



GARY CLEMENTS Commissioner of Consumer Affairs

MANDATORY STANDARDS FOR BUNK BEDS AND BABY WALKERS

The Commissioner of Consumer Affairs Mr Gary Clements is pleased to announce two new Consumer Affairs Product Safety Standards for Bunk Beds and Baby Walkers under the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Regulations 2002*.

Bunk Beds and Baby Walkers are being regulated Australia wide in a bid to improve safety features.

Mr Clements said "The mandatory standard for Baby Walkers is based on the American Standard for Infant Walkers F977-00 and effectively makes it mandatory for manufacturers to comply with provisions in the standard relating to stability, prevention of falls down steps and labelling".

Whilst the new standard will greatly improve safety features of baby walkers, Mr Clements reminds parents and carers that baby walkers can still be very dangerous as they allow infants to move around the house at a younger age than normal. Two thirds of injuries are associated with the walker falling down stairs or tipping over. A further 20% involve children getting access to hazards such as hot stoves, irons or other unsafe items.

He said, "It is imperative that children in baby walkers be supervised at all times to prevent them being able to access hazardous locations. Child safety experts recommend a stationary play centre as a safer alternative to baby walkers".

The mandatory standard for Bunk Beds is based on the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4220:1994 and again although the mandatory standard will assist in increasing safety features of bunk beds, Mr Clements reminds consumers that there are still inherent dangers in the use of bunk beds.

"Bunk beds are not suitable for children under the age of six and they should never be used as a play area. Many injuries occur when children fall from the top bunk while playing. Ladders and guard rails should be checked to ensure they are secure" he said.

A list of safety tips on baby walkers and bunk beds are available from Consumer Affairs telephone 8999 1999.