



This briefing has been prepared for MPs and other members of Parliament for reading in the House of Commons. It is intended to be used as a basis for a 10 minute bill debate on flammability standards for children's fancy dress clothing on 1 December

The current situation

At present, fancy dress costumes (disguise costumes) for children under 14 years are considered toys and they fall within the definition of a toy outlined within the Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC. Under this directive, they should not pose a flammability hazard to users (wearers) and third parties. In the UK, the Directive has been transposed as the Toy Safety Regulations 2011.

In terms of specifics, the Directive states that toys:

- must not be readily flammable (Flame goes out immediately) **or**
- must not be readily ignitable (Flame goes out immediately) **or**

If they do ignite, they must:

- be treated so as to delay combustion process **or**
- be treated so as to delay combustion process

Under the Toy Product Safety Regulations (Toy Product Safety Regulations) a manufacturer of children's fancy dress costumes can choose to apply a 'harmonized standard'.

The specific harmonized standard that has been published in the Official Journal for toys is EN 71-2:2012. This covers the flammability requirements for toys and it is this that manufacturers are using to test that fancy dress costumes comply. Among other factors, the standard covers rate of flame spread in children's costumes etc.

Should there be a change in the standard?

Some commentators have argued that children's fancy dress costumes should be reclassified.

One option is to reclassify the costumes as nightwear which has an arguably



A requirement for increased warnings on the labels of children's fancy dress clothing. Although this is only a temporary solution and in the long run we would always advocate making these products safer by design. Promote the use of LED candles or other lights instead of candles.

Who we are

Standards Institute is a professional membership organisation representing trading standards officers and providing a range of services for the education of members and to improve trading standards practice. We provide information, evidence and policy advice to support national and local stakeholders.

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