L O G O F M E E T I N G

SUBJECT: Plastic Enclosures for Electrical Products

DATE: June 15, 1998 **PLACE:** Ritz Carlton Hotel
Palm Beach, FL

DATE OF LOG ENTRY: June 19, 1998

SOURCE OF LOG ENTRY: William H. King, Jr., ESEE

CPSC PARTICIPANT: William H. King, Jr., ESEE

NON-CPSC PARTICIPANTS:

Allen Weidman, Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc.
Dennis Williams, Borden Chemical, Inc.
Rick Jones, Cytec Industries, Inc.
Michael Fisher, American Plastics Council
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Tina Kierzek, Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc.
Ted Abbot, Neste Resins of Canada
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Bill Ayles, Rogers Corp.
Steve Carow, Plaslok Corp.
Ted Charles, OxyChem
Dick Furlong, OxyChem Canada
Vince Karls, Plenco

SUMMARY:

Mr. King was invited by the Phenolic Division of the Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc. to participate in a portion of their scheduled meeting to provide general information regarding the CPSC and the safety concerns of the CPSC staff with regard to polymeric materials that serve as electric product enclosures, particularly housings for portable household appliances.

Mr. King reviewed the CPSC mission, the annual injury statistics, CPSC history, existing regulations, and how CPSC investigates safety issues. He also covered the various strategies used by the CPSC for addressing product safety issues including: voluntary standards, mandatory standards, recalls/compliance, information/education, partnerships, conferences, and guidelines.

With regard polymeric materials, Mr. King informed the group that Underwriters Laboratories (UL) formed a Plastics Flammability Ad Hoc Committee to address CPSC staff concerns regarding the flammability of plastic enclosures for portable appliances. After several meetings of the committee attended by CPSC staff, specific proposals are expected to be published for public comment by UL within the next several months.

Based on cases contained in CPSC files, the CPSC staff has recommended proposals that 1) apply test flames against plastic parts in proximity to additional potential internal ignition sources, such as electrical circuit connections, 2) tighten the criteria that permits relaxed flammability requirements for products that need the consumer to be present for operation, and 3) remove the exception that permits lesser flammability requirements when internal electrical parts are insulated.

Mr. King concluded by indicating that if the areas of concern can be addressed by considering tests and criteria already contained in international standards, such as IEC 60335-1, this would have the advantage of improving safety while moving closer toward global harmonization.