

## **Toy Retailers Association Statement on Loom Charms alleged to contain Phthalates**



It has been brought to the attention of the Association today that some accessories to loom bands on sale in toy shops in the United Kingdom are alleged to contain illegal levels of Phthalates, a commonly used plasticiser, levels of which are strictly limited in toys.

It is a key part of the Code of Conduct of all Members and the UK Toy Regulations that they will co-operate fully with the relevant authorities, normally co-ordinated by the Trading Standards offices of local authorities, to identify, isolate and remove from sale any and all non-compliant goods. However at this stage the existence and origin of any faulty product is not clear and full investigations are underway.

It is absolutely clear that the items in question are the charms supplied separately as accessories and NOT loom bands themselves.

Retail Members of the Association do not normally import goods directly themselves and the evidence of compliance is guaranteed to them by the supplier. We have, nevertheless, alerted them to the claims and advised them to review their stocks, co-operate with any investigations and take any further action that becomes necessary in the light of further enquiries.

The best safeguard is always to buy from reputable sources such as Members of the Association. Very low prices in bargain outlets and market stalls may be a clue to less reputable supplies and copyists who do not respect the rules.

Toy Retailers Association  
ENDS

28<sup>th</sup> August 2014

### Notes to Editors:

1. The Toy Retailers Association (see [www.ToyRetailersAssociation.co.uk](http://www.ToyRetailersAssociation.co.uk)) was established in 1950 and is the leading trade body for that sector in the UK, representing the majority of UK Retail Sales.
2. Further information on Toy Safety issues and Regulations can be found on our website at <http://www.toyretailersassociation.co.uk/toy-safety>
3. Our members are independent and as such are responsible for their own compliance issues while the Association keeps them fully informed on developments and represents them to UK and European regulatory bodies and policy makers.
4. All members abide by a code of practice also available on the website
5. Most members do not import from beyond the EU and the Association does not concern itself directly with these activities. Two other Associations, [the British Toy & Hobby Association](#), and [Equitoy](#), represent suppliers and importers respectively.
6. The management of compliance under the EU Toy Directive and UK Regulations is primarily the responsibility of wholesalers, manufacturers and importers who place the product into the market place in the EU. They are required to test the products and maintain a file and certificates of compliance before a product can be CE marked. Retailers are not, normally, direct importers but if

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they do import directly from beyond the EU then the responsibility for compliance rests with them.

7. The chemicals concerned (Phthalates) have only fairly recently been banned and present a low risk via long term exposure to the skin or through sucking and do not present any immediate danger.
8. Consumers concerned to ensure the toys they buy are safe can rely on the UK Toy Regulations which provide one of the tightest sets of rules in the world, and across all classes of goods, to ensure that our children are safe.
9. The Toy Industry has a proud tradition marred only by occasional accidents which are quickly and thoroughly dealt with. The risks are inevitably at their greatest when crazes attract opportunists into the supply chain who do not understand the strict rules for toys, and consumers desperate to satisfy their children's demands seek less reliable sources. All suspicions should be reported to Trading Standards.
10. It remains a fact that injury by abuse and neglect of products such as leaving them lying on the stairs is a greater risk than design and manufacture issues in toys.