



Raising standards for consumers



ANEC Annual Review ²⁰¹³



**Child Safety • Design for All • Domestic Appliances • Environment
Ecodesign • Information Society • Innovation • Services • Traffic**





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Foreword by the ANEC President

Arnold Pindar



Since it was established in 1995, ANEC has continued to strengthen the European consumer voice in standardisation. Our volunteer experts provide the user view of consumer products and services. This complements the contributions of business and helps lead to the improved safety and fitness-for-purpose of products and services on the market. Given the development of most standards in the consumer interest relies on the national delegation principle, and few national delegations feature the scarce commodity of consumer expertise, the consumer voice would not be heard without the participation of ANEC at European level. As an external mid-term evaluation of the last EU Consumer Programme ¹ found:

"The work undertaken by ANEC was highlighted as being essential to product safety and standardisation activities, and it was remarked by consultees that, without ANEC, work on standardisation would be very difficult for national organisations to feed into or support."

More recently, we understand an independent evaluation of the EU financial contributions to ANEC over a 5-year period has concluded that no other organisation *"seems able to assume its role"*.

Nevertheless, ANEC has a total dependence on public funding from the EC and EFTA, and this has come under fresh scrutiny in the difficult financial climate. There are several reasons for the decision of the EC, EFTA and Member States to support the creation of ANEC as an association with no financial means of its own, but the most evident is that the consumer movement lacked the resource to fund consumer participation in standardisation. If that was true in the mid-1990s, then it is even truer in the mid-2010s, with many consumer organisations across Europe left impoverished by the crisis.

Yet this view of ANEC ignores the value of the contribution of the many experts who give up their time to participate in our activities. The Secretariat calculated the value of the volunteer contribution in 2007 as 260.000€. A conservative estimate for 2013 is 350.000€. Our problem is that the EC has not accepted the volunteer contribution as a co-funding to its public funding, at least until now. We hope the EC can decide that the latest Financial Regulations allow them to do so in 2015 and afterwards. Otherwise, a potential cut in the level of EC financing - from perhaps 95% to 85% - could place the future of ANEC at risk, despite an available funding envelope of up to 1,4M€. And, as noted in the two evaluations above, it is far from certain whether another organisation could ensure the continuation of an effective consumer voice, and so achieve the required standards for consumer protection and welfare.

It is to the credit of our dedicated and professional staff that ANEC has achieved so much in the difficult circumstances of the past twelve months. I thank them most sincerely for their continued hard work. Their role in delivering the goals of the association needs to be acknowledged, especially as the crisis has forced several experts to withdraw as volunteers. And, of course, my thanks go to those experts who continue to offer so many hours to ANEC each year for no financial reward. I consider their contributions priceless.

¹ <http://goo.gl/Eo1o6N>

Key Events of 2013

- 1 January 2013 saw implementation of the Standardisation Regulation, (EU) 1025/2012. The Regulation amends and consolidates all previous financial and political instruments related to the European Standardisation System, including providing a new legal basis for the funding of consumer representation and requirements for the inclusion of weaker stakeholders in the standardisation process.

Links:

Regulation (EU) 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Standardisation <http://goo.gl/c2JpDx>

- The annual meeting of the ANEC General Assembly adopted the ANEC Strategy 2014 to 2020, comprising a Vision and Mission for ANEC, supported by 10 Strategic Objectives. The first Annual Action Plan to support the implementation of the Strategy was formally adopted by the General Assembly on 6 January 2014. A booklet summarising the Strategy is publicly available.

Links:

ANEC Strategy 2014 to 2020: <http://goo.gl/olp1LN>

2014 ANEC Annual Action Plan: <http://tinyurl.com/pv8jtnr>

ANEC Press Release: 'New ANEC Strategy 2014 to 2020':

<http://tinyurl.com/pkhw5cd>

- The Annual Meetings of CEN and CENELEC endorsed Guide 25 defining new modes of partnership with CEN-CENELEC. The highest category of partnership in both associations is now that of Partner Organisation. Partner Organisations benefit from an “effective participation” in the technical bodies of CEN-CENELEC (in line with the ANEC proposal from November 2011 that was further elaborated by an ad hoc group of the Technical Boards in 2012). Guide 25 was implemented on 1 January 2014 with its provisions replacing all former modes of co-operation, including CEN Associate membership and CENELEC Cooperating Partnership. ANEC is a Partner Organisation of both associations.

- With EuroSafe, ANEC co-led a coalition of over 30 European associations calling for the creation of an EU-funded pan-European database of accidents & injuries. Such a database is seen as key in identifying the need for a preventive measure (be it a legislative instrument or a standard) and assessing effectiveness of the measure. A petition from the coalition was presented to the (then) European Commissioner for Health & Consumer Policy, Tonio Borg, on World Consumer Rights Day (15 March).

Links:

Joint call for a pan-European database of accidents & injuries:

<http://tinyurl.com/bv8dvvq>

Joint Press Release: 'Towards a Europe-wide database of accidents and injuries': <http://tinyurl.com/cs94poy>



• In October 2013, the Internal Market & Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO) of the European Parliament adopted its legislative reports on the Product Safety Package. The Commission published the Package, which comprises a draft Consumer Product Safety Regulation (CPSR) - to replace the General Product Safety Directive - a Market Surveillance Regulation (MSR) and multiannual programme for market surveillance activities, on 13 February. ANEC was able to welcome many of the proposals, including explicit reference in the CPSR to vulnerable consumers and inclusion of child-appealing products. We were particularly pleased by the amendment of the Parliament to add a requirement in the draft MSR to create the accident & injuries database.

Links:

ANEC-ORGALIME joint Position Paper "Market Surveillance Regulation: a brave step towards an effective pan-European market surveillance system":
<http://tinyurl.com/p64obce>

ANEC/SG presentation to IMCO hearing on Product Safety Package:
<http://tinyurl.com/p8qnwdy>

ANEC-BEUC comments on European Commission proposal for a Regulation on market surveillance of products: <http://tinyurl.com/kazlu9k>

ANEC/BEUC position paper on the European Commission Proposal for a Consumer Product Safety Regulation: <http://tinyurl.com/mau4c5d>

ANEC/SG speaking notes at ECR hearing on Product Safety Package:
<http://tinyurl.com/oduxt8>

IMCO legislative report on the Consumer Product Safety Regulation:
<http://goo.gl/7I3CVN>

IMCO legislative report on the Market Surveillance Regulation:
<http://goo.gl/Ueos6K>

ANEC Position Paper "CE+ Marking = Experto Crede-trust the expert?":
<http://tinyurl.com/p5vq4sy>

ANEC leaflet on CE Marking: <http://tinyurl.com/afskvle>

ANEC Press Release: MEPs - please vote for improved consumer protection!:
<http://tinyurl.com/knzv84s>

ANEC Press Release: MEPs vote in favour of better consumer protection:
<http://tinyurl.com/q32ms8b>

Playground safety

On 22 October 2013, TÜV Austria and ANEC co-hosted an international conference, "Playground fall impacts: Are our standards providing adequate safety?". Ahead of the planned revision of European playground standards EN 1176 and EN 1177, which are based on knowledge available up to 2007, newer research on fall injuries concerning safety limits for arm fractures and head injuries was presented and discussed at the conference. ANEC stressed the need for standards to be reliable and credible as a reference for technical design, good practice and consumer health protection. Following the conference, in a joint press release, ANEC and TÜV Austria called for standards for playground surfaces to better reflect the balance between play and protection against falls.

Link:

Joint ANEC-TÜV Press Release: Standards for playground surfaces should better reflect the balance between play and protection against falls:
<http://tinyurl.com/ntaa3oy>



Chemicals in consumer products



ANEC and the Consumer Council of the Austrian Standards Institute (ASI CC) hosted a conference on hazardous chemicals in products on 29 October 2013 at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels. The event was organised with the collaboration of the Austrian Ministry of Health (BMG); the Austrian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK); the Belgium Public Service (FPS) Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (Danish EPA); the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment; the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA); and the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KEMI).

The conference saw speakers from the European Commission, and authorities from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, address food contact materials, water supply materials, indoor emissions, textiles, toys, child care articles, tattoo inks and nano-materials. Information on consumer products was also discussed, prior to a panel debate on strategies to achieve toxic-free products. The conference attracted more than 150 participants.

The conference aimed at exploring existing or planned national regulations and other rules (such as those set by the Council of Europe) for various products. We believe these initiatives could be transformed into European legislation with relative ease.

Following the conference, ANEC and the ASI Consumer Council launched a declaration summarising the goals of the event, with recommendations addressed to the European Commissioners for Health, Consumer Policy, Environment, and Enterprise & Industry.

We call on the European Commission to develop a systematic approach to chemicals in consumer products. In 2014, we will develop a position paper in which we will detail proposals to achieve the goal of a comprehensive approach to minimising adverse effects of hazardous substances, including chemicals in products. This goal of a non-toxic environment is also part of the 7th Union Environmental Action Programme, agreed by the European institutions and welcomed by us at the conference.

Links:

ANEC / ASI CC conference website: <http://tinyurl.com/nvtxfbn>

Joint ANEC - ASI Consumer Council Press Release: ANEC - ASI CC conference proposes options to enhance the chemical safety of products: <http://tinyurl.com/kwb6ybj>

Joint declaration by ANEC & the ASI Consumer Council on hazardous chemicals in products: <http://tinyurl.com/nbcugww>

Links to other stories:

ANEC Position Paper on the European Standardization System Strategy 2020: <http://tinyurl.com/conz7qy>

ANEC Position Paper on the European Commission Communication on the annual union work programme for European Standardisation, August 2013: <http://tinyurl.com/o7ot4t3>

2013 Research & Testing projects

Removing the 'exclusion clause'

The 2013 project was a sequel to earlier ANEC R&T studies on the revision of several Part 2 standards in the EN 60335 series for domestic electrical appliances.

In 2003, ANEC started a campaign to remove this exclusion clause from the EN 60335 series of standards by revising the standards to take into account the use of appliances by children, older people and people with disabilities. Further to ANEC's campaign, supported by study results, many of the standards have been amended to address the needs of vulnerable consumers (including the standards for toasters, microwave ovens, hobs & ovens, hairdryers, water heaters, lawnmowers & trimmers, grills and similar portable cooking appliances, electric pumps, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, clothes dryers, and towel rails).

The purpose of this latest study was to provide proposals for the revision of more Part 2 standards in the EN 60335 series, such as spin extractors, insect killers, vertically moving garage doors, drivers for rolling shutters, awnings, blinds etc., humidifiers and vaporisers.

European cross-border travel and tourism - Learning from consumer experiences and complaints

The purpose of this R&T project was to collect practical examples of consumer complaints related to cross-border services, in particular, travel and tourism.

The result of the survey of almost 6000 consumers showed that travelling within Europe is not always easy. More than a quarter of people (26.8%) reported having problems when using tourism services within Europe. Car rental was seen as the most problematic service area with 22.4% of people reporting a negative experience. Despite regulation in the areas of plane travel, train travel and package holidays, these three areas had some of the highest levels of problems and complaints. Delays, cancellations, lost luggage, confusion around ticketing and lack of clear information all featured highly, calling into question the effectiveness of the present regulations.

Links:

ANEC research study on complaints related to European cross-border travel and tourism: <http://tinyurl.com/nlxcu24>

ANEC position paper: 'How can we make travel in the EU better for consumers?': <http://tinyurl.com/pp2nay6>

ANEC leaflet: Key Facts on European cross-border complaints: <http://tinyurl.com/ov7opzr>



Models of special accommodation for older people across Europe

Between 2008 and 2012, ANEC contributed to the development of the first European standardisation initiative in the area of social welfare: Sheltered Housing for Older People. That process ended with the publication of a weaker deliverable than expected and highlighted the need to consider the diversity of models of accommodation and care for older people in possible future standardisation work.

ANEC conducted a study in 2013, proposed by the ANEC Services and Design for All Working Groups, with a view to informing future work on standardisation related to accommodation and care for older people.

The study confirms a geographical categorisation of these services, and shows the provision of care support to older people in their homes is affected by the cultural specificities. In some countries, evidence has shown an increasing focus on enabling older people to remain at home, or in supported housing, where they retain independence while having access to support when needed.

Links:

Models of special accommodation for older people across Europe: <http://tinyurl.com/p92dbdj>

Child Safety

New standards for window blinds will offer more protection to children

Roller blinds, or other window blinds, are found in many homes. Sadly, children are at risk of injury - even strangulation - from the cords used to operate the blinds. Even more regrettably, there have been several cases of children having died after becoming entangled in cords.

In 2010, ANEC alerted the European Commission to the need for a strengthening of the European Standard, EN 13120 "Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety". The Commission responded through issuing a Decision and mandate to CEN to address risks posed to children by internal blinds and corded window coverings.

ANEC participated in the work of the CEN committee through contributions from its child safety experts. Our participation was especially welcomed given the lack of other child safety experts in the committee. The work led to the adoption in 2013 of 3 European Standards, EN 13120/A1 "Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety", EN 16434 "Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Requirements & test methods for safety devices", and EN 16433 "Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Test methods" that introduce requirements for safety devices to stop cords or chains from forming a hazard; for the installation & testing of these devices; for warnings & instructions and the packaging and point-of-sale information. The standards were published in February 2014.



ANEC welcomes the adoption of these more stringent European standards for window blinds. We trust the tougher safety requirements will lead to a decrease in accidents and fatalities. Nevertheless, many blinds already installed in homes continue to be a concern. We believe that raising public awareness is key in offsetting the risk. For blinds already installed, ANEC advises parents to keep cords out of children's reach and to ensure a cot, bed or playpen is not placed near a window with corded blinds. Guidance about the use of safety accessories to reduce the risks from blind cords should also be sought from retailers.

Links:

Commission Decision (2011/477/EU) on the safety requirements to be met by European standards to address certain risks posed to children by internal blinds, corded window coverings and safety devices pursuant to Directive 2001/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council:
<http://goo.gl/5GU3ab>

Standardisation mandate M/505 issued to the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) to develop European standards in order to address certain risks posed to children by internal blinds, corded window coverings and safety devices:
<http://goo.gl/CCp84f>

ANEC Press Release: 'New standards for window blinds will offer more protection to children': <http://tinyurl.com/pk57qtc>

ANEC leaflet on window blind cords: <http://tinyurl.com/pa4wpaz>

CEN Press Release: New European Standards will improve safety of window blinds and reduce risks to children: <http://tinyurl.com/prbw35l>

Other stories:

Safety requirements under the GPSD

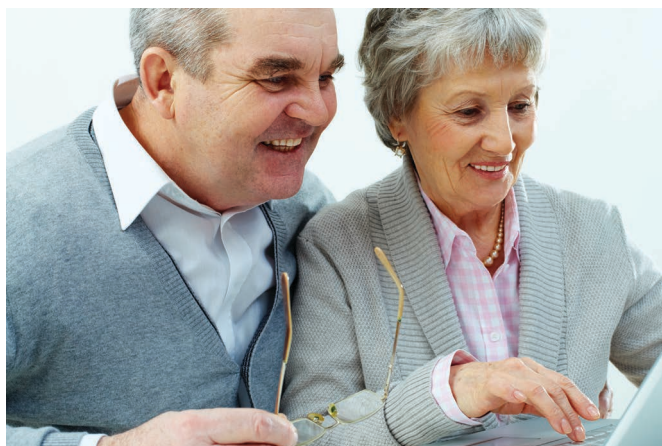
Because of the lack of a standard working method to draft and develop safety requirements to be met by standards falling under the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD), the Commission introduced a working document during 2013. In response, ANEC issued a position paper in which we suggested that the safety requirements should be determined by considering the hazards that have to be addressed by the standards. We proposed that these requirements be drafted in a transparent process, in order to ensure the interests of all stakeholders are met, and by setting up groups of experts according to the related product(s).

Link:

ANEC position paper: Working methods for setting safety requirements in the context of the General Product Safety Directive: <http://tinyurl.com/qxn13xp>

Design for All

Web accessibility directive and standards



Given our strenuous efforts in defending the access to information society by older people and people with disabilities, ANEC welcomed the long-awaited Commission proposal for a Directive on the accessibility of the websites of public sector bodies. We welcomed the draft IMCO legislative report on the proposal as it took into account several of our comments on the scope of the directive, the link with standards and the need to ensure effective market surveillance. The directive should be approved by the European Parliament and Council of Ministers in 2014.

In parallel, we contributed to a set of standards meant to implement this directive. In line with ANEC's position, prEN 301 549 "Accessibility requirements for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe" was approved to go for Formal Vote until January 2014.

ANEC also expressed its approval at the other deliverables developed as a result of Mandate M/376: FprTR 101 550 'Documents relevant to EN 301 549 Accessibility requirements suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe'; FprTR 101 551 'Guidelines on the use of accessibility award criteria suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe'; and FprTR 101 552 'Guidance for the application of conformity assessment to accessibility requirements for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe'.

Links:

ANEC Press Release: 'MEPs strengthen proposal for web-accessibility directive': <http://tinyurl.com/owb45jl>

ANEC Position Paper on Standardisation and other aspects of the European Commission Proposal for a Directive on Accessibility of Public Sector Bodies Websites: <http://tinyurl.com/lzhva5q>

ANEC comments and proposed amendments for draft EP IMCO report on the proposal for a directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites: <http://tinyurl.com/q6elg45>

ANEC comments on draft EN 301 549 Accessibility requirements for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe: <http://tinyurl.com/o7cd9p2>

ANEC comments on the EC Green Paper "Preparing for a fully Converged Audiovisual World": <http://tinyurl.com/nnh87ex>

ANEC Leaflet on the Draft Web Accessibility Directive: <http://tinyurl.com/oyuu45u>

Other stories:

Consumers and vulnerability

The European Consumer Consultative Group (ECCG) approved an Opinion on consumers and vulnerability, drafted by ANEC & BEUC. The aim of the Opinion was to provide better understanding and increased consideration of the needs of all consumers in developing an inclusive and targeted European policy. The Commission has contracted a "Study on consumer vulnerability across key markets in the European Union, plus Norway and Iceland". Its objective is to identify marketing practices that are especially problematic for consumers and to test and assess best practices employed in Member States to mitigate consumer vulnerability.

Link:

ECCG Opinion on consumers and vulnerability: <http://tinyurl.com/c4jss4o>

ISO/IEC Guide 71 "Guidelines for incorporating accessibility in standards"

ANEC continued to work on the revision of ISO/IEC Guide 71 "Guidelines for incorporating accessibility in standards" and to lead Task Force 3 on the standardisation process. The draft revision was submitted to CD Vote by the ISO/TMB and the IEC/SMB with a deadline of 15 March 2014. ANEC will be part of the group responsible for the resolution of comments. ITU confirmed its intention to adopt ISO/IEC Guide 71 as an ITU document. Guide 71 will therefore be supported by all three organisations, the first time a Guide has been endorsed by the three international standardisation organisations.

Domestic Appliances

Carbon monoxide, the silent killer

ANEC and Consumer Safety International (CSI) published a leaflet on the dangers of Carbon Monoxide (CO) which leads to deaths in all too many homes across Europe each year. The 'Silent Killer' has no colour, taste or smell and strikes without warning. The leaflet gives tips to recognise and prevent CO intoxication, and gives guidance on what to do in case of a CO poisoning.

The leaflet followed ANEC's participation in the European Parliament Seminar "Stopping the Silent Killer: European Approaches to Carbon Monoxide", where the Commission presented upcoming policy initiatives to address some aspects of CO poisoning. Initiatives include revising the standards for CO detectors, improving hotel safety, and avoiding indoor use of barbecues through mandatory labelling, all of which are being followed by ANEC.

ANEC also participated as a stakeholder in the PROSAFE joint market surveillance action on CO detectors, which continues into 2014.

Links:

ANEC Press Release: 'Carbon Monoxide - Leaflet aims to highlight the dangers from the Silent Killer': <http://tinyurl.com/orjd9gg>

ANEC-CSI leaflet on Carbon Monoxide, the silent killer: <http://tinyurl.com/pk8xcrx>

Other stories:

Lawnmowers

ANEC was successful in its call for the adoption of three EN ISO standards for lawnmowers during 2013, EN ISO 5395, Parts 1, 2 and 3. We see the standards as rigorous in their safety requirements and offering a high level of protection to the users of this potentially hazardous equipment

Revision of standard for fairground & amusement park equipment

The revised draft of EN 13814 'Fairground & amusement park machinery and structures – Safety' was out for comment in 2013. ANEC participates in this revision and submitted comments on the draft in order to ensure child safety, accessibility and services aspects are covered. The previous version of the standard, EN 13814 : 2004, was unacceptable to ANEC as it offered a very low level of safety to consumers.

In parallel with the revision of EN 13814, ANEC was invited by IAAPA, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, to attend a conference dealing with the safety of amusement parks. The conference gave us an insight into how amusement parks manage safety on a day-to-day basis.



Environment

Business transparency

In a position paper of September 2013, ANEC challenged the effectiveness of reporting under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, noting the Commission proposal for a Directive on “Corporate governance: the disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large companies and groups” (COM/2013/0207). The Directive would require larger companies to report on their social and environmental impacts.

We find current reporting schemes not to be fully comparable, often impeding reliable benchmarking and allowing green washing. Regrettably, the proposed directive would allow companies flexibility in their manners of reporting. We therefore proposed a European non-financial reporting framework, with broad and sector-specific key performance indicators to be adopted through comitology. This builds on the ANEC contribution to standardisation work in ISO TC 207 ‘Environmental Management’ and the revised ISO standard 14031 *Environmental management -- Environmental performance evaluation – Guidelines* of August 2013. The standard includes a methodology for sector-specific environmental performance indicators, developed largely by ANEC.

We also called for creation of a consultation forum, and a public working plan, similar to those existing for the Ecodesign Directive. The framework would be complemented by effective market surveillance, and offer routes for citizens to complain about misleading claims.

Although the legislative report of the Legal Affairs Committee of the Parliament recognises the need for increased transparency as promoted by ANEC, it also presents the compromise that business competitiveness must not be hampered. MEPs asked the Commission to develop reporting guidelines on non-financial performance indicators and use of international standard, and to consider proposing requirements in 2018 for country-by-country reporting on profits, taxes and subsidies.

The votes in Council and plenary of the European Parliament are expected in the first-half of 2014.

Link:

ANEC Position paper on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting:
<http://tinyurl.com/noqbhup>

Links to other stories:

ANEC/Orgalime/ACEA Letter to President Barroso on Environmental Footprint Methodologies: <http://tinyurl.com/caetscu> and the related Joint Press Information: ‘Environmental footprint methodology: not for us state consumers and manufacturers’ - <http://tinyurl.com/qh8h7qn>

ANEC Position in response to the Green Paper on a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment: <http://tinyurl.com/nucn6bj>

ANEC response to DG ENV public consultation on ‘sustainable buildings’:
<http://tinyurl.com/nux5zoc>



Ecodesign

Although the Ecodesign Framework Directive lays the ground for addressing a wide range of environmental parameters in product design and specifically in energy related products, until recently, implementing measures have mainly targeted energy consumption at the use phase. From September 2017 however, the motors of vacuum cleaners sold in the EU will be required to survive at least 500 hours of operation and their hoses will need to sustain at least 40,000 oscillations. A split or broken hose is the commonest cause of vacuum cleaner failure. Consumer expectations from more sustainable products are not restricted to energy efficiency. Durability requirements under Ecodesign constitute one of the long standing demands of ANEC. The upcoming revision of Ecodesign measures for other consumer relevant product groups, such as washing machines, constitutes an ideal opportunity to respond to the consumer expectation for more durable goods.

Links:

ANEC position on Ecodesign requirements for vacuum cleaners:
<http://tinyurl.com/njtw8f4>

Ecodesign regulation on vacuum cleaners:
<http://tinyurl.com/mta5o62>

Links to other stories:

ANEC/BEUC Factsheet on Water using equipment: <http://tinyurl.com/nz3oah3>

ANEC-BEUC Position Paper: Consumer interests in the review of the Ecodesign measures for External Power Supplies (Lot): <http://tinyurl.com/q5cry5m>

ANEC-BEUC Position Paper "Lessons learned from past mistakes - The need for a transparent and simple Energy Label based on a closed A-G scale:
<http://tinyurl.com/oonyome>

MarketWatch

In 2013, ANEC and other environmental, consumer and energy non-profit organisations formed a consortium to raise awareness of the importance of the market surveillance of Ecodesign and Energy Labelling and to encourage the increased involvement by civil society organisations. The countries represented in the consortium represent about 80% of final EU energy consumption. Mis-sold appliances cut expected household energy savings by some 10 percent in Europe. Lost savings from non-compliance equate to about €10.5 billion per year.

From late 2013, national MarketWatch partners began conducting physical shop visits and vetting online stores to check compliance. The results of these visits will be analysed and published in 2014. During the project, more than 300 visits to shops and over 300 online consultations will be carried out. Check-testing of up to 100 products as well as fully-fledged tests of 20 iconic cases in accredited laboratories will be conducted, with results applicable in 10 EU countries.

Links:

www.market-watch.eu



Information Society

Safety of audio-video equipment

During 2013, ANEC worked to avoid the external ignition clause (also known as the candle flame ignition clause) placing consumer safety at risk or prejudicing the adoption of European and International standards on the safety of audio: FprEN 62368-1:2013/FprAA:2013 Audio/video, information and communication technology equipment - Part 1: Safety requirements; FprEN 62368-1:2013 Audio/video, information and communication technology equipment - Part 1: Safety requirements and IEC 62368-1 Audio/video, information and communication technology equipment - Part 1: Safety requirements. The external ignition clause can allow manufacturers to use potentially toxic flame retardants in TVs.

Nevertheless, a sentence about the issue of fire ignition was added to the scope of FprEN 62368-1:2013/FprAA:2013 at the last moment to accommodate an objection from the Danish National Committee. ANEC did not support the sentence as we found it ambiguous.

Although the IEC standard was adopted, many countries voted against FprEN 62368-1:2013/FprAA:2013, due to the addition of the sentence, and it was rejected. A second vote is foreseen in 2014, with the sentence deleted.

Radio equipment Directive (RED)

ANEC warmly welcomed an agreement between the European Parliament and Council in December 2013 that should see the implementation of a universal charger for all mobile phones. The agreement also provides for strengthened surveillance of the radio equipment market as it sets up new database for equipment, to be identified by the EC, which will need to be registered before it can be put on the market. Both points were supported by ANEC in its position on the revision of the R&TTE Directive.

The universal charger is long overdue as the present plethora of chargers represents unnecessary costs to the consumer in their direct (or implied) purchase, and to the environment in the extraction of the raw materials for their construction and in their disposal.

ANEC also welcomed the modifications made by the Parliament to the Commission proposal on the concept of "foreseeable use" and conformity assessment as these help to respond to our position on the protection of vulnerable consumers.

The EP plenary vote is expected to take place in February/March 2014.

Links:

ANEC Press Release: MEPs support the universal mobile phone charger:
<http://tinyurl.com/ptunoba>

ANEC Position Paper on European Commission Proposal for a Directive on the making available on the market of radio equipment (RED):
<http://tinyurl.com/q2qwmnl>

Protecting consumer privacy

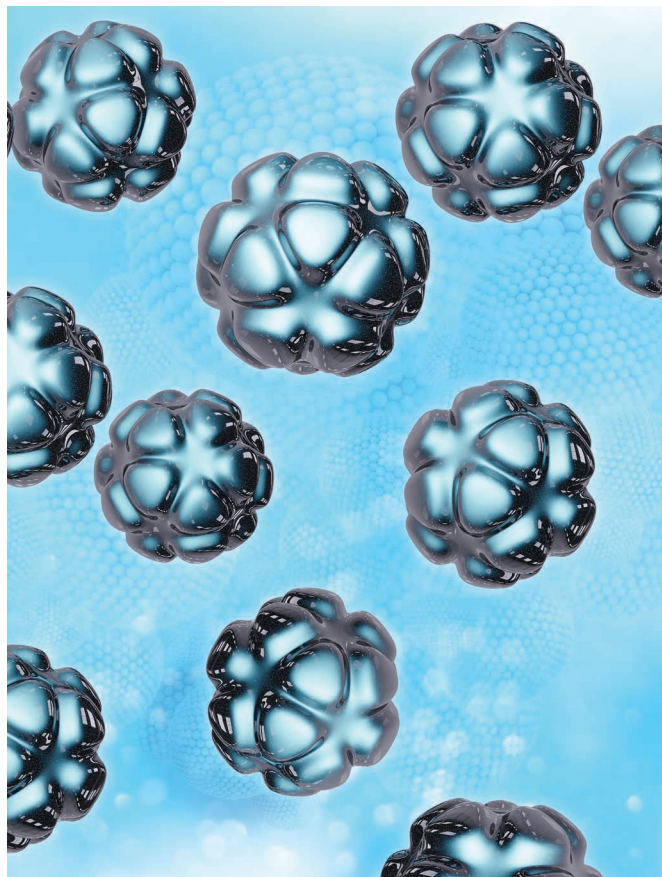
ANEC believes the adoption of a series of CEN Technical Reports:

CEN/TR 16669 Information technology Device interface to support ISO/IEC 18000-3, CEN/TR 16670 Information technology RFID threat and vulnerability analysis, CEN/TR 16671 Information technology Authorisation of mobile phones when used as RFID interrogators standard, CEN/TR 16672 Information technology Privacy capability features of current RFID technologies standard, CEN/TR 16673 Information technology RFID privacy impact assessment analysis for specific sectors standard and on CEN/TR 16674 Information technology Analysis of privacy impact assessment methodologies relevant to RFID standard, during 2013 will prove pioneering in improving the data protection of consumers.

Nevertheless, with opposition from business – especially the credit card industry – progress has not been easy. The development of prEN 16570 'Information technology – Notification of RFID – The information sign and additional information to be provided by operators of RFID application systems', saw a comments resolution meeting on 14 November to decide whether the use of the RFID emblem should be mandatory with a tagged item. The decision was that its use should be mandatory, in line with the position ANEC put forward to the meeting. FprEN 16570, and FprEN 16571 'Information technology - RFID privacy impact assessment process', will be submitted to Formal Vote in 2014.



Innovation



Nanotechnologies

In coalition with other stakeholders, ANEC continued to urge the Commission to introduce a mandatory reporting scheme for nanomaterials. In January, we spoke at the high-level workshop on the Second Regulatory Review of Nanomaterials, and responded to a public consultation on the related Impact Assessment. We are concerned that no-one has a complete overview of the usage of nanomaterials and nanoparticles in consumer products. We think it essential that regulators are able to assess the exposure of consumers and the environment to nanomaterials in the management of risk. In November, we welcomed a Commission study to assess the impact of nanomaterials registry, and an initiative of the Belgian government to consider the introduction of a register at the national level during 2014.

The revised ISO/CEN TS 13820 "Nanotechnologies - Guidance on the voluntary labelling of consumer products containing manufactured nano-objects" was approved in November. ANEC expressed a negative opinion on the draft as well as repeating concerns on the procedure followed. We do not think the standard has added value as it does not provide any clear information about the presence of nanomaterials in consumer products. Many comments submitted during the adoption phase demonstrated a low level of consensus on the content of the standard.

Links:

Workshop on the Second Regulatory Review on Nanomaterials, 30 January 2013, Brussels: <http://goo.gl/9wdLLo>

Open letter to EP ENVI Committee: Stakeholders' Response to the EC Communication on the Second Regulatory Review on Nanomaterials: <http://tinyurl.com/oh269cs>

ANEC Position on the European Commission proposal for additional measures to increase transparency and ensure regulatory oversight on nanomaterials: <http://tinyurl.com/oqxo2uo>

Smart meters

Smart meters need to give consumers easy access to understandable information on their energy consumption. If not, consumers will not be able to participate in the energy market and smart meters will fail to answer their purpose. The provision of clear information will also be a key for enabling demand response programmes throughout Europe.

As each Member State decides which functionalities feature in the smart meter, and hence the benefits available to energy consumers, there is a risk that consumers in some countries will not be able to take advantage of smart metering. It also rests with national governments to decide on an "easily understandable format".

ANEC is therefore working to influence the draft standard prEN50491-11 on the communication of consumer information to an in-home display. The standard is expected to be finalised in 2014.

Links:

ANEC proposed position on the Technical Requirements for inclusion in standards relating to the Communication of Consumer Information by the Smart Metering Systems to the Consumer Interface (for use by an in-home display): <http://tinyurl.com/p3fywou>

ANEC position on the EC report on active demand response: <http://tinyurl.com/ovj4o9j>

Services

ANEC Secretary-General speaks on service standardisation

ANEC Secretary-General, Stephen Russell, spoke at the 2nd European Standardisation Summit, organised by CEN and CENELEC and hosts, Danish Standards, in Copenhagen on 19 June. The summit was dedicated to the standardisation of services, and the important role standards should play in facilitating an EU single market for services.

Mr Russell stressed that, without a European legislative framework of at least minimum harmonisation, European Standards for business-to-consumer (B2C) services could not be truly effective in meeting consumer needs due to the precedence that would have to be given to existing national legislation. He saw this a very major hurdle in encouraging the transfer of national standardisation activities to European level. Moreover, although industry tended to see service provision as local, the consumer was often a multinational user of services (e.g. hotel accommodation). Hence he believed the Commission would need to issue standardisation mandates to encourage industry experts to participate in the development of European Standards dealing with B2C services.

Regarding business-to-business (B2B) services - such as Management Consultancy - the Secretary-General accepted that the development of such European Standards did not require a legislative framework. However, he urged both the Commission and standards bodies not to take the easy option and ignore the demands of the consumer, particularly in setting a framework of laws and standards on the safety of services.

Parcel delivery and e-commerce

ANEC used its experience in the standardisation of the quality of postal services to make proposals on how to meet consumer requirements in the area of e-commerce services, especially in response to the Commission's Green Paper of 2013 on an integrated parcel delivery market. Delivery has been identified as one of the top five priorities to help boost e-commerce by 2015. In our response, we addressed the problems with delivery and product return procedures related to on-line and cross-border shopping. We were also critical of the sustainability and transparency of tariffs, and information on the quality of delivery. Our views were well-reflected in the subsequent Institutional texts.

In November 2013 the European Commission published a roadmap for completing the single market for parcel delivery. The Parliament was meanwhile developing an initiative report suggesting possible European standards on addressing and labelling as well as "e-commerce friendly letter" boxes.

Links:

ANEC response to questionnaire in the European Commission's Green Paper on an integrated parcel delivery market: <http://tinyurl.com/nb34ks9>

Commission's Communication on e-commerce and online services: <http://tinyurl.com/pzt6azo>

EC Green paper and consultation document: <http://tinyurl.com/qevdwmo>

EC roadmap for completing the single market for parcel delivery: <http://tinyurl.com/lftkoh4>

Links to other stories:

Preliminary position paper on accommodation safety: <http://tinyurl.com/ovm-daux>



Traffic

Bicycles

In 2013, ANEC became an A-liaison member of ISO/TC 149/SC 1 'Cycles and major sub-assemblies' in order to participate in the revision of a series of bicycle standards (EN ISO 4210 series, EN ISO 8098). ANEC also published the results of its study conducted in 2012 on requirements on Lighting (Light Intensity) and Reflectors of Bicycles. As the study reveals, there are almost as many differing regulations as countries. Hence we welcome ISO 6742, a proposed International Standard on bicycle lights to which we are contributing. The revised bicycle standards will be published at the end of 2014 or beginning of 2015.

As a participant in CEN/TC 333 'Bicycles', ANEC contributed to the revision of the European Standard for Electrically Power Assisted Cycles (EPACs) and submitted 96 comments on prEN 15194 'Cycles — electrically power assisted cycles — EPAC Bicycles'. We were successful in ensuring that the mechanical requirements of the standard will be adjusted to reflect the higher loads of the EPAC; that electrical safety will be covered; that the frame is marked with the maximum load of the bicycle, and that a printed manual has to be made available to the customer. Additionally, we supported German proposals for higher test-loads for certain components. Discussions will continue in 2014.

Links:

Requirements on Lighting (Light Intensity) and Reflectors of Bicycles: <http://tinyurl.com/opod46s>

Enhanced Child Restraint Systems (ECRS)

The first phase of UN Regulation 129 (R 129) on Enhanced Child Restraint Systems came into force on 9 July 2013. ANEC published a Press Release to help raise public awareness. Indeed, as one of the "main players" in the development of the new Regulation, our views were frequently sought by manufacturers, individual consumers and the media.

The new Regulation, among other things, requires children under the age of 15 months to be transported rearwards-facing and is more consumer friendly as it uses a length classification to help choose the right car seat instead of weight. The Regulation also demands stricter side-impact tests of the CRS. and requires the use of ISOFIX to reduce the chances of incorrect installation.

Links:

ANEC Press Release: 'Belt up! I-Size ready for take-off!': <http://tinyurl.com/pckd37w>

ANEC presentation on the 'Benefits for consumers arising from the new UNECE i-Size Regulation on Child-Restraint Systems': <http://tinyurl.com/nls8adr>

The new regulation on child restraints (i-Size) and benefits for consumers: <http://tinyurl.com/op5pasd>



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NOTE: each member of the ANEC General Assembly is nominated to represent the interests of all national consumer organisations in his or her home country. Hence the organisations listed provide only a contact address for the GA member.



Raising standards for consumers
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ANEC Governance Structure
ANEC Secretariat

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and is open to the representation of national consumer organisations in 33 countries.

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