



Australian  
Competition &  
Consumer  
Commission

# ACCC *update*

Issue 14, November 2003



## PRODUCT SAFETY

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## This year

the ACCC conducted 28 surveys for products subject to safety standards and 41 surveys for banned goods at retail outlets across Australia (an increase from the previous year)

survey and complaint investigations led to the withdrawal from sale and/or recall of 39 different products (also an increase from last year)

7 companies agreed to enforceable undertakings and 1 company was subject to a court-ordered injunction, resulting from product safety investigations

# Working together for safer products

There are around 15 000 types of products available in Australia. Factor in brands and the number rises exponentially. As our economy is increasingly driven by the consumer dollar, and as product differentiation and fashion dictate consumer choice, the risk of unsafe products appearing on the retail shelves multiplies.

The power to ban the sale of unsafe goods and declare national consumer product standards was established in 1977 by amendments to the Trade Practices Act. The ACCC is responsible for ensuring suppliers abide by the product safety laws. This edition of *ACCC update* outlines the ACCC's work in this important area of consumer protection.

Industry is responsible for providing safe products. Whether they are manufacturers, importers or retailers, all suppliers can benefit from supplying safer goods. Not only are they protecting consumers and being good corporate citizens, they are avoiding the heavy costs that can arise by selling unsafe goods. It is important that industry has a philosophy that sees safety considerations as integral to its operations.

As the users of the products, consumers are positioned to have the greatest influence on safety outcomes. They can vote with their wallets whether or not to minimise risk of injury in their selection of products.

Clearly, overall levels of safety can only be improved when all parties involved in the regulation, manufacture, supply and use of products work together to make sure that products are safe and are used safely.



# It's a Question of standards —but whose?

The area of product safety involves responsibilities across all three levels of government—federal, state and local. At each level, various departments are responsible for different products, such as food, health products and general goods. The ACCC works with the agencies involved in consumer safety to make consumer protection more effective.

The ACCC also deals with:

- › supplier organisations including industry and business associations, to reach member companies and deal with their representatives on compliance issues
- › technical experts in product design, manufacture and testing
- › epidemiologists and other injury prevention specialists
- › consumer groups, including special interest user groups, for example, bicycle riders, child safety groups.

More detail on standards development and committee participation can be found on the Standards Australia website: [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au)

## How standards are developed

Standards are developed by those directly affected by them. They are drafted by committees comprising designers, manufacturers, safety regulators, testers, technical experts and consumers. This diverse range of participants ensures no single interest or position prevails. The published standard is a consensus of the different viewpoints involved in its development.

Standards Australia is the neutral party in this process and does not play an active part in the decisions of committees. It provides the secretariat and back office services. The committee members are responsible for the standard's technical content which must match the needs and values of our society. Members of standards technical committees must be nominated by representative organisations, such as industry associations.

Most products change over time, through advances in technology, materials and design. They are also influenced by fashion, consumer taste and changes in demand. Standards must keep touch with product changes to ensure they continue to provide for safe use. For this reason they are regularly reviewed.





## How standards are revised and updated

Most mandatory standards are based on published Australian Standards, which Standards Australia regularly reviews. If any significant issue emerges in between revisions, it can be considered outside the usual review process.

As a member of the Standards Australia committees for all relevant mandatory standards under the Trade Practices Act, the ACCC can provide input based on its experience in implementing and enforcing the standards.

Treasury participates in the Standards Australia review process as well. It also regularly reviews all mandatory standards, working closely with the ACCC, and welcomes comments from suppliers and the community.

Suppliers have a responsibility to report any practical difficulties in achieving compliance either through industry representatives or directly to Standards Australia, the ACCC or Treasury. Suppliers of goods covered by mandatory standards are encouraged to check with their industry or trade association that their interests are represented on the relevant Standards Australia committee.

Consumers can contribute to standards development processes as well (see right).

## How to become a consumer rep on Standards Australia committees

It is critical to have consumer input into the development of standards as, ultimately, they exist to protect consumers. Standards Australia encourages consumer input through a project with the Consumers' Federation of Australia, managed by the Consumer Law Centre Victoria.

The Consumers' Federation of Australia nominates consumer representatives to Standards Australia committees that develop standards important to consumers, including product safety standards. Consumer representatives are recruited from the federation's member organisations and from other consumer advocacy groups, organisations and institutions around Australia.

The Consumer Law Centre Victoria employs a part-time standards coordinator to run the project, recruit consumer representatives and help them become involved, and organise their travel to meetings and reimbursement of expenses. For information about the project, including standards committees that currently need consumer reps, and how to become a representative, please contact:

Angela Russell, Consumers' Federation of Australia  
Tel: (03) 9629 6300 (Wed and Thur)  
Email: [angela@clcv.net.au](mailto:angela@clcv.net.au)

# Standards Australia

Standards Australia  
is an independent,  
non-government  
organisation whose  
primary role is to  
prepare standards.

A standard is a published document which sets out specifications and procedures to ensure that a material, product, method or service is fit for its purpose and consistently performs the way it was intended. Standards reassure consumers that products purchased will be safe and reliable.

Australian Standards are published as voluntary documents, available for anyone to use, from manufacturers to consumers. They are often used as the basis for regulation, such as the mandatory standards under the Trade Practices Act.

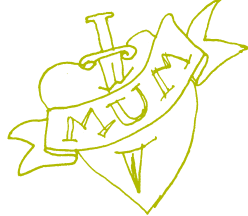
Technical committees prepare the published standards. Their essential characteristic is that membership is balanced and that it represents the broadest possible spectrum of interests.

The ACCC is currently a member of many Standards Australia technical committees including CS/18 for children's toys, CS/86 for children's nightwear having reduced fire hazard, CS/53 for sunglasses and fashion spectacles, CS/75 for child restraint systems for use in motor vehicles and CS/55 for vehicle jacks.

Standards Australia has an excellent website: [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au)



STANDARDS



# What is a mandatory standard?

There are two types of mandatory product standards:

## safety standards

declared when products are likely to be especially hazardous. They require that goods comply with particular performance, composition, contents, design, construction, finish, labelling or packaging rules.

introduced if harm to consumers is possible in the absence of information about a product. They require prescribed information to be given to consumers when they buy certain goods. These standards are often introduced because, as in the case of cosmetics, people using the products have developed an allergic reaction or products have not performed in the way the consumer expected (see p. 7).

## information standards

In declaring mandatory standards the government specifies minimum requirements that must be met before products are sold.

Mandatory standards are usually introduced after concerns about a particular product have been raised—either because accidents have occurred in Australia or overseas, or because a standard has been introduced overseas that is relevant to the Australian situation.

For example, a product safety standard for babywalkers was introduced in November 2002, based on a standard issued by the American Society for Testing and Materials. Babywalkers must now have a braking mechanism to stop them from rolling down stairways. They must also have permanent warning notices

attached to them, alerting parents and carers of possible hazards confronting infants in walkers (see below).

If an existing standard is available, such as a published Australian Standard, it is used as the basis for the mandatory standard. The mandatory standard (as declared in the Commonwealth Gazette) specifies the goods covered and may vary or delete certain requirements in the published standard. If no existing standard is available, the mandatory standard is created by regulation.

The consumer safety unit of the Department of the Treasury develops policy on mandatory standards for general consumer products, working closely with the ACCC. Standards are reviewed regularly and comments from suppliers and the community are welcome.



## Too many injuries from babywalkers

example

About 3500 babies under 12 months are treated in hospitals each year in Australia from injuries linked to nursery furniture. A quarter of these are from babywalker falls.

The total cost of injuries associated with babywalkers alone is about \$1.7 million a year.

Under the mandatory safety standards, babywalkers must have friction bars to stop them falling down steps and stairs, as well as warning labels about keeping children away from fireplaces and heaters and out of reach of stove tops and kettles. They must also carry a separate label warning about the dangers of stairs.

The friction bars are a simple device that clamp onto the surface as soon as one of the wheels of the walker goes over the edge of a step.



## Reducing injury in bunk beds

example

Bunk beds have long been recognised as a potential source of injury to children. In Australia, in the under-15 age group, at least 2100 injuries related to bunk beds are treated by hospital emergency departments every year.

To reduce this frightening statistic, a mandatory safety standard was introduced on 11 March 2003 requiring bunk beds to be manufactured according to safe design rules.

It adopts parts of the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4220:1994 *Bunk Beds*.

The main requirements of the standard include a guardrail on the top bunk and a minimum distance of 260 mm between the top of the mattress and the top of the guardrail to prevent children falling out of the top bunk. The standard also addresses gaps and protrusions which could lead to strangulation, and imposes labelling requirements.

The ACCC has begun monitoring the market to make sure suppliers and manufacturers comply with the standard.

The mandatory standard will only go part of the way to reducing bunk bed injuries. Parents need to keep in mind that even bunk beds that comply with the standard can be dangerous if used as a play area.



## How should cosmetics and toiletries be labelled?

### example

Some skin types are highly sensitive to common ingredients in cosmetics and toiletries. Because of this, dermatologists asked that an information standard be introduced to identify these ingredients.

In 1991 a consumer product information standard for cosmetics and toiletries was introduced. It requires products to be labelled with a list of ingredients so consumers can identify ingredients to which they may be allergic or which may cause an adverse reaction.

As we near the Christmas period, many people begin to buy gifts for family and friends. Children's make-up is a common stocking filler with popular items including:

- face paints
- make-up sets
- body crayons
- temporary tattoos

Some of these products have the potential to cause allergic reactions in children and in some cases such reactions can be very serious.

This list of ingredients must be available at point of sale. Usually the goods should carry the list on their container, but the regulation makes sure that the list of ingredients is still available where this is not possible.

The ingredients must be specifically identified and listed in descending order calculated by mass or volume.



## Allergic reaction leads to ACCC action

### ACCC case

In April 2002 a consumer complained to the ACCC's Perth office that she had bought a product manufactured by Private Formula International Pty Ltd and had a strong adverse reaction.

The ACCC investigated and found that Private Formula's Dr Lewinn's Cosmetic Lift Pack, containing A+ Revita Cell, and Dr Lewinn's Cosmetic Lift Powder did not comply with the mandatory information standard.

In resolving this matter with the ACCC, Private Formula provided a court enforceable undertaking to

- stop distributing the product
- implement procedures to re-label all old stock in the marketplace
- publish corrective advertising in newspapers and retail outlets
- implement a trade practices compliance program
- institute an effective complaints handling system.



STANDARDS

## New developments in product safety standards —sunglasses, toys and jacks

### sunglasses and fashion spectacles

A new mandatory standard for sunglasses and fashion spectacles came into effect from 1 October 2003. It is based on AS/NZS 1067:2003 *Sunglasses and fashion spectacles* published by Standards Australia in April 2003.

Suppliers should note that the old mandatory standard can also be used until 31 March 2005. During this 18-month cross-over period sunglasses and fashion spectacles can comply with either the old or new mandatory standards.

### toys

The mandatory standard for toys for children under three has been reviewed and is expected to be gazetted shortly. The new standard is likely to have an 18-month lead time, giving suppliers time to phase out products that comply only with the current standard. During that time, manufacturers will be able to comply with either AS 1647.2:1992 *Children's toys (safety requirements)* or AS/NZS ISO 8124.1:2002 *Safety of toys, Part 1*.

The proposed standard has been extended to include more than the small parts requirements in the current standard. Items such as pre-school play figures, pompoms attached to toys and small balls will be subjected to additional tests.

### vehicle jacks

The mandatory standard for vehicle jacks is currently being reviewed and is expected to be gazetted before 2004. As with the toy standard, it is expected that the new standard for jacks will have a lead time where suppliers can comply with either AS/NZS 2693:1993 *Vehicle jacks* or the updated 2003 version of the same standard.

There will be some changes, such as new labelling requirements and changes to test procedures, to ensure fail-safe products.

Further information on all new standards and advice on how to obtain documents is available from the ACCC's website under 'product safety/new developments'.





STANDARDS

# Goods subject to mandatory standards

under the Trade Practices Act (as at October 2003)



**Baby walkers:** to minimise risk of injury with falling downstairs or tipping over.

**Balloon-blowing kits:** must not contain benzene.

**Bean bags:** must carry a label warning of choking hazard and any openings must be child resistant.

**Bicycle helmets:** based on Australian standard and the American Snell Standard.

**Bunk beds:** to prevent falls and other entrapment hazards.

**Care labelling—clothing & textile products:** instructions for the correct care and maintenance of clothing, household textiles etc., to be accessible at point of sale.

**Child restraints for motor vehicles:** performance and other safety requirements for baby capsules, child seats and other restraints.

**Children's nightwear and limited daywear having reduced fire hazard:** applies to garments sized 00–14.

**Cosmetics and toiletries:** unless covered by the Therapeutic Goods Act, all cosmetic and toiletry products must be labelled with ingredients.

**Cots for household use:** to prevent entrapment hazards.

**Disposable cigarette lighters:** safe use and child resistance requirements.

**Elastic luggage straps:** stretch tie-down straps and cords, including octopus straps, must carry a label warning of eye injury if overstretched.

**Exercise cycles:** moving parts and other entrapment hazards to be isolated by guards; plus specifications for integrity of the seat.

**Fire extinguishers:** for portable, non-aerosol.

**Fire extinguishers:** portable, aerosol.

**Flotation toys and swimming aids for children:** some performance requirements and a system of marking to alert users to correct use to avoid drowning.

**Jacks—vehicle:** for products up to certain capacity limits.

**Jacks—trolley:** for products up to certain capacity limits.

**Motorcycle helmets:** performance and other safety requirements.

**Paper patterns for children's nightwear:** must carry a label advising of flammability of certain fabrics.

**Pedal bicycles:** performance and safety requirements.

**Ramps for motor vehicles:** for products up to certain capacity limits.

**Support stands for motor vehicles:** for products up to certain capacity limits.

**Sunglasses and fashion spectacles:** performance, safety and labelling requirements.

**Tobacco products:** health warnings and corresponding explanatory messages. Cigarette packages must also carry information messages.

**Toys for children under 3:** toys suitable for ages up to 36 months (not just those marked as such) must not contain any small parts that may be a choking hazard, nor produce any small parts when put through a range of tests which simulate normal use and abuse.

How do I get a copy of the mandatory standards?

To comply with mandatory standards, suppliers should read the current regulation or gazette notice, together with the relevant Australian or other published standards. Australian standards can be purchased from Standards Australia on (free call) 1300 654 646 or at [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au). Gazette notices declaring mandatory standards and regulations can be obtained from the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502. For more detailed information visit the ACCC website: [www.accc.gov.au/product\\_safety/fs-product\\_safety.htm](http://www.accc.gov.au/product_safety/fs-product_safety.htm)





## Banning unsafe goods

The government can declare goods unsafe if they can cause injury to people. Initially the goods will be banned from supply for a temporary period of 18 months, after which the ban is either revoked or made permanent. This is done by publishing a Consumer Protection Notice in the Commonwealth Gazette.

The ACCC enforces bans on unsafe goods.



### Mini-cup jellies

example

There have been 15 known deaths worldwide from people eating mini-cup jellies containing konjac. In August 2002 the government declared a ban on any mini-cup jelly confectionery product containing konjac (also known as glucomannan, konjac, konnyaku, konjonac, taro powder and yam flour), having a height or width of less than or equal to 45 mm.

While konjac is a binding food additive that has been used for hundreds (if not thousands) of years throughout Asia, it presented a serious choking hazard, particularly to small children and the elderly.

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ—formerly ANZFA) was the first agency to be aware of the dangers of this product. They had been notified of one incident in Australia and several deaths overseas. FSANZ issued warnings to consumers in a media release in September 2000 and then monitored the situation, liaising with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and all state health and local government agencies. In 2001 FSANZ called for a voluntary recall, but the product seemed to be still available.

In 2002 FSANZ approached the consumer safety unit of Treasury to have the product banned under the Trade Practices Act. The ban came into force in August that year.

The product has been banned in the US and across Europe since early 2002. A US court recently ordered a Taiwan-based company to pay \$US50 million to the parents of a two-year-old boy said to have choked to death on the candy.



### Candles with wicks containing lead

example

In some cases a banned product can be subject to a variation. For example, candles with wicks that contained any lead were banned for 18 months in 1999. Further research found that some zinc candle wicks contained a small amount of lead naturally and burning them did not result in harmful lead emissions.

Subsequently in 2001 the ban was amended to allow 0.06 per cent lead by weight. Because the ban was varied, it was then subject to a further 18-month temporary ban at the end of which it was made permanent.



some goods are **banned** because they might injure people  
some goods are **banned** because they might injure people  
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some goods are **banned** because they might injure people



BANNED GOODS

## Goods banned

under the Trade Practices Act (as at October 2003)

**Candles with lead wicks:** burning of lead in confined spaces may pose a health hazard.

**Children's dart gun sets** (18-month interim ban from 18 March 2003): supply of dart gun sets, with or without a target, consisting of a firing gun and small suction tipped darts. Darts represent a choking hazard.

**'Diveman' underwater breathing apparatus:** relied on kicking action of the diver to ensure air supply—not effective or reliable.

**Gas masks which contain asbestos:** WWII surplus masks—possible carcinogen.

**Glucomannan in tablet form:** diet aid designed to swell in stomach, but can cause choking if stuck in throat; acceptable in other forms such as powder or capsules.

**Mini-cup jellies** (18-month interim ban from 21 August 2002): Mini-cup jellies containing konjac, a binding ingredient. This product does not readily dissolve and its size, as well as texture, has made it a choking hazard.

**'Quickie' line release system:** a water skiing device intended to release a ski rope if problems arose, but was not reliable.

**Seat belt accessories, including 'Klunk Klip', 'Comfix', 'Auto Comfort':** devices designed to create some slack in belts, but compromised their performance.

**Sun visors including 'Autotrend Sun Filter' and similar internal visors:** goods contain brittle plastic and metal parts which may cause injury to a person in the event of an accident.

**Tinted headlight covers:** headlight covers for motor vehicles that allow less than 85 per cent luminous transmittance.

**Tobacco products (smokeless):** chewing tobacco and snuff—known to cause cancer of the mouth.

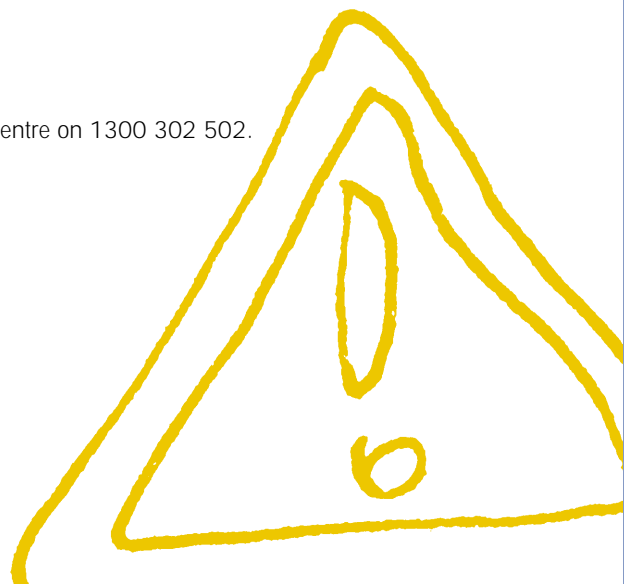
**Victim toys:** a series of toys and figurines depicting violence to human and other victims—may cause psychological harm.

**Yo yo water balls** (18-month interim ban from 4 July 2003): squeezable, soft plastic, liquid-filled ball attached to a stretchable synthetic cord. The stretch cord can wrap around children's necks, causing a strangulation hazard.



How do I get a copy of the bans?

Gazette notices banning these products are available from the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502.





# Suppliers should recall unsafe products

It is in the best interests of suppliers and consumers to make sure that unsafe consumer products are removed from the marketplace. Consumers may suffer serious injury from such products and if they do, suppliers can be liable under the product liability provisions of the Trade Practices Act or at common law.

Manufacturers and suppliers should consider a recall as soon as they become aware of a possible defect in a product that may make it unsafe.

When recalling an unsafe consumer product, suppliers should aim to:

- minimise the risk of injury or death to consumers by removing an unsafe product from use
- retrieve or repair as many of the defective products as possible
- minimise the cost and inconvenience to consumers and the company.

Details of all recalled products are available on the Product Recalls Australia website. Consumers are encouraged to visit this website regularly and check if they possess recalled products.

For further information on how to conduct a voluntary product recall, the Treasury has recall procedures, advising on the type of publicity suitable for your recall, and posting your recall to the Product Recalls Australia website at [www.recalls.gov.au](http://www.recalls.gov.au).

The consumer safety unit of the Department of Treasury is located at Langton Crescent, Parkes, ACT 2600 and can be contacted by telephone on (02) 6263 2747, by fax on (02) 6263 2830 or by email at [recalls@recalls.gov.au](mailto:recalls@recalls.gov.au).

Often, if a product breaches a mandatory standard under the Trade Practices Act, the ACCC will ask the manufacturer or supplier to recall the product.



## Dangerous cots

ACCC case

In October 2002 the ACCC contacted Lane Wrigley Pty Ltd, an importer of household goods, and advised that the 8036 Baby Bed it supplied did not comply with the mandatory standard for household cots. The bed failed to comply with mandatory safety labelling and design requirements of the standard. In particular, the cot was not deep enough to minimise the risk of a child climbing or falling out of the cot and it contained protrusions and hazardous openings.

Once it was alerted to the potential dangers of the bed, Lane Wrigley immediately conducted a voluntary product recall. The company also provided enforceable undertakings to implement a compliance program.



## Faulty bikes sold with mobile phones! —SMS recall

ACCC case

In March 2001 Tele Choice Pty Ltd offered free bicycles to consumers entering a contract to buy a mobile phone. The bicycles were imported direct by Tele Choice.

In July 2001 following a complaint the ACCC contacted the company and asked if it was aware of the mandatory standard for pedal bicycles. Tele Choice then submitted one of the bicycles for testing by an independent test company who advised that it failed to comply with various requirements of the standard. The most serious failings were insufficient seat-clamp strength, lack of front wheel retention when bolts loosened, sharp edges on headset, lack of warning device, lack of a manual and lack of a warning label not to be used off-road.

Tele Choice then began the first phase of its recall by sending SMS messages to those customers who had the bicycle. The initial message advised them not to use the bicycle and to await further instructions about return and modification. This was a new and very effective way for a supplier to conduct a recall as it guaranteed that all consumers who received the bicycle (those who still had accounts with Tele Choice) were alerted to the hazard.

The following week Tele Choice implemented a consumer product safety recall of the bicycles by direct mail to its customers, advising them not to use the bike and to return it for modification to any of the stores on an accompanying list.

Tele Choice also provided enforceable undertakings to implement a compliance program.



## RECENT RECALLS

Recent recall actions successfully sought by the ACCC following an investigation include:

- sunglasses that failed the minimum size or visual performance specifications
- car jacks supplied with various models of cars that failed to comply with requirements for warning labelling and safe usage instructions
- bean bags containing polystyrene beads which did not have child-resistant slide-fasteners or did not carry any warning label
- exercise cycles with gaps that could trap the fingers of young children
- children's dressing gowns that carried a 'low fire danger' label when they should have been labelled as highly flammable.

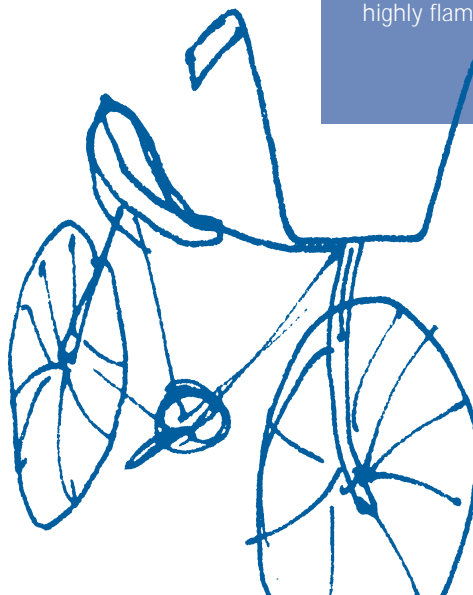


### Compulsory product recalls

If a manufacturer or supplier does not recall a dangerous product voluntarily, the Trade Practices Act allows for a compulsory recall to be conducted. The Commonwealth Government can order a compulsory product recall by gazette notice if the supplier has not taken enough action to remove the hazard and

- the minister believes the goods are likely to cause an injury to a person
- the goods are subject to a mandatory product safety or information standard
- the goods are of a kind where an unsafe goods notice has been published in the gazette.

In ordering a compulsory product recall, the government may direct how the supplier is to carry out a recall, for example, by repairing the goods, replacing them or refunding the price of the goods.



### Unsafe bikes sold on the internet

#### ACCC case

A NSW-based bicycle importer and internet retailer, Easybuy.com.au Pty Ltd (trading as Bikes Direct), has entered into enforceable undertakings with the ACCC to stop misleading customers and to recall faulty bikes. The company had advertised its bikes on television referring potential customers to its website address.

The ACCC alleged that Bikes Direct sold imported bikes which failed to comply with the mandatory Australian safety standards. Because internet customers cannot personally inspect goods there is a greater obligation on internet traders to ensure that the information on their website is accurate, especially when the website is the only source of information.

Bikes Direct responded quickly to the ACCC and rectified misleading statements on its website about consumer rights and warranties. It then had all its bikes tested for compliance with safety standards and found some bikes failed to meet the standards although there were no major structural faults.

Bikes Direct contacted those who had bought the faulty bikes for recall or repair. The firm also implemented a trade practices compliance program.

The onus is on importers to ensure that the goods they buy from overseas meet mandatory Australian safety standards. This also applies to those acting as agents for importers or those buying goods from importers for sale on their own behalf.

Because injury prevention is so important, the ACCC takes its role very seriously in promoting compliance with mandatory standards and bans. If the bans and standards are flouted, it will take enforcement action to drive home the message that it will not tolerate any unnecessary risk to consumers.



## Carrying out surveys

The ACCC conducts random surveys of retail outlets throughout Australia to detect banned products or others that don't comply with a standard. It also assesses the overall level of compliance in the marketplace and liaises with suppliers. These surveys are carried out throughout the year and are developed on a risk management basis. Because it is not possible to survey every product covered by a standard or ban in every survey, selecting those to be surveyed at a particular time needs to take account of a number of things. For example, the time of year (e.g. surveys during the Christmas period usually include items for children), when a product was last surveyed, what complaints

may have been received, current trends and emerging marketplace developments in standards.

The ACCC also investigates allegations by consumers and suppliers about goods not complying with bans and standards, and it checks goods sold by direct marketing and on the internet. In some cases, a simple visual inspection is enough to assess compliance, for example, when checking labelling and a product's dimensions. In others, a technical assessment is necessary. In these cases, if the ACCC suspects a product doesn't comply it may seek proof from the supplier or arrange for the goods to be tested.



### Market surveys for banned mini-cup jellies

#### ACCC case

Following the minister's ban, the ACCC carried out a national market survey program for mini-cup jellies, starting in November 2002. All regional offices across Australia participated, checking in supermarkets, grocery stores and greengrocers in metropolitan and regional centres.

Jelly cups containing konjac were found in Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne. The product was then also included in the survey programs for 2003.

#### Publicity

Because of the inherent dangers of the product, it was essential to obtain as much publicity as possible. The minister issued a press release on the ban and the ACCC issued one soon after. The ban also received some radio publicity.

A product safety bulletin was translated into Chinese and Vietnamese and distributed by staff carrying out the market surveys.

Further publicity has been given to the outcome of ACCC investigations, particularly following the outcome of the Trans Oriental matter referred to below.

#### Action

After finding mini-cup jellies for sale in a shop in Perth, the ACCC instituted legal proceedings against Trans Oriental Import & Export Pty Ltd and Mr Steven Thai Tran. In May 2003 Justice Carr of the Federal Court found that Steven Thai Tran and Trans Oriental had breached the Trade Practices Act.

As part of the settlement, Trans Oriental and Steven Thai Tran consented to orders that included:

- publishing a recall notice
- publishing corrective information notices to wholesale customers and consumers
- refunding customers and retailers who returned product with proof of purchase
- Mr Tran attending a trade practices training program
- contributing to the ACCC's court costs.

ACCC issued media releases on the Trans Oriental matter in December 2002 and May 2003. Some more jelly cups were found in Melbourne and staff contacted the supplier who agreed to:

- immediately notify all their retailers to withdraw the product
- refund retailers who returned product
- send a product safety bulletin to retailers recalling the product and offering refunds. The bulletin was translated into Chinese and both English and Chinese versions were placed in the store.

Other small amounts have been located in Adelaide and Melbourne. ACCC staff ensured the product was withdrawn from sale and recall notices placed in stores.



ACCC TAKES  
ACTION

# What happens if you break the law

When mandatory standards are breached or banned products are found in the marketplace, the ACCC's first priority is to ensure the hazardous goods are removed from the market and from people's homes. It notifies suppliers who are then expected to stop selling the goods immediately and cooperate in ensuring the goods are removed from outlets which carry them.

The ACCC then assesses what enforcement action may be taken against suppliers. Companies found in breach of the product safety provisions of the Trade Practices Act face possible criminal prosecution and maximum penalties of \$1.1 million for corporations and \$220 000 for individuals.

Wilful non-compliance is not common in product safety breaches—usually carelessness and poor attention to addressing risks are the cause. How the ACCC responds and what sort of action might be taken depends on factors such as:

- the seriousness of the safety hazard
- the quantity of the product supplied
- how blatant the conduct is
- the level of cooperation from the supplier.

The ACCC may seek remedies such as administrative action or court enforceable undertakings or, if the case goes to the Federal Court, injunctions and orders for corrective advertising, consumer recalls, refunds or repair of the goods and legal costs.

Suppliers which provide court enforceable undertakings to the ACCC may be required to conduct consumer recalls of the unsafe product and set up corporate compliance programs to prevent any repeat of the safety breach.

## How the ACCC enforces safety standards

- The ACCC obtained consent orders against Hyundai Automotive Distributors for breaches of the mandatory standard for **vehicle jacks**. Hyundai had supplied about 185 000 motor vehicle jacks without the required warnings and instructions. Hyundai implemented a voluntary recall and consented to court orders requiring a trade practices compliance program.
- Super Toyworld in Darwin gave the ACCC court enforceable undertakings to stop selling **bicycles** that do not meet the standard, publish newspaper advertisements offering to fix any bicycles it had sold to ensure they met the standard and implement a substantial trade practices compliance program.
- The ACCC obtained declarations and injunctions in the Federal Court in Perth to settle actions against two importers who supplied two brands of **sunglasses** which did not comply with the mandatory safety standard. Monza and Apollo also agreed to publish product safety notices in newspapers and magazines and provide in-store notices recalling the sunglasses and offering refunds to consumers. Both companies were required to implement trade practices compliance programs.
- The Federal Court granted injunctions against Autobarn Pty Ltd, Autobarn Darwin and Dictomax Pty Ltd preventing them from supplying **portable car ramps** which failed to comply with the mandatory safety standard. Autobarn was also restrained from supplying goods subject to a mandatory safety standard without first sighting verification from an authorised testing authority that they complied with the standard. The companies had supplied the Jackramp which failed the structural integrity, design and safety labelling requirements as set out in the mandatory standard. The court also ordered that the companies pay the ACCC's court costs and that Autobarn institute new processes and conduct additional staff training to supplement its existing trade practices compliance program.



the ACCC can **take action** if you break the laws for product safety



ACCC TAKES  
ACTION



## Running an investigation—Spotlight

ACCC case

**11 September 2000**

ACCC receives complaint from a consumer alleging that a pair of grey tinted wraparound sunglasses with the word 'COLD' on the frames did not comply with the mandatory product safety standard for sunglasses and fashion spectacles. The sunglasses, which had been bought at a Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) stand at the Queensland Show, were found to distort the wearer's vision after he had been wearing them while driving.

**18 September 2000**

ACCC launches investigation which found that a Queensland-based promotional merchandise supplier, Spotlight Promotions Pty Limited, had supplied the sunglasses to CUB for promotional purposes. They were also sold at the CUB merchandising store 'Brewhouse', in Yatala, Queensland, and were either sold or given away at various trade promotions and hotel venues in Queensland and New South Wales.

**25 September 2000**

ACCC tells Spotlight it was concerned that the sunglasses may not comply with the mandatory safety standard.

**25 September 2000**

Spotlight immediately ceases supplying the sunglasses and sends a sample pair to an accredited testing authority for testing in accordance with the mandatory standard.

**27 September 2000**

Spotlight receives test report, which shows the sunglasses failed to comply with the standard. It found that the sunglasses could cause blurred vision, misjudgment of depth, position or objects, and therefore should not be worn. Spotlight advised the ACCC that the supply of the sunglasses occurred because of human error.

**13 October 2000**

ACCC requests that Spotlight conduct a consumer product safety recall.

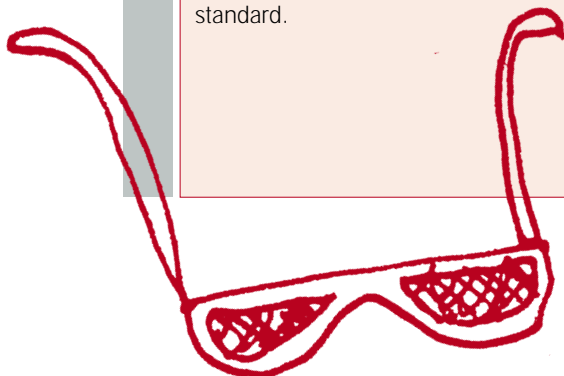
**17–19 October 2000**

Spotlight places consumer product safety recall notices in several newspapers, warning consumers that the sunglasses were unsafe and should not be used. The same notice was also displayed at those hotels and venues where the sunglasses had been sold or given away. As part of the recall, consumers were asked to return the sunglasses to Spotlight for either a full refund of the purchase price or a replacement pair of sunglasses which comply with the mandatory standard.

**27 October 2000**

Spotlight gives ACCC a court enforceable undertaking to implement a corporate compliance program to minimise the likelihood of repeat conduct. This program will help ensure that Spotlight's promotional products comply with any relevant mandatory product safety standard.

Spotlight responded quickly and cooperatively when requested by the ACCC to publish a consumer product safety recall notice and provide refunds.







ACCC TAKES  
ACTION

# Prosecution a warning for variety stores

Product safety can be a challenge for discount variety stores where new products are introduced into an already extensive range. However, lack of product familiarity is no excuse when items are unsafe or wrongly labelled.

The Dimmeys case (see right) has a message for retailers, importers, manufacturers and distributors that not only must they have compliance measures in place but also a means of checking their effectiveness.

This is particularly important for discount variety stores that trade on low margins without a predetermined range of products. If they don't have effective compliance measures, these stores are at greater risk of buying stock without understanding the safety standards and may inadvertently buy stock rejected by other traders for safety reasons.

Companies need to include safety compliance costs when setting margins. They cannot afford to take short cuts on safety to undercut competitors.

Dimmeys paid a high cost for breaching standards in fines, recall costs, lost sales, company time and legal costs for themselves and the ACCC. Indirect costs, such as loss of their reputation and the confidence of customers, are even more damaging and take longer to recoup.



## Variety store a repeat offender

ACCC case

After receiving a complaint about a BMX-style bicycle bought at a Dimmeys Store in Melbourne, the ACCC investigated and found the bike breached the safety standards for children's bicycles. Dimmeys had not previously stocked bicycles and bought them from an importer who had not previously imported them.

In August 1999 Dimmeys Stores Ltd was fined \$60 000 for selling children's pedal bicycles not complying with the mandatory safety standard.

Justice Weinberg of the Federal Court declared that inexperience did not absolve either party (the retailer and the importer) from their obligation to ensure products are safe. Dimmeys, he said, had acted irresponsibly by selling bicycles that did not comply with the mandatory standard. Both the seller and the importer were aware that product safety standards applied to other merchandise they handled, but they failed to make the appropriate inquiries about the bicycles.

Apart from the substantial fine, Dimmeys had to withdraw the bicycles from sale, publish recall notices for those already sold and pay the legal expenses of the ACCC.

In the following year, Dimmeys' failure to comply with safety standards resulted in further court action, this time for selling children's nightwear without mandatory labelling.

In March 2001 Dimmeys was fined \$160 000 on six charges of supplying the nightwear in Townsville in July and in Melbourne in November.

ACCC staff discovered the Townsville contravention in July 2000 during a regular survey of retail stores. When notified, Dimmeys agreed to a public recall. However, the following November a Melbourne survey found that Dimmeys' Richmond store was selling similar garments without the fire hazard information.



# Who's liable?



People who suffer injury or loss because of a defective product can take legal action for compensation against the supplier.

The Trade Practices Act allows **anyone** to claim for personal injury or damage to private property (including land or buildings) arising because of the defect in the product. The law says that goods are defective if they do not provide the level of safety that the community is entitled to expect.

Not only does the law offer redress for consumers, but it also provides an incentive to suppliers to make safer goods in the first place.

Generally speaking, the law applies to a company that:

- manufactured the product
- imported the product
- sold 'own brand' goods manufactured for it under licence.

If a manufacturer cannot be identified then the retailer can be deemed to be the manufacturer.

In the caustic soda case opposite, the supplier, Glendale, argued it was not the manufacturer because it had only packed the product. However, the court did not uphold this claim.

A person has three years to bring an action from the time they become aware (or ought reasonably to have become aware) of the loss, the defect and the identity of the manufacturer. Any action must begin within 10 years of the time the manufacturer supplied the defective goods.

People injured by a defective product will generally seek compensation using a private law firm. However, litigation could also be carried out in a class action or by the ACCC itself. The ACCC can take representative action in the court on behalf of those who have suffered loss.



## Caustic soda product liability appeal dismissed

ACCC case

In March 1998 a consumer received large monetary damages after the ACCC's first product liability representative action in the case against Glendale Chemicals Pty Ltd who manufactured and supplied Glendale Caustic Soda. Glendale later appealed against the decision, arguing that it was not the manufacturer of the product but merely the supplier, in that the product was 'packed by' Glendale. The Full Federal Court dismissed this argument in Sydney in December 1998, upholding Justice Emmett's decision that the Glendale Caustic Soda had a defective label and that the injured consumer did not contribute through his acts or omissions to the injury that he suffered.

The man suffered burns to his face and both eyes when he was hit by a column of water containing caustic soda—an extremely reactive alkali which releases considerable heat when dissolved in water.

He had poured boiling water through the chrome cover of his shower recess waste pipe before sprinkling one third of a 500g pack of Glendale Chemicals Pty Ltd Caustic Soda (sodium hydroxide) down his bathroom drain hole.

The case is a warning for manufacturers—a consumer who suffers injury can succeed against the supplier of the product even if the actual manufacturer of the product does not conduct business within Australia.

Suppliers and importers who re-package and brand the product with their name or logo are deemed as manufacturers under the Act.

Manufacturers need to be aware that consumer products which they know or should know are inherently dangerous or potentially unsafe, should have sufficient warnings and instructions about their safe use.

Glendale Chemicals Pty Ltd had previously given a court undertaking to amend its product labelling to clearly notify consumers of necessary safety precautions and direct consumers in their use of the product.





STAYING  
INFORMED

# What should I do?



**Consumers** can play an important role in buying products that are safe and ensuring that they are used safely.

This means following some basic steps:

- › buying products that are appropriate for the user (e.g. toys with small parts are not appropriate for children under three)
- › responding to product safety recall notices
- › reading and following instructions
- › using products for their intended purpose only
- › asking the supplier if the products meet an Australian or international safety standard
- › using appropriate protective gear
- › considering the environment in which the product is being used and the possible effects on others (e.g. young children should be kept away from exercise equipment that could harm them)
- › checking the ongoing condition of the product
- › taking immediate action on safety problems with the supplier or appropriate agencies.

**Suppliers and manufacturers** have an obligation to help ensure that only safe products are marketed. In particular, suppliers can contribute to safe outcomes by:

- › providing clear instructions for proper use, including warnings against possible misuses
- › being aware of and meeting industry and mandatory safety standards
- › developing product recall plans and procedures including effective communication strategies to the public (e.g. advertisements in papers)
- › incorporating safety into product design
- › developing appropriate safety standards through product improvement
- › implementing a quality assurance program which includes consumer feedback
- › responding quickly to safety concerns that arise.

**Governments** set up regulatory frameworks that encourage markets to deliver safe products to consumers. They can intervene if there is evidence of actual or potential product safety problems. They contribute to safety outcomes by:

- › making sure suppliers and manufacturers comply with mandatory safety standards for specific consumer products (e.g. children's products, electrical products)
- › promoting consumer awareness of particular product hazards
- › promoting good product safety management practices to suppliers
- › encouraging research to improve the safety of products.



## Guidance is available for suppliers

The requirements imposed by mandatory standards and bans are often quite technical. The ACCC gives guidance to suppliers on how to comply with standards via its Infocentre inquiry service, its website and a range of publications on mandatory standards. It also takes part in industry seminars and works with consultants and test companies to ensure suppliers understand their obligations and how to comply. Education materials on product safety can be found at the ACCC website [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au).

### Suppliers' responsibilities to comply with standards

All suppliers—including manufacturers, importers, distributors, hirers and retailers—are responsible for ensuring that goods they supply comply with the relevant mandatory standards.

The term 'supply' includes sale, exchange, lease, hire, hire purchase and 'give-aways' (for example at trade fairs and through promotions).

#### Suppliers should

- remain informed on mandatory standards. Trade associations can help members stay up to date. Suppliers should also have systems in place to ensure their goods fully comply with mandatory product standards. These might include:
  - attention to safe design principles
  - a performance testing program (if necessary)
  - quality assurance checks on ordering, on receipt of goods, and in production
  - staff education programs.

#### Manufacturers should

- obtain copies of the relevant mandatory standards and, where necessary, have sample testing done.

#### Importers and distributors should

- obtain copies of the relevant mandatory standards and, where necessary, have sample testing done or request copies of test certificates
- stipulate that the goods they order comply with mandatory standards
- make visual checks on delivery to see that mandatory standards have been met.

#### Retailers and hirers should

- be aware of any mandatory standards which cover the goods they sell or hire out and where necessary obtain copies of the relevant mandatory standards
- stipulate that the goods they order comply with mandatory standards
- make visual checks on delivery to see that mandatory standards have been met.



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# Toy safety guide



## What parents can do

- Choose toys that are appropriate for children's ages. Toys for older children may have hazards that younger ones do not understand. While they may have novel appeal to young children, they will not accelerate their development and may actually jeopardise their safety. 'Not suitable for children under three' means that there are small parts which could be swallowed; it is not an indication of skill level or intelligence.
- It is important toys are not misused.
- Check for any warnings in the instructions.
- Be realistic about the time you can spend supervising your children's play and consider their individual maturity when selecting toys. Do not buy toys that will require your constant supervision unless you will be able to give it.
- Do not buy on impulse based on high-pressure TV advertising.
- Stop and think before purchasing a toy and personally check its safety features. Check toys for sharp points, splinters and rough edges.
- Inspect toys regularly for wear and tear. Check toys regularly for loose parts which may be choking dangers.
- Buy washable, non-breakable toys for babies. Anything that is smaller than a ping pong ball or fits inside a 35 mm film canister could choke a child under three if inhaled or swallowed.
- Check toy chests and boxes. They should be designed not to close on top of children, or better still with a removable lid. Anything big enough to crawl inside must have ventilation holes.
- Read the age labelling on new toys.
- Check that there are no gaps or holes which could entrap a child's fingers.
- If buying a projectile toy, only choose ones that have soft, one-piece darts or non-removable suction caps. Only allow projectile toys with low velocity and soft tipped parts.
- Be wary of toys that make loud noises as they can be harmful to hearing, particularly toys which are held against the ear, such as walkie talkies and toy mobile phones.
- Check for ventilation before buying tents, masks, helmets etc.
- Make sure nails, screws or other fasteners are tight and properly fixed.
- Make sure moving, folding and mechanical parts which could injure young fingers are not accessible.
- Ensure paints and glazes used on painted toys and dyes used to colour fabric toys are non-toxic. This should be clearly stated on the packaging.
- Remove any strings, cords and tails which are more than 300 mm (12 inches) long from toys (especially cot toys) before use. Loose lengths of string, cord and even fluffy tails can strangle young children or they could choke on them.
- Ensure that ride-on toys are appropriate to the age of the child and are stable. Toy bikes should have effective brakes which can be applied by the rider.
- Never leave 'dead' batteries in toys because they may leak poisons or liquid that may burn skin.



The ACCC enforces standards on a number of children's toy products including toys for children under three that may have or may produce small parts (choking hazard), bicycles and cosmetic products that are for children such as face paint and cosmetic kits.

There are also some toys that have been banned. Two recent ones are children's dart gun sets that contain small darts and yo yo water balls. Both these products have been the cause of serious injuries. The ACCC also enforces these bans.

Remember: play it safe. Parents and caregivers of children have an obligation to choose toys carefully.





# Who does what

In Australia various Commonwealth, state and territory agencies have specific product safety responsibilities. At the Commonwealth level, while the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission enforces the Trade Practices Act, the Treasury is responsible for developing policy on the product safety provisions of the Act.

Other Commonwealth agencies are responsible for particular products. For example:

- Department of Transport and Regional Services is responsible for road safety and vehicle standards
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand for food safety and standards
- Therapeutic Goods Administration for medicine and medical devices
- National Registration Authority for agricultural and veterinary products
- electrical regulatory authorities are responsible for electrical safety and standards at the state level.

These agencies are responsible for regulating product safety for their particular group and the Commonwealth and state and territory consumer affairs or fair trading agencies look after the rest.

There are a few limitations on Trade Practices Act powers. For example the powers only apply to goods supplied in trade or commerce by a corporation or a non-incorporated body engaged in interstate trade or commerce. Therefore, for a national standard to cover all potential suppliers, the states and territories must pass similar or complementary legislation, including the power to declare mandatory standards and to ban goods.

Consumer affairs and fair trading agencies in each state and territory have primary responsibility for investigating individual complaints concerning unsafe goods. If no mandatory standard or ban applies either locally or under the Trade Practices Act, they will consider what, if any, action is needed to remedy the hazard. This might include negotiating with firms to withdraw or recall the product or, if necessary, they may recommend that their minister orders a ban.

These agencies' internet sites are listed on the next page. Links to them, and other related sites, can be found on the ACCC website. They contain a range of materials for consumers and suppliers.

When developing a new regulation, agencies work through the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs which consists of Commonwealth, state, territory and New Zealand ministers responsible for fair trading, consumer protection laws and credit laws. This council must approve the making of a new national standard or ban.

The ministers meet once a year, and there are also several sub-committees that meet throughout the year to discuss specific aspects of consumer protection.

Advising the ministers is the Standing Committee of Officials of Consumer Affairs (SCOCA), which consists of all chief executive officers of consumer protection agencies.



## The Consumer Products Advisory Committee

This committee provides advice to the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs on consumer safety policy matters, ultimately feeding back to all Commonwealth, state and territory governments. It conducts reviews of Australian products safety standards, bans and recalls.

The membership of the committee includes officers responsible for product safety, product investigation and recall, product policy and standards. Members are from all

Commonwealth, state, territory and New Zealand consumer affairs agencies, including a representative from Standards Australia.

It has an ongoing program for safety of nursery products. This program has included introducing mandatory standards for baby walkers, cots and bunk beds. It also involves ongoing education programs for new parents through a range of publications and working with suppliers to improve the safety of the goods they sell.





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## Showbag safety—national outcomes from state cooperation

example

Showbags can be a product safety minefield for small children.

State and territory fair trading agencies conduct annual inspections of the toys and novelties to be sold in showbags before each state and territory's annual shows. They take action to remove unsafe products and rectify any safety concerns.

Voluntary guidelines on the safety of toys and novelties in showbags were first implemented in 1992 to provide a benchmark against which the toys and novelties can be assessed for their safety before being supplied to

shows. However, agencies continue to find some problem products.

The Consumer Products Advisory Committee has recently revised the guidelines under the leadership of the Queensland Office of Fair Trading, in consultation with suppliers. These changes reflect the newly introduced Australian Toy Standard criteria.

In July 2003 the committee endorsed the revised guidelines to be phased in immediately with the aim of full voluntary compliance by suppliers for the 2004 national show circuit.

### Commonwealth, state and territory consumer affairs/fair trading agencies

Department of Equity and Fair Trading Queensland	<a href="http://www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au">www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au</a>
Competition and Consumer Policy Division of the Treasury	<a href="http://www.treasury.gov.au/content/consumer_affairs.asp">www.treasury.gov.au/content/consumer_affairs.asp</a>
ACT Office of Fair Trading	<a href="http://www.fairtrading.act.gov.au">www.fairtrading.act.gov.au</a>
Department of Fair Trading (NSW)	<a href="http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au">www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au</a>
Consumer & Business Affairs Victoria	<a href="http://www.justice.vic.gov.au">www.justice.vic.gov.au</a>
Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (SA)	<a href="http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au/prodsafety.htm">www.ocba.sa.gov.au/prodsafety.htm</a>
Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (WA)	<a href="http://www.docep.wa.gov.au">www.docep.wa.gov.au</a>
Office of Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading (NT)	<a href="http://www.nt.gov.au/caft">www.nt.gov.au/caft</a>
Consumer Affairs & Fair Trading (Tas)	<a href="http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/ca">www.justice.tas.gov.au/ca</a>

### Overseas consumer affairs/fair trading agencies

Office of Fair Trading (UK)	<a href="http://www.oft.gov.uk">www.oft.gov.uk</a>
US Consumer Product Safety Commission	<a href="http://www.cpsc.gov">www.cpsc.gov</a>
Ministry of Consumer Affairs (NZ)	<a href="http://www.consumer-ministry.govt.nz">www.consumer-ministry.govt.nz</a>
Commerce Commission (NZ)	<a href="http://www.comcom.govt.nz">www.comcom.govt.nz</a>

### Other government regulators of interest

Foods Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)	<a href="http://www.foodstandards.gov.au">www.foodstandards.gov.au</a>
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	<a href="http://www.atsb.gov.au">www.atsb.gov.au</a>
Therapeutic Goods Administration	<a href="http://www.health.gov.au/tga">www.health.gov.au/tga</a>

### Other related sites of interest

Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre	<a href="http://www.rch.org.au/safetycentre">www.rch.org.au/safetycentre</a>
Product safety recalls	<a href="http://www.recalls.gov.au">www.recalls.gov.au</a>
National Consumer website	<a href="http://www.consumer.gov.au">www.consumer.gov.au</a>
Standards Australia	<a href="http://www.standards.com.au">www.standards.com.au</a>
Monash University Accident Research Centre	<a href="http://www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc">www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc</a>
Kidsafe—The Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia	<a href="http://www.thegreenwebb.net.au/kidsafe">www.thegreenwebb.net.au/kidsafe</a>



## ACCC product safety publications

Publications can be obtained from the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502 and are also available from our ACCC website at: [www.accc.gov.au/fs-pubs.htm](http://www.accc.gov.au/fs-pubs.htm).

Consumer product standards and bans: a compliance guide for suppliers. April 2003

Product safety guide: **balloon blowing kits**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **bean bags**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **care labelling—clothing & textile products**. May 2000

Product safety guide: **children's nightwear**. September 2001

Product safety guide: **paper patterns for children's nightwear**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **cosmetics & toiletries—ingredient labelling**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **elastic luggage straps**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **exercise cycles**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **labelling of tobacco products**. October 1999

Product safety guide: **pedal bicycles**. December 2000

Product safety guide: **sunglasses and fashion spectacles**. October 1998

News for Business: **disposable cigarette lighters**. October 1997

News for Business: **household cots**. July 1998

Product safety bulletin: **banned product: mini-cup jellies with konjac**. January 2003  
(also available in Vietnamese and Chinese)

## Product safety information via the internet

Information on product safety and standards and the product liability provisions of the Trade Practices Act is available on the ACCC website at [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au).

The site is regularly updated with news on mandatory standards, bans and recalls. A current list of standards and bans, media releases and links to other useful websites is also available.

Publications providing guidance on a range of mandatory standards can also be downloaded from the ACCC website. If you would like more information about them or copies of gazette notices and regulations please contact the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502.





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