

NORMAPME Newsletter

Issue 34 – March 2008

Welcome to the thirty-fourth edition of the NORMAPME Newsletter – March 2008.

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1 Marketing of products – EP puts “new approach” on the right track

NORMAPME warmly welcomed the vote at the Parliament’s plenary in Strasbourg on 21/02/08 on the so-called “goods package”, a framework on various horizontal aspects of marketing of products, including CE marking and other general requirements for a product to be placed on the market. According to NORMAPME, the vote brings the package closer to the needs and expectations of European small companies, by enforcing the proportionality principle and facilitating conformity assessments for small series and made-to-measure products, which often represent crafts’ and SMEs’ core business.

NORMAPME praised the EU Institutions for reaching consensus on this crucial dossier, and encouraged all EU policymakers to take these principles into account in the upcoming revision of sector regulations and directives.

First of all, small series and custom-made goods will not be submitted to the same rules applied to large-scale production. Conformity assessments will be considerably facilitated, which is in line with the requests put forward by NORMAPME in the past months. Secondly, conformity assessment bodies will have to ensure proportionality and consider the so-called “4S”, i.e. the operator’s size, structure, economic sector and serial production when testing SMEs’ products. Thirdly, the vote opens the possibility for trade associations to use and set up notified testing laboratories

and certification bodies, thereby cutting costs and increasing the number and the SME-friendliness of facilities available.

All these measures are not only an important step forward per se. They will also become the cornerstone of a large number of sector regulations, the first two of which (on toys and construction products) are already in the pipeline.

For more information please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

2 Security Labelling

The European Parliament (EP) requested to the European Commission to undertake an impact assessment study on the possibility to introduce a voluntary safety on the European Market. At the EP plenary session in Strasbourg in February, Vice President Verheugen committed to start this action at the earliest.

SMEs feel very concerned by the creation of a European Safety label. SMEs do not see the usefulness but fear worsening their condition of access to the market. This measure would not lead to any additional information or safety. First, a product which complies with European Directives is safe and the proof of this compliance can be the CE mark. Second, if this safety mark is to be the European version of the German GS, it does not lead to more protection

considering that GS marked products were withdrawn from the market as mentioned on the RAPEX website.

As we stated in our intervention at the Keymark workshop organised by CEN on the 4 March in Brussels <http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/news/events/keymarkwsprogramme.asp>, SMEs believe it would be more relevant to promote a single European quality mark that would indicate the compliance with European standards instead of the creation of a European Safety mark and of the numerous National marks demonstrating compliance with European standards instead of the introduction of a security label.

Hence, it appears crucial that SMEs and their representatives remain mobilised in order to ensure SMEs interests are properly taken into account.

For more information please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

4 When the Construction Product Directive becomes the Construction Product Regulation

After a long consultation within the European Commission services, the Construction Product Regulation (previously Directive) shall be presented to the European Parliament early April 2008. The outputs of the inter services consultation is not yet known, but we ask you to be ready to actively take part in the coming

campaign as this regulation will impact a tremendous number of SMEs in Europe. It will be a good opportunity to incorporate what we gained in the goods package in this sectoral regulation.

For more information please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

3 Revision of Safety of Toys Directive

The European Commission has tabled a new Directive proposal to improve toys safety in Europe. The proposal aims at enhancing the safety of toys replacing and modernizing the 20 years old Toys Directive 88/378/EEC of 3rd May 1988.

The revision has a threefold objective:

1. New and higher safety requirements to cope with recently identified hazards;
2. Strengthen manufacturers' and importers' responsibility for the marketing of toys;
3. Enhance market surveillance obligations of Member States.

The proposal addresses a wide range of issues to improve the existing rules for the marketing of toys that are produced in and imported into the EU in view to reducing toy related accidents and to achieving health benefits.



European Office of Crafts, Trades and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises for Standardisation
Bureau Européen de l'Artisanat et des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises pour la Normalisation
Europäisches Büro des Handwerks und der Klein- und Mittelbetriebe für die Normung

The Commission proposal will now be discussed with the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers with a view to an adoption in the co-decision procedure.

Furthermore, CEN has announced that an evaluation of the existing European Standards currently cited under the directive on toy safety (88/378/EC) will be realised with a view to updating them taking into account the new provisions once the revised directive is approved.

So far, NORMAPME has identified some issues in the Commission's proposal and is now drafting a position paper and amendments to be addressed at Commission, the European Parliament and the Council in order to ensure that SMEs needs are taken into consideration.

For more information please visit www.normapme.com or contact Vanessa Pereira, v.pereira@normapme.com

5 Creation of CEN BT/ WG 206

In the framework of the CEN contribution to the European Commission lead market initiative on sustainable construction, CEN BT/TCMG has decided at its last meeting on the 6 March to implement a BT/Working Group that will carry out an inventory of currently existing standards in order to identify possible needs for further contributions to the initiative. The possible needed standards will be developed in CEN TC 350 (sustainability in construction work). NORMAPME is active in

this technical committee since its creation and will also follow the work of the BT/WG 206 with great interest.

For more information, please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

6 Revival of CEN/ CENELEC TC 1

Following the mandate M 417 of the European Commission requesting from the European Standardisation Organisations to evaluate existing standards for conformity assessment in the light of the goods package, CEN and CENELEC has re-launched the TC 1 <http://www.cen.eu/CENORM/Sectors/TechnicalCommitteesWorkshops/CENTechnicalCommittees/CENTechnicalCommittees.asp?param=17372&title=CEN%2FCCLC%2FTC+1>

and appointed the British Standard Institute as secretariat. NORMAPME will take actively part in the activities of this technical committee to ensure that what was gained in the goods package is properly implemented.

For more information, please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

7 Supply chain Security



As of its last meeting (12/12/2007), the CEN Taskforce on supply chain security (BT 199) has been renamed into Project Team TC 379. The European Commission has agreed on a mandate that forms the basis of the work of CEN TC 379. The mandate is much less prescriptive than usual and will leave TC 379 ample room for its own concepts. Members of the TC 379 were requested to send their comments with regard to the mandate to the secretariat before 14 March 2008. NORMAPME already submitted comments on the draft mandate in December 2007. After having carefully read the final mandate, a further comment on the representativeness of SMEs in the transport field was added to the former NORMAPME comments.

Acceptance of the mandate by CEN will take place after positive vote by the members of the Technical Board at CEN.

A next meeting is foreseen in May 2008 in Brussels.

For more information please contact Mariette Wennmacher m.wennmacher@normapme.com

8 Tourism, a new playground for standardisation

At the last ISO TC 228 (tourism services) plenary meeting in Marbella (Spain), some National Standardisation Members have made proposals to start new works and to enlarge the scope of the spa working group to all kinds of spas. As the overwhelming majority of enterprises involved in the tourism sector are SMEs, it is important that they do not have to bear standards they do not need. The principle that standardisation is market driven should remain. SMEs should not bear extra certification costs for standards they do not need.

Therefore, NORMAPME would like to encourage SMEs to inform us and their national standardisation bodies as soon as possible on the relevance of standards on:

- Golf services
- All kinds of spas
- Natural protected areas
- Beaches
- Thalasso therapy services
- Wellness spas
- Adventure tourism

For more information and comments please contact Karine Iffour k.iffour@normapme.com

9 Management consultancy Services

Alongside with the running of surveys on needs for standardisation in the service sectors, CEN has recently launched a CEN Technical Committee on Management Consultancy Services (CEN TC 381). Due to the overwhelming majority of SMEs in the service sectors and the use of services by SMEs, these activities concern SMEs both as clients and providers.

For more information please contact Vanessa Pereira

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10 Release of "A Users' Guide: How to Raise Information Security Awareness" by ENISA

ENISA - the European Network and Information Security Agency - has released a practical guide aiming at helping users (mainly SMEs) with ICT security issues. This guide is available in English, French, German, Spanish, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Greek, Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Maltese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene and Swedish on this

page:

http://www.enisa.europa.eu/pages/05_01.htm

11 PIN- SME discussed at CeBIT



Secretary General Andrea Benassi spoke at a conference organised on 5 March by PIN-SME at CeBIT, the world's largest ICT trade fair in Hannover, Germany. The event, entitled "How can Europe foster its ICT SMEs?", featured speakers from the European Commission, SAP and PIN-SME member organisations.

Mr Benassi singled out new technologies such as e-invoicing, the uptake of "e-skills" and SME-friendly standards as the main opportunities and challenges ahead in the ICT sector for Europe's small companies.

Firstly, e-invoicing has a great cost-cutting potential, said Mr Benassi, but interoperability across Europe must be guaranteed. Secondly, "e-skills" must be further improved and promoted both for ICT practitioners and users. Thirdly, standardisation in the ICT sector could indeed be useful for SMEs, but small companies must be properly involved in the drafting process, which should balance the interests of all stakeholders.

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12 European Project on RFID

ASPIRE is a European project in the field of RFID – Radio Frequency Identification, funded by the European Commission under the 7th Research Framework Programme. It was launched on 1 January 2008 for 3 years with the participation of UEAPME.

RFID, Radio Frequency Identification, considered to replace the barcode, allows the products, goods, services to be traced from the producer to the end-consumer. This increases consumer safety, offers more efficiency, security and competitiveness in the fields of trade, logistics and supply chain. RFID also offers a huge potential for improved consumer services and the development of new markets.

The aim of ASPIRE is to support in particular SMEs in adopting RFID by significantly reducing costs for RFID through developing and providing a lightweight, royalty-free or open source, innovative, programmable and privacy friendly technology.

13 Standards



Please find the list of published standards on <http://www.normapme.com/english/newdev.htm>

14 Date & Events 2008



- NORMAPME expert meeting:
13 May in Brussels
- NORMAPME Board meeting:
20 May in Berlin
- NORMAPME General Assembly:
27 November in Brussels

15 Condolences

We like to express our condolences to Ms Mayo, spouse of Mr Sean Mayo, NORMAPME treasurer from 2004 to 2007.

Mr Sean Mayo immigrated to Canada in 2007 where he died on 12 February 2008.

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