

**LOG OF MEETING  
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES**

**SUBJECT:** ANSI/WCMA Window Coverings  
Steering Committee Meeting

**DATE OF MEETING:** May 3, 2022

**PLACE OF MEETING:** 2001 M Street NW, Washington DC 20036

**LOG ENTRY SOURCE:** Rana Balci-Sinha (ESHF)

**DATE OF LOG ENTRY:** May 9, 2022

**COMMISSION ATTENDEES:** In Person: Rana Balci-Sinha (ESHF), Mark Bailey (EC), Mark Kumagai (ES), Kevin Lee (ESMC), On the phone: Kaylee Niemasik (CO30), Suad Wanna-Nakamura (HSPP)

**NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:** Contact WCMA for attendee list

**SUMMARY OF MEETING:**

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed revisions in ANSI/WCMA A100.1 standard sent by Ralph Vasami to the Steering Committee on April 27, 2022. WCMA technical committee lead, Jeff Stout (Levolor) went through the revisions as summarized below.

- Custom products can be compliant by having no cords, short static cord (not to exceed 8 inches), inaccessible cords, or single retractable cord lift system. Single retractable lift system was discussed in detail along with a show-and-tell of such system. The retractable cord shall passively retract when no tension is applied and the retractor cannot be any cord, but can be a ring or pole, and it cannot bend on itself to create a hazardous loop. A rigid wand will be as long as needed to make it possible to reach to the wand to operate the window covering. Due to no reported incidents associated with retractable cords and an agreement in the committee that it is highly unlikely for a child to go above the retractor, get to the tensioned cord and wrap the tensioned cord around his neck, retractable cord is considered to be a safe system. CPSC staff asked if a minimum force to pull the retractor can be specified in the standard, WCMA will look into it. At a minimum, the weight of the wand creates a tension, which one manufacturer stated to be around 3.8 lbs.; typical stroke length is reported to be around 24 inches and was chosen based on consumer testing. Manufacturers believe that 12 inches of exposed cord at a time is too short to be acceptable by consumers. Some manufacturers said that about 6-8 lbs is a comfortable pull force based on their testing with users.

- The next discussion focused on continuous loops and tension devices (TD). TD shall be attached by the manufacturer and unless properly installed or altered from the shipped conditions with sequential process or tools, it shall prevent the window covering from operating (e.g., TD placed against headrail on the continuous loop). TD shall be permanently attached to the cord loop and meet the durability requirements; TD shall maintain tension on cord loop when properly installed and prevent full operation if not installed properly. TD fasteners shall have a minimum release force of 20 lb. Various scenarios were discussed which may lead to hazardous scenarios. For example, a consumer advocate stated that the consumer can disable TD; CPSC staff pointed out the comments that installers will remove TD if requested by the consumer. It was also confirmed that the consumer can operate the cord on a detached tension device. Some manufactures stated that operating TD on a cord without mounting will be a two-handed operation and that installers are trained to install tension devices as a safety device and warnings state the same. Removal from the TD from the cord requires special tools. However, it was discussed that once consumer buys the product with a tension device, if a professional installer is involved, they may ask the TD to be removed, installer is likely to have special tools to remove it, not having a TD on the cord at all makes the product fully functional. If consumer keeps the TD on the cord but not mount it, the product is partially operable. Manufacturers stated that continuous loops can have a restraining device that doesn't create a hazardous loop or can have a rigid shroud; however, they both are perceived as cumbersome per a user study.
- A new addition to the draft is that horizontal blinds cannot have continuous loops as a compliance path. Because both manual cordless lift and retractable cord max out at a certain weight / dimension (size limitations for cordless – about 8 lbs lift, 8ft wide to 8-10ft long or 84 inch max width – 60-70 inch max drop), consumers will be asked to choose other types of window coverings such as roller shades in lieu of horizontal blinds for those sizes or weights that cannot be accommodated.
- Based on several comments, curtains are likely to be specifically excluded, roll-up style shades can be made as long as it meets the no cords/no accessible cords/no hazardous cords criteria.

Ralph Vasami will circulate canvass membership document shortly; he anticipates that around 24 members, similar to previous ballots, are expected to achieve balance. WCMA will start drafting a revised standard in ANSI format but did not provide a timeline for when it would go out for canvass.