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LOG OF MEETING
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Meeting with Headstrong Group, Inc. to discuss head protection for in-line skaters

DATE OF MEETING: June 4, 1996

PLACE: CPSC Headquarters
Bethesda, MD

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Scott Heh, ESME *MR*

DATE OF ENTRY: June 12, 1996

COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Scott Heh-ESME, Harleigh Ewell-OGC, Andrew Stadnik-ES, Patricia Adkins-COAB, George Sushinsky-LSEL, Suad Nakamura-EHPS, Celestine Trainor-ESHF, Terrance Karels-Economics, Roy Deppa-ESME, Debbie Tinsworth-EHHA, Frank Krivda-CE

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Dale Friedman-President of Headstrong Group Inc., Stephen Prisco-VP of Sales for Headstrong Group, Gil Clark-Executive Director of the International In-Line Skating Association, Randy Swart-Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, Sam Cristy-Product Safety Letter

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Mr. Prisco and Mr. Friedman (of Headstrong) requested to meet with CPSC staff to express their views that headgear for in-line skaters should meet more rigorous performance requirements than headgear for bicyclists. Headstrong sells "multi-sport" helmets that are marketed for use in skating, skateboarding, and bicycling. They are one of the few manufacturers who certify their helmets to the Snell N-94 Standard for Protective Headgear for Use in Non-Motorized Sports.

CPSC staff stated that they have not seen data that provide evidence to support a conclusion that in-line skating headgear should be different than bicycle headgear. Mr. Friedman suggested that since in-line skates have brakes at the rear of the skate, it is much more likely that an in-line skater will fall backwards and hit the back of his head than it is for a bicyclist. He contends that in-line skating helmets should therefore cover more of the rear of the head than bicycle helmets. Mr. Friedman said that Tampa General Hospital and others are starting to gather information that shows that in-line skating requires special head protection.

Mr. Friedman also stated his disagreement with bicycle helmets that are labeled "For Non-motorized Use Only." He said that this label implies that the helmet is suitable for all sorts of activities for which it may not provide adequate protection, such as football. Mr. Swart replied that the label "Not for Motor Vehicle Use," was agreed upon for the ASTM standard to address the most common misuse of a bike helmet and, to his knowledge, nobody has misinterpreted the

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label to mean that a bike helmet is suitable for an activity for which it was obviously not intended.

Mr. Heh said that CPSC staff is interested in the concept of a multi-activity helmet. (CPSC Chairman Ann Brown sponsored a roundtable discussion to examine technical issues regarding what the appropriate scope and performance requirements should be for a multi-activity helmet.) Mr. Heh further stated that the scope of the Snell N-94 standard goes beyond in-line skating and bicycling by including such activities as rock climbing and paddling. He reiterated that CPSC staff has no evidence to show that a bicycle helmet does not provide suitable protection for an in-line skater, but that he is interested in any information that will help to define the in-line skating hazard patterns and help to determine if significantly different helmet performance requirements are needed for in-line skating helmets. Mr. Friedman agreed that he would send any information he receives to the Commission staff. The meeting adjourned.

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