of real fur and is so realistic that even a Canadian black bear would do a double take. Alas, the only criterion that I cannot meet for your MoD is that the fabric didn't originate from a dead bear!

With a humane alternative to bear fur now available – and with our offer to supply free and unlimited faux bear fur to the MoD until 2030 still on the table – it would be absurd for a country that is world-renowned for its compassion towards animals to continue spending taxpayers’ money on the shameful pursuits of cowardly hunters, who slay bears with bullets and bows and arrows for these ornamental caps. I hope you agree. I remain ready to assist the MoD, and in the meantime, I hope to hear a retraction of the false statements made about our faux bear fur.

Kind regards,

Christopher Sarfati
CEO, ECOPEL

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right and then curves downwards to the left.