

Director
Consumer Policy Unit
Market Conduct Division
Treasury
Langton Cres
Parkes ACT 2600

Email: consumerlaw@treasury.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

Accord is pleased to provide this submission on the *Treasury Laws Amendment Bill 2024: Product Safety Regulation* (the Bill).

Accord is the peak national industry association representing the manufacturers and marketers of formulated hygiene, personal care and specialty products, their raw material suppliers and service providers. Accord member companies make and/or market a broad range of consumer and commercial goods that play integral roles in safeguarding public health, promoting personal hygiene, boosting confidence and emotional wellbeing, maintaining comfortable homes and enhancing quality of life, as well as keeping the wheels of commerce and industry turning. Member companies include large global manufacturers as well as small dynamic Australian and family-owned businesses. A list of Accord member companies is available on our website: <http://accord.asn.au/about/members>.

Headline statistics¹ for Accord's economic footprint include:

- Accord's membership is approximately 100 companies (including Full Members and Associates)
- Collectively, Accord's Full Members:
 - contribute almost 9,000 full-time equivalent jobs
 - operate more than 129 offices, nationally
- Additionally, of Accord's Full Members
 - 62% manufacture in Australia
 - 78% export products overseas
 - 80% import products

Accord is an active participant in standard setting processes; Accord is a nominating organisation for several Standards Australia Committees, including committees that consider child resistant packaging testing requirements, storage and handling of chemicals, sunscreen efficacy and menstrual products.

Accord welcomes the intent of the proposed amendments to the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*. Accord has long supported outcomes-based, rather than process-focused regulation and welcomes the recognition that there may be more than one way ensure the safety of products retailed in Australia. As the *Improving mandatory standards under the Australian Consumer Law – Decision Regulation Impact Statement* (DRIS) has identified, the

¹ Results from Accord's internal surveys

current cost of complying with Australian mandatory standards where it deviates from other internationally accepted standards is significant.

We recognise that the Bill proposes amendments to a primary legislation and as such, it is not possible to capture much of the policy intent detailed in the DRIS. We are interested in understanding the implementation plan once the Bill has passed so that the intent of the amendments is retained. For example, whether there will be a guidance developed in consultation with stakeholders to clarify or set processes such as;

- the process to ensure that transition time for standards that are adopted 'as amended from time to time' is appropriate for each standard/amendment,
- the process for nominating, reviewing and 'adopting' and alternative standard that is clear, transparent and efficient, and
- a clarification that a nominated standard for a product is per product not per supplier or manufacturer i.e. a supplier or manufacturer may supply/manufacture different products complying with different standards, provided that all nominated standards are acceptable alternative standards under the ACL (this would be useful for suppliers sourcing products from multiple regions).

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions regarding this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Oh
Director, Regulatory Strategy

25 October 2024