LOG OF MEETING

SUBJECT: Meeting of Working Group on Rangetop Cooking Fires

DATE: March 3, 1999 **PLACE:** Whirlpool Room Air Conditioner Factory
La Vergne, TN

DATE OF LOG ENTRY: March 8, 1999

SOURCE OF LOG ENTRY: Andrew Trotta, ESEE

CPSC PARTICIPANTS:
Andrew Trotta, Engineering Sciences (ES) Directorate

NON-CPSC PARTICIPANTS:
Lee Bishop, General Electric
Tim Brooks, Whirlpool
Norman Chiu, General Electric
Joe Erdelsky, Siebe Appliance Controls
Rick Fort, International Approval Services
Sharon Franke, Good Housekeeping Institute
Gordon Gillerman, UL
Doug Macdonald, Mintz, Levin
Donald Mays, Good Housekeeping Institute
Wiley Miller, Frigidaire
Wayne Morris, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers
Issac Sargunam, Maytag
Rick Seib, Whirlpool

SUMMARY:
This was the fourth meeting of this working group to reduce rangetop cooking fires. At the November 19, 1998 meeting of the working group, four task groups were established. The progress of each task group was covered. Group #2 Testing. Good Housekeeping Institute presented the results of their evaluation of the effects of the CPSC experimental control system on normal cooking. The results, which will be detailed in a forthcoming report from Good Housekeeping, showed that the control system operation did not affect normal cooking in many instances. However, cooking times for recipes requiring high-heat (such as boiling, searing and blackening) were typically longer when the control system was active. CPSC staff offered to consider changes to the control system algorithm to improve the system performance in these areas and invited manufacturers to participate in the re-design discussions. Group #1 Data Collection. Discussion on further definition of cooking fire hazard patterns through detailed data collection were delayed pending the distribution of the CPSC special study on 289 cooking fires. Group #3 Cost Analysis. The representative from Siebe Controls presented a cost estimate for a rudimentary control system as it would be sold to range manufacturers for open coil electric ranges with electromechanical controls. With four units per range, the estimated costs were between $41.68 and $51.00. AHAM provided an estimate of the retail cost to consumers based on manufacturers' and retailers' mark-ups (according to Department of Energy mark-up estimates for clothes washers). The estimate indicated an increase of $90 to $180 to the retail price. Group #4 Non-technological Options. AHAM showed a video news release and a public service announcement on safer cooking. AHAM is looking for additional partners to sponsor information and education efforts. Other approaches that the task group will explore are changes to building codes, such as residential sprinkler systems and requirements for commercial kitchen fire suppression. In a general discussion, Good Housekeeping representatives encouraged the industry members to accept the moderate success of the CPSC experimental system and to conduct independent efforts to develop a reliable, durable range control system. Industry members indicated that they do not consider the problem to have an economically feasible solution that will not interfere with normal cooking and thus will not engage in independent development efforts. Another working group meeting was tentatively set for June 1999 pending the progress of the task groups.