



## INDEPENDENT CONSUMER & COMPETITION COMMISSION

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## REPORT NO: 1/2005 ON THE CONSUMER PRODUCT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (CPCC)

### **INTRODUCTION**

The *Consumer Product Consultative Committee* (CPCC) an initiative of the *Independent Consumer and Competition Commission* (ICCC) was successfully launched on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2005 by the Honorable Minister for Finance and Treasury Mr. Bart Philemon, Member for Lae.

The establishment and the launching of the Consumer Product Consultative Committee (CPCC) is part of ICCC's focus to involve key players in the industries as technical advisors and partners in making sure that consumer protection issues such as product safety are addressed in PNG.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of CPCC as highlighted in the meeting encourages the industries, stakeholders and consumers alike to work together in finding solutions to protect the consumers for the benefit of the industries and the wider community in ensuring the goods and services manufactured and distributed in the market are safe for consumption and use.

### **ISSUES DISCUSSED AT CPCC MEETING**

The launching and the CPCC meeting proper on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2005 was a success, well presented and received by all the CPCC members. The issues raised in the meeting were as follows;

- Counterfeit and Pirated products
- Products do not conform to the relevant mandatory product standards
- Mandatory product standards are not known to relevant industries.
- Who are the custodians of relevant mandatory product standards?
- Product labels in foreign language that consumers don't understand.
- Apart from Expiry dates, Safety dates not known to consumers in some products.
- Absence of product recall policies in some of the industries.

## **PROGRESS**

Following the CPCC meeting, the ICCC organized a series of meetings and dialogues with IPA, IRC Customs, CHM on the issue of pirated and counterfeit music products, PNG Power Limited on the issue of electrical standards, the Food Sanitation Council on the issue of product labeling and expiry dates and a number of traders on their foreign language labeled products.

The following are some of the results achieved from the dialogues and meetings;

### ***(a) Ban/Confiscation of Products***

On the advice of IRC Customs and IPA Registrar of Trade Marks, CHM has engaged a lawyer to register the major brand product that it distributes and supplies. This will allow IRC Customs to ban the counterfeit/fake and pirated products. Meanwhile CHM has also engaged the assistance of the Police Department to search and confiscate pirated music products produced locally.

### ***(b) Electrical Product Standards***

PNG Power who are the regulatory authorities for electricity have been engaged to identify product standard requirements and advice ICCC. Based on this information ICCC in liaison with PNG Power will conduct consumer awareness on electrical product standard requirements. The industries will be advised that products that do not comply with the standards will be removed from the market or banned.

### ***(c) Product Labelling – Food Products***

ICCC have recently collaborated with the Health Department in media releases on product information and labeling. In collaborating with the Health Department, ICCC was invited to serve on the Food Sanitation Council Meeting and attended its Meeting No#3 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2005.

The Council supported the initiative by ICCC to establish an MOU with Health Department and the City/Town Authorities to exchange information and share resources in the enforcement of consumer protection related activities.

The draft Food Sanitation Regulation which comprehensively covers the requirements of food labeling and information has now been approved by the Council and will shortly be submitted to the NEC.

### ***(d) Voluntary Product Recall Guide***

Following the need for industries to consider having product recall polices, the ICCC has drafted a Voluntary Product Recall Guide, distributed and circulated to the CPCC members and stakeholder for their comments.

## **OBSERVATION**

It was obvious from the first CPCC meeting that there are many important issues that will need to be further discussed and addressed going forward with the support from all CPCC members mainly in relation to;

- Creating more awareness on mandatory product standards to consumers and industries.
- Preventing banned and illegal/unsafe products from coming into PNG.
- Getting support from industries to enforce mandatory product safety standards.
- Getting support from enforcement agencies to enforce mandatory product safety standards.
- Adopting and developing appropriate product safety standards in products where there are none.

## **CONCLUSION**

Even though it was the first CPCC meeting some progress are already made in assisting the Commission in addressing consumer product safety issues including other relevant consumer protection issues with the help of the CPCC members, the industries and the consumers.

Through the CPCC some awareness and the existing partnership with the industries and the relevant enforcing agencies to work together have improved to some new level for the benefit of all consumers and players in the industries.

Hence in order to continue this awareness and commitment, the Chair has invited PNG Power Ltd to make a presentation on Electrical Standards and IRC Customs to make a presentation on the Ban on Counterfeit and Pirate Products for the 2<sup>nd</sup> CPCC meeting from issues raised in 1<sup>st</sup> CPCC meeting.

**THOMAS ABE**  
Commissioner & CEO  
CPCC Chairman