



October 20, 2006 (updated)

BIC position regarding enforcement of “child-resistant” lighters

“A child-resistant standard is good, but enforcing it is even more important. Enforcement is essential because if there is no enforcement, consumers will actually be less safe,” said François Bich.

“Indeed, those manufacturers today who do not respect the ISO 9994 safety standard regarding lighter safety, will not respect the child-resistant standard,” he added.

“We have to keep in mind that a lighter with a child resistant device is a lighter with a more complicated lighting / ignition system. As a result, most consumers prefer a lighter without a child-resistant device. So it is absolutely essential that the European Commission and the Member States guarantee that the child-resistant decision will be 100% respected,” concluded François Bich.

1. What will be the effective date of the standard? Will it be phased in?

The European Decision provides that starting 11 March 2007, it will be forbidden to import or to produce non child-resistant lighters intended for sale in the EU market.

The inventory of non child-resistant lighters already placed in the market as of 11 March 2007 can be sold until 11 March 2008, date from which European consumers must be able to buy only child-resistant lighters.

2. Is BIC Group ready for this?

Yes. BIC has already made the necessary investments and is ready to transition to child-resistant lighters.

It is the same child-resistant feature that is on BIC lighters sold in countries with mandatory child-resistant standards (the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand).

BIC lighter plants in Europe already produce certain models of child-resistant lighters for those markets where the child-resistant lighter standard is mandatory.

3. What do child-resistant lighters look like?

A child-resistant lighter is in fact a lighter which has been purposely modified in order to make it more difficult to operate. In the case of BIC® lighters, the child-resistant mechanism is either a guard placed around the spark wheel or a stronger spring which increases the minimal force required which increases the minimal force that must be applied on the pusher to generate ignition.

4. What does “child-resistant” mean? (age, %...)

In order to meet the child-resistant requirements of the standard, lighters must actually be tested with children under 51 months old (4 years and 3 months). Eighty-five percent of children under 51 months old (4 years and 3 months) must not be able to operate the lighter.

No lighter is child-proof and there is no substitute for proper adult supervision. We urge consumers to use them properly and to follow all warnings provided by the Company, especially "Keep Away From Children!"

5. Which lighters are included in this new child-resistant standard?

This European Decision does not apply to luxury and semi-luxury lighters which in particular are sold with a written guarantee and can be repaired by an after-sales service. In practice, these lighters are usually offered to consumers at a selling price above 8 Euro.

The European Decision adds that novelty lighters will be forbidden following the same deadlines. The European Decision indicates that novelty lighters are in particular those with a shape that resembles *“cartoon characters, toys, guns, watches, telephones, musical instruments, vehicles, human body or parts of the human body, animals, food or beverages, or that play musical notes, or have flashing lights or moving objects or other entertaining features. This excludes lighters that are printed or decorated with logos, labels, decals, artwork or heat shrinkable sleeves.”*

6. How many deaths per year are the result of lighters that do not respect the ISO 9994 safety standard?

BIC has no knowledge of any death in Europe because of a lighter that did not conform to the ISO 9994 standard. Injuries or deaths may have occurred because of lighters that do not conform to the ISO 9994 standard. BIC has no specific data on this issue because all BIC lighters meet the ISO 9994 standard.

7. How many children die per year from lighters that are not “child-resistant”?

In Europe, BIC® has not received any complaints regarding a child using a BIC® lighter. Certainly, even one death or injury of a child is too many. The method used to gather data in Europe was not precise, especially since the data is based on media articles from one country, which were not thoroughly investigated and then were extrapolated for all of Europe.

8. Which measures will be implemented to enforce this standard (custom, store checks, etc.)?

This is the exact concern of the European Federation of Lighter Manufacturers, which we have expressed to both the European Commission and to the Member States. In fact, if the child-resistant standard is not respected, consumers will be less safe than they are today. Those who do not respect the ISO 9994 safety standard today, will not respect the child-resistant standard tomorrow. As the majority of consumers will prefer the lighter *without* the child-resistant feature because it is easier to light, those lighters will improve their market share, to the detriment of brands such as BIC®, which respect the ISO 9994 safety standard and will respect the child-resistant standard.

9. What is the luxury lighters market share in Europe?

Less than 1% in volume.

10. How will BIC proceed once the standard is in effect (lobbying, etc.)?

BIC® will, of course, respect the requirements of the child-resistant lighter standard. Just as we have lobbied Brussels, we are “lobbying” our customers to explain the danger of lighters that do not respect the ISO 9994 safety standard, and going forward, we will explain to them that it is mandatory for retailers to sell only child-resistant lighters.

11. Are enforcement and control measures strong enough?

The European Commission admits that enforcement and control measures are not sufficient: *“In order to ensure that the Decision and safety requirements for lighters are properly enforced, the Commission will be launching, together with EU Member States, a specific project to ensure adequate controls of lighters, including for imports. Customs and surveillance authorities will work together to ensure reinforced controls of the safety requirements of lighters.”*

The European Commission asked us to participate in this process and we responded: **« Since we consider the administration and enforcement of the child-resistant standard essential for the safety of consumers in Europe, we will participate in the process. »**

Illustration for Question 3:



About BIC

BIC is a world leader in stationery, lighters and shavers. For more than 50 years, BIC has honored the tradition of providing high-quality, affordable products to consumers everywhere. Through this unwavering dedication, BIC has become one of the most recognized brands in the world. BIC products are sold in more than 160 countries around the world. In 2005, BIC recorded net sales of 1,381 million euro under IFRS. The Company is listed in the Eurolist Euronext Paris, the SBF120 and CAC Mid 100 indexes. BIC is also part of the FTSE4Good Europe Index of Ethical Companies and of the ASPI Eurozone.

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