



Global products, Global Product Safety

One of the ways Australia is working to improve the effectiveness of the product safety regime is by developing strong links with safety regulators overseas.

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) officers work with their counterparts in many countries so they can share information and processes to improve product safety regimes. Safety is a global issue and by tapping into information available overseas, the ACCC will be able to identify risky products that are present in Australia and benefit from the thinking of our counterparts.

The ACCC is also involved in a number of projects aimed at addressing emerging risks consistently. For example we are currently working with partner agencies in Canada, the European Union and the US on a pilot aimed at reaching a shared view about risks posed by products that have led to the death or serious injury of children. Having agreed on the nature of the hazard, the working groups will establish how the hazard is best addressed.

The pilot will initially focus on:

- › Corded window coverings
- › Chair-top booster seats and;
- › Baby slings

'This project represents an innovative way of working on global product safety,' Deputy Chairman Peter Kell said.

The ACCC is also active in international product safety collaboration more broadly. For example, earlier this year, the ACCC signed an agreement with our United States counterpart to formalise the already close working arrangements on product safety between the two nations. The ACCC and the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Sydney on 13 January 2011.

'This reflects our intention to work together even more closely on product safety issues into the future,' Mr Kell said.

'Signing this agreement with the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission can only strengthen our international systems and efforts to reduce risks of injury and death associated with consumer products—and that's a great benefit for consumers in both countries.'

The agreement recognises the global nature of product safety issues and the opportunities the ACCC and CPSC have to work together in improving:

- › Identification and assessment of risks and hazards.
- › Methods and timing of sharing intelligence about product safety hazards, standards and bans.
- › Cross-border product safety compliance.

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