UK Issues Advisory Note on Children’s Nightwear Flammability

The UK Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) has issued an advisory note that provides guidance on how to comply with new UK flammability requirements for children’s nightwear that went into effect in November 2008 and which may be enforced under the UK General Product Safety Regulations of 2005. The advisory note has been issued to align UK’s Statutory Nightwear (Safety) Regulations of 1985 (which remain unchanged), with BS EN 14878 Textiles - Burning Behaviour of Children’s Nightwear.

The UK Regulations are generally more stringent than BS EN 14878, however, there are some requirements in the EN that are more onerous than those required by the UK. The advisory note offers guidance on how to comply with both sets of Regulations.

KEY REQUIREMENTS DESCRIBED IN THE ADVISORY NOTE

In the UK Nightwear Regulations of 1985 both pyjamas and cotton terry bathrobes did not require mandatory flammability testing although they had to be labelled according to the UK Regulations. The main changes as a result of the advisory note for the UK are that children’s pyjamas and cotton terry bathrobes now have to pass flammability requirements as described in BS EN 14878. There are other differences between the two sets of regulations, such as differences in age definitions, but the key differences relating to performance and toxicology are outlined below.

Childrens Pyjamas between the ages 6 months to 14 years must meet either BS EN 14878 Class “A” when tested to BS EN 1103 with:
- No surface flash of flame
- 520mm trip thread severed in not than 15 secs
- No design limitations

OR

Childrens Pyjamas between the ages 6 months to 14 years must meet either BS EN 14878 Class “B” when tested to BS EN 1103 with:
- No surface flash of flame
- 520mm trip thread severed in not less than 10 secs
- design limitations described in BS EN 14878 Clause 10.

Cotton Terry Bath Robes For Children Aged from 6 months up to 14 years must meet BS EN 14878 Class “A” when tested to BS EN 1103 with:
- no surface flash flame
- 520mm trip thread severed in not less than 15 seconds

Flame Retardants: Under EN 14878, when a flame retardant (FR) is applied to a conforming textile it is the responsibility of the manufacturer or retailer placing the item onto the European market for any country under the aegis of CEN to ensure that the FR finish being used has been adequately assessed for risk of toxicity. The safety of the FR finish shall be determined by the EU Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER). This requirement is not part of the old UK Nightwear Regulations.

Labelling Requirements: Labelling is compulsory under the UK Nightwear Regulations and labels must meet strict criteria, including legibility and durability. The labelling requirements in the UK have not changed as a result of EN 14878 although labelling is optional under EN 14878. However, if the optional labelling is chosen, it must follow requirements per Annex A of EN 14878.


Contact Information:
Bureau Veritas Consumer Products Services UK is experienced in testing nightwear flammability.
For assistance, please contact: Frank.Lowe@uk.bureauveritas.com