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## **A Retailers Perspective: Commentary on Today's Regulatory Environment for Retailers**

Submitted by: Best Buy



**Joint Regulatory Advisory Committee on  
Electrical and Electronic Equipment  
Meeting with Industry  
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# Retail Perspective


Commentary on today's regulatory environment for Retailers

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## Introduction

- Tim Cassidy, Sr. Manager for Product Safety, Best Buy, Exclusive Brands
- I am here today to discuss *product* regulations and my remarks relate specifically to electronic products sold to consumers through retail outlets
- Disclaimer
  - The views expressed here represent my personal understanding of the subject matter and may differ from others in the retail industry. These are not necessarily the views of Best Buy.

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## Two Major Trends

- Due to the complexities of the supply chain, retailers are increasingly being held responsible for products in the consumer market
  - Retailers live in the consumers market, not the producers market
- The use of private labels by retailers is growing significantly

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## What Do the Trends Mean?

- Retailers are taking more direct interest in regulations around products
  - Usually through industry associations advocating for common sense rules
  - Advocating on behalf of consumers
- Retailers are more deeply involved in the supply chain
  - Developing industry standards
  - Driving accountability in the supply chain

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## Private Label Enterprises

- It is often assumed that private labelers “specify” the products – this is technically incorrect...
  - Private labelers specify *features* we believe represent what consumers want – form, fit and function as a *concept*
  - Vendor’ design engineers translate these concepts into actual material and design *specifications*
- Retailers sit between consumers and designers

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## Main Areas of *Product* Concern

- Traditional electrical and mechanical product safety
  - Shock, fire, burn, lacerations, etc.
- Radio interference
  - Conducted/radiated emissions/immunity of active component products
- Energy efficiency
  - Standby use and various operational modes
- Material substances
  - CMRs and bioaccumulative; heavy metals, flame retardants, pigmentations, preservatives, etc.

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## General Principles We Encourage

- Voluntary standards are more effective than mandatory standards
  - Voluntary standards keep pace with technology changes
  - The word “voluntary” is misunderstood – it’s not a free pass
  - Rules can point to these standards making them de-facto mandatory standards
  - Voluntary standards are written by engineers, scientists, and safety experts and require consensus of stakeholders in development and maintenance activities

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## General Principles We Encourage

- Harmonized standards are more effective than localized standards
  - Products are global and culturally invariant
  - “Safety” is a fundamental issue, not variable by jurisdiction in its physical effect
  - Harmonized standards may have national or regional difference (such as plug type) and still be essentially the same
  - Harmonized standards promote safety while keeping consumer prices low

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Thank you!

Questions?

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