

25
2/15/95

**LOG OF MEETING
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES**

SUBJECT: Christmas and Ornamental Lighting

DATE OF MEETING: February 8, 1995

PLACE OF MEETING: CPSC, East-West Towers, Room 612, Bethesda, MD

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Erlinda M. Edwards, ESEE *EE*

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Bill King, ESEE

Terry Van Houten, EPHF

John Shumlansky, CECA

Nicholas Mogan, ESEE

Erlinda M. Edwards, ESEE

Chuck Smith, ECPA

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Don Talka, UL, Engineering Services

Vanessa Uneberg, UL, Engineering Services

Mario Xerri, UL, International Inspection Services

Camille Alma, UL, Standards Department

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

Mr. Bill King stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss Underwriters Laboratories' proposal for updating UL 588, Standard for Christmas Tree and Decorative Lighting Outfits. The subject has been brought to the forefront due to the increased number of problems observed during the 1994 Christmas season. Most of the problems seen involved nonlisted products; however, some problems were found with listed light sets. Mr. King indicated that, in roughly 60 days, the Commission would be briefed on options available which might prevent a recurrence of such problems, including mandatory rulemaking once there is a standard suitable for adoption.

Mr. Mario Xerri estimated that 60 to 70 percent of listed products were being made in China. He offered his assistance to Mr. Chuck Smith in characterizing the industry: How much product and what types are imported/domestic? What percentage is listed? Who are major players? Mr. Xerri also offered the following information:

	<u>Outfits</u>	<u>Strings</u>
1993	30 million labels	150 million labels
1994	50 million labels	160 million labels

✓

Mr. John Shumlansky showed several products from the 1994 Christmas season which exhibited electrical hazards, most of which were nonlisted. He asked that Compliance be included in UL's distribution list of press releases; Compliance would like to work with UL when possible. Mr. King suggested that, should UL be aware of an incident that they believe should be followed up, CPSC might use its investigative resources.

Mr. Nick Mogan showed some indoor/outdoor products with electrical hazards. He suggested that products used outdoors, particularly since they may later be used indoors, should not be able to collect water, which may result in corrosion, and that spacings between terminals of opposite polarities should be sufficient to avoid tracking.

Mr. Don Talka outlined UL's two-tier plan for updating and reorganizing the standard, and addressing CPSC concerns. Tier 1, which could be completed in approximately 6 months, would be a revision aimed at reflecting the types of products and the level of safety available on the market today. To make the standard more readable, Mr. Talka suggested that, as an interim measure, flow charts would be used at the beginning of the standard to denote applicable sections for various product types. Mr. Talka stated that UL is anxious to address issues of consumer interaction with products; he would like to work with CPSC Human Factors staff on the message that CPSC would like to convey.

Mr. Talka explained that Tier 2 would include a general upgrading and reorganization. Upgrading would address issues such as continuous use, environmental considerations for outdoor products, appropriateness of materials, how products are handled, and detrimental effects of storage environments. UL will also compare their standard with others, such as CSA and IEC standards.

Mr. Talka explained that effective dates of changes to the voluntary standard must be timely, or the impact of the changes will be missed for a season. The manufacture of components (lampholders, attachment plugs) occurs between February and April. Imported strings are manufactured up until September; domestically, they are manufactured into November. Reasonable effective dates to allow for retooling suggest that effects of proposed changes may not be apparent before the 1997 Christmas season. He concluded by stating that it is too early to tell what benefit other changes, which went into effect this year, might have.