

LOG OF MEETING DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Meeting of the ASTM F15.30 Subcommittee on Bunk Beds

DATE OF MEETING: November 8, 2019

PLACE OF MEETING: ASTM International Headquarters, West Conshohocken, PA

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Tim Smith (ESHF)

COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Tim Smith (ESHF) (via phone)

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Contact ASTM for attendee list.

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

This meeting was led by the Chair of the ASTM F15.30 Bunk Bed subcommittee, Bill Perdue. The Chair pointed out that the F1427 (– 2013) standard is overdue for revision. The subcommittee discussed the results of an earlier, closed ballot item: F15 (17-03) item 2, which was a proposed revision to the ladder requirements in section 4.9.2, intended to clarify how measurements should be taken and to provide a rationale for why the height requirement for the first step differed from other step heights. A negative vote on this ballot item had been withdrawn previously, but since then the member who submitted the negative changed his mind about withdrawing it. The original language of the standard had allowed for vertical step-to-step spacing of up to 16 inches, rather than 12 inches, if the bed structures were used as ladders. The ballot item no longer allowed for this larger spacing, instead specifying no more than 12 inches for the vertical spacing of all ladder steps, except for the first step, which can be up to 16 inches.

The subcommittee discussed this issue at length. The subcommittee acknowledged that the exception for bed structures that are used as ladders was removed to have consistency in the vertical spacing of ladders across all ladder types. However, some members identified certain bunk bed types, such as bunkhouse beds, for which trying to reduce the spacing of the bed structure components to meet the 12-inch requirement would create larger spaces elsewhere in the structure that would fail entrapment tests using the wedge probe. This would require substantial redesign, but such designs (with 16-inch spacing) have been on the market for a very long time and there are no known incidents specific to this issue. CPSC staff pointed out that although there are no known incidents of this type, it would be difficult to attribute a fall-related incident to the vertical spacing of ladder steps, specifically. The subcommittee concluded that the negative was persuasive and intends to revise the language of the ballot item to address the negative. The Chair expressed his desire to reballot this item quickly. In the meantime, a 2019 version of the F1427 standard will be published, reflecting the other F15 (17-03) ballot item that had previously passed.

The meeting then turned to a discussion of new business, which focused on a new locking mechanism for a bedrail, and a general discussion of trends related to bunk beds. The Chair also explained that he is trying to work through the current two-label requirement for bunk beds, where the mandatory rule requires one specific warning label and the ASTM standard requires another with additional information above and beyond that in the mandatory label. The meeting then adjourned.