

U.S. Attorney for the district embracing the place where the action or proceeding is brought.

(d) The General Counsel shall forward the request, the accompanying documentation, and the General Counsel's recommendation to the Secretary or his/her designee for decision.

## **PART 16—PROCEDURES FOR A VOLUNTARY CONSUMER PRODUCT INFORMATION LABELING PROGRAM**

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 2, 31 Stat. 1449, as amended; sec. 1, 64 Stat. 371, (15 U.S.C. 272); Re-organization Plan No. 3 of 1946, Part VI.

SOURCE: 42 FR 26648, May 25, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

### **§ 16.1 Purpose.**

The purpose of this part is to establish procedures under which a voluntary consumer product information labeling program administered by the Department of Commerce will function.

### **§ 16.2 Description and goal of program.**

(a) The Department's Voluntary Consumer Product Information Labeling Program makes available to consumers, at the point of sale, information on consumer product performance in an understandable and useful form so as to facilitate accurate consumer purchasing decisions and enhance consumer satisfaction. It also educates consumers, distributors and retailers in the use of the product performance

information displayed and provides manufacturers and other persons who participate in the program with an opportunity to convey to the public the particular advantages of their products. These objectives are accomplished by:

(1) Selecting or developing standardized test methods by which selected product performance characteristics can be measured;

(2) Developing labeling methods by which information concerning product performance can be transmitted in useful form to consumers at the point of sale;

(3) Encouraging manufacturers and other participants in the program voluntarily to test and label their products according to the selected or developed methods; and

(4) Encouraging consumers through various informational and educational programs to utilize the product performance information provided.

(b) The program involves voluntary labeling by enrolled participants of selected categories of consumer products with information concerning selected performance characteristics of those products. The performance characteristics selected are those that are of demonstrable importance to consumers, that consumers cannot evaluate through mere inspection of the product, and that can be measured objectively and reported understandably to consumers. The consumer products covered include those for which incorrect purchase decision can result in financial loss, dissatisfaction, or inconvenience. The program seeks to avoid the duplication of other Federal programs under which performance characteristics are labeled by exempting those performance characteristics from this program. However, where the Federal agency concerned agrees, the Department of Commerce may include information about those performance characteristics in CPILP labels if, by doing so, product comparison at the point of sale is simplified for consumers, and the complexity of product labeling is reduced for the manufacturers by enabling them to comply with the labeling requirements of other Federal agencies through participation in CPILP.

(c) For selected categories of consumer products, the program includes advertising guidelines covering situations where quantitative performance values are stated in advertising or where qualitative comparisons are made of the performance of different products.

[42 FR 26648, May 25, 1977, as amended at 43 FR 8255, Mar. 1, 1978]

### § 16.3 Definitions.

(a) The term *Secretary* means the Secretary of Commerce or her designee.

(b) The term *consumer* means the first person who purchases a consumer product for purposes other than resale.

(c) The term *participant* means a manufacturer, assembler or private brand labeler of consumer products or an importer of such products for resale and who participates in the program.

(d) The term *consumer product* means any article produced or distributed for sale to a consumer for the use, consumption, or enjoyment of such consumer. The term does not include products customarily intended primarily for business, commercial, or industrial use.

(e) The term *person* means an individual; a manufacturer; distributor; retailer; importer; private brand labeler; government agency at the Federal (including any agency of the Department of Commerce), State and local level; consumer organization; trade association; standards writing body; professional society; testing laboratory; or educational institution.

(f) The term *performance characteristic* means a performance characteristic of a consumer product that can be measured in an objective manner with respect to a given consumer product.

(g) The term *Specification* means a Performance Information Labeling Specification developed under § 16.5.

(h) The term *label* means printed matter affixed to or otherwise provided with a consumer product and containing all of the performance characteristics as prescribed by the Specification applicable to that product.

(i) The term *designated agent* means a person as defined in paragraph (e) of this section, who has been designated by the Secretary to carry out appropriate operational procedures on behalf

of more than one participant in this program in accordance with rules set out under § 16.9.

### § 16.4 Finding of need to establish a specification for labeling a consumer product.

(a) Any person may request the Secretary to find that there is a need to label a particular consumer product with information concerning one or more specific performance characteristics of that product.

(b) Such a request shall be in writing and will, to the extent practicable, include the following information:

(1) Identification of the consumer product;

(2) Extent that the product identified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section is used by the public and, if known, what the production or sales volume is of such product;

(3) Nature and extent of difficulty experienced by consumers in making informed purchase decisions because of a lack of knowledge regarding the performance characteristics of the identified consumer product;

(4) Potential or actual loss to consumers as a result of an incorrect decision based on an inadequate understanding of the performance characteristics of the identified consumer product;

(5) Extent of incidence of consumer complaints arising from or reasonably traceable to lack of knowledge regarding the performance characteristics of the identified consumer product;

(6) If known, whether there currently exist test methods which could be used to test the performance characteristics of the identified consumer product and an identification of those test methods;

(7) Reasons why it is felt, in cases where existing test methods are identified in responding to paragraph (b)(6) of this section, that such test methods are suitable for making objective measurements of the performance characteristics of the identified consumer product; and

(8) Estimated cost to participants to test and label the product.

(c) The Secretary may ask for more information to support a request made under paragraph (a) of this section if she feels it is necessary to do so, or, if