



Members of the Internal Market Committee
of the European Parliament
Rue Wiertz
Brussels 1047

10th October 2007

Dear Member,

As part of the discussions surrounding the February 'goods package' in the European Parliament, suggestions have been made to introduce a voluntary European safety mark.

Businesses throughout Europe are strongly opposed to such suggestions.

Safety is a top priority for the European businesses. We believe that the legislative goals of product safety are of the greatest importance. The introduction of such a voluntary European safety mark will only serve to confuse consumers and businesses alike.

BUSINESSEUROPE's member federations believe that:

- **Safety cannot and should not be voluntary.** European legislation requires that only safe products are placed on the market and unsafe products are withdrawn from the market. A voluntary safety mark would introduce nothing but uncertainty and confusion to the important issue of safety. It would incorrectly suggest that the existing European system of legislation and *CE marking* are incapable of providing sufficient safety and consumer protection.
- **Safety should not be a matter of choice.** Consumers must be able to trust that all products on the market are safe and fulfil requirements of European legislation. The only means of ensuring this is responsible business practices, obeying the law and efficient, effective and consistent market surveillance which prevents the marketing of unsafe products. A voluntary safety mark of the kind suggested will inevitably be understood to mean that there are different levels of safety acceptable in Europe leading to confusion among consumers.

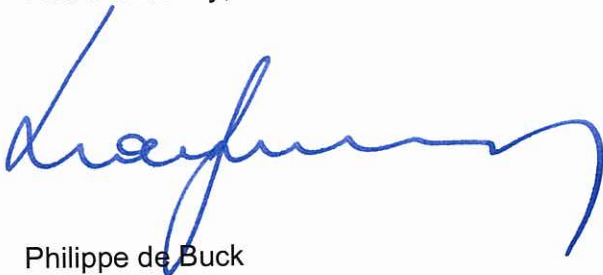
In addition we would like to highlight our belief that a voluntary mark would not actually provide any answer to the problem of unsafe products placed on the market. Unfortunately marks can easily be forged. They do not guarantee product safety for consumers. Instead, a new safety mark would just serve to increase product costs and consequently make products more expensive for consumers without improving safety.

BUSINESSEUROPE would therefore like to re-emphasise a point we have made many times before. Consumer safety and confidence can best be ensured through the better enforcement of existing legislation backed up and complimented by effective market surveillance.

The vast majority of economic operators play by the rules, that is they place only safe products on the market. There are however always a few individual economic operators who do not obey European legislation. Market surveillance by national authorities (coordinated at the European level) is the only real means of meeting this challenge and of ensuring that only safe products enjoy free movement in the European single market.

We are firmly of the opinion that introducing a voluntary European safety mark for consumer products is not the right answer to the problem of unsafe products. On the contrary, we believe it would harm the legislative goals of product safety and transparency in consumer choices.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philippe de Buck', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Philippe de Buck