

Report to the Tyne and Wear Trading Standards Joint Committee

21 June 2018

Code of Practice on Product Safety Recalls

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Purpose of the report

To update the Committee on the latest developments with the important issue of Product Safety Recalls.

Office of Product Safety and Standards

1. The Government on the 21 January 2018 announced the creation of a new national oversight body tasked with identifying consumer risks and managing responses to large-scale product recalls and repairs.
2. The new Office for Product Safety and Standards is seen as enabling the UK to meet the evolving challenges of product safety by responding to expanding international trade, the growth in online shopping and the increasing rate of product innovation.
3. The Government has promised to continue to work with stakeholders such as consumer groups, manufacturers and retailers to ensure the office coordinates the UK's product safety regime as effectively as possible.
4. This will not lessen any of the legal responsibilities that sit with manufacturers, importers and retailers to present safe products to the market, and to take rapid effective action when safety issues arise with their products.
5. One of the key actions identified as part of the government's response to the working group include:
 - working with the British Standards Institute to provide guidance on product recalls and corrective action,

Code of Practice

6. In March 2018 the Office for product Safety and Standards teamed up with the British Standards Institute to launch the Code of Practice (PAS 7100) for product safety recall in the UK.
7. The Code of Practice includes details on how a business can monitor the safety of products and plan for a recall, and how Market Surveillance Authorities such

as local authority Trading Standards can support businesses in their monitoring of incidents and their implementation of corrective action.

8. The Code of Practice, developed by BSI, is the first major initiative for the new Office since it was launched by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in January. It follows a recommendation by the Working Group on Products Recalls and Safety to introduce such a Code to further strengthen the UK's already tough product safety regime.
9. The Code of Practice was created with the assistance of leading retailers, consumer interest groups and industry bodies, including Tesco, Samsung Electronics, British Retail Consortium, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers.

Scott Steedman, Director of Standards at BSI said:

- *“Public interest in product safety is higher than it has ever been and whilst consumer products generally perform without problems, there are times when products can become faulty and require a repair or recall. The Code of Practice was created to ensure that corrective action by manufacturers is taken in a safe and systematic way. The launch of this guidance is an important step in ensuring even higher levels of product safety in the future”.*

10. The Code of Practice comes in two parts. The first part is focused on non-food consumer products and is intended for use by manufacturers, importers and distributors. It provides details on:

- how a business can plan for a recall, including establishing mechanisms to deal with any product safety issue identified,
- managing a possible safety related product recall or other corrective action,
- establishing mechanisms to monitor the safety of products,
- investigating any potential product safety issue,
- reviewing corrective action programmes to ensure that product safety responsibilities continue to be met.

11. The second part is aimed at regulators, specifically Market Surveillance Authorities including local authority Trading Standards. It details how they can carry out their role in ensuring businesses meet their responsibilities in respect of consumer product safety issues by:

- monitoring incidents and analysing data,
- supporting businesses in the preparation of their 'product safety incident plan' (PSIP),
- supporting businesses in their monitoring of incidents and their implementation of appropriate corrective action.

Training Event

12. Officers from across the region attended a training event on the new Code of Practice which was hosted by the Office of Product Safety and Standards in Newcastle on the 23 April 2018.

Recommendation

10. The Committee is asked to note the information contained within this report.

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