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U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Log of Meeting

SUBJECT: WCMA Steering Committee Meeting
DATE OF MEETING: July 21, 2011
LOCATION: Kellen Company Offices, 750 National Press Building, Washington, DC
LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Rana Balci-Sinha
DATE OF LOG ENTRY: August 1, 2011
CPSC ATTENDEES: Rana Balci-Sinha, Human Factors
 Bob Ochsman, Human Factors
 Renae Rauchschalbe, Compliance
 Matt Howsare, Chief of Staff to the Chairman (via teleconference)

NON-CPSC ATTENDEES:

Lisa Valenti	Beautiful Window (via teleconference)
Tom Hennessey	Beautiful Window (via teleconference)
Dave Perkwitz	B & W Window Fashions
Jeff Sendlak	Bureau Veritas (via teleconference)
Paul Ehrman	Bureau Veritas (via teleconference)
Rich Watkins	Comfortex
Rachel Weintraub	Consumer Federation
Don Mays	Consumers Union
Mike Gidding	Gidding & Brown
Steve Drew	Health Canada
Joe Jankoski	Hunter Douglas
Jim Anthony	Hunter Douglas (via teleconference)
Joe Kovach	Hunter Douglas (via teleconference)
Chris Outlaw	Hunter Douglas
Jack Feng	Levolor (Newell)
Teri Williamson	Levolor (Newell)
Mark Johnson	Levolor (Newell)
Robert LeBlanc	Lewis Hyman Inc. (via teleconference)
Brian Robertson	Louvolite Canada
Linda Kaiser	Parents for Window Blind Safety
Joe Cannaverde	RollEase (via teleconference)
Derick Marsh	RollEase

Will Lynch	Safe-T-Shade
Tom Merker	Springs Window Fashions
Michael Hollander	Whole Space Industries
Eric Lin	Whole Space Industries (via teleconference)
Jackson Ko	Whole Space Industries (via teleconference)
Barbara Miller	WCMA
Ralph Vasami	WCMA
Tim Bennett	WCMA

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

- 1) Tom Merker called the meeting to order. Ralph reviewed the antitrust rules. The log of the May 25th meeting was approved. Don stated that this and past meeting logs did not have details. Ralph took a note of generating detailed logs of the future meetings.
- 2) Task groups gave an update on the status of their work.
- 3) Continuous loop and bead chain task group:
 - a. A new proposed addition to the section includes various tests for “cord restraining devices”. Some tests will require multiple samples whereas it is common for a manufacturer to send only one complete sample to the test lab. Component testing at the supplier site coupled with the system level testing by the manufacturer or test labs were discussed. Dividing the testing responsibility was raised as an issue and the technical committee will review it.
 - b. Rana asked if there will be a durability testing for cord shrouds. The technical committee will review.
 - c. Linda stated that there have been four fatal incidents in which a child was able to remove the tension device from the wall or fixed surface. Some manufacturers indicated that the new proposed additions associated with the durability and impact testing of the tension devices should result in sturdier devices and installation. There was a discussion on those solutions still relying on consumer performing a proper installation where in real world it may not happen. Don gave an example of furniture tip-over standards development in which the task group finally deciding that due to the many variables associated with attachments to an unknown surface, the furniture should inherently be resistant to potential tip-over scenarios.
 - d. Bob asked of the challenges that manufacturers have to implement alternative solutions (other than tension devices). Some of the concerns raised included the solutions not being applicable to nylon cords, inability to implement the solutions to large sized or heavy products, and the balance between reducing the amount of force to operate the shade versus the number of repetitions.
 - e. Tom asked if any other standard excludes certain products from meeting the requirements. Rana indicated that she supported the idea of certain (such as heavy and large) products being excluded until the technology is developed, however the main argument from the manufacturers has been that the consumer may not accept using different operating systems for different sized windows in the same room. In addition, Rana asked if the consumer acceptance has been examined when consumers are required to install tension devices for the shade to operate, which is not the case at the moment.

- f. Linda stated that one of her concerns now was that the tension devices would be used more extensively than before if complying with the tension device route would be cheaper than other options allowed in the standard.
 - g. Consumer advocates stated that the tension devices should not be used as a solution for continuous loops.
 - h. Tom Merker said that the working groups will discuss the issues raised.
- 4) The accessibility task group:
- a. Task group's new proposal includes defining shades with their "construction". "Open" construction shades can have openings up to 2 inches and any of its openings provides access to all inner cords. Open construction shades will be evaluated using the probe based on CPSC-staff provided anthropometric dimensions. The "Closed" construction shades will not allow cords within 6 inches from the side of the shade with openings that have a diameter of 4 inches or less. The group stated that they have arrived at the 4-inch diameter because it is smaller than the size of the head probe.
 - b. Steve asked if the accessibility testing is applicable to inner cords only. Rich responded that two probes that are newly introduced will be in lieu of the accessibility probe that is in the current standard. Steve stated that the current finger probe is more conservative than the proposed probes.
 - c. Will asked what process would be followed to have a new technology to be part of the standard and asked how long it would take.
- 5) Hazardous Loop task group:
Group added a requirement (D1.1.4) stating all accessible cords and opening combinations to be tested separately to ensure compliance. In D2.2.2, the worst case scenario is to be tested, but relies on the tester to determine the largest loop, which was believed by the task group that the tester should easily accomplish. The group added clarification in D2.4.1, which allows looping the cord onto both hooks without specifying a max limit for the amount of force.
- 6) Wide lift band task group:
Intertek is working on defining the relationship between the material stiffness and width. Manufacturers will be sending new materials and let Intertek reduce the width step by step to see where the threshold is.
- 7) Operating cords task group:
The group is waiting for the Intertek results to move forward.
- 8) Labels and Hangtags task group:
New warnings will be circulated.
- 9) According to WCMA, Intertek report will not be shared among the steering committee members. At the moment WCMA is planning to share the results only.
- 10) Next meeting is scheduled for September 1st, 2011 at 11am-4pm in DC.
- 11) Meeting was adjourned.