

**LOG OF MEETING
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES**

SUBJECT: Planning Meeting of ASTM Subcommittee F15.39 on Bean Bag Chairs

Date of Meeting: August 31, 1995 **Place:** ASTM Headquarters, Philadelphia, PA

Log Entry Source: Catherine A. Sedney, ESHF *AS*

Date of Entry: October 3, 1995

Commission Attendees: Jacqueline Elder, EXHR; Catherine A. Sedney, ESHF

Non-Commission Attendees: John A. Blair, DuPont (ASTM)
 Scott Haugh, Now Products
 Keith Mowry, UL, Inc. (ASTM)

Summary of Meeting:

The meeting was requested by CPSC to discuss the need to develop a voluntary standard to reduce the risk of choking/suffocation incidents to children associated with bean bag chairs. Please see attached ASTM minutes for details of the issues addressed. Significant exceptions to the minutes are noted below:

- (1) Section F., opening paragraph: The minutes imply that, based on CPSC's presentation of accident data, design changes in bean bag chairs in 1991-1992 have resulted in improved product safety. This opinion was expressed by an attendee representing a bean bag manufacturer, and cannot be inferred from data provided by CPSC attendees.
- (2) The minutes do not reflect the discussion and development of a draft standard which was produced during the meeting. The draft was provided under separate cover and is currently under review.

Attachment

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MINUTES
PLANNING MEETING OF
SUBCOMMITTEE F15.39 ON BEAN BAG CHAIRS
AUGUST 31, 1995
ASTM HEADQUARTERS, PHILADELPHIA, PA

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

B. Welcome and Self-Introductions of Attendees

John Vowell, Director, Technical Committee Support, welcomed those present and initiated self-introductions. A list of attendees is included on Attachment A.

C. Objectives of Meeting

The objectives of this planning meeting were to:

1. Bring together individuals, companies, and organizations representative of this industry to determine the best future course of action regarding the development of standards and related information.
2. Identify specific areas to be addressed in the development of standards and related information. If the participants agree on the need for these products and have an interest in developing them, then:
3. Determine whether the group should move forward and hold an organizational meeting and,
4. Formally establish a new activity by approving a title, scope, and working group structure.

D. Overview of ASTM and the Standards Development Process

John Vowell presented an overview of the ASTM organization and committee operations, which is summarized in the following paragraphs.

ASTM, a not-for-profit corporation organized in 1898, is a management system for the development of standards and related technical information for materials, products, systems, and services. It provides a legal, administrative, and publications forum within which producers, users, ultimate consumers, and representatives of government and academia can meet on a common ground to develop standards that best meet the needs of all concerned.

ASTM's membership of 38,000, of which 5,000 are international members, is organized into 131 technical committees which do the actual work of standards writing. Committee members voluntarily contribute their time and effort.

ASTM's technical committee structure is made up of main committees, subcommittees, and task groups. The task groups initiate draft standards which sub and main committees ballot following the rigorous due process, consensus procedures described in the Regulations Governing ASTM Technical Committees. There are six principal types of standards including test methods, specifications, practices, guides, classifications, and terminology.

The ASTM procedures, based on due process, ensure that the standards produced are technically sound and rest on a solid legal foundation with appropriate concern for legal issues such as restraint of trade and volunteer liability.

Some reasons why individuals and organizations request that ASTM organize a new activity include:

1. ASTM, one of the few standards organizations not limited in scope, provides a management system that can address any area where the need for standards or related information exists. ASTM encourages strong liaison with other standards organizations to avoid duplication of efforts.
2. ASTM is a proven system that has been in existence for over 95 years and has produced nearly 10,000 standards that are widely used to provide the necessary certainty in contractual agreements, regulatory initiatives and industry self-regulation programs.
3. A full-time professional staff operating from ASTM Headquarters in Philadelphia provides administrative and management support to assist the ASTM membership.
4. The ASTM system provides a neutral umbrella in which all interested parties voluntarily participate in the development of consensus information.

E. Background Information and Request for Activity

Keith Mowry, with Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., gave an overview of ASTM Committee F15 on Consumer Products. The request came from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) asking ASTM to investigate the need for safety standards related to bean bag products.

F. Discussion From the Floor

CPSC data concerning accidents associated with bean bag chairs was distributed. See Attachment B. The change in zipper designs (moving zippers to the side rather than the middle and in manufacturing of the fastener) in 1991-92 has greatly improved product safety.

The group unanimously agreed on the need, title and scope for a new subcommittee in ASTM to address safety issues associated with bean bag chairs.

Title: F15.39 on Bean Bag Chairs

The group agreed that Keith Mowry, with Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., would be the new subcommittee chairperson.

Scope: The development of standards for the prevention of choking/suffocation from bean bag chairs.

The areas for consideration in standards development are:

- width of opening (influences zipper placement)
- zipper placement (on bottom of bag design)
- zipper lock design/and disabling
- labelling (warning)
- durability testing/performance standard
- material testing (flex and peel)
- terminology (i.e., bean bag chair: fabric covered
furnishing with no internal support structures
and filled with formed polystyrene (PS) beads)

The initial preparation of a draft standard will focus on testing and labelling. The group agreed to pursue the provisional standard process for this standard.

G. New Activity Promotion

John Vowell requested the names and addresses of additional individuals and organizations in this area so they may be invited to participate in this new subcommittee. He also requested appropriate journal titles for additional press release coverage.

Other organizations identified as having an interest in this activity included:

- Wal Mart, K Mart, Sears, Venture, Target, Caldor, Montgomery Ward, Harts, J. C. Penney, Toys 'R' Us

H. Next Meeting Date and Location

The organizational meeting for this activity will be November 2, 1995 at CPSC Headquarters in Bethesda, MD from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

NEW ASTM SUBCOMMITTEE F15.39 ON BEAN BAG CHAIRS
PLANNING MEETING - AUGUST 31, 1995
ASTM HEADQUARTERS, PHILADELPHIA, PA

ATTENDEES

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BEAN BAG CHAIRS - INTERESTED

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United States
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: **AUG 29 1995**

TO : Jacqueline Elder, Deputy AED
 Office of Hazard Identification and Reduction

Through: Dr. Mary Ann Danello, Associate Executive Director *M. Danello*
 Directorate for Epidemiology and Health Sciences
 Robert E. Frye, Director, EHHA *R. Frye*

From : Manon Boudreault, EHHA, (301)504-0470, ext. 1258 *MAB*

Subject : Bean Bag Chair Incidents, 1973-August 23, 1995

Attached are two tables describing and listing bean bag chair deaths and non-fatal incidents where children either crawled inside bean bag chairs and suffocated, ingested/inhaled chair beads/pellets or were in a potential suffocation/ingestion type of incident. Five deaths occurred where children got inside bean bag chairs and suffocated. Deaths where data is limited and described solely as "died of SIDS sleeping in a bean bag chair", "suffocated on a bean bag chair" or "died of positional asphyxia on bean bag chair" were omitted. Narratives and all other information were obtained from computer records. Emergency room treated incidents (collected through the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, NEISS) involving bean bag chairs most often were children jumping off/on bean bag chairs, falling off, or tripping over them. Several other non-fatal incidents (not included in tables attached) reported through NEISS occurred where children put chair beads in their ears or nose.

The cases identified were from the death certificates, in-depth investigations, news clippings, consumer and other reports for the 1973 through August 23, 1995 period.

Attachments (2)

**BEAN BAG CHAIR DEATHS
1973-RECEIVED AS OF AUGUST 23, 1995**

Date of Death yymmdd	City	State	Age of Victim(s) Sex	Narrative	Doc. Number Task Number
801127	Spokane	WA	6 years old and 13 years old (Males)	Two children zipped themselves inside a bean bag chair and suffocated.	T0C0011A2 F335002A2 X4A0137A2 801216HIA3 013
830515	Hinsdale	IL	14 years Male	A child crawled inside a large bean bag chair filled with foam pellets. He couldn't get out of the bag and suffocated when the foam pellets clogged his nose and throat passageways.	317025338 G440187A1 840413CHI 0719
891202	Longview	WA	4 years Male	A child crawled inside a bean bag chair, his 3 year old brother closed the zipper and he died of asphyxia.	953031838 X9C0449A1 891212CAA 3094
940911	Unionville	MO	20 months Male	A child died of asphyxia after unzipping 2 zippers and crawling inside a bean bag chair.	C4A5012A1 X496227A1 940921CAA 2757

Source: CPSC death certificates, in-depth investigations, incident reports, newspaper clippings, and other reports.

**NON-FATAL INCIDENTS
1973-RECEIVED AS OF 08-23-95**

Date of Incident yyymmdd	City	State	Age	Narrative	Doc./Task No.
781201	Centeriach	NY	unknown	Child got out foam balls from a child's bean bag chair, ate some and almost choked.	H8C0282A1
781228	Morgan-town	WV	unknown	Child unzipped chair, beans came out and covered him completely, beans got in his mouth and almost choked him.	L8C0014A1 H8C3237A0
790109	Bowie	MD	2 years	Child unzipped bean bag chair and inhaled contents into nose.	H911810A1
800514	Cherry Hill	NJ	2 years Male	Styrofoam balls from the bean bag chair were inhaled by child.	P070154A1
850000	Huntingdon	PA	18 months Female	Child nearly suffocated when her face became buried in a bean bag chair.	H060126A1
860100	Springfield	MA	2 years Male	Child was able to gain access to bean bag chair and got a bean stuck in his nose.	G670177A0
891228	Clifton	VA	2 years Male	A boy was slightly injured after he got tiny balls from a bean bag chair in his ears, nose, and mouth.	X010646A1
890000	Gilbert	AZ	3 years Male	Child inhaled foam beans from bean bag chair after the zipper came undone freeing the beans while children were on it.	HO30082A1
900700	Fairfield	CT	4 years Male	Child suffered an earache from a styrofoam bead that was lodged in his ear and had to be surgically removed.	N0C0051A1

Non-fatal incidents continued

Non-fatal incidents continued

NON-FATAL INCIDENTS
1973-RECEIVED AS OF 08-23-95

Date of Incident yymmdd	City	State	Age	Narrative	Doc./Task No.
910113	Scarborough	ME	3 years Male	Child nearly suffocated after inhaling foam beads which came from a child's bean bag chair.	H110076A1
910500	Patchogue	NY	4 years Male	Child got a nose-bleed when the small foam balls inside the bean bag chair lodged in the bridge of his nose, balls were removed in the emergency room.	910626CCC15 75
931225	Fairview Heights	IL	3 years Male	Child unzipped chair and was throwing it around the room and he slipped it over his head; the styrofoam was clinging to his face.	Y582691A
940220	Crystal Lake	IL	3 years Male	Child crawled inside adult size bean bag chair, mother dislodged the beans blocking the victim's airway by inducing vomiting.	G430312A1 940418CCC24 35
940400	Tallahassee	FL	3 years Female	Child was able to unzip and climb into a bean bag chair.	Y510110A0
940715	Bowling Green	KY	4 years Female	A bean bag chair burst at the seam and the child placed a pellet in her nose.	H470143A1 940722CCN 1977
940828	El Paso	TX	2 1/2 years Female	Child crawled inside bean bag and 5 year old brother zipped her in. Child was found unconscious and was revived.	X4A0118A1 941026CAA30 29
941100	Hartington	NE	14 months Female	Child ate foam beads from bean bag chair whose seams ripped.	H530285A1

Non-fatal incidents continued

Non-fatal incidents continued

NON-FATAL INCIDENTS
1973-RECEIVED AS OF 08-23-95

Date of Incident yymmdd	City	State	Age	Narrative	Doc./Task No.
941125	Hillsboro	NH	2 years Male	Child inhaled a foam pellet from a bean bag chair.	H4C0128A1
950100	Rincon	GA	5 years Male	Child was not injured after placing bean bag beans in his mouth.	H580108A0
950200	Virginia Beach	VA	4 years Male	Child was uninjured when he placed pellets from bean bag in mouth.	H540198A0
950222	Rittman	OH	2 years Male	Child inhaled pellets from a bean bag chair she unzipped.	H530227A1
950322	Wichita	KS	2 years Female	Child ingested pellets from a bean bag chair that required medical attention for removal.	X551267A1
950614	Graham	TX	2 years Female	Child ate foam pellets from a bean bag chair and choked on them; hospitalized for treatment.	H580035A1

Source: CPSC death certificates, in-depth investigations, incident reports, newspaper clippings, and other reports.