

Workshop Overview

Interactive Exercise in “Writing” a Safety Standard

Summary:

Working in small groups, participants were challenged to identify the potential hazards associated with a fictitious consumer product and to work out how those hazards could be addressed in a consumer product safety standard.

Session Flow:

The session began with an opening presentation from Kitty Pilarz on the benefits of consumer product safety standards, citing the decline in injuries associated with baby walkers as an example of standards making a difference. This was followed by the showing of two Mattel-produced videos about a fictitious consumer product, called a zo-zo sphere which resembles the yo-yo water ball toys. The first video was a parody of a manufacturers’ commercial about the product and the second was a representation of incident data gathered by a fictitious testing house.

The next phase of the session was the participant’s dialogue. Each group had been provided with unique, country-specific incident data (again fictional) about the zo-zo sphere and was asked to consider and answer the following questions based on the videos and the written incident data:

1. How is the product used and by whom?
2. What are the potential hazards associated with this product?
3. What is the available accident / injury data telling us?
4. How might a voluntary safety standard reduce the identified hazards?
5. What interest groups should participate in developing the standard?
6. Is a voluntary standard appropriate or is there another conclusion?

Participants were seated at round tables and provided with flip charts and markers to record their findings.

Following this discussion period, the moderator then invited each table to report back on its deliberations, noting differences in the incident data considered by the different groups.

The session concluded with some remarks from Kitty Pilarz about ASTM efforts to write a standard for yo-yo water ball toys. Participants were provided a take-away handout listing standardization resources.

Session Organizer / Moderator:

Jim McCabe, American National Standards Institute

Speaker:

Kitty Pilarz - Mattel Worldwide Product Safety Fisher-Price

Facilitators (1 per table):

Bruce Farquhar - Consultant, Canada

Barbara Guthrie - Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

Don Mays - Consumers Union

Jack Walsh - Keeping Babies Safe

Rachel Weintraub - Consumer Federation of America

Agenda

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Time	Item	Topic	Speakers/ Participants
11:05	Opening	Welcome and review of the agenda	Jim McCabe
11:10	Introduction / Case Study	Consumer Product Consensus Standards	Kitty Pilarz
11:25	Group Discussions	<p>Questions to be Addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is the product used and by whom? 2. What are the potential hazards associated with this product? 3. What is the available accident / injury data telling us? 4. How might a voluntary safety standard reduce the identified hazards? 5. What interest groups should participate in developing the standard? 6. Is a voluntary standard appropriate or is there another conclusion? <p><i>(Each group provided incident data for either USA, Canada, France, Hong Kong, or Mexico.)</i></p>	<p>All</p> <p><u>Group Facilitators:</u></p> <p>Bruce Farquhar Barbara Guthrie Don Mays Jack Walsh Rachel Weintraub</p>
11:55	Feedback	Report back from groups / comments from the floor (as time allows)	<p>All</p> <p>Jim McCabe</p>
12:10	Closing	Wrap up	<p>Jim McCabe</p> <p>Kitty Pilarz</p>

Zo Zo Sphere Incident Data

Summary of reports received Jan-Dec 2005

USA

Approximate US sales in same time period 2,000,000

Reported Incident	Number of Occurrences
Child found zo zo sphere in basement, reported the product was glowing on and off and making a strange sound	1
Child swinging zo zo sphere over his head, cord became wrapped around child's neck, child had difficulty breathing	65
Children playing with zo zo sphere, one hits other with product by stretching back cord and letting it go causing minor bumps and bruises	10
Child uses zo zo sphere that was frozen in back yard to break neighbors window, neighbor cut with broken glass	1
Children playing with product, sphere broke releasing fluid, child has allergic reactions, rash, red mark, itching, or skin irritation	23

Zo Zo Sphere Incident Data

Summary of reports received Jan-Dec 2005

Canada

Approximate Canadian sales same time period 200,000

Reported Incident	Number of Occurrences
Child found zo zo sphere in basement, reported the product was glowing on and off and making a strange sound	1
Child swinging zo zo sphere over his head, cord became wrapped around child's neck, child had difficulty breathing	650
Children playing with zo zo sphere, one hits other with product by stretching back cord and letting it go causing minor bumps and bruises	10
Zo zo sphere found in child's bedroom closet, burning, smoke filled room. Child reports the sphere burst into flames when he spun it too fast.	1
Children playing with product, sphere broke releasing fluid, child has allergic reactions, rash, red mark, itching, or skin irritation	23

Zo Zo Sphere Incident Data

Summary of reports received Jan-Dec 2005

France

Approximate French sales same time period 100,000

Reported Incident	Number of Occurrences
Child found zo zo sphere in basement, reported the product was glowing on and off and making a strange sound	1
Child swinging zo zo sphere over his head, cord became wrapped around child's neck, child had difficulty breathing	125
Children playing with zo zo sphere, one hits other with product by stretching back cord and letting it go causing minor bumps and bruises	1000
Zo zo sphere found in child's bedroom closet, burning, smoke filled room. Child reports the sphere burst into flames when he spun it too fast.	10
Children playing with product, sphere broke releasing fluid, child has allergic reactions, rash, red mark, itching, or skin irritation	230

Zo Zo Sphere Incident Data

Summary of reports received Jan-Dec 2005

Hong Kong

Approximate French sales same time period 100,000

Reported Incident	Number of Occurrences
Child found zo zo sphere in basement, reported the product was glowing on and off and making a strange sound	1
Child swinging zo zo sphere over his head, cord became wrapped around child's neck, child had difficulty breathing	125
Children playing with zo zo sphere, one hits other with product by stretching back cord and letting it go causing minor bumps and bruises	1000
Zo zo sphere found in child's bedroom closet, burning, smoke filled room. Child reports the sphere burst into flames when he spun it too fast.	10
Children playing with product, sphere broke releasing fluid, child has allergic reactions, rash, red mark, itching, or skin irritation	230

Zo Zo Sphere Incident Data

Summary of reports received Jan-Dec 2005

Mexico

Approximate Mexican sales same time period 500,000

Reported Incident	Number of Occurrences
Child found zo zo sphere in basement, reported the product was glowing on and off and making a strange sound	1
Child swinging zo zo sphere over his head, cord became wrapped around child's neck, child had difficulty breathing	125
Children playing with zo zo sphere, one hits other with product by stretching back cord and letting it go causing minor bumps and bruises	10
Zo zo sphere found in child's bedroom closet, burning, smoke filled room. Child reports the sphere burst into flames when he spun it too fast.	1
Children playing with product, sphere broke releasing fluid, child has allergic reactions, rash, red mark, itching, hair loss or skin irritation	4

Standardization Resources . . . For More Information

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The following is a small sampling of organizations providing information relevant to the standardization of consumer products. Resources include educational materials, handbooks and manuals, case studies, procedures, databases, webstores, participant directories, and much more.

American National Standards Institute www.ansi.org

ANSI is a private, non-profit organization (501(c)3) that administers and coordinates the U.S. voluntary standardization and conformity assessment system

ANEC – the European Consumer Voice in Standardization www.anec.org

ANEC represents consumers from all European Union and European Free Trade Area countries in technical standardization.

ASTM International www.astm.org

ASTM is one of the largest voluntary standards development organizations in the world. Technical Committee F-15 deals with Consumer Products.

Canadian Standards Association www.csa.ca

CSA is a not-for-profit membership-based association serving business, industry, government and consumers in Canada and the global marketplace. CSA develops standards and helps people understand standards through education and information products and services.

Consumers International www.consumersinternational.org

CI is an independent, non-profit organization that supports, links and represents consumer groups and agencies all over the world. Its publication *First steps in Standards representation: a guide for consumer organisations* provides basic guidance on how to participate in national and international standards making.

European Commission Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/>

DG Sanco is charged with managing the laws of the European Union on the safety of food and other products, on consumers' rights and on the protection of people's health, and verifying that EU members observe these rules.

European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization www.cenelec.org

CENELEC is the European regional standardization body for electrotechnical standardization.

European Committee for Standardization www.cenorm.be

CEN is the European regional standardization body for all sectors except those covered by CENELEC and ETSI (telecommunication).

EuroSafe, the European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

<http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/>

Eurosafe, previously known as ECOSA, is a network of injury prevention champions dedicated to making Europe a safer place.

International Electrotechnical Commission www.iec.ch

IEC is a global organization that prepares and publishes international standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies.

International Organization for Standardization www.iso.org

ISO is a global federation of national standards bodies that develops and publishes international standards for all sectors except those covered by IEC and ITU (telecommunication). ISO's Committee on Consumer Policy (COPOLCO) provides a forum for the exchange of information and experience on standards and conformity assessment issues of interest to consumers.

National Center for Standards and Certification Information

<http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/ncsci/ncsci.htm>

NCSCI, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology, is a central repository for standards information in the United States providing access to U.S., foreign and international documents and contact points as the U.S. national inquiry point under the World Trade Organization Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

Pacific Area Standards Congress www.pascnet.org

PASC is a voluntary, independent organization of Pacific Rim national standards organizations.

Pan American Standards Commission www.copant.org

COPANT is the regional standardization body of the Americas.

Standards Council of Canada www.scc.ca

SCC is a federal Crown corporation that oversees Canada's National Standards System.

Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. www.ul.com

UL is an independent, not-for-profit product-safety testing and certification organization. It develops UL Standards for Safety.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission www.cpsc.gov

CPSC is an independent Federal regulatory agency charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Its National Electronic Injury Surveillance System is a resource for researching injury data, providing a national probability sample of hospitals in the U.S. and its territories.