



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

**FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS
(FIRE) (SAFETY) REGULATIONS
1988**

**Consultation on proposed
amendments to Schedule 5 - the
Match Test - Part 1 and Schedule 4
- the Cigarette Test**

AUGUST 2014

**Annex 8: Proposed amendments to schedule 5 - the match test -
part 1 and schedule 4 - the cigarette test - of the furniture and
furnishings (fire) (safety) regulations 1988 - response form**

The Department may, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, make available, on public request, individual responses.

The closing date for this consultation is 7th October 2014.

Please provide answers to any of the questions below, and provide any additional response you believe is appropriate, headed:

Your name:

Redacted

Organisation (if applicable): Stokke AS

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Please return completed forms to:

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Please tick boxes below which best describe you or your organisation.

	Organisation type
	Business representative organisation/trade body
	Central government
	Charity or social enterprise
	Individual
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Large business (over 250 staff)
	Legal representative
	Local Government
	Medium business (50 to 250 staff)
	Micro business (up to 9 staff)
	Small business (10 to 49 staff)
	Trade union or staff association
	Other (please describe):

Please note: in addition to the consultation questions below, we would be very grateful if you could also answer the questions from the Impact Assessment which follow them.

Consultation questions:

Question 1: Do you think this proposal will achieve its aims of: helping to make UK furniture greener, save money to industry and making UK furniture more fire safe?

Comments: As a general comment we are astonished by several points presented in this consultation. This regulation lack total relevance when it comes to the rest of Europe and also several other markets, making this a huge barrier to trade and still an environmental low point in European consumer regulations.

As the awareness related to use of harmful chemicals in consumer products is growing around the world, it is also quite difficult to understand these regulations. It seems that some of the mandated points behind this amendment were related to reduce use of FR chemicals, considering consumer health and also environment related issues is not taken care of during this consultation for certain consumer products. For children's products this seems to be the opposite situation after this amendment, and we are quite surprised that BIS has not taken upon them to protect the most vulnerable consumers.

This amendment will not contribute to a cost reduction for the nursery industry, especially as the amendment seems to even enlarge the scope with the 40 mm requirement. For nursery products, this requirement is quite challenging.

We are very surprised by the lack of external factors being addressed in this consultation, we recognize that house fires has been dramatically decreased since the regulation first was taken into force, but there are other factors that should have been discussed:

- Less smoking indoors
- Less smoking in total
- Better electrical systems in doors
- More enlightened consumers
- Self-extinguishing cigarettes

The consultation does not present any statistics or accident data relevant for this process.

We are for the sum of all of the above mentioned reasons, quite appalled and astonished by this consultation.

Questions 2: Do you think that paragraphs 19-22 accurately set out the need for a change to the current match test?

A ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Comments:

We do believe that the grounds mentioned in these paragraphs sets out a need to change the current test, but not in the direction indicated in this consultation. Baby product's and nursery products should not be part of these regulations; they contain small amounts of foams and textiles. There is already flammability requirements used for other EU countries, EN 1103, has this been evaluated at all for this category of products?

The availability and exposure for FR chemicals should be limited to a minimum for small children, and industry should be empowered to contribute to a lowered total chemical exposure for all children. By enforcing these kinds of regulations, we are forced to go in the opposite direction.

These regulations will continue to be a strong barrier to trade for all producers aiming at being present in the UK market.

Question 3: Do you think the proposed changes are viable (paragraphs 23-29)?

A ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not sure

Comments:

Going through the consultation with our products in focus, these changes will clearly force us to use more FR chemicals than ever, due to the 40 mm requirement especially. This requirement will dictate that even plastic moulded seats in car seats and strollers will have to be FR treated. This will put us as producers in a very difficult position as this will most probably result in the

need to use more "old fashioned" chemicals that we do not want to expose our users to or be associated with.

This is so completely out of sync with the direction the rest of the world is taking with regards to these chemical.

Question 4: What are your views on the inclusion of currently unregulated materials (paragraphs 27-29)?

Comments:

See also our answer to question 3, this will force the use of even more FR chemicals especially related to children's products with thin cushions and upholstery. These are the consumers that should really be protected against these chemicals.

Question 5: Do you agree with the benefits BIS believes the changes will bring?

A ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not sure

Comments:

The consultation brings to the table to few details to really make us as a producer able to review the consequences fully. But for our range of products it will bring about no reduction in the use of FR chemicals for our UK range of products. As far as we are able to read the mandate of committee working with this amendment to the existing regulation was also to focus on the environmental and health aspect of FR chemicals and to encourage less use of FR chemicals.

Having said this, we are surprised that the product range of baby/nursery and children's products are still in the regulation and that it seems obvious that there will be an extended need for treatment with FR chemicals. We cannot see that this is fulfilling the original mandate of the amendment.

Question 6: What is your view on BIS's reasons for bringing forward the changes (paragraphs 41-42)?

Comments:

We recognise the reasons, but we cannot see that the proposed amendment will facilitate this.

Question 7: General rating of the proposals.

On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest, grade your overall approval of the proposals

	5	4	3	2	1
Right problems identified			x		
Range of options wide enough					x
Preferred options well chosen					x

Question 8: Do you have any other comments that might aid the consultation process as a whole?

Comments:

As a general comment we are not able to comment on direct costs as the details in the consultation are too few and do not enable us to fully evaluate the consequences. We strongly react to the fact that the full text of the amendment is not published. How are we as an industry going to comment on the consequences in more detail?

Below are the additional questions from the Impact Assessment. Please respond to them on this part of the form.

Q1: Is the assumption on the cost of testing above right in your view? Could you provide evidence supporting your arguments?

Q2: Do you have any evidence that could help to refine this cost estimates?

Q3: Are there any other costs not included here that should be included? Please provide evidence supporting your arguments.

Q4: Do you agree with the assumption that there will be minimal losses of stock given the transition period? What is your normal turnover of stock?

Q5: Do you agree with the assumption on annual cost savings to UK based companies testing of fabrics for the cigarette test? Could you provide information on the cost of the cigarette testing for your company?

Q6: Do you agree with the range of cost savings above? What are the cost savings most likely to be for your company?

Q7: Are there any other methodologies you think would be more appropriate?

Q8: Do you agree with the cost estimates above? Could you provide alternative estimates?
Could you provide estimates of cost savings for upholstered garden furniture and/or caravan upholstered furniture?

Q9: Do you agree with the assumptions above towards calculating the total annual amount of treated fabric? Please provide evidence supporting your arguments.

Q10: Are there any other unquantified costs or benefits? If possible, please provide evidence supporting your arguments.

Q11: Is this a fair reflection of how smaller businesses will be affected? Please provide evidence supporting your arguments.

Q12: Are the familiarisation cost savings, in time, between options 2 and 4 an accurate reflection of the difference? Please provide evidence supporting your arguments.

Q13: Do the cost saving time profiles accurately reflect the timings of cost savings your business expect to see?

Thank you for your views on this consultation. Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge receipt of individual responses unless you tick the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply ☒

At BIS we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be okay if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

☒ Yes

☐ No

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