

June 2019

JA2016: Interim Results Newsletter

31 Market Surveillance Authorities from 24 European countries work jointly to keep the European consumers safe

The **Joint Market Surveillance Action on Consumer Products 2016 (JA2016)** is a pan-European project co-funded by the European Union (EU) that focusses on consolidating and enhancing product safety through effective market surveillance across the European Economic Area. The project features a number of product-specific and capacity-building (“Method Development”) activities that support market surveillance in identifying and removing dangerous products from the Single Market.

The first results from the product inspections and Method Development activities were presented at the Annual Market Surveillance Workshop in Malta. They demonstrate the achievements of the project to the benefit of the European consumer through the assessment of the risks associated with unsafe products and the enforcement measures taken by the participating authorities, e.g. removal from the market.

To reflect the growing importance of e-commerce, many of the inspected products have been sampled from online shops. The project is coordinated by [PROSAFE](#), a non-profit NGO formed by market surveillance officers and based in Brussels.

Photo: The JA2016 Annual Market Surveillance Workshop in Malta



Overview of findings per product category

► Childcare Articles - Baby carriers and cots



Baby carriers in various formats are an increasingly popular product group with a patchwork of standards and requirements. In [JA2013](#), 92% of cots tested had failed the standard, out of which half were found to present a serious risk to consumers. A new European Standard has been adopted to minimise the main risks posed by the products and [JA2016](#) has provided an opportunity to verify its applicability and potentially identify requirements that might need a revision. In total, 84 baby carriers and 23 costs have been sampled and tested. The results from testing have already resulted in 21 RAPEX notifications for baby carriers and 4 notifications for cots. By the end of the project the participating MSAs will have undertaken enforcement action on 89 products.

► Electrical toys



The activity looks at the electrical properties of different battery and mains powered toys. Testing has been undertaken to assess compliance with the new European Standard for Electrical Toys that came into force on 3 June 2017, and for some samples with the [ROHS2](#) Directive that restricts the use of certain hazardous substances such as lead and cadmium.

In total, JA2016 tested **238** samples according to the Electrical Toy standard and **119** for ROHS. The early results show a failure rate of around **25%** for the safety standard and of nearly **65%** for ROHS.

► **Impact drills**



The Market Surveillance Authorities (MSAs) have decided to primarily target the lower end of the market. In total, **100** products have been sampled from online and brick and mortar shops. They have been inspected for compliance with the administrative requirements of the standard related to markings, warnings, use instructions, use instructions and the declaration of Conformity. The products have been then tested in a laboratory against the appropriate safety standards. The preliminary results reveal that **70%** of the samples did not fully comply with the administrative requirements, whilst just under **20%** failed the physical testing.

► **Household electrical appliances (haircare products)**

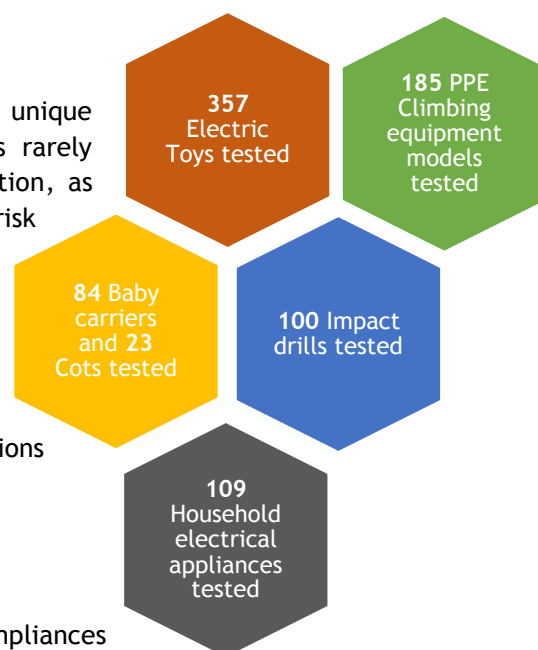
In total, **109** samples of **hairdryers, curling irons and hair straighteners** have been subject to inspection and safety testing. Almost **40%** of the samples were taken from online retailers. The lab test results have identified failure rates at just above **50%** for all three classes of products, however most of them are related to formal non-compliance and abnormal operation. The follow up actions to date have resulted in **9** RAPEX notifications, with eight classed as a serious risk.

PPE Climbing Equipment



Personal protective equipment presents a unique challenge to the MSAs. The products themselves rarely present a hazard but rather their failure to function, as intended, exposes the user to a very serious risk perhaps even death. Five types of climbing equipment have been inspected: **mountaineering ropes, harnesses, energy absorbing systems, connectors and helmets.**

In all, **185** models have been sampled and tested. The preliminary test results of the 180 test reports received so far indicate a total of **130** safety and/or risk-related issues that require follow-up actions by the national MSAs.



Towards achieving impacts

The participating MSAs assess the risks associated with the non-compliances identified during the tests. They have taken the appropriate enforcement measures proportionate to the nature of this risk, for instance, by removing non-compliant products from the market and asking the economic operators to remedy the shortcomings.

The MSAs issue notifications on the detected dangerous products through the European Commission tool, [Safety Gate](#) rapid alert system. Weekly reports of the alerts are available to the EU/EEA consumers to increase public awareness.

PROSAFE and the MSAs actively promote the JA2016 outcomes to targeted audiences and stakeholder groups at national and EU level to increase visibility. A tailored communication and dissemination strategy of diverse communication streams is in force to this purpose. All the developed tools, templates, guidelines, and e-learning modules are accessible from [PROSAFE's web portal](#). News updates about the product test results and the impacts of the project activities roll out on [PROSAFE's Twitter page \(@PROSAFE_ORG\)](#) on an ongoing basis to reach the expert audiences targeted and the general public.

Caution!

The above results are based on samples of products from the markets in the participating countries. As in most market surveillance activities, the results represent the targeted efforts that authorities undertake to identify unsafe products. They do not present a statistically valid picture of the situation of the whole market.

Tests were undertaken at accredited laboratories and focussed on those safety requirements that have the largest impact on consumer safety.

Method development activities

JA2016 features a number of activities that aim to develop methodologies and infrastructure to support market surveillance work in the Member States. Most of these activities have now been finalised:

- ▶ **The New and Emerging (N&E) Issues** activity offered a regular platform to exchange information between MSAs within Europe, and authorities in Canada and the USA. A total of 5 Networking Teleconferences gave the opportunity to the officers to remain abreast of the latest threats to consumer safety. The early awareness on N&E issues promotes the development of best practices that can be applied around the world – recent examples include hoverboards and fidget spinners.
- ▶ **The Rapid Advice Forum** (an internal knowledge transfer forum established by PROSAFE) developed in previous joint actions has been further exploited to allow market surveillance officers to exchange expert opinions on N&E issues and products. 20 questions were posted on the Forum during the first Reporting Period with about 4 replies per question from officers solving the queries raised.
- ▶ **The Risk Assessment (RA)** activity studied RA methods and produced 3 new guidelines for assessment of risks from Acoustic Toys, Fireworks, and missing warning and instructions to help market surveillance inspectors assess product risks in a uniform way. One major initiative over the years has been the development of RA templates. There are now **25** such templates available to free-download from the newly developed [PROSAFE's RA web Hub and e-Library](#).
- ▶ **The Continuous Improvement of Market Surveillance (CIMS)** activity facilitates a systematic capacity building process whereby authorities can learn from each other's best practices through a peer-review-like scheme. Two CIMS reviews have been carried out under JA2016, one in Cyprus and one in Iceland. The findings from the reviews are beneficial to all the authorities who took part – 8 MSAs in Cyprus, 5 in Iceland. Results can be found on PROSAFE's website.
- ▶ **The e-Learning** activity developed modules available to the MSAs, businesses and others to build further capacity on product safety issues. JA2016 has revised and updated the RA e-learning with 5 new interactive modules translated in other EU languages through the voluntary support of the respective MSAs (Croatian, Latvian, Lithuanian). All modules can be accessed from the [PROSAFE's RA web Hub](#) – the entire library of e-learning courses is free but registration is required.

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Background information

This information is issued by PROSAFE and the MSAs representing 24 EU/EEA countries in JA2016: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. PROSAFE brings together market surveillance officers from all over Europe.

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