



Coles Myer Ltd.
ABN 11 004 089 936

4 May 2006

Study into Standards Setting & Accreditation
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
Belconnen ACT 2616

Dear Claudia

Please find following an addendum to the Coles Myer submission on the *Review of Australian Government's Relationship with Standards Australia Ltd and the National Association of Laboratory Accreditation (the Review)*.

Further discussions regarding Australian Standards and how they are recognised by legislators has identified another poignant issue. Legislators often recognise Australian standards with a number of modifications. Such modifications are never reflected back into the standard. The implications being that the purchase of standards and compliance with a standard may not ensure compliance with the regulation.

A current example is children's nightwear. The ACCC is currently conducting a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) for children's nightwear – which is looking to recognise the most recent version of the standard (AS/NZS 1249:2003) in parallel with the previous standard. Notably, a number of variations have been proposed for both of these standards.

Whether greater involvement by regulators during the development of the standard would overcome this problem is doubtful. The content of standards often contains a number of clauses designed to meet the various requirements of diverse range of Committee members. In such a forum, one imagines it could be difficult to compile a standard that fully satisfies all of a legislator's requirements. A system whereby legislative changes are either noted in standards, or the legislation and standard are married together, may be a more practical solution.

This above example also reinforces previous points made about the delay between the release of a standard and when the standard is recognised in legislation. At a national level, an RIS is standard protocol but is slow to be activated and is a lengthy process. At a State level, the process is able to fast tracked, which can lead to jurisdictional differences – an issue for manufacturers, importers and retailers.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comment on the Review. Should you wish to further discuss our comments, please contact Daran Ponton on (03) 9661 4941.

Yours sincerely

Jodi Dixon
Manager Regulatory Affairs
Coles Myer Ltd