



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
HEALTH & CONSUMER DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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

Brussels, 16 November 2009  
DG SANCO.B.3 dmo/ D(2009)230340

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

**BRUSSELS – 22 OCTOBER 2009**

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

### **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 minutes of the meeting of 16.06.09 were adopted without changes. The adopted minutes are attached as Annex 3.

### ***Standardisation***

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### **3. Publication of Standards in the Official Journal of the European Union**

#### **3.1. Regularisation of standards already published in the Official Journal**

The Commission representative presented two revised draft safety requirements for standards already published in the OJ concerning (1) stationary training equipment and (2) gymnastic equipment. The revised versions were proposed by CEN and represent a much more simplified version than those circulated in June this year. The Commission drew attention to the fact that the draft safety requirements for gymnastic equipment are also to be used to reference 3 standards not yet published in the OJ: EN 914, EN 915 and EN 13219 on trampolines.

Prior to the meeting, the Commission also circulated draft safety requirements for bicycles and bicycle luggage carriers. Bicycles for children are also addressed by these safety requirements. The standard for bicycles for children will be published if there is agreement amongst Member States.

Member States were invited to discuss the regularisation of these standards for a future mandate and submit any comments or proposals to the Commission. The Commission welcomed the input from several Member States and ANEC during the meeting and announced that the revised version as amended would be circulated after the meeting for final comment. CEN will also circulate the draft safety requirements for bicycles to its members in advance of their December meeting.

### 3.2. Mandates for existing standards to be published in the Official Journal

In June, the Commission circulated a list of existing standards that could be suitable for publication in the OJ and, as a result, Member States agreed on two groups of standards: playground equipment and candles. A draft of the safety requirements will be circulated after the meeting and Member States are invited to submit comments.

As regards standards for candles, participants (Norway & ANEC) recalled that such a mandate was already prepared several years ago. The Commission confirmed that discussions did take place in 2005 and a mandate for candles was prepared but it was never presented for a vote. CEN confirmed they did not receive such a mandate. The Commission will look into the matter and advise.

### **4. Draft mandates for childcare articles (Cluster 1 – drowning risks) and window locks**

The Commission gave information concerning the draft mandates for childcare articles (cluster 1 – drowning risks) and window locks. The draft of the mandates was distributed to Member States prior to the meeting.

The Commission representative requested further information from EL, SV, PT and UK concerning legislation that already exists in these countries which requires a modification of the environment to prevent children from falling from windows (e.g. window locks, window guards). These were referred to in the Child Safety Alliance country report cards. It would be useful to know more and for a reference to this legislation to be included in the mandate.

The Commission then gave an update on the follow-up to the adoption of the Decision last June. The European Parliament's right of three-month scrutiny ends on 14 November 2009, but in the meantime the Council has already acted and does not oppose the draft safety requirements. If there are no further comments from the European Parliament, the Decision will be sent to the Commission for adoption.

### ***Service Safety Issues***

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### **5. Hotel Fire Safety**

The Chair gave an update on the state of play concerning HOTREC's self-regulatory initiative on fire safety in hotels and on the Charter that has been prepared with the cooperation of stakeholders.

There are still some open issues which need to be cleared up. HOTREC proposes that national or regional industry associations should be signatories to the Charter, whereas various stakeholders believe it would be useful for consumers and hotel-users if individual establishments or hotel chains were to subscribe to the Charter and if information on participation in the initiative were made publicly available. The Commission subscribes to this point of view. There is also a need for a mechanism to monitor compliance with the Charter. The Commission invites Member States to engage with national hotel associations on this issue and offers to provide any documentation that might be of assistance with this. The Chair informed the members that he will also raise these issues when he attends HOTREC's General Assembly in November.

## **6. Joint Actions 2007-2009**

The Commission representative gave an update on the 2009 applications. A total of 5 applications were received, 4 of which were awarded co-financing. These concern babywalkers, helmets, child-appealing appliances and sunbeds. Unfortunately, this year it is unlikely that co-financing will be available for the lighters project due to budgetary issues. However, in response to concerns raised during the meeting, the Commission confirmed that if there is money available at the end of the year it might be used to finance at least part of the project, although this cannot be guaranteed.

As regards the exchange of officials, the Executive Agency for Health & Consumers has received 22 applications. These are currently being examined and, in response to a question from the Norwegian representative, the Commission agreed that a report on best practices in this area could be useful.

The function and role of the CSN in terms of joint actions was raised and in particular the complex procedure for applying for funding. The Commission representative replied that the Commission, within the boundaries of the financial regulations, is looking at ways to facilitate the work by Member States and PROSAFE on this issue.

A representative from PROSAFE (Anne Beutling) then gave an extensive presentation of its activities and ongoing actions, in particular EMARS II, cords & drawstrings, lighters, toys and sunbeds. The proposals for possible joint actions in 2010 were also briefly presented. 10 projects were identified at the last PROSAFE meeting and Member States are invited to contact PROSAFE or the Commission if they have any comments or if they have any planned actions on these projects.

At the end of the discussion, the Chair informed Member States that after the new regulation on the free circulation of goods comes into force on 1 January 2010, SANCO may no longer award funding to joint actions on harmonised products. As these projects fall under the New Legislative Framework, they would have to be financed out of DG ENTR's budget. DG SANCO would thus prioritize joint enforcement actions which fall under the GPSD, i.e. those on non-harmonised consumer goods.

Finally, a comment was made about press activities for Joint Actions. Lighting chains will be the focus of press interest in the run-up to Christmas and Member States were asked to coordinate with the Commission on any other press activities they are planning for Joint Actions.

## **7. Injury/accident data collection**

The Commission representative provided an update on DG SANCO's webpage on existing injury & accident data collection systems relating to the use of consumer products. The information has been gathered from Member States, other Commission Services, NGOs and international organisations. The website is not yet online but it will be available via DG SANCO's consumer website. The site is divided into the following sections:

- Injury/Accident Data Collection Systems at EU level

- Injury/Accident Data Collection Systems in European Union Member States
- EU Associations, NGOs & Consultancies hosting (or offering) data on injuries/accidents caused by consumer products/services
- Specific European projects on injury/accident data collection
- Injury/Accident Data Collection Systems at International level

The Commission looks forward to cooperating with Member States on this issue and asks for additional information that will allow the website to be updated.

## **8. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)**

The German representative referred to a recent study carried out by the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) on PAHs. These are complex mixtures of organic compounds that can be found in several consumer products such as rubber tool grips, bicycle handle-bars and plastic clogs. Data show that a broad range of PAHs can be identified. More products containing PAHs are arriving on the market and they are known to be carcinogenic and to endanger fertility.

Currently, no legal limits for exposure have been set, but it is now technically possible for manufacturers to produce products without using PAHs and some have already taken steps in that direction. The German representative believes that an EU strategy of harmonisation could tackle the use of PAHs.

A study has identified 16 PAHs most frequently present in environmental samples and benzo(a)pyrene (BaP), the reference compound in this substance group. The representative elaborated on guidance values in Germany agreed with industry and the possible exposure levels to consumers. As set out in a paper already circulated by BfR to members via the Commission, it is proposed that the level of PAHs in products used by consumers be minimised as much as possible (the "ALARA" principle = As Low As Reasonably Achievable) and that limit values should be set for PAH and benzo[a]pyrene (BaP) in order to protect consumers from health risks.

Germany proposes a limit of 0.2 mg/kg of material for children's products and for toys which can be put in the mouth. For products which are in contact with the skin for longer periods of time (over 30 seconds), limits should be set at 10 mg/kg. For products involving short-term skin contact, such as cable housings, higher levels could be tolerated.

As regards how to proceed, Member States questioned whether the REACH regulation or the GPSD should be used to regulate such substances in products. The time factor involved in obtaining legislation has to be taken into consideration. Under REACH the procedure could take at least 2 years. A direct enquiry to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has revealed, however, that it could take 3 to 4 years, due to the current workload in ECHA. It was also proposed that a temporary measure under the GPSD could be taken, setting limits to allow certain products to be withdrawn from the market. The Commission acknowledged the inclination to move quickly on this issue in view of the data available, but reminded Member States that there was no immediate solution available in any European legislation.

The Chair invited Member States to support action in this field and underlined the Commission's efforts in liaising with Germany. Member State colleagues who have news and/or data in this area were invited to come forward with proposals.

The Commission will consult colleagues responsible for REACH and other internal scientists to find a way forward.

## **9. Thai/UFO Balloons**

Representatives from the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority & the Office for Risk Assessment gave a presentation on the risk management of sky lanterns, a product which has existed in the Netherlands since 2007. Member States are currently taking different actions against these products in their respective countries. In the Netherlands there is national legislation in place to ensure that the product is safe for consumers, buildings and planes. Research has been undertaken and a risk assessment was carried out by the Dutch Office for Risk Assessment using the latest version of the Risk Assessment Guidelines as a basis. Different scenarios for accidents, damage and injuries were examined in order to estimate the risk level posed and the probability. It was concluded that in some circumstances sky lanterns have a medium risk and in others a low risk. However, even though the risk may be low, this is a relatively new product and so risk management colleagues in the Netherlands have been advised to take measures to reduce the risk. The product will therefore stay on the Dutch market as long as the importers can ensure a reduction in the risk involved. The current design will need to be modified and consumers should be made aware of the dangers involved. A sticker regarding safety aspects will be applied to the product and warnings and labels will be added to all products. Work has also started on a safer burner.

The Netherlands invited the other Member States to provide their views on the risk analysis carried out and on risk management of this product in their respective countries.

## **10. Food imitating products**

The Commission representative gave a brief update on food-imitating and child-appealing chemical products. The Scientific Committee, which was asked by the Commission to assess the potential risks posed by such products, has accepted that the matter be referred. Further data received from Member States would help in improving the deliberations of the Scientific Committee. Member States are also invited to put forward names of experts.

## **11. Laser pointers**

The representative from Malta gave a presentation on toy laser pointers that can be found on the market and showed examples of such products to participants. The lasers in question are not intended for use by professionals, but as toys. According to RAPEX notifications submitted, certain Member States have banned these products. However, there is no legislation in Malta which covers toy laser pointers and the authorities are concerned that there is no control over how children are using these products.

Malta therefore inquired about the need to have a harmonized approach among Member States and asked whether the issue could be referred to the Council by the GPSD Committee in order to ban such lasers in Europe. The Commission responded that the regulatory framework is in place but there may be an issue with enforcement and traceability.

The Chair announced that Malta's presentation would be forwarded to colleagues working in the area of toy safety.

## 12. AOB

- Ethanol powered appliances project

The Danish representative gave a short update on the project concerning ethanol powered appliances which was launched following discussion at the last meeting of the GPSD Committee. Work on the drafting of the safety requirements is underway. Input has been received from 4 Member States and government representatives have been invited to participate in the work. A first draft report is being finalised and will be sent to interested parties before the next meeting of the working group in Copenhagen in November. Denmark invites Member States who wish to participate at the meeting or to contribute to the work to get in touch with them directly.

- Joint market surveillance action on child-resistant lighters and novelty lighters

This point was taken during the discussion on joint actions (agenda point 6). A questionnaire from PROSAFE on national market surveillance activities on child-resistant lighters and novelty lighters has been published on *Circa*. Member States are invited to complete the questionnaire before 15 November. Feedback will help to establish best practices in enforcing the Commission decision on lighters.

### **Risk Assessment Expert Meeting :**

#### **13. Nitrosamines - Risk Assessments for Cosmetics & Balloons**

The summary record of the expert meeting, which took place in the afternoon, will be presented in a separate document.

The next meeting of the CSN will take place early next year.

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#### **ANNEX 1: Draft Agenda**



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#### **ANNEX 2: Attendance List**



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#### **ANNEX 3: Adopted Minutes of Meeting of 16 June 2009**



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