FAQ: Safety of Children’s Clothing in Europe

EN 14682, BS 7907 and CEN/TR 16792
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1. **What standards relate to the safety of children’s clothing?**
   The safety of children’s clothing is covered by two main standards as follows:
   
   - EN 14682 – Safety of Children’s Clothing – Cords and Drawstrings on Children’s Clothing – Specifications

   A third standard exists for specification of zips (BS 3084), which includes requirements for zips on children’s clothing. A European standard (EN 16732) is currently being discussed, however has not yet been published.

   Other standards exist, such as solar UV protective properties of clothing, azo dyes, formaldehyde etc., however this FAQ document will only comment on cords and drawstrings and mechanical safety of children’s clothing.

2. **What is the latest version of EN 14682?**
   EN 14682:2014 was published in December 2014. On the 31st December 2014, the British version of this standard was published, BS EN 14682:2014. It supersedes BS EN 14682:2007, which is withdrawn.

3. **Which version of the standard should I meet?**
   As EN 14682:2007 is harmonised under the EU General Product Safety Directive, retailers and brands should continue to meet this version of the standard.

4. **What does harmonised standard mean?**
   A harmonised standard is one that has been put before the EU General Product Safety Committee and has been approved. However, EN 14682:2007 has special status under Article 4 of the General Product Safety Directive. As such, if children’s clothing meets EN 14682:2007 for the risks covered in the standard, then it is deemed to meet the General Product Safety Directive. Conversely, if the children’s clothing does not meet EN 14682:2007, then it is likely to be deemed unsafe.
5. **How long do I have before I have to meet EN 14682:2014?**

Generally standards can take a couple of years before they are harmonised, however anyone designing children’s clothing going forward would benefit from ensuring that new designs meet both the 2007 and 2014 version of the standard. This way they are covered if and when the 2014 version is harmonised.

6. **What are the differences between EN 14682:2007 and EN 14682:2014?**

EN 14682:2014 has some significant changes, including (but not exhaustive):

- New clause for bags and purses that are often sold as co-ordinating accessories for children’s clothing.
- 'Terms and definitions' reordered including some additional and revised definitions.
- Requirements now consider the different risks for front and back of garment, and specification corrected accordingly.
- Decorative cords are now permitted for young children with restrictions that specifically consider strangulation hazards. This is consistent with permitting stitched embellishments, for example bows.
- Ring and slider mechanisms for shoulder straps and halter necks are commonly used to permit adjustment of the strap in wear. The loops created by these straps will be variable, and may be greater than 7.5 cm, however as these are close fitting to the body, no loop should present an entrapment hazard.
- Examination of garments shows that those clothes that are worn from waist down can be defined as those that fit closely to the body to be functional. Strings at the waist on these garments when closed to the body will be low hazard, and some requirements have been relaxed. Other garments can be more flowing, for example unbuttoned coats. In these garments, requirements have been strengthened.
- Sleeves clauses have been revised to consider strings other than at hems, and all lengths of sleeve.
• New paragraph to clarify that anthropometric data listed is that used to define children’s sizes in EN 14682:2014, where the tallest children in Europe were considered.

• Annex C: enhanced to provide rationale for exclusions from scope, and rationale for requirements for lengths of drawstrings and cords. Explanation that manufacturers need to be more aware of how product is likely to be used, and not what it is called as a garment type.

• New improved methods for measurement of
  o sash or tied belt,
  o garment open to its largest and laid flat,
  o garment in its relaxed natural state.

• New improved figures provided to illustrate requirements.

7. Has BS 7907 been withdrawn and superseded by CEN/TR 16792?
   No. CEN/TR 16792:2014 is a European Technical Report very similar to BS 7907. It is expected that BS 7907 will be withdrawn in time, as it conflicts with CEN/TR 16792.

   CEN/TR 16792 is very similar to BS 7907 for many clauses, however it does have some significant differences, including (but not exhaustive):
   • Glued and fused components are now classed as non grippable and subject to a wash test rather than a test method to determine removal force.
   • A tensile strength of buttons and recommended minimum strength is now included.
   • Small parts assessment is referred to.
   • Etc.
9. What about EN-71 for security of attachment? Should I still use the requirements from this standard?
EN 71-1 is a European standard for safety of toys: Mechanical and physical properties. The maximum requirements are set at 90N as toys are subject to use and abuse. Both BS 7907 and CEN/TR 16792 have a maximum requirement of 70N, however as CEN/TR 16792 covers Europe, retailers should consider moving to this standard.

10. What standards should I follow if I only sell in the UK, rest of Europe or both UK and the rest of Europe?
EN 14682 and CEN/TR 16792 are European standards and apply to UK as well as the rest of Europe.

11. My manual states BS 7907. What should I use?
As the security of attachment requirements for CEN/TR 16792 are the same as BS 7907, with the exception of fused of glued components, if you meet BS 7907, then you will meet CEN/TR 16792.

12. What about glued or fused components for BS 7907 and CEN/TR 16792?
As CEN/TR 16792 classes these items as non grippable, a wash test is now required.

13. My manual states to use EN 71-1 for security of attachment. What should I use?
As there is now a European Technical report (CEN/TR 16792) for children’s clothing with recommendations for security of attachment, retailers should consider moving to this standard.
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