

COT SURVEY 2004 Summary Report

Background

The Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs, as part of a wider EU initiative, (involving Netherlands, Spain, Denmark, Poland and Belgium) carried out a survey in May 2004 into the safety of cots, to establish the level of compliance with the requirements of the EU General Product Safety Directive.

Methodology

Inspectors identified and visited 68 premises nationwide. In all a total of 22 brands and 96 different models were checked against the provisions of the European Cot Standard EN716:1995 Part1. The survey concentrated on

- a) instructions and labelling, and
- b) safety elements of the cot.

Each possible non-conformity was given a risk classification based on the possible impact on safety.¹ Where a cot was found not to meet the requirements of EN 716 the distributor or manufacturer was instructed to take corrective action.

Results

A summary of results is shown in APPENDIX 1. In total 71% of models examined met the requirements of the standard and 29% did not. The following non-conformities were found:

Instructions/labelling

- No instructions supplied (13 models)
- Instructions not in English (1 model)
- No marking on the cot showing maximum height of mattress (10 models)
- No manufacturer's/distributor's/retailer's I.D. on cot (11 models)
- EN716:1995 mark absent (22 models)

¹ Risk classifications: 0 - nil
1 - low risk
2 - dangerous under some conditions
3 - immediate danger

- No instruction that the lowest height of the base should always be used when the baby can sit up (2 models)
- No instruction to retain manual for future reference (2 models)
- No recommendation or unclear recommendation for mattress size (8 models)
- No warning to be aware of risk of open fire (3 models)
- No instruction regarding the maximum height of the mattress (1 model)

Relating to the cot

- The distance between the cot base and the ends is greater than 25mm (6 models)
- The distance between the base slats is greater than 60mm (2 models)
- Vertical bar broke under stress (1 model)
- Sharp edges on plastic fittings (1 model)
- Holes into which a 7mm plug can fit exceed 10mm in depth (8 models)

Some models had a number of different non-conformities.

Conclusions

This survey represents a detailed picture of the safety of cots on the market in Ireland. ODCA is reasonably confident that the majority of models of cots on sale in Ireland during the period within which the survey was conducted have been examined. Although there is a relatively high level of non-conformity with the standard, no instance of a cot posing an immediate danger has been identified. However, there is a very high level (23%) of cots which could be 'dangerous in some circumstances'. Many of these relate to non-conformities which can be easily corrected. Traders gave clear commitments to make these corrections when contacted by staff from ODCA.

The fact that ODCA and the surveillance authorities of five other EU Member States are simultaneously contacting manufacturers relating to the need to fully comply with the safety standard for cots will help to enhance the safety of cots in Ireland and throughout the EU.

Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs

July 2004

APPENDIX 1 – STATISTICAL RESULTS

Summary		
		Expressed as a percentage of total examined
No. of premises visited	68	
No. of cots examined	96	
Number of cots non-compliant in relation to risks	21	21.88%
Number of cots compliant in relation to risks	75	78.13%
No. of cots having a level 2 non-compliance (classified as 'dangerous in some circumstances')	22	22.92%
No. of cots non-compliant in relation to labelling/instructions	24	25.00%
No. of cots compliant in relation to labelling/instructions	72	75.00%
Total no. of non-compliant cots found	28	29.17%
Total no. of compliant cots found	68	70.83%



