



30 September 2019

Director, Button Battery Taskforce  
Consumer Product Safety Branch  
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission  
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CANBERRA ACT 2601

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Attention: Cindy Meadley, Project Officer, Consumer Product Safety Branch

Dear Ms Meadley

**Submission on the Button Battery Safety Issues Paper**

Baby Bunting Pty Ltd (**Baby Bunting**) is a national baby goods retailer operating over 50 stores around Australia, as well as an online store.

Baby Bunting sells a small number of products that contain button batteries. These are primarily small thermometers and products in the toy category. It sources these products from Australian and overseas distributors. Baby Bunting does not sell button batteries on a standalone basis.

We note the "Questions for response" contained in the Issuer Paper. Baby Bunting is not in a position to respond to all of the questions. However, Baby Bunting provides responses in relation to the following questions:

**Question 4: Do you think the recommended safety actions in the Industry Code for Consumer Goods that Contain Button Batteries (Code) for products that contain button batteries are adequate to reduce the risk of children accessing button batteries. Please provide the reasons for your response.**

Baby Bunting considers that the Code has, in general, been a useful guide for industry participants since its introduction.

However, elements of the Code, in our experience, have caused confusion among suppliers of products containing button batteries. For example, it is not always clear to suppliers of products with button batteries the nature of the warnings to be included on the product, its packaging and on instructions. It is not necessarily clear to all suppliers of products the extent and degree to which the "suggested" warning markings in Appendix A of the Code are to be applied. This can contribute to disagreements as to what warnings are necessary to meet the requirements of the Code, which in turn can create difficulties when engaging with suppliers of products – in particular, suppliers of products sourced overseas where packaging and instructions have been prepared to be used in a number of different countries.

**Question 8: Would a mandated safety standard for the security of battery compartments of products containing button batteries be likely to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities caused by button batteries in Australia? Please provide the reasons for your response.**

Baby Bunting believes that the introduction of a mandated safety standard for the security of battery compartments of products containing button batteries would be likely to reduce the risk of injuries and fatalities caused by button batteries.

A mandated safety standard will provide a consistent standard to be followed by suppliers of products containing button batteries. It will also provide retailers with a standard against which to assess products

put forward by suppliers and provide an objective basis to assess the safety of products with a button battery.

In general, Baby Bunting would support amending the suite of mandatory standards for toys to include an express requirement relating to button batteries. The *Consumer Product Safety Standard: Toys for children up to and including 36 months of age (36 month Toy Standard)* is a standard that is relevant to a number of products sold by Baby Bunting. Strengthening the 36 month Toy Standard to include additional requirements for the physical battery compartment and required warning labels and instructions would be a useful development and one that, in our view, manufacturers and suppliers of these types of products should be able to readily adapt to.

**Question 9:** Would a mandated safety standard and/or an information standard for child resistant packaging and labelling be likely to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities caused by button batteries in Australia? Should any such standard require provision of Australian Poisons Information Centre details? Please provide the reasons for your response.

Baby Bunting believes that the introduction of a mandated safety standard and/or information standard for child resistant packaging and labelling would be likely to reduce the risk of injuries and fatalities caused by button batteries.

For the reasons noted above, Baby Bunting believes that it would be useful for product manufacturers, distributors and retailers to have more clarity on the warning information that is required for products with button batteries.

On the basis that the Australian Poisons Information Centre is the most relevant first point of contact for consumers who suspect that their child may have ingested a button battery, Baby Bunting considers that any mandated standard should include details of the Australian Poisons Information Centre.

**Question 10:** If it is your view that child resistant packaging and labelling requirements should be mandated, do you think this should apply to all button batteries regardless of size or chemistry? Please provide the reasons for your response.

Baby Bunting believes that child resistant packaging and labelling requirements should apply to all button batteries regardless of size or chemistry. By introducing mandated child resistant/proof packaging (such as shrink wrapping on individual batteries), it would help draw to consumers' attention to the importance of handling button batteries safely every time they unpack a button battery. We believe this would further facilitate the objectives of ensuring consumers safely use, store and dispose of button batteries.

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We hope this submission is of assistance in your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely



Corey Lewis  
Group Legal Counsel  
Baby Bunting Pty Ltd