

LOG OF MEETING
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Meeting at Health Canada to Discuss a Canadian Standard for Bunk Beds

DATE OF MEETING: Sept. 7, 1995 **PLACE:** Product Safety Bureau,
Health Canada Laboratory

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: John Preston, ES *JAP*

DATE OF ENTRY: September 11, 1995

COMMISSION ATTENDEES: John Preston, ES

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Jean Wong, PSB, Health Canada	Georges Desbarats, PSB
Therese Gagnon, PSB	François Dignard, PSB
Mary Hill, PSB	Michael Veljkovic, The Brick
Victor DeViller, Sears	Ken Foster, CJPMA

Approximately ten other non-commission attendees representing manufacturers and importers of bunk beds. Complete list of attendees available at a later date upon receipt of the minutes of the meeting.

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

After a self introduction of attendees, Therese Gagnon, Acting Chief of the Mechanical and Electrical Hazards Division of the Product Safety Bureau, Health Canada, explained the structure and functions of the Product Safety Bureau. Ms. Gagnon then introduced Georges Desbarats who chaired the balance of the meeting.

Mr. Desbarats stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss with industry representatives whether a regulation should be issued by Health Canada addressing the safety of bunk beds. He said such a regulation could be issued under the Hazardous Products Act and it could reference the existing U.S. ASTM voluntary standard for bunk beds. He noted that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) encourages compatible standards in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

At the request of Mr. Desbarats, John Preston summarized the evolution of the ASTM standard for Bunk Beds and the involvement of CPSC staff in this standard. Preston noted that he had written to the ASTM bunk bed subcommittee chairman in April and requested a meeting to discuss changes to the ASTM standard. These were 1) add requirements to address entrapment in the lower bunk end structures, 2) require the name and address of the manufacturer, distributor or seller to be on the bed, and 3)

reduce the language on the required warning label but add the size of the intended mattress on this label. Preston said that these staff requests were discussed at a July 18th ASTM subcommittee meeting and attendees at that meeting had agreed to No. 2, rejected No. 3 and would further discuss request No. 1 at a September 27th meeting.

Several attendees at this meeting expressed an opinion that it was important for the name and address of either the manufacturer, distributor or seller to be on the bed.

During discussion on the merits of a Canadian standard for bunk beds, a buyer for a major department store stated that his job would be simplified if there was such a standard.

A manufacturer of bunk beds stated that he believed that public awareness of the hazards associated with the use of bunk beds is very important. He suggested that some type of public awareness campaign should be initiated.

In summarizing the discussion at the meeting, Mr. Desbarats noted the following:

- o some retailers require conformance to the ASTM standard for bunk beds that they sell,
- o identification of the source of the bed is very important and should be marked on the bed,
- o a (mandatory) regulation establishes a "level playing field" for manufacturers,
- o currently there are some manufacturers producing beds that conform to the ASTM bunk bed standard and some that do not conform,
- o the effectiveness of a regulation for bunk beds may be enhanced by a public awareness campaign focussing on hazards associated with bunk beds.

Mr. Desbarats invited attendees to write to either the director of the Product Safety Bureau or the Minister for Health expressing their opinion on the merits of a regulation for bunk beds. He said that if a decision is made to not publish a mandatory standard, the four furniture manufacturers associations in Canada would be contacted to seek voluntary conformance to a standard for bunk beds. He also noted that a regulatory impact study would have to be conducted before a decision is made to publish a mandatory standard.

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