

Note of the 1st Meeting of the Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety – Tuesday 1st November 2016

1. Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety

This was the first meeting of the newly formed Working Group on recalls and product safety under the Chairmanship of Neil Gibbins.

Attendees:

Neil Gibbins, Former Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Devon and Somerset (**Chair**)
David Bolton, British Retail Consortium (BRC)
Steve Brunige, British Standards Institution, (BSI)
Philip Buckle, Electrical Safety First, (ESF)
Kate Corby, Baker McKenzie LLP
Sian Lewis, Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliances (AMDEA)
Jonathan O’Neil, Fire Protection Association (FPA)
Guy Pratt, Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO)
Charlie Pugsley, the Chief Fire Officers’ Association (CFOA)
Professor G. J. Rodgers, Brunel University London
Mark Shepherd, Association of British Insurers (ABI)
Errol Taylor, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
Melanie Wiseman, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)

Apologies:

Roland Earle, British Toy and Hobby Association (BTHA)
Leon Livermore, Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)

2. Meeting content

Margot James, the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility, tasked the group to come up with initial answers and proposed solutions to the following six issues with an initial report on progress before Christmas 2016:

- the causes of fire in white goods and the steps we can take to reduce them;
- ways to improve the capture and use of data relating to faulty electrical goods;
- the value of marking white goods to preserve their identification through fire;
- registration of electrical products at the point of sale;

- a code of practice for product recalls including the peer review of risk assessments;
- improving the information available to consumers and the role of consumer education.

The group were enthusiastic in picking up the challenge and accepting the remit and focus of the group and the timescale for reporting before Christmas.

The group went through each of the six questions posed to give views on what they needed to find out, how they would do it and who else might need to be involved.

3. Outputs

We are following through on the working groups responses to the six questions.

Meetings have been organised for Neil Gibbins with AMDEA and Whirlpool.

Officials are meeting with the regulatory experts from 21 major retail organisations on Monday morning with David Bolton from BRC to explore recall best practice and content requirements for a recall guide.

Officials are meeting the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to explore recall processes in the motor sector and how second hand sales are addressed.

No decisions have yet been made on subgroup activities given the pace required in this initial phase but there are likely to be subgroups around data, consumer communications and use of behavioural insights and product recall guidance in due course.

The full working group will reconvene on 14th December to review answers to the Minister's questions and further actions.