

Log of Telephone Call

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Subject: Go Karts

Date of Phone Call: April 18, 1996

Log Entry Source: Troy Whitfield, ESME

Commission Attendee: Troy Whitfield, ESME

Non-Commission Attendees: Steve Hix, Executive Director IRGA
(International Recreational Go-Kart Association)

Summary of Conversation:

I contacted Steve Hix to discuss the Fun Kart Industry's willingness to develop a voluntary standard which would address safety issues associated with go-karts intended for sale to consumers. Mr. Hix informed me that the IRGA interests are divided into three categories; Concession (amusement rides), Fun Kart, and Racing. I was told that between 1990 and 1991 the group, under ASTM F24, drafted, balloted, and accepted 18 months later, a standard which applied to go-karts designed and manufactured for use at amusement parks. The venture was such a success that last April (4/22/95) there was a meeting in Memphis of the 15 major manufacturers to form a trade association (a division of IRGA) and develop requirements for fun karts (karts intended for sales to consumers). Mr. Hix indicated that a proposed standard is in the balloting process and that, partially based on the review of NEISS data, the standard contains language to address; hair entrapment, loose and/or exposed parts, rollover protection (ROP), and seat belts. Additionally, Mr. Hix expressed the need for consumer education programs, revised operators manuals, and the possible development of training videos to increase product knowledge among consumers.

Because the ASTM F24 deals with amusement rides, the Subcommittee does not have an interest in including the Fun Karts as part of their requirements. However, Mr. Hix stated that he believes there is a consensus among the trade association to petition ASTM to form a new subcommittee to deal with the Fun Kart issues. He envisions the subcommittee to include consumers, manufacturers, trade associations, suppliers, etc. At this time, the trade association is made up of all but one major manufacturer (approximately 20 to 25 manufacturers).

Our discussion was concluded with Mr. Hix mentioning the need for help (possibly financial under CFR 1105.1) in disseminating information to manufacturers and the public regarding the safety standard and safe consumer practices. I informed Mr. Hix that we may be able to provide some assistance through our Office of Information and Public Affairs but that financially, our budget was limited. Mr. Hix also asked if a letter from Chairman Brown to the trade association members could be drafted to emphasize the need to settle differences and accept a voluntary standard in the interest of public safety.