

NAFLIC

National Association For Leisure Industry Certification

Standards & Related Documents Committee

TECHNICAL BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 2006

316. Dangerous Bouncy Castle Alert from HSE

The attached alert has been received from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Committee Members:- Mr. Doug Dadswell (Chairman), Mr. Richard Barnes, Mr. Peter Smith,
Mr. Ian Grant, Mr. John Green, Mr. Phil Mitchell, Mr. Ron Dale Dr Garry Fawcett MBE, & Mr. Dave Inman
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Dangerous Bouncy Castles Alert

During a routine test by a [PIPA](#) registered examiner based in Suffolk, a bouncy castle was found to have several serious defects, including a lack of a suitable number of anchor points, excessive fall-off height, poor stitching, several entrapment points and generally fell far short of the requirements of prEN 14960 the draft Standard for inflatable play equipment used by PIPA Inspectors as a minimum standard for testing inflatables. The owner was advised to contact the local Trading Standards officers who subsequently contacted the HSE. Enquiries revealed that the castle was one of a batch of inflatable play equipment manufactured and imported from China by [Bouncers Outdoor Leisure](#) of Cramlington, Northumberland and advertised by them as being suitable for “commercial use”. HSE visited the supplier and served a Prohibition Notice, prohibiting him from supplying these castles for commercial use. Local Trading Standards Officers also subsequently visited the supplier and suspended him from selling any of the castles as “toys” in their current condition.

Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, among other things, requires anyone who imports or supplies any article of fairground equipment to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that it is safe when being used in connection with the entertainment of members of the public; to ensure that any article of fairground equipment has been tested as necessary; to ensure that anyone supplied with any article of fairground equipment has been provided with adequate information about the use for which the article is designed so that it will be safe when being used; and to ensure that any purchaser is supplied with any revisions of information if it becomes known that anything gives rise to a serious risk to health and safety.

During the visit the supplier informed the HSE Inspector that he had sold several hundred of these castles for commercial use. The castles were mostly sold over the internet, and were described as “18ft by 16ft commercial bouncy castles”. These castles as supplied are not suitable for third party use, i.e. for hiring to members of the public either for reward or otherwise and anyone doing so may be failing to comply with the duties imposed upon them under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

The Sector (CACTUS) would support prohibiting the use of any of these castles where it can be shown that they are unsafe when being used in connection with the entertainment of any member of the public. A PIPA or [ADIPS](#) test can be used to determine whether or not an inflatable bouncy castle is safe. The HSE contact for this issue is Gerry Muir at the HSE office in Glasgow. (Tel: 0141-275-3082 or e-mail: gerry.muir@hse.gsi.gov.uk)