U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Log of Meeting

SUBJECT: WCMA Technical Meeting on window covering cords

DATE OF MEETING: October 30, 2007

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Caroleene Paul cp.

DATE OF LOG ENTRY: November 6, 2007

LOCATION: Sheraton Newark Airport Hotel, Newark, NJ

CPSC ATTENDEE(S): Caroleene Paul, ESME

NON-CPSC ATTENDEE(S):

Bruce Baiter	WCMA
Michael Tierney	WCMA
Michael Hollander	Whole Space Industries
Rory McNeil	Techstyles Window Covering
Tom Merker	Springs Window Fashions
John Morris	Springs Window Fashions
Joseph Zakowski	RollEase, Inc.
Patrick Foley	Levolor Kirsch Window Fashions
Krister Hård Af-Segerstad	IKEA NA Services, LLC
Joseph Jankoski	Hunter Douglas Inc
Michael Daniels	Hunter Douglas Inc
Christopher Outlaw	Hunter Douglas Inc
Ren Judkins	Consultant
Tom Marusak	Comfortex Window Fashions
Rich Watkins	Comfortex Window Fashions

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

The last revision of ANSI/WCMA A100.1 was published with the knowledge that certain issues were unresolved. In the interest of getting other issues dealt with first, such as tie down devices on continuous cords, the voluntary standard was approved. The purpose of this meeting was to organize the following issues for the next revision of ANSI/WCMA A100.1.

Wood and Roman Shades

The CPSC staff will provide copies of all in-depth investigation (IDI) reports involving roman shades. A task group will be formed to review IDIs and to provide recommendations to the committee. The task group will consist of C. Paul, T. Marusak, J. Jankowski, P. Foley, and T. Merker as chairman.

This is the first time that the committee is considering products whose main manufacturers are not members of the WCMA. The WCMA can produce a contact list of the main roman shade manufacturers and request that CPSC staff send them a letter informing them of the WCMA's activities and the fact that their product is covered by a voluntary standard.

Simplification of Appendix A

The intricate letter/number outline for Appendix A was probably left over from a larger document. Efforts to simplify the letter/numbering will have to ensure that changes carry through to references to each procedure. P. Foley will provide a better pictorial of the test fixture diagram.

Specification of pull force needed to break off small parts in section 4.2

C. Paul will verify the information provided in 16 CFR 1501 - *Method for Identifying Toys and Other Articles Intended for Use by Children Under 3 Years which Present Choking, Aspiration, or Ingestion Hazards Because of Small Parts* (referenced in ANSI/WCMA A100.1). CSPC staff believes ANSI/WCMA A100.1 was developed to address strangulation hazards from window covering cords; it was not intended to cover choking hazards from window blind components because there was and is no data indicating that choking from small window covering parts is a hazard.

Multiple Operational Cords

A communication from Bureau Veritas, an independent testing agency, indicated that cords in products with multiple operational cords tangle extremely easily, thus creating loops that the manufacturer is obviously trying to avoid. Bureau Veritas recently received products which incorporated 4 or even 5 operational cords and the testers want to know if there is a way to address the cord tangle issue within the context of the current voluntary standard ANSI/WCMA A100.1.

The Engineering & Design Safety Sub-Committee (task group that produced a study of all fatal window covering IDIs between 1996 and 2006) will reconvene and review IDIs relevant to multiple cord tangling. The task group will look for ways to focus direction on this issue and make recommendations to the committee.

Tri-Lingual Hang Tags and Labels

Communications from Health Canada indicate that under the Hazardous Products Acts, all corded window coverings sold or imported in Canada will have to comply with the Canadian National Standard CAN/CSA-Z600 *Safety of Corded Window Covering Products*. The 2006 version of CAN/CSA-Z600 is based on ANSI/WCMA A100.1-2002 *American National Standard for Safety of Corded Window Covering Products*. Health Canada has offered to provide French translations for hang tags and provided direction on CSA dual language requirements.

WCMA does not see a need to add a third language to ANSI/WCMA A100.1. Obviously Health Canada may propose requirements in CAN/CSA-Z600 that are applicable or appropriate for products marketed in Canada.

Test Requirements for Roll-Up Blinds

An inquiry/request from a roll-up blind manufacturer questioned which requirements of the voluntary standard are applicable to a break-away device in the head rail of roll-up blinds.

There are two ways to interpret the looped cord in the subject roll-up blind: 1) as an inner cord that is subject to requirement 6.6 which states that a 10 lbf downward force on the cord will not create a 6" diameter loop, or 2) as an exposed loop with a cord release device that is subject to requirement 6.1 which states that the average release force for 50 samples shall not exceed 3.0 lbf and no single sample shall exceed 5.0 lbf.

CPSC staff initially interpreted the looped cord in a roll-up blind as an exposed loop, but upon further discussion with committee members, it appears that it's more reasonable to define the cord as an inner cord. Because the weight of the rolled up shade keeps the lifting loop cord in tension, it is more similar to a loop with a tension device than a free standing loop. As such, requirement 6.1 is not applicable to a roll-up blind. C. Paul will confer with CPSC staff to verify this interpretation.

CPSC Action Items:

- provide roman shade IDIs to WCMA for distribution to task group
- review 16 CFR 1501 to verify adequate pull forces are referenced for separation of small parts from product
- identify IDIs that involved operation cords that were tangled
- discuss roll-up blinds with CPSC staff