



BHFTI

Bureau of Home Furnishings
& Thermal Insulation

**BHFTI Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

ATTENDANCE:

Advisory Council Members:

Sharron Bradley, Vice Chair, Western Home Furnishings Association
James C. Albers, *Public Member*
Burt Grimes, Pacific West Furniture Manufacturing, Inc.
Neil S. Puro, Pacific Coast Feather Cushion Company
Gene Valcke, Hanes Fabrics Company

BHFTI Staff Members:

Rick Fong, Bureau Chief
Victoria Hernandez, Assistant to the Chief
Rick Diamond, Field Operations Manager
Joanne Mikami, Compliance Unit Manager
Karen Skelton, Licensing Unit Manager
Carrie Cathalifaud, Laboratory Supervisor
Dale Chessey, Licensing Unit Program Analyst
Patty Rodriguez, Enforcement Unit Program Analyst
Diana Godines, Administrative Analyst
Said Nurbakhsh, Test Engineer
Sue Xu, Test Engineer
Shalom Rojas, Staff Services Analyst
Jenna Weddle, Staff Services Analyst

Other DCA Staff:

Claire Yazigi, Attorney, DCA Legal Affairs

Public/Other Meeting Attendees:

Lynn Baker, Air Resources Board

Agenda Items:

- I. Opening Remarks and Introductions
 - Chief Rick Fong opened the meeting at 9:00 A.M., welcoming the attendees
 - The Chief announced the duration of the Council Meetings are extended to allow adequate time for agenda item discussions

- Advisory Council members and DCA staff introduced themselves following Chief's comments
- The Chief acknowledged Claire Yazigi as the Bureau's new Legal Counsel and discussed her role with the Bureau

II. Department Update

- The Chief announced Brian Stiger as the new Director of Department of Consumer Affairs, effective August 2009
- The Chief commented on the great success of the previously held Pact Summit meeting; the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 26-28, 2010 at the Sacramento Convention Center
 - The Chief announced the Pact Summit has undergone a name change to Regulatory Next Practices: A Working Conference
 - The Chief and Sharron Bradley provided an overview of the conference, commented on the restructuring of the workshops and outlined a few topics in focus such as workforce pipeline issues, new enforcement models, the baby boom generation and training
- The Chief announced that DCA is progressing towards the implementation of a centralized database with the aid of Office of Technology Services
 - Rick Diamond stated DCA is anticipating the roll out of the centralized database to be next year and discussed the improvements foreseen as the database capabilities will allow easier access to up-to-date information
- The Chief announced DCA will be holding an Employee Appreciation Day on October 6, 2009

III. Bureau Update

- Licensing Update:
 - Dale Chessey provided an overview of licensee trends and commented on licensees' progression toward filing Chapter 11 bankruptcy rather than Chapter 7 bankruptcy resulting from the decline in the economy
 - Karen Skelton provided an overview of the Licensing Unit activities and reviewed statistical data of the number of applications received and processed, mentioning that the manufacturers had the biggest decline in number of license renewals
 - Sharron Bradley, Neil Puro and Burt Grimes discussed the impingement the economy has on the industry and the trends toward consolidation or restructuring of businesses
- Laboratory Update:
 - Carrie Cathalifaud discussed progress with establishing the Bureau's new facility in Natomas
 - Burt Grimes inquired on capabilities of the new facility and the necessity for new equipment
 - The Chief commented that the current equipment is in great working condition and the calibration is well maintained; purchasing new equipment is avoidable at this moment
 - The Chief mentioned the accommodation of larger mattresses will be cost effective for the Bureau; also staff will have better handling of the products tested
 - Carrie Cathalifaud provided an overview of the Laboratory Unit activities and included statistical information of the number of flammability tests conducted to date
 - Neil Puro and Burt Grimes inquired about charging a fee for performing flammability tests and generating revenue for the Bureau
 - The Chief and Staff Counsel, Claire Yazigi discussed that the Bureau's focus and resources must be put towards its mission of protecting consumers by ensuring compliance with BHFTI laws and not a fee-for-service to businesses
 - Carrie Cathalifaud and Sue Xu discussed the continued testing of the new cigarettes and working with CPSC regarding a new smoldering source
 - Said Nurbakhsh provided statistical data regarding 16 CFR 1633 stating that the majority of mattresses pass the standard

- Enforcement Update:
 - Patty Rodriguez provided an overview of the Field Operations activities
 - Rick Diamond presented video of field staff performing inspections with numerous vendors located at a Southern California swap meet
 - Rick Diamond provided an overview of the Complaint and Investigation Trends
 - Rick Diamond and Burt Grimes discussed the type of complaints that Enforcement Unit would proceed to investigate versus complaints handled at Mediation
 - Rick Diamond discussed the seriousness of enforcing advertising regulations with possible involvement of City Officials or District Attorneys
 - Joanne Mikami provided statistical data of disciplinary actions taken by the Compliance Unit
 - Joanne Mikami discussed the effectiveness of Bureau's authority to disconnect the business telephones of unlicensed businesses
 - The Chief announced that a committee has been formed to explore the use of a third party to collect outstanding citations
- Legislative Update:
 - The Chief commented on SB 772 in which BHFTI continues to test and monitor juvenile products for compliance with flammability standards
 - The Chief commented on the status of TB 604 which remains under review with State and Consumer Services Agency

IV. Bureau Consolidation

- The Chief announced the consolidation of BHFTI and BEAR; the proposed name has been decided as Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair, Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation
 - Patty Rodriguez and Dale Chessey are anticipating the new website will go live on October 22, 2009
- Chief asked Advisory Council members for input regarding outreach

V. California Composite Wood Regulation Title 17 California Code of Regulations §93120

- Air Resources Board Representative, Lynn Baker, presented the California Composite Wood Products Regulation established to reduce public exposure to airborne formaldehyde
- Lynn Baker provided a status of ARB's regulation implementation and outreach efforts; also requested partnership with BHFTI staff to assist with outreach to affected industries

VI. Roundtable Discussion

- Burt Grimes, Gene Valcke and Sharron Bradley discussed assisting the Bureau with outreach via their member websites or newsletters
- James Albers commented on issues with self-extinguishing cigarettes and the uncollected data regarding fires
- The Advisory Council agreed to tentatively schedule the next meeting for January 13, 2010 in Southern California

VII. Public Comment

- No Public Comment

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 P.M.