FIRE SAFETY PLATFORM

COUNTERFEIT, POOR QUALITY OR FAULTY CABLES AND PRODUCTS

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Product/Cable Safety

Focus on four key areas:

Product design & manufacture

Market surveillance and enforcement

Information and data sources

Consumer Actions

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Product design & manufactures

Bad practices still exist, resulting in counterfeit and low quality products entering the market. As such, it is important that product design and manufacture is effectively underpinned by manufacturing codes of practice based on appropriate functional standards. Such standards should, if designed and implemented correctly, improve standards of electrical installations and build professionalism amongst installers.

Ensuring that codes and standards promote routine testing of installations, this should also assist in identifying risks in design and production which may then lead to design improvements incorporating additional safety measures.

Market surveillance & enforcement - EU

➢ A market surveillance framework currently exists within the European Union. However, sub-standard (counterfeit / low-quality / second-hand) products are still able to enter the market. Given the increasing proliferation of fulfilment houses and online sales platforms, traceability of products is also often problematic.

➢ EC Regulations relating to consumer product safety and market surveillance are under consideration, the main aim of which is to refine and harmonise existing arrangements, addressing three major objectives: more safety for consumers; less burden for businesses; more co-operation among competent authorities. Implementing this proposed legislation is intended to:

o Enhanced product identification and traceability

o Enhanced use of European standards

o Establishment of a common European framework for market surveillance concerning all products on the internal market or entering the EU market

o Creation of one single piece of market surveillance legislation

o Strengthened external border controls (to better control internet purchases)

o Creation of an easily accessible database for market surveillance activities

Information & data sources

➢ Data systems are often insufficiently integrated, being disparate in nature, and not sufficient accessible to relevant stakeholders, for example, to other agencies or consumers in general.

➢ There are doubts as to whether the data being supplied is correct and sufficiently comprehensive, for example: whether all incidents (including small fires) and all relevant aspects of those incidents were being reported; whether fire investigation outcomes are fed back into recording systems; whether suitable national repositories exist for recording injuries, product recall information or customer complaints.

Consumer Actions

➢ The design and manufacture of electrical products ultimately result in the use of those products by consumers, either in the domestic sector by members of the general public, or in the non-domestic sector by industry or retailers. As such, a consumer perspective is important when considering electrical product safety.

➢ It is understood that, whilst acknowledging that the general public grasps the concept of product recall, there is a huge cultural reluctance to register electrical appliances, thereby potentially reducing the availability of product safety information.

➢ The public have concerns relating to the misuse of submitted personal data for marketing purposes. Furthermore, given the prevailing climate of financial austerity in recent years, a consumer demand for cheaper, often lower quality and counterfeit, goods has emerged.

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