



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
HEALTH & CONSUMER DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate B - Consumer Affairs  
**B3 - Product and service safety**

Brussels,  
SANCO/B3/DMO/VC/cj

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CONSUMER SAFETY NETWORK (CSN)**

**BRUSSELS –10 FEBRUARY 2011**

The meeting was chaired by Mr Stefano Soro, Head of the 'Product and Service Safety' Unit.

**1. Adoption of the agenda**

The draft agenda was adopted. The adopted agenda is attached as Annex 1.  
The attendance list is attached as Annex 2.

**2. Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting**

The draft summary record of the meeting of 15.10.2010 was adopted without change.  
The adopted minutes are attached as Annex 3.

***Standardisation***

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**3. Forthcoming draft decisions and mandates**

The Commission representative launched a first discussion on the preparation of a standard for bicycle trailers. Background documents on this issue were circulated to the members of the CSN prior to the meeting.

Bicycle trailers are often used for carrying young children and small loads but they pose risks due to visibility difficulties and it is essential that the attachments are safe. Adequate ventilation for children is also an issue, as are sharp edges and protrusions.

A European standard is currently being drafted by CEN and a vote is expected in March. If supported, the standard could be published in August this year. Therefore, Member States were asked to consider whether the standard was suitable for reference in the Official Journal of the European Union and were reminded that this would require the adoption of safety requirements in order to issue a mandate to CEN.

The members of the CSN supported the proposal to proceed with the steps required to ultimately publish the references of the standard in the Official Journal of the EU.

#### **4. Revised standards for personal music players**

The Commission representative informed the Committee of the state of play of the new standard that was developed by CENELEC and presented to the GPSD Committee at its last meeting on 17 June 2010.

The standard passed a formal vote by the national standardisation committees at the end of 2010 and it is expected to be published by CENELEC early this year as an amendment to two existing standards.

A transition period of 24 months will follow, during which the standard will be implemented at national level by the publication of national standards. By the end of the transition period, industry should have started to apply the standard to their products.

The Commission will proceed with the procedure to publish the references of the standard in the Official Journal of the EU.

CENELEC is expected to continue with the next step of the mandated work which is the development of "smart" methods of providing protection against excessive sound pressure based on the measurement of sound dose.

A background note has been published on *Circa*.

#### ***Joint Actions and Exchange of Officials***

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##### **5. Joint Actions and Exchange of Officials programmes**

The Commission representative gave an overview of the 2010 Joint Actions and exchange of officials programme and provided information on the upcoming calls for 2011.

In 2010, the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers received an application from PROSAFE for one single joint action in which 21 Member States will participate. The joint action covers 5 product groups:

- Food imitating child appealing products
- Children's fancy dress
- Laser pointers
- Ladder
- Visibility clothing and accessories

Work on the joint action, which includes several horizontal activities (i.e. customs cooperation, China and stakeholder outreach), has started and a formal launch event will be held on 9 March 2011.

The 2011 call for proposals will be launched towards the end of February with an indicative budget of 1.3 million EUR. The proposed deadlines have been pushed back (to 15 April for pre-proposals and 15 June for final applications) with the aim of signing the grant agreement(s) in the second half of this year.

As regards the exchange of officials programme, in 2010 there were 15 exchanges.

The call for 2011 will also be launched towards the end of February, with an indicative budget of 150.000 EUR for the GPSD and CPC Regulation exchanges. The proposed deadline is 31 May 2011.

The Commission thanked the Member States for their participation and invited them to participate again in the upcoming calls.

### **Results of the Joint Action on Helmets**

An expert from PROSAFE presented the results of the Joint Action on Helmets, which was carried out last year with the aim of ensuring that helmets placed on the EU market are safe and carry the appropriate warnings and instructions. The joint action also provided an opportunity to share best practices in market surveillance.

The joint action covered four types of helmets used by consumers for leisure purposes: those used for skiing, cycling, horse-riding and children's impact protection helmets (for use in playgrounds for example). Each type is covered by a different standard. The joint action also included a specific action to identify whether DMF was present in any of the helmets. Testing of the helmets was carried out by a Swedish laboratory during August and September last year.

One of the outcomes of the joint action was the need to provide guidance to the customs authorities to enable them to identify these products. An information sheet has therefore been sent to Customs authorities and translated into Chinese.

A copy of the presentation, showing the results of the joint action, is available on *Circa*.

### **Results of the Joint Action on Child-appealing Appliances**

An expert from PROSAFE informed the members of the CSN of the outcome of the joint action on child-appealing household appliances which ended in December 2010. This joint action aimed to create a common understanding among market surveillance authorities of characteristics that may be considered child-appealing.

Work involved the selection of a Research Institute to carry out a study on the issue and external experts, parents and caregivers were consulted to gain further insight into the behaviour of children and the elderly, who are considered the most vulnerable consumers in this area.

One important outcome from the joint action was a catalogue referred to as "The Atlas", which includes a tool for classification to distinguish between normal household appliances and those with a child-appealing design. However, the Atlas has provoked a reaction from industry which has requested certain amendments. Industry's proposal will be reviewed before the Atlas is further developed. It will then be tested in April this year and, once finalised, the outcome will be offered to the LVD AdCo and Working Party before being submitted to the relevant committee of CENELEC.

The research report is available within PROSAFE and the Commission and it was suggested that the outcome of the Research Institute could also be used as an example in other joint actions.

## **Progress with EMARS II**

A representative from PROSAFE updated the Committee on the progress of EMARS II and its core coordination activities. This action is still on-going.

One major objective of EMARS II is to continue the operation and further development of the risk assessment forum and knowledge base for market surveillance purposes. The latter is only accessible for PROSAFE members via an online document management system called 'Webex'. However, an inventory of the knowledge base is available to all via the PROSAFE website.

The PROSAFE representative outlined the 8 tasks undertaken by EMARS II and their achievements so far. A copy of the presentation is available on *Circa*.

## **Results of Joint Action on Baby walkers**

A representative from PROSAFE gave a presentation on the 2009 Joint Action on baby walkers. The scope of the joint action was to study the market to ensure that baby walkers are safe and carry appropriate warnings and instructions. For this purpose, 36 different baby walkers were tested for compliance. Just over half of those tested were compliant with the clauses tested, but 42% failed the "prevention of falls down steps" test. This was due either to brake failure or because they were equipped with more than 4 wheels, which can have an affect on stability. Other non-compliances included illegible marking, entrapment of fingers, small parts which pose the risk of choking and seat height which can also affect the stability of the baby walker. Folding actions were also tested. The trends noted during testing have been exposed to industry and the results of the tests, which were presented in the meeting, will also be helpful to market surveillance inspectors.

A copy of the presentation is available on *Circa*.

## ***Specific Products & Risks***

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### **6. Chemical consumer products resembling food and/or having child-appealing properties**

The Commission representative reminded CSN members of the background regarding these types of products, which have been the subject of many RAPEX notifications. There are two types of food-imitating products: solid products, such as candles, and viscous products such as shower gels and shampoo. Risk assessments received from Member States concerning the second type of product indicate that there is a risk of ingestion by more vulnerable consumers, such as children and the elderly, which could lead to vomiting and, in the worst cases, chemical pneumonia. To find out more about the risks, the Commission asked the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) to gather data throughout Europe to find out more about accidents related to these products and the health risks involved.

The Commission invited a member of the SCCS to present the Committee's opinion on the potential health risks posed by chemical products resembling food and/or having child-appealing properties. The scope of the scientific opinion did not cover solid products and the methodology followed by the working group was based on data received from poison centres.

The members of the working group examined typical ingredients found in detergent products and evaluated the toxicity of these ingredients and the potential health risks if ingested by vulnerable people. They also consulted external experts on the behaviour of children and the elderly and looked at the influence of bittering agents and packaging on accidental ingestion, as well as other characteristics such as shape, colour, taste, odour, etc. The member of the SCCS pointed out the lack of data on accidents involving Food-imitating/Child appealing chemicals.

The Opinion is available on DG SANCO's website and the presentation is available on *Circa*.

A representative from PROSAFE drew attention to similar work carried out in the framework of joint actions which could be of value to work in this area.

## **7. Car air fresheners**

The Commission representative reminded Member States of the discussions at the previous meeting where the Commission called for volunteers to work on a first draft of a recommendation on car air fresheners. Since then there has been no response. The Commission representative therefore asked the members of the CSN to confirm their interest, if any, in a recommendation, bearing in mind that there have been no RAPEX notifications on car air fresheners. Members of the CSN were also informed that AISE (the International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products in Europe) had in 2007 launched a programme for those companies putting such products on the market in all EU and EFTA countries with the aim to promote best practice in the industry. Several major companies joined the programme and apply best practices including that they should not manufacture and/or put on the market toy-shaped products specifically intended to attract children.

Following the information provided by the Commission, it was decided that there was no need for a recommendation on child-appealing car air fresheners.

## **8. Puzzle mats**

A Commission representative from DG ENTR informed members of the CSN of a survey carried out in Belgium in 2009 which concluded that EVA puzzle mats contain chemical substances such as formamide. As a result, the Belgian authorities met with representatives from the toy sector and it was agreed that products containing this substance should no longer be placed on the market in Belgium. In 2010, the authorities carried out a market surveillance campaign to see if this voluntary agreement had been respected. The checks found varying levels of formamide in the mats and the results have been sent to the RAPEX Contact Points in the Member States.

The Belgian authorities have since published an Act suspending the distribution of EVA puzzle maps unless manufacturers can prove that they comply with the requirements of the Toy Safety Directive. Other Member States (France, Luxembourg) have also taken measures to suspend the sale of these products unless the manufacturer can prove that they do not contain formamide. A document from the Italian authorities concerning this issue was recently published on *Circa*.

The current Toy Safety Directive 88/378/EEC states that a toy shall not contain dangerous substances in amounts which may harm the safety and health of children. The Directive does not contain a specific limit value for formamide, nor are there limit values available in standards. However, the new Toy Safety Directive 2009/48 introduces, as from July 2013, a general ban on CMR (carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic) substances in toys. As an exception, CMRs may be present in concentrations equal to or below the concentrations mentioned in Directive 1999/45/EC (until 31 May 2015), or in Regulation 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures (from 1 June 2015), or if they are inaccessible, or if a decision (allowing their use) has been taken.

Due to the lack of precise information concerning the level of formamide found in the puzzle mats by the Belgian authorities, the Commission has asked for further clarification of the level of risk involved. Under the Toy Safety Directive, a Working Group of chemical experts has also been set up and further discussion will take place on 5 April with all Member States and stakeholders. Additional information is expected from other Member States carrying out market surveillance.

The floor was then opened for discussion. ANEC informed that consumers need to be well-informed as they have no way of distinguishing between safe and unsafe puzzle mats on the market. Members of the CSN agreed that there is a need for a harmonised approach throughout the EU.

## **9. Sky lanterns**

The representative from the United Kingdom presented the UK's concerns about sky lanterns and asked Member States to share their views. These products are becoming increasingly popular in the UK and they have wide implications, causing a hazard not only to consumers but to cattle and air traffic. Within the UK, there has been a call for a total ban from the rural community and farmers unions, as well as the fire services. While the civil aviation authority has not called for a ban, it has issued guidelines for the use of sky lanterns near airports. The UK coastguard has also been affected and has reported a 700% increase in false alarms attributed to these products.

The Commission representative informed members of the CSN that sky lanterns have already been banned in several Member States. Consideration was given to the possible application of Article 13 of the GPSD. This would require consensus among Member States that the products pose a serious risk to the health and safety of consumers. In addition, it would be necessary to foresee a more permanent solution, such as a directive or a standard. It was decided at the meeting that this issue would therefore require further reflection.

In the meantime, the Commission representative asked Member States to submit data about risks caused by these products, as well as information relating to the national measures already in place which can be compared and shared with other Member States.

## **10. Childcare articles**

The Commission representative gave an update on the study on the risk assessment and safety requirements of the childcare articles, which was mentioned at the last meeting of the Consumer Safety Network.

In December 2010, following a call for tender, a contract was signed with an Italian expert to collect information on accidents, guidelines, standards, legislation, etc for the next stages of the study, which will end in September 2011. Member States are asked to cooperate by providing relevant information if contacted by the contractor. The Commission will provide regular updates on the progress of the study.

## ***Miscellaneous***

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### **11. Service Safety**

The Commission representative informed Members that the Commission will collect data for a Green Paper on certain services which involve consumer safety issues, such as tourism and leisure services, especially those with a cross-border impact. Member States will be asked to contribute to this work. The future Green Paper would aim at prompting further discussion on service safety and help to provide a clearer view of the way forward in this area.

## ***AOB***

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### **12. Announcements**

#### *Market Surveillance Workshop*

Members of the Consumer Safety Network were reminded of the afternoon workshop on the future of market surveillance run by the British Standards Institute (BSI), the contractor for the project. All Members of the CSN were invited to attend.

#### *Date of the next CSN meeting*

The next meeting of the Consumer Safety Network is scheduled to take place in Brussels on 27 May 2011. An official invitation will be sent in due course. Members of the CSN were reminded that, for administrative reasons, pre-invitation letters were sent out at the end of last year.

*Annex 1: Adopted agenda*

*Annex 2: Attendance list*

*Annex 3: Adopted minutes of the meeting of 15.10.10*