



## EUROLAB Special Briefing

### EUROLAB report: International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organization's (ICPHSO) 2016 International Symposium

The International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organization's (ICPHSO) 2016 International Symposium has been held November 14 – 15, 2016 in Brussels during the International Product Safety Week hosted by the European Commission. Diana Popa, International Affairs Manager at EUROLAB, attended the event.

ICPHSO brought together stakeholders involved in consumer product safety: regulators, consumer representatives, manufacturers, retailers, and TIC industry.

This year's theme was "**Joining the Dots: safety and Cooperation in the Connected World**". The event focused on typical and emerging product safety issues that affect all consumer product sectors.

On the first day, **Věra Jourová** Commissioner, Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, European Commission opened the event with a keynote speech addressing the main issues concerning security and safety of products on the market.

The "starter" session "**The Internet of Things (IoT): where it's heading and what you need to know**" addressed the 'Internet of Things' issue which is increasingly penetrating the consumer product sector, and is becoming a remarkable part of every consumer's interaction with products in their everyday life.

The session was moderated by **Rod Freeman**, Partner Product Law Team, Hogan Lovells International LLP and the speakers were **George Borlase**, Ph.D, PE Assistant Executive Director for Hazard Identification and Reduction, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, **Scott Kohler** Counsel, Product & Regulatory Affairs, Nest Labs, Inc., **Robert MacDougall** Head of Enterprise Public Policy, Vodafone. They introduced the IoT concept and explained how it's going to affect consumer protection and product safety in the future.

Additionally, the panellists explained how they are involved in product safety and compliance relating to IoT products and how they are involved in development of policy around the IoT in the EU and US. Moreover, they discussed how regulators and legislators are approaching IoT, with the Alliance for Internet of Things Innovation (AIOTI) and European Commission.

The second session of the day was "**Human Factors Affecting the Safety Journey**". The panel looked at why consumers make the choices they do and how this affects the safety community. The panel involved the audience in an interactive session of surveys.

On day two, **Christel Schaldemose** MEP, European Parliament opened the plenary session with a keynote speech. She addressed key issues related to Internal Market and Consumer Protection e.g. increase safety by decreasing the risk, improve market surveillance through better and more refined legislation, increase penalties if not in compliance with the rules.

The day two main session addressed the issue of "**Improving Consumer Product Safety: Current Risks and Lessons Learned**".

The session was moderated by **Hanane Taidi**, Director General, International Federation of Inspection Agencies (IFIA) and the speakers were **Marcello Manca**, Vice President of Government and Industry Affairs, EU, UL (representing both CEOC and IFIA), **Richard O'Brien**, Director International Programs and Intergovernmental Affairs, U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, **Catherine Van Reeth**, Director General, Toy Industries of Europe, **Despina Spanou**, Director for Consumers, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission.

The panellists discussed the amount of data available concerning the levels of compliance of consumer products on sale in markets around the world. Studies by IFIA and CEOC have found high rates (16%) of dangerous faults in self-declared non-

compliant products as opposed to less than 1% non-compliant third party verified products. ProSafe has found 63% non-compliance rate for bicycle helmets, 78% for lighting chains, while a study by the European Commission found 92% of drones to be non-compliant. The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission representative explored the tools that are being used in the US to address the market current risks and how they are working to decrease those risks. The following tools were mentioned: legislative bans, strict reporting requirements, general certificates of compliance, third party certification, e-commerce market surveillance as well as targeted surveillance based on algorithms and risk assessments, trainings and dissemination, in house hazard identification and reduction, injury data collection and forensic risk analysis.

The second session of the day was “**Connecting the Dots: Safety Criteria for Innovative Products**”. The panellists presented the business/industry issue, e.g. developing safe innovative products in an increasingly regulated Europe / World; the different approaches for predicting safety concerns for innovative products, e.g. epidemiological versus predictive, different available tools, e.g. incident data rich versus data poor, and discuss several innovative product examples to articulate the differing approaches and available tools.

During the closing plenary session of the ICPHSO International Symposium, “**Update from Product Safety Regulators Around the World**”, regulators discussed the main priority areas they currently focus on and best practices and projects of interest for the international community. The session has also explored possibilities for further cooperation. **Nick Shipley**, Manager, Compliance and Enforcement Division, Consumer Product Safety Directorate, Health Canada presented Canada’s approach to regulation by e.g. identifying and educating consumers and suppliers/supply chains, conducting compliance and enforcement outside of Canada, increasing market surveillance, information gathering and border controls. **Thomas Zerdick**, Acting Head of Unit, Product Safety and Rapid Alert System, Directorate General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission presented the product safety priorities for the European Commission:

1. Safety of products sold online
  - Guidance to market surveillance to improve safety of products sold online – consultations with Member States, authorities, development of a European Commission guidance regarding best practices in order to raise awareness.
2. International cooperation (US and China, CETA, OECD)
3. Ongoing work to improve the use and impact of product safety alerts and the EU rapid alert system
4. Enforcement and Compliance
  - Support national authorities, activities co-financed by EU as well as coordinated enforcement activities

Around the main panel discussions, multiple smaller sessions dealing with e.g. compliance, standards alignment and regulations for drones have taken place.

During the ICPHSO International Symposium, the participants had the opportunity to better understand the current product safety risks facing consumers and identify solutions and tools that have proved successful in countries around the globe. Certainty is that compliance and safety of products stay very important on the agenda of economic operators and there is a remarkably high commitment to ensure product safety and conformity in the “safety community”.



From left to right: **Marcello Manca**, Vice President of Government and Industry Affairs, EU, UL, **Catherine Van Reeth**, Director General, Toy Industries of Europe, **Hanane Taidi**, Director General, International Federation of Inspection Agencies (IFIA), **Despina Spanou**, Director for Consumers, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission, **Richard O'Brien**, Director International Programs and Intergovernmental Affairs, U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Should you have any comments or questions do not hesitate to contact Diana Popa at [diana.popa@eurolab.org](mailto:diana.popa@eurolab.org)

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