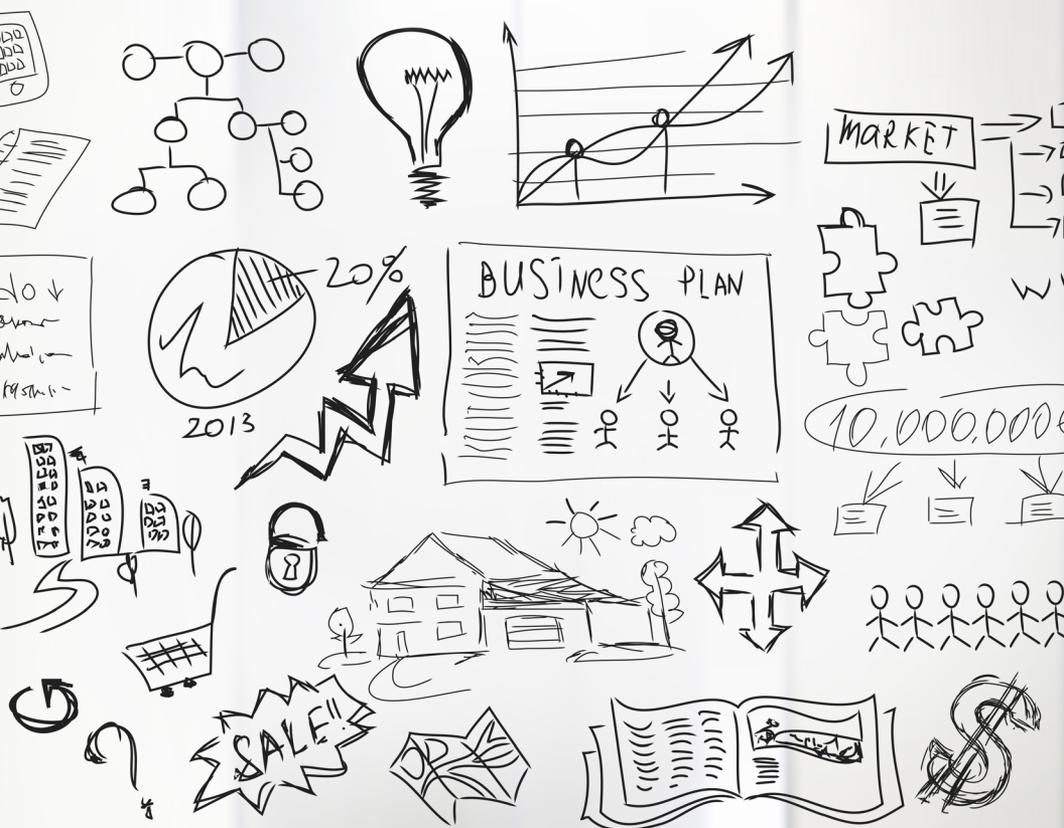




**BUREAU OF ELECTRONIC & APPLIANCE REPAIR,
HOME FURNISHINGS & THERMAL INSULATION**

**STRATEGIC
PLAN
2013-2017**



**MESSAGE FROM THE
BUREAU CHIEF**

I am pleased to present the 2013–2017 Bureau Strategic Plan.

To be effective the Bureau must be clear about its objectives, cognizant of resources, and responsive to change. By identifying, prioritizing and monitoring our activities, we ensure that we are working toward the same goals.

This plan reframes the strategy and direction the Bureau will take over the next several years. The development of this plan reinforces the Bureau's belief that ensuring a fair and competitive marketplace is vital for California consumers.

As we implement this plan, we will continue to measure our progress, evaluate outcomes and respond to emergent challenges. This plan provides a roadmap over the next several years to meet those challenges and to seize opportunities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tonya Blood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Tonya" being a large, stylized "T".

Tonya Blood
Bureau Chief

OVERSIGHT HISTORY

The California Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation (BHFTI) was initially established in 1911 as part of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in response to unscrupulous manufacturing in the mattress industry which contributed to the fires following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. There were no standards at the time for disclosing the materials used in the contents of mattresses. Later, BHFTI's jurisdiction was expanded to include home furnishing products. In an effort to ensure public safety with these products, BHFTI's licensing population was broadened to include retailers, wholesalers and importers, to be able to trace the origin of a product to the source and where products were deemed dangerous, to have a mechanism to remove the product from the market.

In addition to bedding and furniture manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and retailers, BHFTI currently regulates supply dealers, custom upholsters, sanitizers and manufacturers of thermal insulation.

The California Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair (BEAR) was established in 1963 as the Bureau of Repair Services under the Department of

Professional and Vocational Standards, which later became the Department of Consumer Affairs, in response to fraud and negligence in the television repair industry. In 1973, the repair of major home appliances was added to BEAR's regulatory authority. As technology evolved, the Bureau's regulation has been revised to add such items as microwave ovens, personal computers, satellite antennas and home office products. In 1994, service contracts over consumer electronic and home appliance products were added to BEAR's regulatory authority, in response to companies selling or administering contracts without providing adequate financial backing or properly disclosing the terms and conditions, as required in the California Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act. In 2004, the products covered under service contracts were expanded to include furniture, jewelry, lawn and garden products, and many other items used in homes and for personal use.

BUREAU BACKGROUND



In an effort to effectively share resources and provide cost savings, BHFTI and BEAR were housed together and placed under the oversight of one Chief in the late 1990s. As time went on, different units within the Bureaus consolidated and staff cross-trained, blending the workload together. In 2009, legislation - ABX420 - officially merged the two bureaus together as the Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair, Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation (BEARHFTI).

BEARHFTI licenses and regulates almost 40,000 companies across the globe from small single-person businesses to major corporations. The Bureau has a combined staff of 43 employees who license/register companies, inspect businesses, ensure compliance with laws and regulations, conduct investigations, test products to ascertain if they meet the required standards, conduct research and development, educate applicants and registrants, and initiate disciplinary action against companies who commit egregious violations.

OUR MISSION

To protect and serve the consumers while ensuring a fair and competitive marketplace.

OUR VISION

To be an efficient organization that effectively protects consumers and improves the marketplace through enforcement of the law, providing excellent customer service, and prompt licensing.

OUR VALUES

Accountability We are accountable to the people of California.

Consumer Protection We conduct swift, thorough investigations and ensure fair adjudication of violations of law.

Effectiveness We identify new ideas and innovations, to make informed decisions.

Integrity We conduct business in an impartial and transparent manner, delivering on our commitments.

Professionalism We ensure that staff is qualified and proficient in serving consumers, licensees and the industries we regulate.

Service We foster open communication and productive partnerships, with licensees, industry, and other stakeholders.

GOALS



GOAL 1 LICENSING



Administer a licensing process that permits applicants to timely enter to the workforce while ensuring consumer protection.

- » Implement access to online licensing and renewals through the Department's BreEZe system.
- » Develop and utilize additional screening methods for applicants to increase consumer protection.
- » Develop informational tools to assist Service Dealer Contract Administrators in the proper submission of valid contracts, financial record keeping, and executing renewals.
- » Review and update licensing and registration forms.

GOAL 2
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND
ENFORCEMENT

Ensure the Bureau's enforcement program maximizes resources to provide timely consumer protection through actively enforcing the laws and regulations governed.

- » Revise the Bureau's disciplinary guidelines to remediate misconduct.
- » Review and update the probationary monitoring program to effectively monitor probationer terms and conditions.
- » Develop and implement a plan to address unlicensed activity, illegal, or unfair business practices.
- » Develop and implement a plan to address collection of unpaid citations.
- » Review citation and fine processes.
- » Continue research on bed clothing flammability standard.

GOAL 3
COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION

Will inform and engage consumers, licensees, and other stakeholders about the Bureau's laws and regulations and the availability of the complaint process.

- » Annually publish an electronic newsletter to provide legislative and regulatory changes, disciplinary actions taken, and identify Bureau achievements.
- » Hold biannual Advisory Council meetings to garner input on the Bureau's activities.
- » Identify outreach opportunities to meet with target groups, such as academic institutions and trade schools.
- » Attend venues to update stakeholders on regulatory matters and Bureau activities.
- » Update and disseminate the guide to Electronic and Appliance Repair and Service Contract brochure.
- » Develop and foster partnerships with consumer advocates and stakeholders.

GOAL 4
LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS

Implement legislative and regulatory changes to provide for the protection of consumers and to address current and emerging issues.

LEGISLATION

- » Implement legislative change to track and monitor the delinquent tax debt requirements (*Assembly Bill 1424, Statutes of 2012*).
- » Implement legislative change by developing the requirements for product reimbursements (*Assembly Bill 1443, Statutes of 2012*).
- » Implement legislative changes for active military personnel (*Assembly Bills 1588 and 1904, Statutes of 2012*).
- » Implement legislative change by adoption of regulations to authorize electronic and appliance services dealers, to install, maintain, and monitor Ignition Interlock Device Installation (*Senate Bill 1576, Statutes of 2012*).

REGULATIONS

- » Through regulation, revise the Upholstered Furniture Flammability Standard entitled Technical Bulletin 117 (TB 117).
- » Through regulation, review, evaluate, and seek exemption of additional juvenile products from the requirements of TB 117.
- » Update the Electronic and Appliance Repair regulations to reflect current industry terminology.
- » Through regulation, review and update the Bureau's advertising guidelines.
- » Update the Thermal Insulation program to include new testing methods and certify new products in regulation.
- » Through regulation, revise and update Technical Bulletin 133 to remove calorimeter testing criteria.
- » Add Federal Requirement (16CFR1632) in regulation.
- » Through regulation, update the chemical sanitization logs.

GOAL 5
ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Implement efficiencies, streamline processes, and communicate with stakeholders and staff consistently and often, by delivering timely and accurate information and services.

- » Consolidate the Bureau's two web sites to improve ease of use and consistency.
- » Continually update and disseminate the Bureau's Laws and Regulations.
- » Prepare a Sunset Review Report.
- » Support staff in upward mobility goals through formal training and cross-training opportunities within the Bureau.
- » Develop and provide examples of compliant flammability, plumage and law labels.





STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

<http://www.bearhfti.ca.gov>

4244 South Market Court, Suite D, Sacramento CA 95834