



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020



KEEPING CONSUMERS **SAFE**





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# Message from Chairman Elliot F. Kaye



Stop and think about it. Our lives are intricately intertwined with consumer products. And we expect them to be safe. We expect a laptop battery to work and not catch fire. We expect our children's toys to be entertaining

and not break into small parts that are choking hazards. We expect a smoke alarm to alert us to smoke or fire and not fail.

For the most part, our expectations are met, and we go about our day without incident. Thanks to new authorities and greater funding levels in recent years from Congress, as well as efforts at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and from many product safety stakeholders, we enjoy a far stronger product safety net. These efforts have resulted in fewer dangerous products reaching store shelves and our homes and stronger safety standards across many product categories, especially those affecting children. Our nation has the strongest crib safety standard in the world. Retail stores for new parents are filled with play yards, bassinets and strollers that have fewer hazards than ever before. Toys have never been safer.

Yet, risks of harm and hidden hazards still exist. Children are tragically killed by unstable furniture. People are poisoned by carbon monoxide from portable generators. Older Americans are entrapped in bed rails. And those are the acute hazards. We have no idea to what extent we (and more importantly our children) are exposed to harmful chemicals from consumer products and the real magnitude of that exposure. From the couches they read on, to the playgrounds and artificial turf fields they play on, they are potentially exposed to harmful chemicals. All consumers, especially parents, deserve

to know if that exposure is dangerous, and, if so, they rightfully expect the government to do something about it.

All this to say, the CPSC remains an extremely relevant agency with a critical health and safety mission for the American public. We provide a strong return on taxpayers' investment with our modest budget. And we are very passionate about our mission, as evidenced in the pages that follow. Through this new Strategic Plan, CPSC is positioned to be an even more effective and impactful force for consumer product safety to achieve our vision of a nation free from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products.

Our most valuable resource is, of course, our great staff. The talented and dedicated CPSC team is the foundation of the agency's success. That is why our first strategic goal is to *cultivate the most effective consumer product safety workforce*. We already have a tremendous head start in achieving this goal. The CPSC is fortunate to have a team of motivated, talented and deeply committed public servants who come to work every day wanting to make a difference by improving product safety for consumers. This Strategic Plan will build on our already strong workforce foundation by aligning our human capital, continuously developing our people, recruiting even more of the best and brightest to serve with us, and increasing employee engagement in the critical work of consumer product safety.

Preventing safety hazards from occurring is the most effective and efficient way to fulfill the mission of keeping consumers safe. Our second strategic goal is to *prevent hazardous products from reaching consumers*. Of the four goals we have set in this Strategic Plan, none is more challenging than prevention. Consumer product manufacturing, distribution and sales happen simultaneously on a global scale, from massive to micro transactions. Consumers anywhere in the U.S. can make a

"Through this new Strategic Plan, CPSC is positioned to be an even more effective and impactful force for consumer product safety to achieve our vision of a nation free from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products."

purchase directly from a foreign manufacturer with a few taps on a smartphone and have a product delivered to their front door the same day. Consumers can also just print a toy or other product on a 3D printer in their basement.

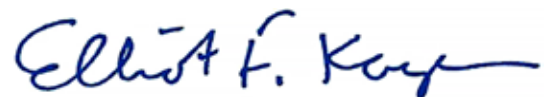
This rapidly evolving landscape means we must be smarter and quicker in our assessments and decision making. Our Strategic Plan will steer us to even better prevention outcomes by using high quality data, analytical models, and cutting edge science and research to identify and understand potential hazards as soon as we can, to provide guidance and clarity through "smart regulation" (voluntary standards and mandatory regulations) for consumer product manufacturers and importers, and to prevent hazardous products from entering the marketplace through improved surveillance at ports of entry.

While prevention is our preferred approach to keep consumers safe, it is not the only course of action. Despite the best efforts of many innovators, manufacturers, retailers and governments, hazardous consumer products do find their way into the marketplace and the hands of consumers. The third strategic goal in our Strategic Plan is *to respond quickly to address hazardous consumer products both in the marketplace and with consumers*. To achieve this goal, the CPSC will work to actively monitor and more rapidly identify consumer products for enforcement actions, and once identified, work to minimize further consumer exposure to the product hazard. When a recall of a consumer product is necessary, we want to make sure the recall is effective, and this Strategic Plan charts a course to make product recalls more effective.

In order to make sound safety choices, manufacturers, retailers, foreign partners and especially consumers need the right information from us in a timely manner. The fourth and final strategic goal in our Strategic Plan is to *communicate useful information quickly and effectively to better inform decisions*. Our plan outlines a strategy to improve the usefulness and delivery of safety information and to find better and more innovative ways of empowering and protecting consumers who are most at risk of suffering product safety related injuries. We are also aiming to increase and enhance collaboration with stakeholders because good communication always goes two ways.

As you read through our Strategic Plan, we hope you notice we have attempted to make this a document that maintains its relevance to our safety work over time. Ideally, the Strategic Plan will inform and direct the actions of the CPSC during the next four years.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the many contributions that made this Strategic Plan possible. This plan is truly the result of a highly collaborative process among my fellow Commissioners, the CPSC staff, and our many external stakeholders that provided their insights and ideas. We are excited to build on this collaborative momentum, as we work together to implement this Strategic Plan and fulfill our mission of *keeping consumers safe*.



# Overview of the Agency

The CPSC is an independent federal regulatory agency with a public health and safety mission to protect the public from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products.

The CPSC was created in 1972 by the Consumer Product Safety Act (“CPSA”). In addition to the CPSA, as amended by the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (“CPSIA”) and Public Law No. 112-28, the CPSC also administers the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, the Flammable Fabrics Act, the Poison Prevention Packaging Act, the Refrigerator Safety Act, the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, and the Children’s Gasoline Burn Prevention Act.

The CPSC has jurisdiction over thousands of types of consumer products used in and around the home, in recreation, and in schools, from children’s toys to portable gas generators and toasters. Although the CPSC’s regulatory purview is quite broad, a number of product categories fall outside the CPSC’s jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

The societal costs of consumer product incidents amount to more than \$1 trillion annually. The CPSC has a mission to keep consumers safe and works to reduce consumer product-related injury and death rates by using analysis, regulatory policy, compliance and enforcement, and education to identify and address product safety hazards. This includes:

- **Hazard Identification and Assessment**—collecting information and developing injury and death statistics related to the use of products under the CPSC’s jurisdiction;
- **Voluntary Standards<sup>2</sup> and Mandatory Regulations<sup>3</sup>**—participating in the development and strengthening of voluntary standards and developing mandatory regulations;
- **Import Surveillance**—using a pilot risk assessment methodology to analyze import data to identify and interdict violative consumer products before they enter the United States;
- **Compliance and Enforcement**—enforcing compliance with mandatory regulations and removing defective products through compliance activities, such as recalls or other corrective actions, and litigating when necessary;
- **Public Outreach**—educating consumers, families, industry, and foreign governments about safety programs and alerts, recalls, emerging hazards, mandatory regulations, voluntary standards, and product safety requirements in the United States;
- **Intergovernmental Coordination**—coordinating work on product safety issues with other federal government stakeholders; and
- **Cooperation with Foreign Governments**—leveraging work with foreign government safety agencies, bilaterally and multilaterally, to improve safety for U.S. consumers.

The CPSC is a bipartisan commission that consists of five members appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Chairman is the principal executive officer of the Commission, which convenes at meetings that are open to the public.

<sup>1</sup> Other federal agencies regulate product categories such as automobiles and boats; alcohol, tobacco, and firearms; foods, drugs, cosmetics, and medical devices; and pesticides.

<sup>2</sup> A voluntary standard is defined as a consensus product standard, and is also called a safety standard.

<sup>3</sup> A mandatory regulation is defined as a mandatory standard, and is also called a technical regulation.



Commissioner  
Robert S. Adler



Commissioner  
Ann Marie Buerkle



Chairman  
Elliot F. Kaye

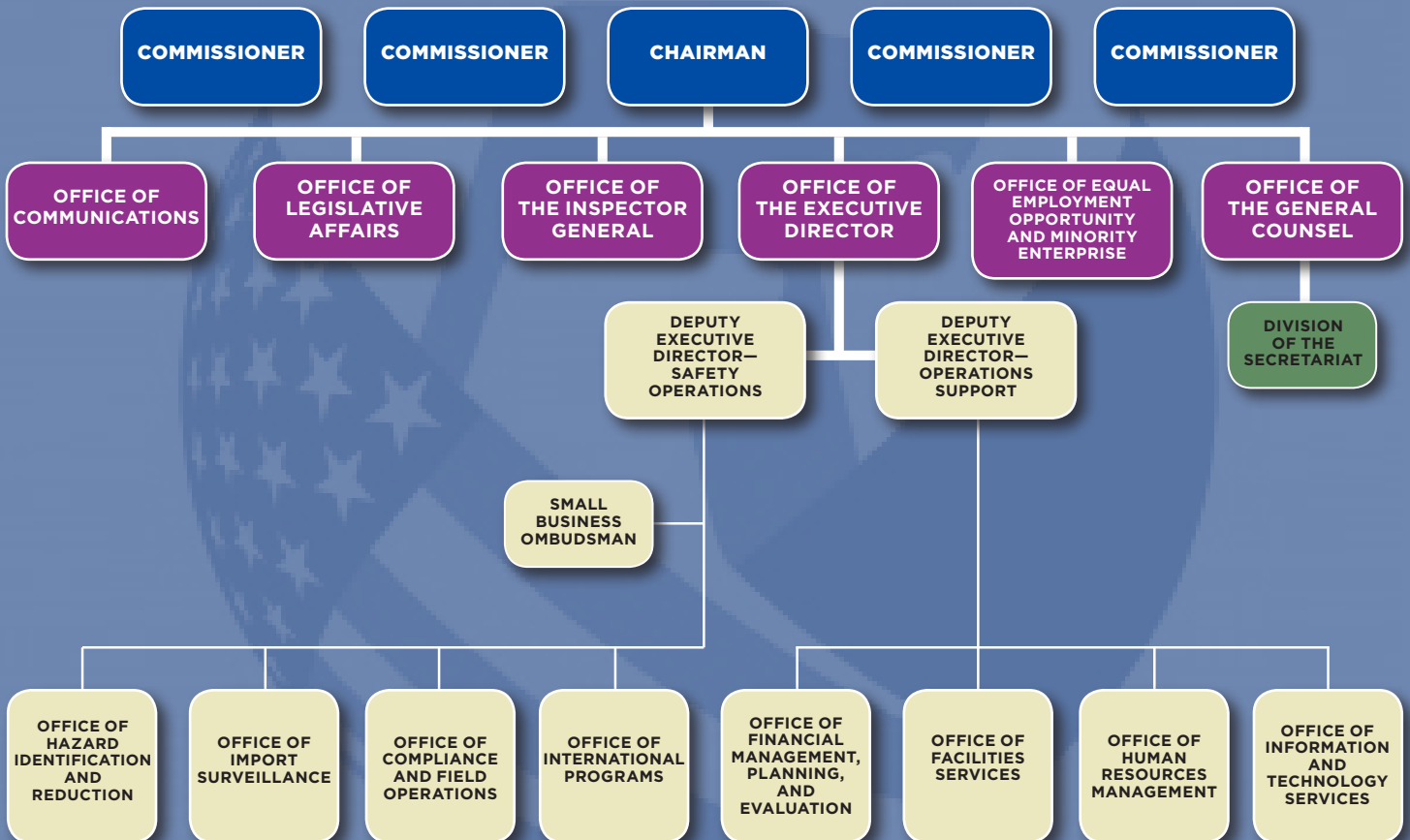


Commissioner  
Marietta S. Robinson



Commissioner  
Joseph P. Mohorovic

## CPSC Organizational Structure



# 2016-2020 Strategic Plan Summary

## Mission: Keeping Consumers Safe

Vision: A nation free from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products

### CORE MISSION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

OPERATIONAL  
EXCELLENCE

DATA COLLECTION  
AND ANALYSIS

INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

INTERNAL AND  
EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

#### STRATEGIC GOAL 1 WORKFORCE

Cultivate the most effective  
consumer product safety workforce

##### Strategic Objective 1.1

Enhance effective strategic  
human capital planning and  
alignment

##### Strategic Objective 1.2

Foster a culture of  
continuous development

##### Strategic Objective 1.3

Attract and recruit a talented  
and diverse workforce

##### Strategic Objective 1.4

Increase employee  
engagement

#### STRATEGIC GOAL 2 PREVENTION

Prevent hazardous products  
from reaching consumers

##### Strategic Objective 2.1

Improve identification and  
assessment of hazards to  
consumers

##### Strategic Objective 2.2

Lead efforts to improve the  
safety of consumer products  
before they reach the  
marketplace

##### Strategic Objective 2.3

Increase capability to identify  
and stop imported hazardous  
consumer products

#### STRATEGIC GOAL 3 RESPONSE

Respond quickly to address hazardous  
consumer products both in the  
marketplace and with consumers

##### Strategic Objective 3.1

Rapidly identify hazardous  
consumer products for  
enforcement action

##### Strategic Objective 3.2

Minimize further exposure  
to hazardous consumer  
products

##### Strategic Objective 3.3

Improve consumer response  
to consumer product recalls

#### STRATEGIC GOAL 4 COMMUNICATION

Communicate useful information  
quickly and effectively to better  
inform decisions

##### Strategic Objective 4.1

Improve usefulness and  
availability of consumer  
product safety information

##### Strategic Objective 4.2

Increase dissemination of  
useful consumer product  
safety information

##### Strategic Objective 4.3

Increase and enhance  
collaboration with  
stakeholders



## Strategic Plan Overview

The CPSC's mission of "Keeping Consumers Safe" is grounded in the statutes that authorize the work of the agency. The agency's overarching vision is "A nation free from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products." The CPSC will work to achieve four strategic goals that will contribute to realizing the vision and achieving the mission. The CPSC's programs will align with the strategic goals, and staff will implement strategies to achieve the strategic goals. The strategic goals are:

- 1. Cultivate the most effective consumer product safety workforce**
- 2. Prevent hazardous products from reaching consumers**
- 3. Respond quickly to address hazardous consumer products both in the marketplace and with consumers**
- 4. Communicate useful information quickly and effectively to better inform decisions.**

Strategic objectives have been formulated and reflect the key component outcomes necessary to achieve each of the strategic goals. The strategic objectives are underpinned by performance goals and strategic initiatives, which define additional outcomes, outputs, and activities that the CPSC will implement and pursue within each strategic objective. Proposed key performance measures, which will be refined, are identified for monitoring and reporting on progress toward achieving the strategic objectives.

The CPSC's Strategic Plan sets the framework for all subsequent agency planning, communication, management, and reporting. The Strategic Plan provides direction for resource allocation, program design, and management decisions. The Strategic Plan defines the evidence and performance data that will be used to monitor and assess program effectiveness.

## Development of the Strategic Plan and Stakeholder Involvement

The CPSC developed the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan using a highly participatory process that involved many CPSC staff and significant engagement with different internal and external stakeholders.

One source of background information was a CPSC annual public meeting, held to receive comments and recommendations from stakeholders and the public on the CPSC program priorities for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Representatives from a variety of industry associations, consumer safety organizations, and other organizations concerned with safety issues affecting consumer products presented oral or written comments that included recommendations for future areas on which the CPSC should focus.

A special planning committee was formed to develop the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. The committee, which consisted of managers from all major CPSC offices, developed the Strategic Plan over the course of approximately a year. The committee met frequently and agreed on decisions and recommendations, using a consensus process. Committee members reported back to their program staffs between meetings and gathered input. One of the first tasks completed by the committee was to conduct a thorough "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats" ("SWOT") analysis and try to identify relevant data and information, which included information on stakeholder perspectives.

After the committee had developed initial proposed mission, vision, and strategic goal statements, the committee conducted a survey of all CPSC staff to assess views on the appropriateness of the proposed statements. Survey results from staff informed the proposed mission, vision, and strategic goal statements. The committee formed larger working groups, one for each strategic goal, to refine the proposed strategic objectives and develop the details of proposed strategies for achieving the strategic objectives and strategic goals. This included identifying proposed performance goals and initiatives necessary to achieve each strategic objective. Working groups also developed proposed key performance measures

for the strategic objectives. Nearly 60 CPSC staff members participated in working group meetings. The planning committee solicited guidance from the CPSC Chairman and Commissioners throughout the strategic planning process. The CPSC published a *Federal Register* notice and solicited public comments on the draft Strategic Plan. The CPSC also solicited input from the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”) and Congress. A third party not-for-profit government consulting firm, provided assistance to the CPSC planning committee and working groups throughout this process by preparing materials, facilitating group discussions and documenting committee decisions. In addition, an outside contractor provided graphic design services for the final Strategic Plan publication.

The CPSC Strategic Plan addresses the requirements of the GPRM Modernization Act of 2010 (“GPRMA”) and OMB guidance, as stated in OMB Circular No. A-11, *Part 6: Preparation and Submission of Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans, and Annual Program Performance Reports*.

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CPSC network engineers ensure networks, systems, and software are readily available to CPSC staff.

# Cross-Cutting Priorities

Four cross-cutting strategic priorities are integral to the CPSC's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan:

- **Operational excellence**
- **Data collection and analysis**
- **Information technology**
- **Internal and external collaboration**

These themes are fundamental to “the way the CPSC works,” and how the agency plans to achieve the strategic goals in the Strategic Plan.

## Operational Excellence

All agencies, including the CPSC, depend on a solid administrative management foundation to enable their operations. The CPSC's programs require strong management policies, effective processes, and adequate support in areas such as human resources, financial management, risk management and internal control, budget and performance management, procurement, facilities, and information technology. The CPSC must continuously improve the management environment and service infrastructure necessary to meet the evolving safety mission and achieve strategic objectives and performance goals.

**Enable a high-performing workforce:** The CPSC will support and enhance the recruitment, retention, and continuous development of an agency workforce focused on excellence. The agency will provide the systems, tools, and technologies needed by the CPSC workforce to achieve the mission. In addition, the CPSC will provide a physical work environment that is safe and conducive to a high-performing, professional workforce.

**Improve performance management:** CPSC staff will use performance management techniques and analysis, supported by high-quality data, to manage programs and set priorities. The agency will align resource requests with strategic priorities and with

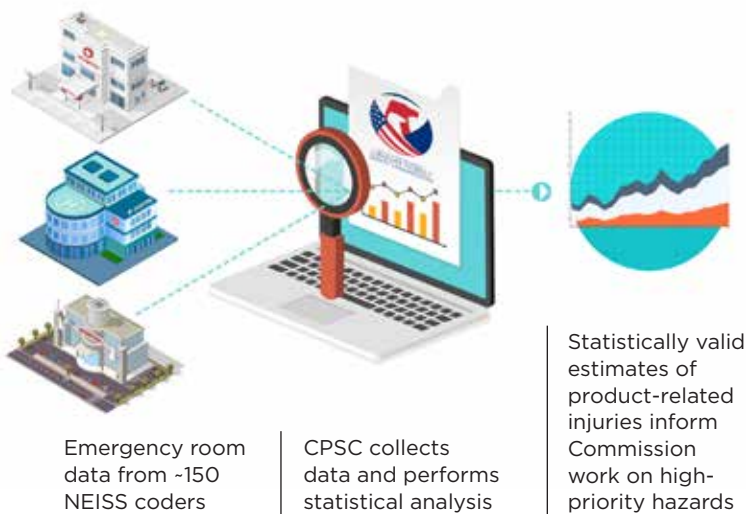
an eye toward future product safety challenges.

The CPSC will improve and increase collection and analysis of evidence for performance monitoring and program evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the CPSC's work. CPSC staff will also create a culture of customer service and pursue customer value in achieving the agency's mission outcomes.

**Enhance financial stewardship:** The CPSC believes that good financial stewardship begins with accurate, timely, and reliable financial data and reporting. That work is given added credibility through a robust system of internal controls and an overarching enterprise risk management framework. Together, this work is the basis upon which management can provide reasonable assurance that financial resources are properly accounted for and used for their intended purposes, and that recommendations from auditors have been addressed in a timely manner. Done well, the CPSC prides itself in translating reliable financial data into actionable analysis that informs policy options and decisions at all levels of the agency by illuminating funding requirements and financial and performance implications. Lastly, the CPSC is committed to delivering financial management services efficiently and effectively. The agency will use shared services to capitalize on economies of scale not otherwise accessible to a small, independent agency and will pursue best value, best price, and outstanding service delivery in the CPSC's strategic procurement work.

## Data Collection and Analysis

In the CPSC's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, agency access to useful, accurate, and timely data is a cross-cutting priority focus. The CPSC is a data-driven agency. Collection and analysis of high quality data are essential to successful achievement of the CPSC's strategic goals and fulfillment of the agency's mission. CPSC staff regularly collects and analyzes a wide range of data from multiple sources and uses



## National Electronic Injury Surveillance System

The National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (“NEISS”) is a vitally important CPSC database system. NEISS provides statistically valid national estimates of consumer product-related injuries from a probability sample of hospital emergency rooms. Patient information is collected from each NEISS hospital for every emergency visit involving an injury associated with consumer products. NEISS data, which the CPSC uses to identify safety issues that may require additional analysis or corrective action, are critical to achieving the agency’s Prevention, Response, and Communication Strategic Goals. Other stakeholders, including additional federal agencies, also depend on NEISS data. The CPSC relies on a national network of healthcare providers under contract to collect NEISS data. CPSC staff works with participating NEISS hospitals and emergency departments to improve the quality and timeliness of data, by enhancing the user interface and expanding data elements and possibly data sources, and seeks input from NEISS stakeholders and users to try to improve NEISS. The CPSC ensures that the quality of NEISS is monitored and tries to identify potential vulnerabilities that could threaten this valuable data resource. For example, the statistical validity of NEISS data depends on maintaining the sample of hospitals. If participating hospitals drop out, the CPSC takes steps to recruit new hospitals to replace them and maintain the sampling design.

that information to shape program strategies and prioritize program activities.

During the information-gathering phase of developing the Strategic Plan, staff identified constraints to effective collection and use of data by the CPSC. Some agency data management systems and analytical models need to be updated to maintain data quality and/or improve systems and search functions. In addition, some data systems are compartmentalized within specific organizational components, which results in a need for greater cross-program and inter-office collaboration, as described in the Internal and External Collaboration theme below. The CPSC should also explore additional potential sources of data on consumer product hazards that could inform agency work. Difficulty in identifying emerging risks, as compared to known hazards, is another data-related area of growth for the CPSC. Each of the strategic goals in the Strategic Plan involves strategies and specific initiatives aimed at improving data systems and increasing data-based decision making.

## Information Technology

Information Technology (“IT”) is an integral tool used to meet objectives across all of the CPSC’s strategic goal areas. The CPSC’s many IT applications and systems automate agency business processes and improve efficiency. CPSC IT systems collect and store critical consumer product safety-related data, and facilitate timely retrieval and analysis of data by agency staff, as well as by consumers, businesses, and other federal, state, and local agencies. IT projects at the agency support several centralized CPSC database systems that contain information vital to identifying and responding to consumer product hazards and preventing hazardous products from reaching consumers. The CPSC consistently looks for ways to improve the quality, transparency, reliability, and availability of data essential for achieving the agency’s strategic objectives, goals, and mission.



To protect the major information systems that are so critical to achieving the agency's strategic goals, the CPSC has implemented an Information System Continuous Monitoring strategy. This strategy allows the agency to identify and prioritize—based on risk—security controls that require enhanced monitoring and reporting. This strategy also is intended to improve visibility into information security vulnerabilities. By monitoring security controls in a continuous, nearly real-time manner, the agency will be better able to identify and respond to emerging threats to agency information systems, and enhance the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information systems that support achievement of the CPSC's mission.

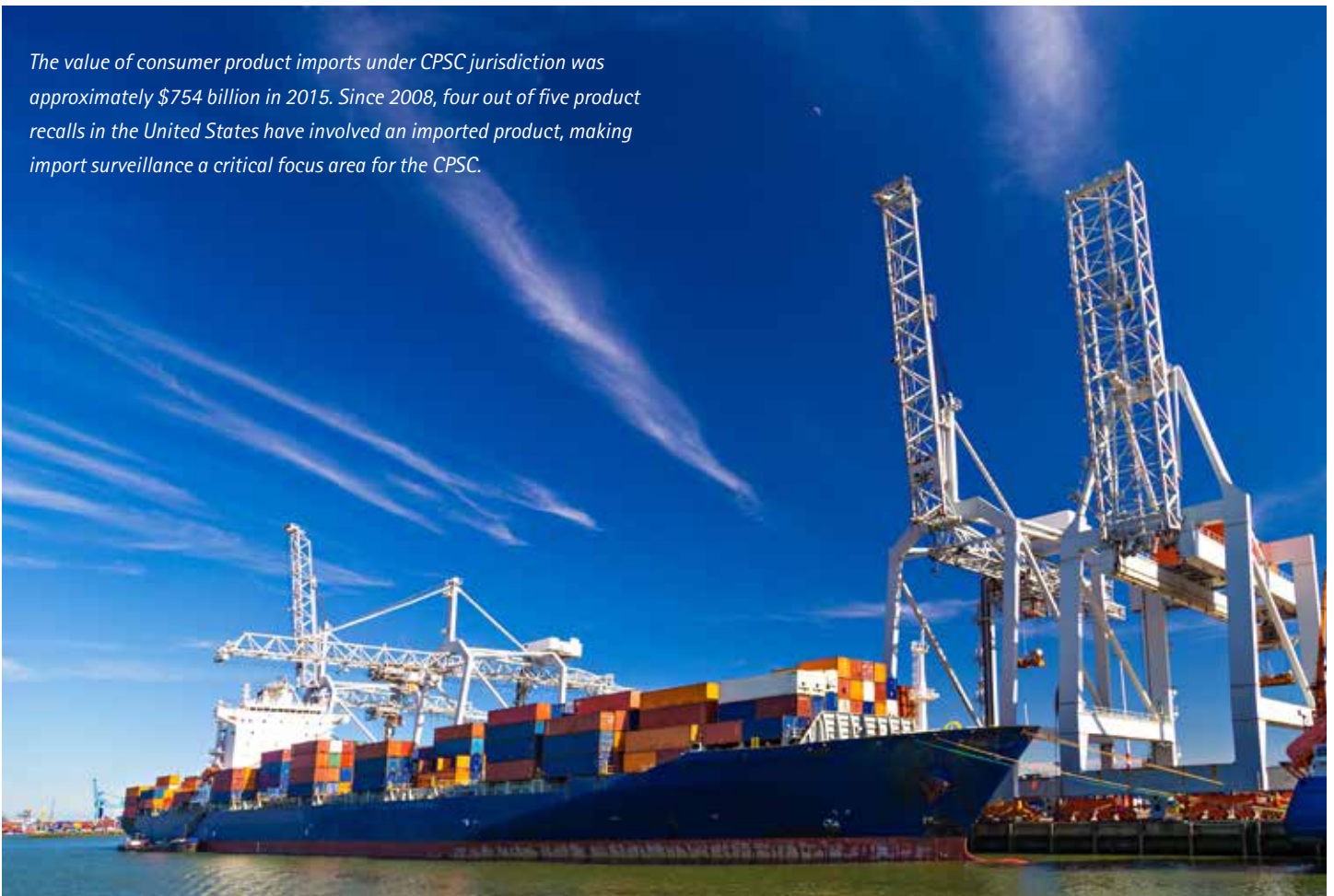
As the state of IT advances, the CPSC's IT systems must also evolve to help meet the agency's strategic goals while maintaining adequate IT security. Another priority for the future is evaluating "big data" solutions to determine how the agency can best use

data and advanced and predictive analytics to identify and respond to emerging hazards and improve consumer protection. The CPSC is also exploring the use of cloud computing to improve system availability and gain cost efficiencies. As part of the CPSC's mobility strategy, the agency is updating its IT infrastructure to a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure environment, a platform that offers users the flexibility to access CPSC applications and data from any location by using any Internet-connected computing devices, including smart phones and tablets.

## Internal and External Collaboration

Improved internal collaboration and working effectively across teams, offices, and projects is essential to the CPSC's success in achieving the objectives of the Strategic Plan. A critical issue identified during the development of the Strategic Plan was the need for effective, transparent communication among all levels of the agency,

*The value of consumer product imports under CPSC jurisdiction was approximately \$754 billion in 2015. Since 2008, four out of five product recalls in the United States have involved an imported product, making import surveillance a critical focus area for the CPSC.*



including Commissioners' offices, and also better integration of processes, systems, and resources across functional offices. The need for improved integration of separate data systems was also noted and is relevant to the data and information technology cross-cutting priorities. Effective teamwork and internal communication are especially important, given the CPSC's relatively small size (fewer than 600 employees) and broad responsibilities because agency personnel must often work across offices to accomplish tasks. In addition, the agency expects a surge in retirements of experienced employees over the next decade, with accompanying loss of technical skills and institutional knowledge. Effective internal collaboration will be essential to the transitioning workforce.

The CPSC has a history of working effectively and collaboratively with many types of external organizations to achieve strategic outcomes, including consumer advocacy organizations and groups, manufacturers' associations and trade groups, voluntary standards organizations, federal agencies, state and local governments, and foreign governments.

During development of the Strategic Plan, the agency also identified potential opportunities to strengthen effective collaboration with outside stakeholders to achieve agency goals and solve consumer product safety problems. The CPSC plans to increase engagement with external stakeholders, from consumers to manufacturers, to importers and retailers, to help make regulation and enforcement more efficient and to inform public policy decisions. Increased collaborative work with universities and other research organizations may contribute to collecting new data, improving identification of emerging hazards, and developing innovative solutions to safety problems. Relationships with other agencies and organizations may be leveraged for educational campaigns and to increase dissemination of safety and health information.

### **Internal Collaboration through Coordinated Enforcement:**

The CPSC's coordinated enforcement approach was developed to improve coordination of all available agency information and tools to manage more effectively compliance and enforcement activities directed toward manufacturers and importers that have a history of noncompliance. The approach involves a multidisciplinary team comprised of CPSC staff from the offices of Import Surveillance, International Programs, Compliance and Field Operations, the General Counsel, and the Executive Director. The coordinated enforcement team works together to develop and implement actions that endeavor to bring repeat violators into compliance with U.S. consumer product safety laws and regulations. Whenever possible, staff works collaboratively with firms that are willing to make the necessary changes to bring their products into compliance. In cases where firms are unwilling or unable to make the necessary changes to ensure compliance, unilateral actions are taken by CPSC staff to prevent the firms from placing noncompliant products into the marketplace.

# External Factors Affecting the CPSC's Strategic Plan

External factors beyond the CPSC's direct control potentially may affect the agency's ability to accomplish some program outcomes and strategic goals. The CPSC considered the following external factors when developing the Strategic Plan, and developed workable strategies to try to address them, where feasible.

## Production Technology and Supply Chain Changes Affecting Consumer Products

The marketplace for consumer products under the CPSC's jurisdiction is constantly evolving. New technologies lead to new consumer products and applications that were not previously imagined. For example, new technologies, such as additive manufacturing (3-D printing), have the potential to fundamentally change the consumer product supply chain. Cutting-edge products containing nanoscale materials present a number of new human exposure questions that the agency is only beginning to address. The Internet has also changed the way consumers purchase products, enabling a consumer to purchase products directly from a manufacturer or distributor located nearly anywhere in the world. The CPSC's Strategic Plan includes initiatives to drive the discovery of innovative safety solutions for emerging technologies and modernize the agency's strategies to address the evolving supply chain, marked by increased online sales and other direct manufacturer-to-consumer marketing.

## Increasingly Global Markets

The marketplace is more global today than ever before. Many of the consumer products for sale in the United States are manufactured in foreign countries, which are governed by different standards and regulations. During FY 2015, more than 192,000 importers brought into the United States imports of consumer products under the CPSC's jurisdiction having a total estimated value of approximately \$754 billion. That averages to more than \$2 billion worth

of consumer product imports per day. Combine that with the fact that approximately 80 percent of consumer product recalls in FY 2015 involved an imported product, and the enormity and urgency of the global consumer product safety challenge comes into focus. The CPSC's strategy to deal with an increasingly global marketplace has already been set in motion through the Import Surveillance program, and the Strategic Plan builds and expands on this strategy.

## Consumer Product Safety Scope and Resources

The scope of the consumer product safety challenge is enormous. In 2015, an average of more than \$2 billion of consumer product imports, many manufactured using cutting edge technologies, arrived on store shelves or directly on consumers' front porches each day. The CPSC is a small, independent Commission with a vast policy responsibility to protect the U.S. public against unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products. The CPSC, like all government agencies, operates in a challenging fiscal environment, competing for scarce resources. To operate successfully in this environment, the CPSC has proposed an alternative funding mechanism, a user fee, to finance the import surveillance strategy; worked with OMB and Congress to develop thoughtful, analytically supported budget requests for program expansions; and collaborated with other federal agencies to build upon and leverage work they have done that is applicable to consumer product safety. Additionally, legislative requirements and mandates could impact the scope of the CPSC's responsibilities and the direction of its safety programs, as well as its regulatory agenda. All of these factors affect the agency's need for resources, which have not kept pace with the changing marketplace and the increased demands on the agency. The CPSC will continue to work with OMB and Congress to address limited resources in relationship to the scope of its mission.

# STRATEGIC GOAL 1:

## Strategic Goal Overview

Having a highly trained, diverse, and engaged workforce is critical to meeting the dynamic challenges of the consumer product safety landscape and achieving the CPSC's life-saving mission. Agency staff's knowledge about product safety, commitment to the agency's mission, and "can-do" attitude make achieving the CPSC mission possible. Cultivating the most effective safety workforce is the first strategic goal because people enable the accomplishment of all other goals, objectives, and initiatives. The CPSC plans to recruit and retain a talented and diverse staff, train current staff so that skills and competencies are aligned with evolving needs, and develop policies and programs to create an engaged and top-performing workforce. To accomplish this goal, the CPSC needs staff with a wide range of specialized and support skills, and with the education, expertise, and potential to fulfill the full depth and breadth of agency responsibilities. This includes technical experts in law, science and engineering, health sciences, child health and development, safety inspection and enforcement, communications, statistics, information technology, data analysis, financial management, facilities management, and program analysis, among other disciplines.

This Strategic Plan was formulated to address the following key workforce challenges:

- Having a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet new, innovative, and emerging product safety challenges;
- Aligning staff resources to agency priorities;
- Maintaining a global presence to address global marketplace issues;
- Increasing employee engagement; and
- Strengthening knowledge transfer through succession planning.

## WORKFORCE

## Cultivate the Most Effective Consumer Product Safety Workforce

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1

Enhance effective strategic human capital planning and alignment

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2

Foster a culture of continuous development

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3

Attract and recruit a talented and diverse workforce

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4

Increase employee engagement



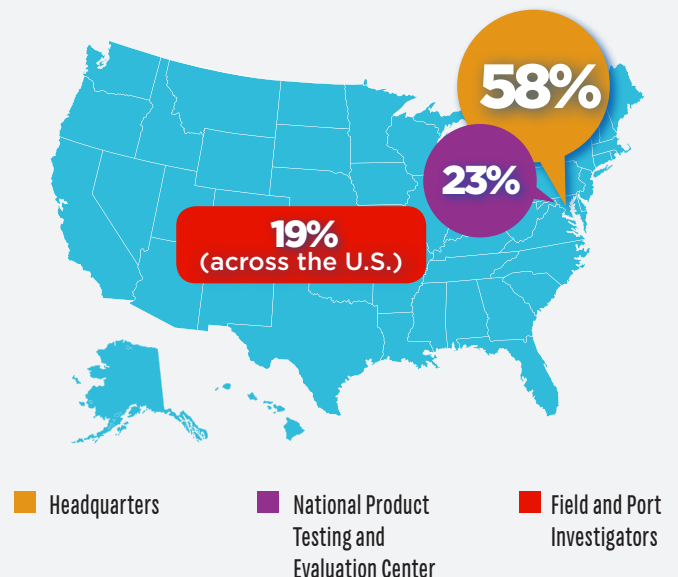


*The CPSC is dedicated to attracting and recruiting talented and diverse employees to help fulfill its mission of "Keeping Consumers Safe."*

The CPSC's approach to cultivating an effective workforce involves enhancing human capital planning and alignment, increasing opportunities for professional development, and improving recruitment strategies to attract talented, diverse, and committed staff. The strategy also emphasizes increasing employee engagement by promoting and rewarding staff innovation and creativity, increasing managers' commitment to fostering employee engagement in the workplace, and promoting a healthy work-life balance.

### Employees by Location

Nearly one-fifth of the CPSC's workforce of approximately 550 employees is stationed in the field, where staff focuses on compliance and enforcement, including inspections of imported shipments and retail establishments to identify harmful consumer products.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1

### Enhance effective strategic human capital planning and alignment

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1.1

Human capital strategic plan completed and implemented

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.1

Improve human capital infrastructure

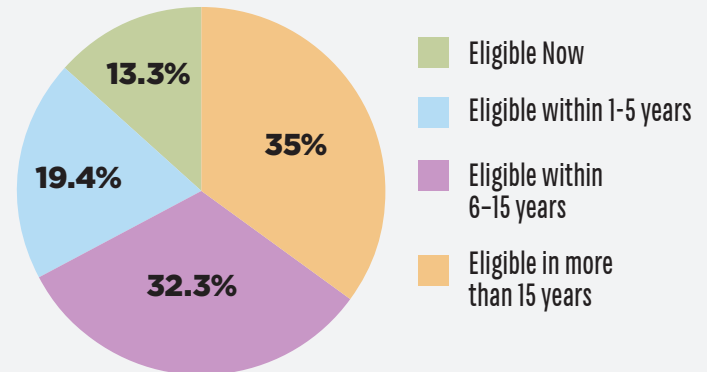
##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.2

Enhance human capital resource allocation reporting

To achieve the strategic goal of cultivating an effective safety workforce, the CPSC needs to improve the agency's human capital infrastructure and develop and implement a human capital strategic plan that aligns resources to achieve the goals and priorities of the agency's overall Strategic Plan. Information systems for reporting on allocation of human capital resources need to be updated, workforce planning needs must continually be assessed and addressed, and data analytics should be used to guide effective workforce planning and forecasting to make more informed decisions. The CPSC will continue to assess current and projected future skill gaps and use this information to reshape its workforce to meet the agency's mission.

### Retirement Eligibility

Nearly one-third of the CPSC's workforce is eligible to retire now or within the next five years. Almost two-thirds of total staff will become eligible for retirement within 15 years. A human capital strategic plan will help the agency prepare for the transition.



#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.1

##### Improve human capital infrastructure:

The CPSC will improve the agency's infrastructure for human capital management. The agency will align the human capital strategic plan with the CPSC's Strategic Plan and will develop, coordinate, and implement an agency-wide succession plan to ensure that the agency has a high-performing, mission-ready workforce now and in the future. Improvements to the human capital infrastructure will be pursued through the following initiatives:

##### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Benchmark best practices at other federal agencies and private sector organizations; and*
- *Implement change management in the human capital infrastructure.*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> These two initiatives contribute broadly to achievement of all of the Performance Goals under Strategic Goal 1.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.2****Enhance human capital resource**

**allocation reporting:** The CPSC needs effective processes to track and guide the allocation of human resources. Improved human resource allocation reporting will enhance and inform the agency's strategic alignment of people to achieve the results described in the Strategic Plan. The following initiatives will be undertaken:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Train supervisors on making a business case for position management; and*
- *Improve human capital resource tracking and reporting.*

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2****Foster a culture of continuous development****KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1.2**

Percentage of employees satisfied with opportunities to improve their skills (as reported in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.1**

Encourage and support professional development

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.2**

Deliver high-quality, targeted development opportunities

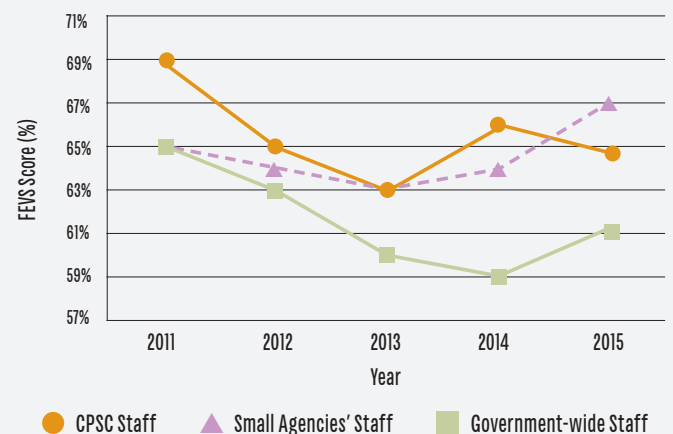
The CPSC solicited feedback from its employees to better understand the results of the FEVS. Employees provided helpful feedback, indicating that they are looking for more professional development opportunities to keep their skills current. This is consistent with the agency's need for diverse technical skills to deliver on its broad mission. The CPSC has formulated performance goals to increase professional development opportunities for staff.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.1****Encourage and support professional development:**

The CPSC will review best practices for supporting professional development opportunities from other federal agencies and private sector organizations, and then formulate and implement a range of initiatives that will best serve our employees' needs. The CPSC will promote the use of individual development plans to help employees identify their professional development needs, encourage participation in development opportunities, and provide opportunities to receive coaching and mentoring through CPSC-sponsored programs. The following initiatives will be implemented to achieve the goal:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Perform best practice research across other federal and private sector organizations;*
- *Develop and implement individual development plans; and*
- *Implement coaching and mentoring programs.*

**Employee Satisfaction with Opportunities to Improve Skills**

Employees' satisfaction with opportunities to improve their skills is estimated from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey ("FEVS") data. The CPSC exceeded the government-wide average score over the period, and met or exceeded the average for small agencies every year except for 2015.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.2****Deliver high-quality, targeted development opportunities:**

The CPSC will enhance its organizational culture to encourage and support employee development. The agency will identify and deliver specific, high-quality development opportunities to build key competencies, which will prepare employees to expand their capabilities and provide cross-functional skills to support the CPSC's mission. This goal will be accomplished through the following training initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- Conduct training needs assessment; and
- Develop agency-wide training plan.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3****Attract and recruit a talented and diverse workforce****KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1.3**

Percentage of hiring managers trained on recruitment

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.1**

Improve targeted assessments to recruit talent

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.2**

Increase targeted outreach to increase diversity

Recruiting talented, diverse, and committed employees is fundamental to the CPSC's success in having a highly effective workforce and achieving the strategic goals. The CPSC, like all government agencies and private companies, has the fundamental challenge of competing for talented people with the right mix of skills needed to deliver the agency's mission at the highest level. For most positions, the CPSC currently conducts targeted outreach and typically has a large, diverse applicant pool from which to select. Nevertheless, recruitment can be improved by training the CPSC's hiring managers to make better use of targeted assessment tools like questionnaires and structured interviews, and by expanding targeted outreach activities to reach the best, most diverse pool of applicants, resulting in the most talented candidates being referred for selection.



CPSC staff from the Office of Communications works to disseminate important consumer product safety information to a diverse audience.



**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.1****Improve targeted assessments to recruit talent:**

To help improve recruiting for targeted positions, the CPSC will increase the effectiveness of assessment tools by identifying and defining more precisely the skills and experience needed for specific job openings. The CPSC will accomplish this through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Research best practices at other federal agencies and private sector organizations in developing assessment tools; and*
- *Establish a manager training program on developing and utilizing assessment tools.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.2****Increase targeted outreach to increase diversity:**

Targeted outreach efforts tailored for specific positions or occupations will contribute to the CPSC's recruitment of a diverse workforce. Targeted outreach for recruitment efforts will be accomplished by implementing the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Create a new and enhanced marketing/outreach strategy; and*
- *Advance relationships with colleges and universities.*



*The CPSC recruits college students for summer internships to build a future generation of safety professionals.*

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4****Increase employee engagement****KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1.4**

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey  
Employee Engagement Index score

**PERFORMANCE****GOAL 1.4.1**

Promote and recognize innovation and creativity

**PERFORMANCE****GOAL 1.4.2**

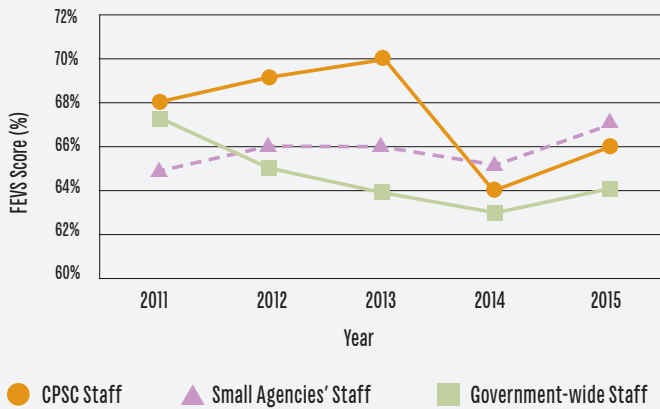
Build commitment to employee engagement

**PERFORMANCE****GOAL 1.4.3**

Promote work-life balance

“Employee engagement” is defined as a state of passion and commitment to the organization’s goals on the part of each employee, which leads to his or her willingness to invest discretionary effort to ensure success. A motivated, fully engaged workforce is essential to achieving the agency’s mission. Engaged employees are more productive and produce higher quality results than their less engaged colleagues. The CPSC launched an employee engagement initiative in September 2015, led by the Office of Human Resources Management, in partnership with the American Federation of Government Employees Local, and the CPSC’s Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Enterprise. The initiative focused on four key areas of improvement: 1) employee awards and recognition; 2) diversity and inclusion; 3) employee development and training; and 4) communication and information sharing. The CPSC believes that an engaged workforce leads to improved outcomes, including better mission results and long-term talent retention.

## Employee Engagement



The Employee Engagement Index provides a measure of the extent to which employees indicate that conditions are conducive to employee engagement. The CPSC's new Strategic Plan includes initiatives to try to increase employee engagement.

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.1

#### Promote and recognize innovation and creativity:

The mission challenges faced by the CPSC are complex and often difficult to solve. Encouraging creativity and prudent risk-taking, and then reinforcing that behavior through recognition systems, can result in finding new efficiencies, improving agency effectiveness, and ultimately attracting and retaining new talent. The CPSC will undertake the following initiatives to promote and reward employee innovation and creativity:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Research, develop, and implement an awards policy that encourages and recognizes innovation; and*
- *Train workforce on problem solving and framing methods to encourage innovation through alternative approaches.*

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.2

#### Build commitment to employee engagement:

The CPSC will work to bring all levels of the workforce into the decision-making process to foster a stronger sense of engagement and buy-in across the agency. This endeavor will require commitment at all levels of agency management and employees, and will also necessitate changes in how managers approach decisions. Because inclusion is essential to engagement, the CPSC will train the workforce on the use of "New IQ" (inclusive intelligence) techniques. The New IQ is based on the concept that individual behaviors can be learned, practiced over time, and developed into habits that create an inclusive environment. The following initiatives are planned:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Implement agency employee engagement initiative; and*
- *Train the workforce on New IQ.*



The CPSC celebrates employees' accomplishments each year on Employee Recognition Day.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.3**

**Promote work-life balance:** Programs that promote an improved work-life balance for employees can improve workforce health, job satisfaction, and job performance. The CPSC will build upon existing initiatives that support safety and wellness for employees, and increase awareness of available workplace flexibilities to help employees achieve work-life balance. The following initiatives are planned:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Develop and provide training and informational opportunities on work-life balance to the workforce; and*
- *Provide wellness and safety activities for the workforce.*



*Promoting work-life balance is one of the ways in which the CPSC increases employee engagement.*

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Having a highly trained, diverse, and engaged workforce is critical to meeting the dynamic challenges of the consumer product safety landscape and achieving the CPSC's life-saving mission. Agency staff's knowledge about product safety, commitment to the agency's mission, and "can-do" attitude make achieving the CPSC mission possible.

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# STRATEGIC GOAL 2:

## Strategic Goal Overview

The CPSC is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury and death from a vast array of consumer products supplied through expanding global markets. Imports represent an increasing percentage of available consumer products in the United States, and also represent an increasing percentage of products identified as noncompliant. Efforts to increase manufacturing of safe consumer products, combined with improved mechanisms to identify hazardous products before they enter the marketplace, are the most effective ways to prevent hazardous products from reaching consumers.

The CPSC will focus on addressing key challenges to preventing consumer product-related injuries, including:

- Providing surveillance for the myriad of consumer products imported and domestically manufactured under the CPSC's jurisdiction;
- Advancing data analysis and research capability to identify existing and potential emerging consumer product hazards, particularly those linked to rapid advances in technology, such as the use of nanoparticles;
- Addressing changes in traditional manufacturing methods, such as additive manufacturing using 3-D printers, and eCommerce sales and distribution options;
- Helping develop voluntary standards and adopting mandatory regulations to address existing product hazards and product hazards resulting from new technologies; and
- Identifying, researching, and informing the public about chemical or chronic hazards in consumer products.

The CPSC uses several means to try to prevent injury or harm from consumer products. The overall approach is to: (1) work at the national and international level to help ensure that hazards are appropriately addressed by voluntary standards or mandatory regulations; (2) provide technical information to industry to support voluntary standards development; and (3) allocate inspection, surveillance, and enforcement resources effectively to identify and remove hazardous products from the marketplace.

## PREVENTION

### Prevent Hazardous Products From Reaching Consumers

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1

Improve identification and assessment of hazards to consumers

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2

Lead efforts to improve the safety of consumer products before they reach the marketplace

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3

Increase capability to identify and stop imported hazardous consumer products





*Import surveillance is a major component of the CPSC's prevention and compliance strategies.*

The CPSC participates in the development of new voluntary standards, creates mandatory regulations, and educates manufacturers on safety requirements. The CPSC works with standards development organizations to create and strengthen voluntary standards for consumer products, which involves building consensus among relevant stakeholders. The CPSC develops new mandatory regulations when necessary and consistent with statutory authority, in response to identified product hazards. The agency also educates manufacturers on safety requirements and collaborates with foreign regulatory counterparts to help build safety into consumer products.

Another major component of the CPSC's prevention approach is identification and interception of hazardous consumer products through import surveillance and inspection programs. The agency conducts establishment inspections of manufacturers, importers, and retailers; monitors Internet and resale markets; responds to industry-generated reports about potentially unsafe products; and tests products for compliance with specific standards and mandatory regulations.



*CPSC port investigators are co-located with U.S. Customs and Border Protection at U.S. ports of entry to identify and interdict violative or potentially hazardous products from entering the United States.*

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1

### Improve identification and assessment of hazards to consumers

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2.1

Percentage of consumer product-related incident reports warranting follow-up actions, such as In-Depth Investigations and enforcement actions

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.1

Increase agency capacity to analyze hazard data

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.2

Improve quality and specificity of hazard information

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.3

Improve agency capacity to identify and assess chronic hazards

Achieving the CPSC's mission of preventing hazardous products from reaching consumers depends on assessing data to identify hazards and developing potential mitigation strategies. Determining when a consumer product is hazardous to consumers depends on a critical analysis of data at a sufficient level of detail to characterize the risk and the severity of the injury associated with the hazard. An enormous quantity of hazard-related data from multiple sources must be processed and analyzed systematically to identify quickly patterns and trends. The CPSC needs to increase agency capacity to analyze hazard data, including chronic hazard data. The CPSC also needs to identify and use additional data sources, and improve the quality and

specificity of hazard data. Improving the quality and specificity of hazard data, and improving the agency's capacity to analyze the data, will result in an increase in the number and percentage of consumer product-related incident reports that are more likely to require agency action. Agency follow-up actions may include conducting a detailed investigation of a reported incident, gathering additional product-related information from the manufacturer and/or importer, and, as appropriate, requiring a recall of the product. By improving the agency's ability to screen out hazard data associated with incidents and products that present little-to-no risk to consumers, CPSC staff is able to focus its limited resources directly on the products that present the greatest risk to consumers.

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.1

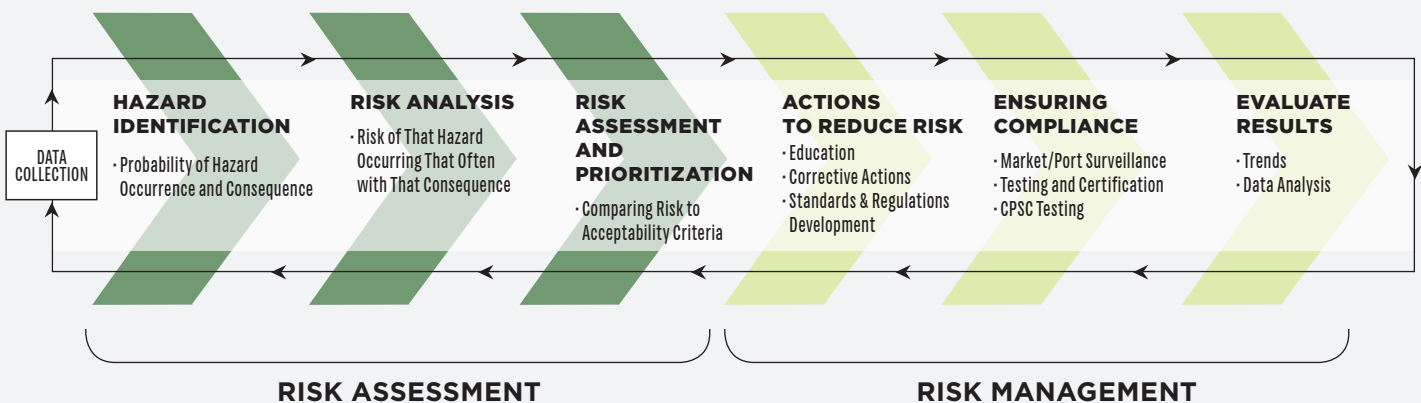
##### Increase agency capacity to analyze hazard data:

The CPSC will increase the agency's capacity to analyze consumer product hazard data by improving access to timely data from additional relevant sources. The CPSC will also broaden analysis to include products with similar identified hazards, and use specific information technology tools and "data-mining" approaches. Increased agency capability for analysis of hazard data will be accomplished through the following initiatives:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- Enhance IT solutions and data-mining techniques to improve data collection and analysis; and
- Identify alternative sources of data that will assist in hazard analysis and monitoring.

### CPSC RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS



**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.2****Improve quality and specificity of hazard**

**information:** The CPSC will work to improve the quality and specificity of hazard information as part of the strategy for enhancing identification and assessment of hazards to consumers. This goal will involve identifying and adopting methods for improving the completeness of data submitted to the CPSC. Samples of actual consumer products that have been identified in reports of harm or potential harm are an important source of hazard data. Having access to these consumer product incident samples is an important part of the hazard assessment process. In some cases, the actual consumer product incident sample is in the custody of a state or local authority as part of its case evidence file. The CPSC will improve the quality and specificity of hazard information through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Research and implement methods for improving completeness of data submitted to the CPSC;*
- *Research and implement methods to increase the number of incident samples available for analysis; and*
- *Promote a universal product identifier<sup>5</sup> to improve product traceability.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.3****Improve agency capacity to identify and assess**

**chronic hazards:** Chronic hazards are those for which injury or death, either from a long- or short-term exposure, results after a long period of time. This contrasts to the more immediate health effects observed for acute hazards. Chronic hazards are often associated with chemicals. Chemical use is extensive (in terms of the number of chemicals, exposure, and duration of exposure), dynamic, and growing. There are millions of consumer products in consumers' homes made from any of the 80,000 chemicals in commerce in the United States. Three thousand of these chemicals are defined as "high production volume chemicals," meaning that more

than 1 million tons are used per year. Manufacturers are generally not required by federal law to disclose which naturally occurring or intentionally added chemicals are in their consumer products.

Attributing the contribution of chronic hazards to consumer product-related injuries and deaths poses unique challenges, in comparison to analyzing acute hazards. It often is difficult to link injuries and illnesses to exposure to specific chronic hazards. Identifying potential chronic hazards related to the use of emerging technologies used to manufacture consumer goods, such as nanotechnology and additive manufacturing, also presents challenges for the agency's surveillance systems and processes. Further development of working relationships with other federal agencies that also have responsibilities for chronic hazards will improve the CPSC's capacity to identify and assess chronic hazards.

The CPSC will undertake the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Develop a plan to enhance chronic hazard assessments; and*
- *Enhance coordination with relevant federal agencies working on chronic hazards.*

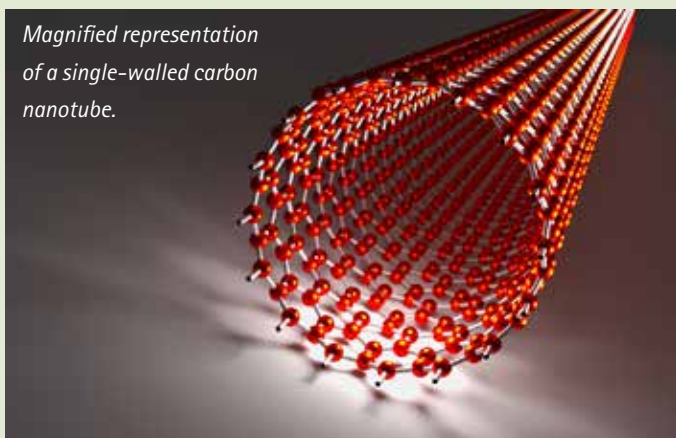


*A CPSC chemist tests consumer product samples.*

<sup>5</sup> Universal product identifiers for consumer products would provide a standardized way of referencing unique products, based upon a set of differentiating attributes understood by both industry and global regulators. Adoption of universal product identifiers would enable CPSC staff and consumers to identify accurately the manufacturer, importer, and product model for each consumer product.



*Magnified representation  
of a single-walled carbon  
nanotube.*



## Nanotechnology

After more than a decade of sustained international investment of many billions of dollars, nanotechnology research and development is rapidly being commercialized into consumer products, including products for children. Furthermore, global trading partners are investing in the manufacturing infrastructure to produce and export to the United States new consumer products containing nanomaterials. Nanotechnology enables scientists to produce a wide array of materials in the size range of approximately 1–100 nanometers (nm). Nanomaterials have unique physical and chemical properties and can be incorporated to improve product performance in areas such as greater strength, flexibility, stain resistance, or cleaning ability. There is a critical need for focused research on consumer product applications of nanomaterials and their potential risks to consumers.

The CPSC is involved in a number of specific collaborative activities with the U.S. federal government's National Nanotechnology Initiative (see [www.Nano.gov](http://www.Nano.gov)). The CPSC is the only agency with mission responsibility for addressing unreasonable risks associated with human exposure to nanotechnology in consumer products. Since 2011, the CPSC has been researching the implications of nanomaterial use in consumer products and has produced more than 40 reports and publications outlining potential testing approaches for these nanomaterials.

Future work will focus on developing robust test methods to determine and characterize human exposure to nanomaterials from consumer products; characterizing and understanding consumer use of products containing nanomaterials; and providing support to manufacturers, especially small businesses, by developing approaches to testing products to determine release of, and potential for exposure to, nanomaterials.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2

**Lead efforts to improve the safety of consumer products before they reach the marketplace**

### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2.2

Violation rate of targeted repeat offenders and first-time importers

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.1

Increase manufacturers', importers', and retailers' use of consumer product safety best practices

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.2

Participate actively in the development of consumer product voluntary standards and develop mandatory regulations for products that pose an unreasonable risk of injury

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.3

Engage federal, state and foreign governments on product safety

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.4

Increase efforts to drive the discovery and innovation of safety solutions

The CPSC works to prevent consumer product-related hazards from entering the marketplace. One approach involves promoting product safety best practices with manufacturers, importers, and retailers to address consumer product hazards before products enter the stream of commerce. When there is evidence that consumer products pose an unreasonable risk of harm and existing voluntary standards or mandatory regulations are insufficient to resolve the issue, the CPSC participates in developing new voluntary standards and adopts mandatory regulations, as applicable, to mitigate the risk and help reduce future harm.

Another CPSC approach involves working, within the limits of its authority, to prevent consumer product hazards from entering markets by sharing information on consumer product safety and conducting targeted outreach with governments at multiple levels, including U.S. federal agencies, state governments, and foreign governments. The CPSC



also seeks to encourage discovery and innovation of safety solutions for acute and chronic hazards, emerging technologies, and product trends with the potential to affect consumer product safety.

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.1

#### **Increase manufacturers', importers', and retailers' use of consumer product safety best practices:**

Effective implementation of process-focused quality management systems by those involved in the manufacture, importation, and sale of consumer products can prevent, reduce, or eliminate hazards in consumer products. To produce consumer products that do not pose an unreasonable risk of injury or death, product design, material selection, and manufacturing practices should follow available voluntary standards and existing mandatory regulations. Programs like the CPSC's Trusted Trader Program strive to increase consumer product industry use of safety-related best practices. The CPSC provides guidance and educational materials and collaborates with foreign and domestic industry to conduct outreach and training on federal safety regulations, to help understand the product design and supply chain process.

### Trusted Trader Program

The Trusted Trader Program is designed for importers who commit to maintaining a high level of product safety compliance and strive to prevent importation of unsafe consumer products. Participation in this sophisticated, collaborative program facilitates legitimate trade. Importers who voluntarily submit their compliance processes to strict CPSC scrutiny can enjoy significant benefits, specifically achieving faster time-to-market. It is envisioned that the Trusted Trader Program will advance the CPSC's efforts to establish a modernized import surveillance program in which harmful and noncompliant consumer goods are intercepted and deterred, while legitimate cargo is identified and admitted rapidly and without disruption.

The CPSC will pursue increased adoption of consumer product safety best practices by manufacturers and importers through the following initiatives:

#### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Finalize Trusted Trader Program; and*
- *Deliver training events and collaborate on consumer product safety best practices with foreign manufacturers and domestic manufacturers, importers, and retailers.*

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.2

#### **Participate actively in the development of consumer product voluntary standards and develop mandatory regulations for products that pose an unreasonable risk of injury:**

Safety standards and mandatory regulations for consumer products play a vital role in protecting the public from hazardous products. The CPSC will continue to participate in the development of voluntary standards and mandatory regulations to reduce injury and death from hazards associated with consumer products. The CPSC will conduct risk assessments to inform priority-setting decisions, using available data on acute and chronic hazards, with an emphasis on risks that are addressable. The agency will also work on developing a systematic way to evaluate the effectiveness of existing voluntary standards and mandatory regulations, and will conduct research, as needed, to help develop and improve voluntary standards and mandatory regulations. The CPSC will work to make consumer products safer by implementing the initiatives below:

#### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Identify and target top consumer product hazards, based on risk and addressability;*
- *Develop a process to facilitate the frequent monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of standards and mandatory regulations;*
- *Conduct research, as appropriate, to enable development and improvement of consumer product voluntary standards and mandatory regulations; and*
- *Enhance staff training and internal operations to improve the voluntary consensus standards development process.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.3****Engage federal, state and foreign governments on product safety:**

The CPSC will work to prevent consumer product hazards from entering markets by sharing information on consumer product safety and conducting targeted outreach with governments at multiple levels, including U.S. federal agencies, state governments, and foreign governments. As appropriate, the CPSC will provide relevant guidance and educational materials, conduct training, and exchange information.

Globalization and technological advances have expanded the range of products in the market, increasing the risks and opportunities associated with these advancements, and making the challenge of overseeing and regulating the thousands of product types under the agency's jurisdiction all the more complex. As part of a strategy for addressing the growing complexity and risk associated with additional global sources of production, the CPSC works to reduce the number of recalls through outreach and education for foreign manufacturers and regulators. The CPSC also seeks ways to address hazardous products by encouraging closer cooperation among product safety and customs authorities of the United States and other countries. International programs include education for industry and coordinating and sharing best practices with fellow regulators to help ensure that manufactured products meet U.S. safety requirements. Compliant products reduce the need for remedial action or recalls later, benefiting both the U.S. consumer and the manufacturer. Engaging different levels of government on consumer product safety issues will be accomplished through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Deliver targeted federal, state, and foreign government outreach, (e.g., summits, trainings, staff exchanges, and best practice exchanges); and*
- *Improve international information-sharing capability.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.4****Increase efforts to drive the discovery and innovation of safety solutions:**

Given the nature of the consumer marketplace, and the myriad ways that consumer products are used, the CPSC cannot rely only on standards development and government monitoring to ensure consumer safety. Nor should the CPSC attempt to develop safety solutions by itself. Instead, the CPSC will seek to motivate and engage a wide range of public and private sector entities to identify, develop, and implement innovative safety solutions for existing and emerging acute and chronic hazards. To do so, the CPSC will provide characterizations of challenges (e.g., hazards for which traditional risk management measures are not anticipated to be effective) and work with various stakeholders and potential solutions providers to develop, implement, and evaluate needed nontraditional solutions. Solutions may involve technology, procedures, information and education, and other mechanisms.

The CPSC will shape the agency's response to challenges posed by acute and chronic hazards associated with consumer products, as well as emerging technologies and other trends with the potential to affect consumer product safety, by implementing the following initiative:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:**

- *Develop initiatives to drive the discovery and innovation of safety solutions for acute and chronic hazards, emerging technologies, and product trends with potential to affect consumer product safety.*

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3

### Increase capability to identify and stop imported hazardous consumer products

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2.3A

Percentage of consumer product import entries that are risk-scored by the CPSC

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2.3B

Percentage of consumer product imports, identified as high-risk, examined at import

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.1

Fully implement the CPSC's risk assessment methodology

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.2

Decrease time required to process imported products subject to inspection

In FY 2015, approximately \$754 billion in products under the CPSC's jurisdiction were imported into the United States. The CPSC's Import Surveillance program successfully interdicts many noncompliant consumer products at the ports. In 2015, the CPSC stopped nearly 7.5 million violative or potentially hazardous consumer product units at ports and prevented them from entering U.S. markets. Each noncompliant consumer product that is stopped at a port is kept from entering the domestic U.S. consumer marketplace. Congress is aware of the consumer product import problem and has mandated that the CPSC address it. The CPSIA, Section 222, requires the CPSC to create a Risk Assessment Methodology ("RAM") to identify products imported into the United States that are most likely to violate consumer product voluntary standards and mandatory regulations. However, the CPSC does not have a sufficient number of consumer product inspectors to cover the 327 U.S. ports of entry and review all consumer product

imports. Nor does the CPSC have the necessary information technology resources to identify systematically noncompliant products before they leave U.S. ports for store shelves and ultimately consumers' homes. Given the volume of consumer products that are imported and the likelihood of imported products being noncompliant, the CPSC must increase its capability to identify and address noncompliant products at importation. To do this, the ongoing effort to modernize the CPSC's pilot RAM computer surveillance system to target higher risk import shipments must be accelerated. Another critical performance goal is to improve the timeliness with which imported consumer product hazards are addressed. To monitor effectively an average of more than \$2 billion per day in consumer product imports, the CPSC needs the right people, processes, and technology.

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.1

##### Fully implement the CPSC's risk assessment methodology:

The CPSC uses an analytical, data-driven approach to identify shipments that have an increased risk probability of noncompliance or defect. The CPSC's pilot RAM surveillance computer system was developed in 2011 to analyze a limited subset of products imported into the United States that are most likely to violate consumer product voluntary standards or mandatory regulations. Certain high-risk imports are identified based on a predetermined rule set and stopped at the port for inspection. If a violation is found, the shipment is denied entry into the United States, preventing a public safety concern before the product enters the marketplace. The CPSC will intensify efforts to fully modernize RAM and import surveillance activities, which will be accomplished through the following initiative:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

- Implement full-production RAM compliant with the U.S. government's "Single Window" initiative.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The "Single Window" system, also known as the Automated Commercial Environment, is a CBP system designed to facilitate legitimate trade, while enhancing border security. By the end of 2016, it will become the primary system through which the international trade community will submit import/export data and the government will determine admissibility.

## Risk Assessment Methodology Pilot System

The CPSC is currently upgrading the critical Risk Assessment Methodology ("RAM") system, an important IT system that contributes to achievement of the CPSC's Prevention, Response, and Communication strategic goals. The RAM system was developed in response to a requirement of Section 222 of the CPSIA to develop a risk assessment methodology to identify products imported into the United States that are most likely to violate consumer product safety statutes and regulations enforced by the Commission. The RAM uses a risk-scoring algorithm to analyze U.S. Customs and Border Protection ("CBP") entry data to identify consumer product imports with a high risk of a violation or defect. Consumer product imports identified as "high risk" are physically evaluated for compliance. The RAM system, which currently operates as a limited-functionality, pilot-scale version, has improved the information flow from CBP to the CPSC and allows the CPSC to target more efficiently imported consumer products that are potentially hazardous to the public. The CPSC proposes to transition the RAM to a full-production system, which will be integrated with the U.S. government "single window" initiative being implemented as part of the Safe Port Act of 2006. (The electronic "Single Window" system, also known as the Automated Commercial Environment ["ACE"], is a CBP system designed to facilitate legitimate trade, while enhancing border security. By the end of 2016, ACE will become the primary system through which the international trade community will submit import/export data and the government will determine admissibility. The single window initiative will streamline and automate manual processes and eliminate paper; and the international trade community will be able to comply more efficiently and easily with U.S. laws and regulations.) The intent is for firms to have a single U.S. government interface at import and export, rather than have to work individually with each of the 47 U.S. government agencies with customs-related responsibilities. The cost-saving benefits to industry and the U.S. government are expected to be sizeable.

## PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.2

### **Decrease time required to process imported products subject to inspection:**

The CPSC needs to make timely determinations about whether imported products pose an unreasonable risk of injury or death before they are admitted into the United States. The CPSC also will use a multi-faceted approach to improve the timeliness of the resolution of consumer product hazards, once they are identified. When a consumer product is identified at the ports as violating a consumer product safety rule, or either has a defect that constitutes a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of injury, the CPSC and CBP will cooperate in seizing products and taking appropriate action. The following initiatives will contribute to improving the timeliness of hazard resolution and addressing corrective actions for imports:

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Develop and uniformly implement enforcement guidelines for admissibility determinations for imported products;*
- *Increase the number of products covered under section 15(j)<sup>7</sup> and develop methods to facilitate the identification of defective products at ports of entry; and*
- *Streamline compliance notification to importers of noncompliant products electronically through the CPSC's RAM system, which will be integrated into the U.S. government's "Single Window" initiative.*

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<sup>7</sup> A section 15(j) rule is a Commission determination of a substantial product hazard based upon specific "readily observable" product characteristics that are addressed in an effective voluntary standard. Products as to which the Commission had made a 15(j) determination can be screened more efficiently.





*A CPSC investigator inspects a product at a U.S. port for compliance with a section 15(j) rule.*

# STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

## Strategic Goal Overview

The CPSC learns about potential consumer product hazards from many sources, including incident reports, consumer complaints, the agency's Hotline (800-638-2772), [www.SaferProducts.gov](http://www.SaferProducts.gov), Internet reports, and company reports. Additionally, field staff investigates reports of incidents and injuries; conducts inspections of manufacturers, importers, and retailers; and identifies potential regulatory violations and product hazards. When potential product defects are identified, the CPSC must act quickly to address the most hazardous consumer products that have made their way into the marketplace or into the hands of consumers. The longer a hazardous consumer product remains on store shelves or in homes, the longer the risk of exposure to the hazard remains. Moreover, response and enforcement efforts should be predictable and carried out in a consistent manner.

This strategic goal focuses on key response challenges, including:

- Addressing trends in retailing and eCommerce, such as the prevalence of online sellers or other direct manufacturer-to-consumer marketing, as well as sales through third party platform providers;
- Working within a global supply chain, which creates complex monitoring challenges;
- Collecting, integrating, and analyzing data to identify high-risk hazards for appropriate action; and
- Improving the monitoring and effectiveness of consumer product recalls.

## RESPONSE

### Respond Quickly to Address Hazardous Consumer Products Both in the Marketplace and with Consumers

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1

Rapidly identify hazardous consumer products for enforcement action

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2

Minimize further exposure to hazardous consumer products

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3

Improve consumer response to consumer product recalls

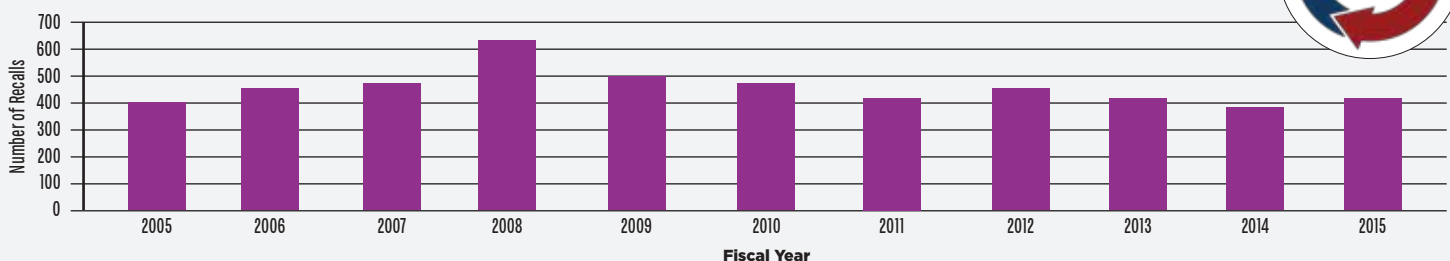


A CPSC chemist records laboratory results of consumer product testing.

To continue to decrease the time required to identify and remove potentially hazardous products from the marketplace, the CPSC will redesign the procedures used to process and analyze incoming product hazard-related data. The CPSC will realign resources to improve the agency's ability to act upon the information and quickly remove potentially hazardous products from the marketplace. The CPSC will improve its recall monitoring process and work with industry to increase consumer awareness of product recalls as they occur. Improving the consumer response to consumer product recalls

is critical to success in achieving this strategic goal. The CPSC will work with consumers and other interested parties to increase the number of consumers receiving recall notices directly from the CPSC and recalling firms and retailers. Ways in which the agency will seek to improve the effectiveness of product recalls include, but are not limited to, expanding the CPSC's use of social media, urging recalling firms to use social media to broaden the notice of recalls, and conducting consumer focus group research on why and when consumers respond to recalls.

## Consumer Product Recalls



Recalls involve remedial actions by firms to address hazards in identified noncompliant or defective consumer products. The goal is to retrieve as many hazardous products from the distribution chain and from consumers in the most efficient, cost-effective manner possible. The annual number of consumer product recalls has been approximately 400 for several years.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1

### Rapidly identify hazardous consumer products for enforcement action

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3.1A

Average number of days to identify a hazardous consumer product that contains a defect which could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death to the public<sup>8</sup>

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3.1B

Average number of days to identify a consumer product that fails to comply with a CPSC regulation<sup>9</sup>

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.1

Improve collection, prioritization, and assessment of data on potential consumer product hazards

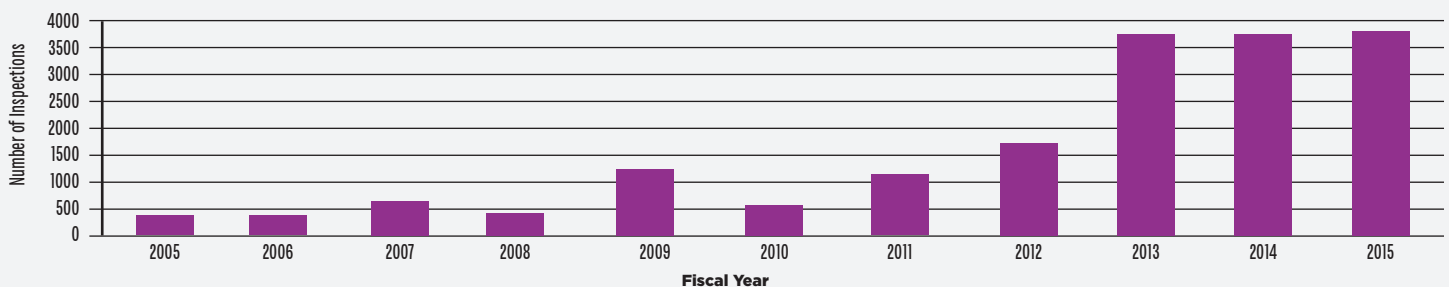
Reducing the possibility that a consumer will be injured by a hazardous product requires the CPSC to identify quickly the causes of potentially hazardous consumer products. To achieve the strategic goal of quickly addressing hazardous products in the marketplace and in the possession of consumers, the CPSC will increase the speed with which the agency identifies these products by improving the data collection, internal sampling analysis, and testing process to identify quickly the patterns and trends that reflect emerging hazards. The CPSC will accomplish this through improved IT, coordinated efforts with other CPSC functional areas, and operational efficiencies.

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.1

##### Improve collection, prioritization, and assessment of data on potential consumer product hazards:

Improving how the CPSC collects, prioritizes, and assesses data is the first step in reducing the time required to identify hazardous consumer products for enforcement action. The CPSC will identify hazardous products more rapidly by improving agency systems for prioritizing and assessing hazard data collected from product incident reports and product samples. Prioritization and assessment of data will be improved through the following initiatives:

## Inspections



The CPSC field staff conducts inspections of manufacturers, importers, and retailers and identifies potential regulatory violations and product defects that could harm the public. Beginning in FY 2010, in a concentrated effort to improve marketplace surveillance, the CPSC initiated programs and shifted resources to increase the number of inspections.

<sup>8</sup> Under Section 15(b)(3) and (4) of the CPSA, manufacturers (including importers), distributors, and retailers have a duty to report to the CPSC a product that contains a defect that could create a substantial product hazard or a product that creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death, absent actual knowledge that the CPSC has been "adequately informed" of the defect or risk.

<sup>9</sup> Under Section 15(b)(1) and (2) of the CPSA, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers have a duty to report a product that fails to comply with any rule, regulation, standard, or ban under any Act enforced by the CPSC, absent actual knowledge that the CPSC has been "adequately informed" of the noncompliance.



**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Use multidisciplinary teams to address high-priority cases quickly;*
- *Review current processes and identify opportunities to establish sample analysis priorities and reduce processing time; and*
- *Determine the feasibility of implementing an e-filing process for manufacturers, importers, retailers, distributors, and third party platform providers to submit incident data and/or Section 15(b) reports.*

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2

### Minimize further exposure to hazardous consumer products

**KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3.2**

Average time to obtain corrective actions for hazardous consumer products

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.1**

Increase speed of corrective actions

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.2**

Improve effectiveness of corrective actions

**CPSC Fast-Track Product Recall Program**

Businesses have an opportunity to participate in a streamlined recall process through the Fast-Track Product Recall Program, which helps consumers by removing potentially dangerous products from the marketplace more quickly, and saves time and resources for both companies and the CPSC. To take advantage of the Fast-Track Program, an eligible firm must commit to implementing a consumer-level voluntary recall within 20 business days of submitting an initial report to the CPSC, and must immediately stop sale and distribution of the product. A firm benefits from the recall by consumers' reduced exposure to potential incidents and injuries from potentially harmful products, which may reduce the likelihood of potential product liability claims or other lawsuits.

Reducing exposure to a hazardous consumer product reduces the likelihood that a consumer will sustain a product-related injury. As soon as a hazardous consumer product has been identified, the CPSC takes action to protect consumers, remove the product from the marketplace, and hold violators accountable. The more quickly and effectively the agency can conduct an investigation and negotiate a corrective action, including a voluntary recall, the greater the likelihood that consumers' exposure to a known hazard will be reduced.



CPSC mechanical engineers perform product safety testing on a baby walker.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.1**

**Increase speed of corrective actions:** Typically, the CPSC obtains a corrective action plan (“CAP”)<sup>10</sup> from the firm recalling a product, before issuing a recall notice to the public. Decreasing the amount of time required to obtain and implement an effective CAP will reduce consumers’ exposure to a hazardous product. More timely corrective actions will be achieved through the following initiative:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:**

- *Explore the feasibility of an expedited approach to CAPs for lower-level consumer product hazards.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.2**

**Improve effectiveness of corrective actions:**

Although decreasing the amount of time required to obtain and implement a CAP is important, ensuring that a corrective action is effective in mitigating the risks associated with a recalled product is equally important. Working with individual recalling companies to ensure progress reports are accurate and timely, improving the technology to ease the regulatory burden on recalling companies for the submission of progress reports, and identifying priority recalls for enhanced monitoring by CPSC staff are important activities for addressing effectiveness of corrective actions. Improved effectiveness will be achieved through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Implement electronic submission of progress reports from recalling firms;*
- *Review the CPSC corrective action monitoring process to address priority recalls and achieve operational efficiencies; and*
- *To the limits of the CPSC’s authorities, inform foreign product safety regulators about interventions undertaken in the United States and encourage them to take appropriate steps.*

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3**  
**Improve consumer response to consumer product recalls**

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3.3 Consumer correction rate (percentage of products corrected by consumers)		
PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.1 Increase consumer motivation	PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.2 Improve direct contact with consumers	PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.3 Improve understanding of consumer response

Once a consumer product hazard has been identified, the CPSC works with the recalling firm to notify consumers and provides information on specific remedies that consumers may pursue. Notification may take many forms, such as press releases, website postings, social media posts, emails, telephone calls, letters, posters, or advertisements. A notification explains the reason for the recall and provides consumers with information on how to obtain a repair, replacement, or refund.

Agency data on the number of products involved in consumers’ pursuit of the prescribed remedy suggest that there is much room for improvement in the consumer response to safety notifications. Improved consumer responses are essential to reducing exposure to hazardous products. As the CPSC learns more about improving consumers’ responses to recalls and how best to measure recall effectiveness, the agency will consider other evaluation tools and metrics to address this strategic objective and key performance measure.

<sup>10</sup> If a firm discovers it has manufactured, distributed, or retailed a potentially hazardous product, the CPSC may require the firm to develop and implement a CAP. A CAP generally includes any type of remedial action taken by a firm, such as providing for the return of a product to the manufacturer or retailer for a cash refund or a replacement product, for the repair of a product, and/or for public notice of the hazard.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.1**

**Increase consumer motivation:** Increasing consumer motivation to take advantage of the remedy offered by the recalling firm improves consumer response, reducing the risk of further exposure to the known product hazard. Firms could offer incentives to try to increase consumer motivation to respond to a recall. Recall notices could be enhanced through use of social media platforms, online consumer product registrations, and apps that push notifications, text messages, and alerts to consumers' mobile devices. The CPSC will accomplish this goal through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Request firms to use incentives, enhanced notices, and an effectiveness evaluation as part of a CAP; and*
- *Conduct additional recall effectiveness checks throughout a recall to determine if a corrective action is effective.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.2**

**Improve direct contact with consumers:** To maximize the number of consumers who are aware of a product recall and remedy, as well as motivate consumers to take advantage of the prescribed remedy, the CPSC will implement measures designed to improve direct contacts with consumers. The CPSC will accomplish this goal through the following initiatives.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Increase the number of consumers signed up for recall updates via email; and*
- *Explore technological solutions that inform consumers about recalled durable infant and toddler products.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.3****Improve understanding of consumer response:**

Although providing safety information is an important tool in an overall strategy for managing the risk of injury and death related to the use of consumer products, simply making information available to consumers does not always yield the desired results. Not only do consumers need to be aware of information regarding safety and the risks associated with the use of any given product, they also need to pay attention to the information and adjust their actions accordingly. Closing the gap between information availability and behavioral change is a key to improving the effectiveness of recalls. One way to address this gap will involve the CPSC collaborating with industry, consumer groups, and federal and foreign regulatory agencies to consider novel actions that motivate consumers to pay closer attention to safety information and change behavior to account better for actual risks. The CPSC will implement the following initiatives to improve the agency's understanding of what affects consumer response, so that steps can be taken to increase future response rates.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Meet with industry, consumer groups, and other government agency stakeholders to discuss how to increase response rates;*
- *Enhance interagency collaboration (domestic and foreign) on best practices to increase consumer response; and*
- *Identify and test strategies to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives to change consumer behavior.*

# STRATEGIC GOAL 4:

## Strategic Goal Overview

Consumers, safety advocates, industry, and government regulators need high-quality information about consumer product safety. Consumers need safety information to make more informed decisions for themselves and their families. Safety advocates rely on accurate data to shape their policy recommendations. Industry needs information to stay in compliance with safety requirements. Foreign regulators and state and local government agencies also need high-quality information to establish new safety requirements that advance consumer safety. These diverse audiences have different information needs and respond to different methods of communication.

Within the CPSC, technical staff, management, and Commissioners need high-quality information to make better decisions more quickly to help the agency maintain its standing as a leader in consumer product safety in an ever-expanding global marketplace.

For this strategic goal, the CPSC will focus on the following key challenges to the agency's communication strategy:

- Updating knowledge management strategies and adopting advanced communication tools and channels to improve consistency, reliability, accessibility, and timeliness of information provided to stakeholders and internally among the CPSC staff;
- Improving CPSC messaging and outreach to affected populations, including underserved, low-income, and minority communities and families; and
- Strengthening the CPSC's collaboration with all stakeholders to improve communication.



*"Pool Safely" is the CPSC's national public education campaign to reduce child drowning and entrapments.*

## COMMUNICATION

### Communicate Useful Information Quickly and Effectively to Better Inform Decisions

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1

Improve usefulness and availability of consumer product safety information

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2

Increase dissemination of useful consumer product safety information

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.3

Increase and enhance collaboration with stakeholders





Chairman Elliot F. Kaye speaks about first simultaneous trilateral recall in North America.

The CPSC uses a wide array of communication channels and strategies to provide timely, targeted information about consumer product safety to the public, industry, and other stakeholders. The agency disseminates safety messages through workshops and training sessions; listserv messages; press releases; public service announcements and video news releases; newspaper, radio, and TV interviews; and increasingly, social media, including blogs and Twitter. The CPSC will improve the usefulness and availability of safety messages by collecting and analyzing data and designing and applying new and innovative communication tools. Dissemination of more useful and timely consumer product safety information will result in a stronger agency brand, the ability to communicate in mobile environments, and the ability to explore micro-targeting to reach the most at-risk populations. An additional element of the CPSC's strategy involves strengthening collaborations with stakeholder groups, including other government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

## Regulatory Robot

### About the "Regulatory Robot"

The CPSC designed the "Regulatory Robot" as an innovative, free resource for small businesses that are manufacturing or importing products for children or other consumers. Available online at: <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/business--manufacturing/>, the Regulatory Robot is a tool to help small businesses identify which federal consumer product safety regulations may apply to their products. The Regulatory Robot asks the user a series of simple questions to provide basic guidance on consumer product safety rules needed to move forward with the design and manufacturing process. The CPSC hopes that the Regulatory Robot will assist businesses to manufacture and distribute products that are safe and compliant for American consumers.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1

### Improve usefulness and availability of consumer product safety information

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 4.1

Percentage of positive responses about usefulness of information received from CPSC communication channels

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.1

Implement evaluation tools to measure message usefulness

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.2

Implement enhanced tools to increase availability of safety information

A critical part of the CPSC's communication strategy involves improving the usefulness and availability of safety information. The CPSC is striving to be an even more valuable source of information for consumers, businesses, and fellow regulators. Before a consumer buys a portable gas generator for the first time, for example, the CPSC would like the consumer to turn to the agency for insight on where to safely set up the generator. When a small business needs to determine the steps required to comply with U.S. voluntary standards and mandatory regulations, the CPSC would like the owner to turn to the agency's Small Business Ombudsman<sup>11</sup> for guidance. To achieve this, the CPSC will assess and improve the utility of information disseminated to different audiences and identify new and innovative tools to increase the availability of consumer product safety information.

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.1

##### Implement evaluation tools to measure message usefulness:

The CPSC will collect information on the utility of its safety messages, using selected tools identified through research on best practices from the public and private sectors. Evaluative tools may take the form of a survey of users of [www.CPSC.gov](http://www.CPSC.gov), or feedback from participants of conferences where CPSC officials make presentations. The following initiatives will be implemented:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Identify best practices from federal and private sectors for assessing the utility of safety information; and*
- *Assess the utility of CPSC safety messages using best practices from federal and private sectors.*

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.2

##### Implement enhanced tools to increase availability of safety information:

The CPSC will identify and use new and innovative tools to increase the availability of consumer product safety information. Large segments of the population use smartphones as their sole means of communication and information gathering. From millennials to minorities to busy parents, many consumers prefer to receive news delivered in images, texts, and tweets. During the next 5 years, the CPSC will strive to deliver content in more mobile-compatible formats. This will be accomplished through the following initiatives:

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Improve [www.CPSC.gov](http://www.CPSC.gov) search functions, Frequently Asked Questions on [www.CPSC.gov](http://www.CPSC.gov), and mobile compatibility; and*
- *Design and develop new online communications and printed materials.*

<sup>11</sup> The CPSC's Small Business Ombudsman serves as the CPSC's primary point of contact for small businesses seeking information, guidance, and technical assistance in complying with applicable federal consumer product safety laws.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2

### Increase dissemination of useful consumer product safety information

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 4.2A

Number of impressions of CPSC safety messages

#### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 4.2B

Number of CPSC safety messages adopted, repeated, and/or shared by targeted groups

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.1

Expand and enhance the CPSC “brand”

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.2

Expand communications with targeted audiences

##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.3

Increase use of enhanced communication technology to advance consumer safety

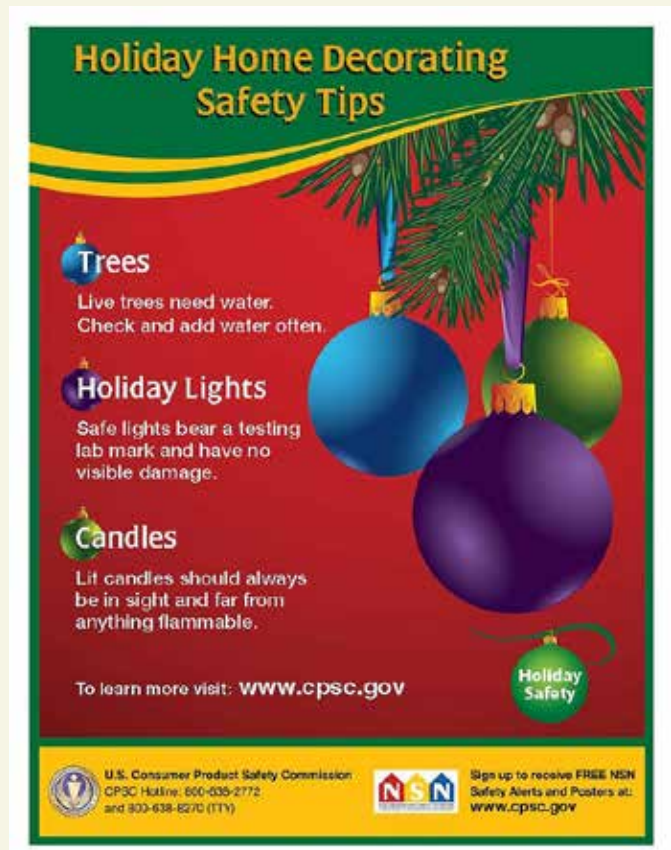
##### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.4

Increase timeliness of CPSC information dissemination

Increasing dissemination of useful consumer product safety information is an essential element of the CPSC’s strategy to quickly and effectively communicate information to inform decisions. The CPSC plans to expand outreach to targeted audiences with tailored messages, use enhanced technologies and social media platforms, and increase the speed of disseminating information on known hazards. The CPSC is seeking to increase the frequency with which targeted audiences share agency safety information, whether by disseminating copies of CPSC publications, sharing social media posts, or participating in the Neighborhood Safety Network.

## Neighborhood Safety Network

The Neighborhood Safety Network (“NSN”) is a CPSC program designed to offer timely consumer product safety information and resources to hard-to-reach communities that may be underserved by traditional media. The NSN program is a free, online service that provides potentially lifesaving information via educational posters and messages that member organizations can disseminate to vulnerable population groups, such as the elderly, low-income families, and some minority groups. Organizations that are members of NSN have access to posters, checklists, and toolkits that can be used to create safety programs tailored to reach specific groups of consumers. NSN members represent a wide variety of organizations with reach into specific communities, including nonprofit organizations, such as the Girl Scouts of the USA, Safe Kids, and the National Urban League, as well as health care and safety organizations, and government organizations ranging from cities and townships, to state legislatures, and the U.S. House of Representatives.



A Neighborhood Safety Network poster



#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.1

**Expand and enhance the CPSC “brand”:** Even though the work of the agency and its staff touches the life of every American nearly every day, the CPSC is not a well-recognized agency. The CPSC “brand” or identity among various stakeholder groups with which the agency works is a potentially valuable asset that could be used to increase the effectiveness of CPSC outreach and information dissemination. The more consumers, members of the media, and opinion leaders who understand what the CPSC does and how the agency serves the public, the greater the potential for increased consumer confidence in the legitimacy of the safety message from the CPSC. The CPSC will collect data on public awareness of the agency, its mandate, and its programs, and implement the following initiatives:

##### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

- *Implement survey to collect data on public awareness of how the CPSC keeps consumers safe; and*
- *Identify and implement specific strategies to enhance the CPSC “brand.”*

#### PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.2

##### **Expand communications with targeted audiences:**

The CPSC implements targeted outreach campaigns for priority hazards and vulnerable communities, including minority and underrepresented population groups, such as children, low-income, and limited English-speaking audiences who might not otherwise receive safety messages or who may be disproportionately affected by particular product-related and hidden hazards. Communication with targeted groups will be expanded by implementing the following initiative:

##### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

- *Explore strategies to communicate and interact directly with the most at-risk communities (micro-targeting strategies).*

*“Anchor It!” is the CPSC’s national public education campaign aimed at preventing furniture and TV tip-overs from killing and seriously injuring children.*





**PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.3****Increase use of enhanced communication**

**technology to advance consumer safety:** The CPSC will increase the use of modern communication technologies and enhanced social media platforms to expand dissemination of consumer product safety information. An example of the type of activity the CPSC could support is a challenge to members of the public to develop new application software for use on mobile devices that would be designed to make it easier for consumers to access CPSC safety information. The CPSC may sponsor “data jams,” bringing together leaders from technology fields, public safety, and government communities in a workshop-style format to leverage publicly available government data sets to attempt to solve consumer product safety challenges. The CPSC also plans to increase the agency’s presence on social media platforms used by hundreds of millions of consumers. These types of activities will increase the CPSC’s ability to disseminate safety information quickly and reach targeted audiences. The agency will undertake the following initiative:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:**

- *Enhance CPSC websites to make them compatible with mobile devices.*

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.4****Increase timeliness of CPSC information**

**dissemination:** The CPSC will work to increase the timeliness of information on consumer product hazards that it disseminates and makes readily available. The American public expects to be provided with information about an emerging or serious hazard quickly and conveniently. The CPSC must continue to improve on how it communicates with consumers in a timely manner. One strategy for accomplishing this involves developing safety messages and materials that can be made readily available on demand. To accomplish this, the agency will implement the following initiative:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:**

- *Develop new and enhanced safety alerts, posters, blogs, and toolkits that can be disseminated quickly to respond to known and emerging consumer product hazards.*

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.3****Increase and enhance collaboration with stakeholders****KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE 4.3**

Number of CPSC collaboration activities initiated with stakeholder groups

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.1**

Increase agency-wide collaboration capacity

A variety of partners and stakeholders collaborate with the CPSC to communicate consumer product safety information. The CPSC works to disseminate safety information in cooperation with industry, state and local government, other federal agencies, foreign regulatory agencies, safety and advocacy organizations, and a variety of other nonprofit organizations. Improving existing stakeholder collaborations and initiating new collaborations with associations, organizations, agencies, and companies is a cross-cutting priority for the agency, essential to achieving all four strategic goals in this Strategic Plan.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.1****Increase agency-wide collaboration capacity:**

To increase collaboration and enhance targeted outreach, the CPSC will establish an agency-wide stakeholder collaboration plan and prioritize the stakeholder groups with which the agency will work. This will include outreach to the stakeholder community and development of criteria for successful collaborations. The CPSC will accomplish this goal through the following initiatives:

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:**

- *Develop annual agency collaboration plan; and*
- *Develop an agency reporting mechanism and system for documenting collaboration activities.*

# Appendix A:

## Research and Evaluation Plans

The CPSC is committed to using evidence to inform management decisions, drive improvements in program delivery and effectiveness, and inform future strategies and program formulation.

The CPSC uses a variety of methods to evaluate its programs. For example, the CPSC's Office of the Inspector General conducts audits, evaluations, reviews, and investigations relating to the agency's programs and operations. The agency's financial statements are audited annually, which encompasses a thorough overview of the agency's financial position and various transactions throughout the fiscal year. The purpose of this audit is to provide objective analyses to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision-making, and contribute to public accountability.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office, an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress, also conducts evaluations and analyses and makes recommendations to help improve the CPSC's practices, policies, and programs to ensure effective and efficient operations within the federal government.

The CPSC, through its Office of Financial Management, Planning and Evaluation, conducts a semi-annual Strategic Data Review with senior leadership to assess the status of program performance measures, processes, improvements, and achievements. This exercise is based on submissions from every program office and engages the CPSC's senior leadership in a comprehensive performance review that informs annual planning and budget formulation, sets performance improvement areas for the year, and identifies potential evaluation topics to improve understanding of the effectiveness of agency activities.

In addition, the CPSC performs targeted reviews of internal controls. The areas targeted for review are determined by several factors, including risk assessment, management input, prior audits and reviews, and the current external (regulatory) environment. Management evaluates the results from the internal controls reviews to determine what processes should be modified to strengthen and improve operations.

The annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey ("FEVS") offers another evaluation tool for leadership, supervisors, and managers to know whether the CPSC is providing an inclusive and satisfying work environment and supports the professional development of its staff.

The CPSC plans to conduct evaluation and research on the effectiveness of specific strategies and programs that support the strategic goals in the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. The CPSC proposes to include the following activities, based on available resources:

### PROPOSED RESEARCH/EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Strategic Goal	Topic/Description	Type of Study	Schedule
1	Perform best practices research on professional development opportunities across federal agencies and private sector organizations	Research	2016-2017
1	Determine impact of employee engagement initiatives in the four identified areas for improvement	Survey	2016-2017
2	Increase agency capacity to analyze hazard data by identifying alternative sources of data	Research	2016-2020
2	Assess targeted federal, state, and foreign government outreach through summits, trainings, and staff and best practice exchanges	Participant Surveys	2017-2019
3	Explore the feasibility of an expedited approach to corrective action plans for lower level consumer product hazards	Research	2016-2018
4	Collect baseline data on public awareness of how CPSC keeps consumers safe	Survey	2016-2018
2, 3, 4	Evaluate the factors that influence the effectiveness of consumer product recalls and conduct research on consumer decision making to motivate consumers to reduce product related risks	Evaluation; Social/Behavioral Science Research	2016-2018

# Appendix B:

## Implementing the Strategic Plan

The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan is central to the CPSC's planning, budgeting, and performance management systems. The Strategic Plan will be fully integrated into the CPSC's annual performance and budget planning and review cycles. It is a critical planning, management, reporting, and communication tool. The Strategic Plan will guide program design, project management, and resource allocation decisions.

The CPSC's budget, annual performance plan, and operating plan documents will serve as the primary implementation tools for the Strategic Plan, and will be aligned with the strategic goals, objectives, performance goals, and strategic initiatives. The budget will outline the necessary resources to implement the strategy and the annual performance plan will define the expected results at those resource levels. The agency operating plan will serve as the tactical implementation plan, delineating work activity, milestones, projects, and associated resources to incrementally advance toward the accomplishment of the strategic goals.

The CPSC's performance monitoring and reporting systems will also align with the Strategic Plan, and future evaluation and research efforts will be designed to assess progress toward the intended results. The plan will serve as the framework for the agency's efforts to collect and analyze data and other evidence, and for agency performance reporting. The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan includes 16 proposed key performance measures to be used to assess progress toward the strategic objectives, meeting a key requirement of OMB Circular A-11 and complying with the GPRAMA. A majority of these performance measures track higher-level outcomes that reflect the effectiveness of programs, rather than simple project outputs. Additional key measures may be developed during the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The agency's quarterly performance reporting and review process will be used to monitor and manage progress toward the stated Strategic Plan results, and to make management course corrections, as warranted. All employee performance plans will be aligned to the Strategic Plan, so that individuals' performance will have a direct, transparent link to the achievement of agency goals.



# Appendix C:

## Performance Measures

The CPSC has identified the following preliminary set of key performance measures to track progress toward the strategic objectives. These key measures, which will be refined in the coming months and may be revised, will be reported in the agency Performance Budget Request, Annual Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report. Most of the key measures track outcomes of programs, such as meaningful changes in conditions. Additional

operational-level performance measures and milestones also will be identified to monitor lower-level outcomes and outputs of agency projects and programs. These measures will be tracked and analyzed internally to monitor progress toward program and performance goals supporting the strategic objectives, and will be reported in the agency's annual Operating Plan.

### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

GOAL/OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
<b>Strategic Goal 1: Workforce</b>	
Strategic Objective 1.1: Enhance effective strategic human capital planning and alignment	Measure: Human capital strategic plan completed and implemented
Strategic Objective 1.2: Foster a culture of continuous development	Measure: Percentage of employees satisfied with opportunities to improve their skills (as reported in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)
Strategic Objective 1.3: Attract and recruit a talented and diverse workforce	Measure: Percentage of hiring managers trained on recruitment
Strategic Objective 1.4: Increase employee engagement	Measure: Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Employee Engagement Index score
<b>Strategic Goal 2: Prevention</b>	
Strategic Objective 2.1: Improve identification and assessment of hazards to consumers	Measure: Percentage of consumer product-related incident reports warranting follow-up actions, such as In-Depth Investigations and enforcement actions
Strategic Objective 2.2: Lead efforts to improve the safety of consumer products before they reach the marketplace	Measure: Violation rate of targeted repeat offenders and first-time importers
Strategic Objective 2.3: Increase capability to identify and stop imported hazardous consumer products	Measure: Percentage of consumer product import entries that are risk-scored by the CPSC
	Measure: Percentage of consumer product imports, identified as high-risk, examined at import

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## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

GOAL/OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
<b>Strategic Goal 3: Response</b>	
Strategic Objective 3.1: Rapidly identify hazardous consumer products for enforcement action	Measure: Average number of days to identify a hazardous consumer product that contains a defect which could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death to the public
	Measure: Average number of days to identify a consumer product that fails to comply with a CPSC regulation
Strategic Objective 3.2: Minimize further exposure to hazardous consumer products	Measure: Average time to obtain corrective actions for hazardous consumer products
Strategic Objective 3.3: Improve consumer response to consumer product recalls	Measure: Consumer correction rate (percentage of products corrected by consumers)
<b>Strategic Goal 4: Communication</b>	
Strategic Objective 4.1: Improve usefulness and availability of consumer product safety information	Measure: Percentage of positive responses about usefulness of information received from CPSC communication channels
Strategic Objective 4.2: Increase dissemination of useful consumer product safety information	Measure: Number of impressions of CPSC safety messages
	Measure: Number of CPSC safety messages adopted, repeated, and/or shared by targeted groups
Strategic Objective 4.3: Increase and enhance collaboration with stakeholders	Measure: Number of CPSC collaboration activities initiated with stakeholder groups

# Appendix D:

## External Stakeholders

The CPSC engages with a wide range of external stakeholders—from industry, trade associations, consumer groups, non-profit entities, and standards development organizations—to the international, congressional, federal, state, and local sectors. To achieve the agency's lifesaving public health and safety mission, it is important for the CPSC to work with colleagues to share information and gain insights and perspectives into the ever-expanding global community.

The CPSC engages with the congressional committees and subcommittees listed below to get input on strategic priorities and goals:

- House Energy and Commerce Committee
- Energy and Commerce Subcommittee—Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade
- House Appropriations Committee
- House Appropriations Subcommittee—Financial Services and General Government
- Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee
- Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Subcommittee—Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security
- Senate Appropriations Committee
- Senate Appropriations Subcommittee—Financial Services and General Government.

A partial list of external agencies and organizations with which the CPSC works to achieve its mission and strategic goals follows:

### Strategic Goal 1: Workforce

- Office of Management and Budget
- U.S. Office of Personnel Management
- Small Agency Council<sup>12</sup>
- U.S. Department of the Interior—Interior Business Center<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The Small Agency Council is a voluntary management association of sub-Cabinet, independent federal agencies. The council, which was created in 1986, represents approximately 80 small agencies.

<sup>13</sup> The Interior Business Center is a federal government shared service center used by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the agency's personnel and payroll applicant intake, talent management, and entrance on duty systems.

## Strategic Goal 2: Prevention

- Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations to U.S. Customs and Border Protection<sup>14</sup>
- American Association of Exporters and Importers
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American National Standards Institute
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion
  - National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
  - National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
  - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- ASTM International
- Consumers
- Express Carriers of America
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- Foreign governments
- Industry (manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers of consumer products)
- Industry associations
- International Organization for Standardization
- National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- National Institutes of Health
  - National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
  - National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- National Institute of Standards and Technology
- National Science Foundation
- Occupational Health and Safety Administration
- Office of the United States Trade Representative
- UL<sup>15</sup>
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## Strategic Goal 3: Response

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
- Consumers
- Foreign governments
- Foreign manufacturers
- Industry (manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Federal Trade Commission
- U.S. Department of Transportation

<sup>14</sup> The Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations to CBP advises the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Department of Homeland Security on the commercial operations of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and related DHS and Treasury functions.

<sup>15</sup> A global independent safety science company.



**Strategic Goal 4: Communication**

- Abbey's Hope Charitable Foundation
- American Home Furnishings Alliance
- Association of Pool and Spa Professionals
- American Red Cross
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Consumer Federation of America
- Consumers Union
- Families United to Prevent Drowning
- Federal Trade Commission
- Joshua Collingsworth Memorial Foundation
- Kids in Danger
- Major League Baseball
- National Drowning Prevention Alliance
- National Electrical Manufacturers Association
- National Fire Protection Association
- National Football League
- Public Citizen
- Safe Kids Worldwide
- Safe States Alliance
- Shane's Foundation
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- USA Swimming Foundation
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- U.S. Fire Administration
- U.S. PIRG
- YMCA of the USA

# Appendix E:

## Voluntary Standards and Mandatory Regulations

Consumer product voluntary standards and mandatory regulations play an important role in protecting the public from hazardous products.

### Voluntary Standards

A “voluntary standard” is defined as a consensus product standard and is also called a safety standard. It is a prescribed set of rules, conditions, or requirements concerning definitions of product-related terms; classification of components; specification of materials, performance, or operations; delineation of procedures; or measurement of quantity and quality in describing products, materials, systems, services, or practices relating to the safety of consumer products used in and around the home, outdoors, and in schools. The CPSC’s statutory authority requires the agency to rely on voluntary standards rather than promulgate mandatory regulations, if compliance with a voluntary standard would eliminate or adequately reduce the risk of injury identified, and it is likely that there will be substantial compliance with the voluntary standard. CPSC staff works with organizations that coordinate the development of voluntary standards. Voluntary standards activity is an ongoing process that may involve multiple revisions to a standard within 1 year or over multiple years; and such activity may continue in subsequent years, depending on the activities of the voluntary standards committees and priorities of the Commission. CPSC staff participates actively in voluntary standards activities for identified products. Active participation extends beyond attendance at meetings and may include, among other things, providing injury data and hazard analyses; encouraging development or revision of voluntary standards; identifying specific risks of injury; performing research; developing health science data; performing laboratory technical assistance; and/or taking other actions that the Commission, in a particular situation, determines may be appropriate.

### Mandatory Regulations

Mandatory regulations, also called technical regulations, are federal rules set by statute or regulation that define requirements for consumer products. They typically take the form of performance requirements that consumer products must meet or warnings they must display to be imported, distributed, or sold in the United States. The CPSC may set a mandatory regulation when it determines that compliance with a voluntary standard would not eliminate or adequately reduce a risk of injury or finds that it is unlikely that there will be substantial compliance with a voluntary standard.<sup>16</sup> The Commission may also promulgate a mandatory ban of a hazardous product when it determines that no feasible voluntary standard or mandatory regulation would adequately protect the public from an unreasonable risk of injury.

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<sup>16</sup> The CPSIA requires the Commission to promulgate mandatory regulations by adopting existing voluntary standards (in whole or in part) for some products, such as durable infant or toddler products, children’s toys, and all-terrain vehicles. For additional information, please refer to the CPSIA at: [www.CPSC.gov/CPSIA.pdf](http://www.CPSC.gov/CPSIA.pdf).

# Appendix F:

## Acronyms

ACE	Automated Commercial Environment
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CPSA	Consumer Product Safety Act
CPSC	U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
CPSIA	Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act
FEVS	Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
GPRAMA	GPRA Modernization Act of 2010
NEISS	National Electronic Injury Surveillance System
NSN	Neighborhood Safety Network
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
RAM	Risk Assessment Methodology
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats



[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

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