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UNITED STATES  
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20207

Memorandum

Date May 23 2001

TO The Commission  
THROUGH Sadye E. Dunn, Secretary *S. Dunn*  
Michael S. Solender, General Counsel *MS*  
FROM Pamela Gilbert *PG*  
Executive Director  
SUBJECT 2001 Midyear Review

This memorandum presents a status report on the use of Commission resources and the progress of planned projects in the first half of fiscal year 2001. This memo also presents staff proposals for adjustments in CPSC's operating plan for the second half of the year.

**Resource Status**

Agency spending in total through the first half of the fiscal year was 49% of the annual plan. We have \$1.1 million available for possible reallocation.

Current employment, including hiring commitments, is about 475 FTEs with active recruitment underway for vacancies primarily for the technical directorates, compliance and the field. To date, we have had 25 departures and have hired or have hiring commitments for 27 new employees. So far, through careful planning and a great effort by staff, there have been no substantial project delays because of vacancies.

Attachment A contains a summary of our resource status.

**Project Status**

We have reviewed agency projects in terms of progress to date, Commission direction, new information, and opportunities to advance safety initiatives. I am pleased to report that we are generally on track to meet our 2001 annual performance goals.

Under Hazard Identification and Analysis, work continues on collecting data under the new All Trauma NEISS project. In addition, staff continues to collect consumer product death and injury data, investigate incidents, research emerging hazards, and conduct economic analyses in support of hazard reduction efforts.

Our Hazard Assessment and Reduction projects are moving forward. On our Phthalates project, the Chronic Hazard Advisory Panel (CHAP) report is expected in June and the staff is

NOTE: This document has not been

reviewed or accepted by the Commission

Initial *PG* Date *5/22/01* CPSC Hotline 1-800-678-CPSC(2772) \* CPSC's Web Site <http://www.cpsc.gov>

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analyzing data from the mouthing behavior study Our Smoke Alarm research project in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U S Fire Administration the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and Underwriters Laboratories is continuing as planned This is a two year effort designed to evaluate performance of existing and new technology alarms with the goal of updating the current voluntary standard Finally staff is recommending deferring the status indicator work on smoke alarms (until we see the results of our research project) and deleting the activity on CO alarms (at this time it appears that status indicators for CO alarms are not feasible), work on GFCI status indicators is continuing as planned

In the Compliance program, the Fast Track Recall program continues to be successful with about 50% of the Commission's recalls being conducted under Fast Track In addition, we have continued to work on a wide range of product hazards, including high chairs, sprinklers furnaces, fast food premiums, dishwashers, child resistant disposable lighters multi purpose lighters and fireworks The Safe On line Shopping Internet monitoring effort continues to seek products that have been recalled, violate mandatory safety standards or are unsafe

We continue to get safety messages to the public We issued 10 CPSC funded consumer information video news releases (VNR) in the first half of the year as well as 8 manufacturer funded VNRs The Offices of Field Operations Compliance, Public Affairs, and Information Services conducted a very successful 2001 Recall Roundup campaign preliminary data show that the campaign reached about 70 million TV viewers, the most ever, in addition to the added exposure by working with nearly 2,000 local firestations The CPSC website continues to experience growth in use, in April, the site received over 500 000 visits compared to 400,000 last April

We continue to make advances in information technology Staff requested 270 database programming tasks By midyear, we have completed 60% of these tasks that will refine our databases and lay the groundwork for future integration For example we recently completed the integration of the Epidemiology database assignment system with the Field s database system This work eliminates duplicate data entry expedites the receipt of investigations from Field, and makes all of the completed assignments more available to CPSC staff resulting in faster turn around time on other staff assignments

We have strengthened our training program We have allocated funds and delegated authority for training decisions directly to major offices We have recommended funding all midyear training proposals We have included a training goal in the agency's strategic plan to stress the importance of coordinated training The Office of Human Resources (EXRM) has appointed a training coordinator to complete a plan to meet training needs that are common to all agency offices We will also ask offices to appoint a training coordinator because each office is responsible for meeting its own technical training needs EXRM has developed and distributed a manual to help offices develop their training plans EXRM has secured free training from the Employee Assistance Program and has begun stocking a library of training videos for staff use Finally, EXRM is exploring securing contractor training to conduct on site, in demand training subjects at a lower cost than individual off site training sessions

## **New Funding Proposals**

Staff has suggested about \$2 million in new funding proposals designed to advance safety initiatives or otherwise improve agency operations. However, as we only have \$1.1 million in available funds, we had to make choices. After review with staff, I propose that the Commission fund the items listed in Attachment B. The major items proposed for funding are summarized next.

*I recommend the following to directly advance the program work of the Office of Hazard Identification and Reduction (HIR). These include:*

- 1 \$30,000 for work on clothes dryer testing, heat exchanger testing and child poisoning data,
- 2 \$25,000 to purchase 500 telephone investigations of child bicycle injuries and,
- 3 \$100,000 for new research on using emerging sensor technology to reduce product hazards.

I also recommend an additional \$19,000 for HIR technical staff training and other operating expenses such as the purchase of technical reference materials to support standards development. In addition, I recommend about \$179,000 in various laboratory testing improvements including a major equipment replacement item of \$85,000 for a mass spectrometer. Finally, I recommend \$19,000 for HIR's Engineering Sciences staff to support their compliance screening work and development of mechanical codes and standards.

Information technology continues to be essential to CPSC productivity. I recommend these investments:

- 1 \$56,000 to conduct a limited telecommuting pilot test for headquarters staff.
- 2 \$387,000 to provide various improvements to our network infrastructure including a new document server, help desk staffing, faster network operations, new programming test server and remote website security monitoring.
- 3 \$198,000 to replace our oldest desktop computers (80), printers (10), field laptop computers (25), field digital cameras (25), and field printers (100). This will enhance efficiency and productivity in a wide range of program offices, as well as continue our needed replacement cycle, and,
- 4 \$20,000 for increased technical training of our information technology staff.

In total, I have recommended \$36,000 be added to our original training budget for technical training in HIR, information technology and administrative services.

These recommendations for funding reflect the highest priorities of the program managers. The full list of items proposed for current funding is described in Attachment B. The balance of the staff requests is described in Attachment C. This list is not in priority order – if funds become available, purchases would be prioritized on the basis of agency need, funding prospects for next year, and consideration of additional new items that may develop later this year.

## Next Steps

The staff will brief you on May 31. The staff and I are available to review these recommendations and related materials with you prior to this meeting. A separate decision meeting on the proposed actions, if necessary, will be scheduled. Upon Commission action, the staff will begin to implement approved changes.

The Executive Director will keep the Commission informed of staff progress on approved proposals. If additional funds become available by the end of year, we will apprise the Commission of spending plans.

Thank you for your consideration.

## Attachments

**2001 MIDYEAR REVIEW  
RESOURCE SUMMARY  
(dollars in thousands)**

	<b>Operating Plan</b>	<b>Current Estimate</b>	<b>Available Resources</b>
<b>FTEs</b>	480	470	+10
<b>Budget</b>	\$55,080*	\$53,944	+\$1,136

\*Includes \$2,695 million reimbursement income beyond the \$52,385 million appropriation

**2001 MIDYEAR REVIEW  
PROPOSED NEW FUNDING**

**Hazard Identification and Analysis**

<i>Contract support</i> for clothes dryer testing, heat exchanger testing, and, child poisoning data	\$30
<i>Bicycle study</i> – 500 telephone investigations of child injury incidents	25
<i>Technical reference materials</i> to support standards development work	9
<i>Training</i> for technical staff	10
<i>Sensor research</i> on using emerging sensor technology to reduce product hazards	100
<i>Compliance screening equipment</i> for use by Engineering Sciences staff	14
<i>Student partnership</i> contract in support of mechanical codes and standards work	5
<i>Data acquisition software and equipment upgrades</i> for use in the Laboratory	36
<i>Hydrocarbon Gas Analyzer</i> to provide Lab backup and eliminate testing delays	8
<i>One Year CAMI doll</i> to provide full range of anthropometric testing dolls	4
<i>Mass Spectrometer</i> to replace critical chemical testing equipment	85
<i>Analytical Mass Balances (5)</i> replacements to maintain Lab measurement reliability	15
<i>Gas Analyzer</i> to replace old equipment at Laboratory	30

**Information Technology**

<i>Telecommuting equipment/training</i> for Headquarters pilot test	56
<i>IDI Document server</i> upgrade and addition of backup server	39
<i>Helpdesk contract support</i> for balance of year	28
<i>Network upgrade (switches/computer room)</i> to speed data transmission	288
<i>Field telecommuter equipment</i> replacement of all one scanner/printer/fax copiers	29
<i>Computer/printer</i> replacement of desktop/laptop computers (105) and printers (10)	159
<i>Digital cameras</i> replacement of aging cameras (25) used by Field investigators	10
<i>Test server</i> replacement of aging server used to test database enhancements	18
<i>Remote Website security monitoring</i> by security contractor	14
<i>Technical training for computer specialists</i>	20

**Other Items**

<i>Publications reprints</i> of ‘best sellers’ requested by public	20
<i>Inspector General audit</i> contract for statutory required information security audit	60
<i>Safety equipment</i> for Field investigator cars	5
<i>Fireworks investigation supplies/equipment</i>	9
<i>Color copier sorter</i> for copy center to speed copy work	4
<i>Training</i> for procurement and financial specialists	<u>6</u>

**Total** **\$1,136**

**2001 MIDYEAR REVIEW  
UNFUNDED REQUESTS  
(Not Listed in Priority Order)**

**Hazard Identification and Reduction**

<i>Space renovation</i> to enclose exterior workstations	28
<i>Space renovation</i> to reconfigure two workstations to store equipment in ES space	4
<i>Digital Infrared Camera</i> for use in Laboratory fire analysis	15
<i>Chiller</i> to support Laboratory combustion chamber testing	17
<i>Camı Doll</i> replacements for older dolls in Laboratory	6
<i>Fastener and Assembly Parts System</i> for Laboratory	9

**Compliance**

<i>Copier</i> replacement	14
<i>Space renovation</i> to enclose interior workstations on 6 <sup>th</sup> floor (needs HVAC study)	20

**Field**

<i>Presentation projector</i> for staff presentations	6
<i>Travel funds</i> for potential new hires	3
<i>Furniture replacements</i>	4

<b>Office of the Secretary – Replacement copier</b>	10
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**Administrative Services**

<i>GSA Security recommendations</i> (still being developed)	32
<i>Space renovation</i> to create more meeting space in Administrative Services	4
<i>Copier replacement</i>	4
<i>Copy paper</i> for agency	30
<i>Move Samples Storage facility</i> (site development still in planning stage)	20
<i>Portable Projector</i> for staff presentations	3
<i>Space renovation</i> to upgrade 4 finance workstations (needs study)	16

**Information Technology**

<i>Telecommuting equipment</i> for possible expansion of Headquarters telecommuting	220
<i>Color printers</i> (one each, Office of Secretary and Compliance)	10
<i>Laptop computers</i> (6) for Headquarters loaner program expansion	13
<i>Windows/Office 2000 software</i> upgrade (needs study)	151
<i>Printer supplies</i>	16
<i>Computer room racks</i>	9
<i>Human Resource software</i> replacement (needs study)	<u>200</u>

<b>Total</b>	<u><u>\$864</u></u>
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