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#### 17.4.2.2 Trade standards and regulations

In its consumer program, the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is responsible for the administration of broad legislation which affects the business community. Policies and programming are determined by the Consumer Standards Directorate, and the necessary field supervision by the Field Operations Service.

**Hazardous products.** The Product Safety Branch administers the Hazardous Products Act which deals with consumer goods. The Act makes specific mention of products designed for household, garden, or personal use, for use in sports or recreational activities or for use by children. It also mentions without reference to end use, poisonous, toxic, flammable, explosive and corrosive products.

Under the Act, the Minister is empowered to establish mandatory standards for application in Canada. Compliance orders now being enforced include the use of shatterproof glass in patio and shower doors, flammability standards for children's sleepwear and protective standards for hockey helmets. Regulations governing toys, cribs and portable car seats are designed to protect children. Other products required to meet rigid specifications include matches, charcoal, ceramics and electrical appliances.

**General commodity field.** A Packaging and Labelling Act will give uniformity to packaging practices in Canada, reduce the possibilities of deception in packaging and advertising and control proliferation of package sizes. On March 1, 1974 the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations were proclaimed. The effective date of these regulations is September 1, 1975 for non-food items and March 1, 1976 for foods.

Regulations under the Textile Labelling Act, in effect since December 1, 1972, require labels on all consumer textile articles. The label must include fibre names and percentages and the identification of the dealer. The Regulations also deal with misrepresentation in both labelling and advertising. The Textile Care Labelling System of coloured symbols recommending proper care for textile products is a voluntary program at this time. The Canadian Standard Size (CSS) system for children's garments, developed by the Canadian Government Specifications Board in conjunction with the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, is administered under the National Trade Mark and True Labelling Act. This system is also voluntary, although dealers must register for a licence before claiming that the garment does, in fact, conform to the CSS and before affixing such a label to the product.

Control of marking of precious metal articles is maintained under the Precious Metals Marking Act. The new Regulations came into force in July 1973.

**Food.** In areas of health, grading, standards and composition, the Food and Drug Act, the Canadian Agricultural Products Standards Act and the Fish Inspection Act are generally applicable. The Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department is charged with administration of the economic fraud aspects in distribution. This responsibility relates mainly to labelling and advertising in any segment of the news media.

Among the many important regulations promulgated in 1974 are those which will require a complete list of ingredients on foods and a durable life date on perishable foods effective March 1, 1976.

**Advertising.** Most legislation has particular requirements to ensure against misleading advertising, but Sections 36 and 37 of the Combines Investigation Act are especially noteworthy as they include general provisions against misleading advertising practices.

**Measurement.** The Weights and Measures Act prescribes the legal standards of weight and measure for use in Canada; it also ensures control of the types of all weighing and measuring devices used for commercial purposes, and provides for in-use surveillance directed toward the elimination of device-tampering and short-weight sales. A replacing Act has been passed by Parliament and new regulations were proclaimed in August 1974. The fundamental objectives of existing legislation are unchanged. The new Act is an updating, and complements the proposed packaging and labelling legislation.