



PROSAFE Joint Action
Seamless surveillance by
close cooperation



Brussels, 28th January 2013

Joint Action on Cooperation between PROSAFE and the General Administration of Quality, Supervision and Quarantine (AQSIQ) of the People's Republic of China in the Field of Consumer Product Safety

Newsletter, January 2013

There has been good progress with the activities in JA China in the past months and the project management wants to take the opportunity to inform about this in this newsletter to the participants in the Joint Action and its stakeholders.

First mission to China successfully completed

The first mission to China took place in October-November and it was successful. Participants were Marijn Colijn (from Netherlands), Carol Garrett (from the UK), Katarzyna Bednarz (from Poland), Torge Wolters (from Germany), Torben Rahbek (from PROSAEF) and 3 Dutch laboratory experts (Krista Bouma, Ton de Koning, Frank Nab). The delegation met with AQSIQ as well as the local CIQ offices in Shenzhen and Shanghai.



The Joint Action delegation is welcomed by Shenzhen CIQ.

The aim of the mission was to get an impression of the functioning of the Chinese export control system to analyse where it can provide intelligence that can guide the European import control. This was accomplished, and the Chinese system will be described in the report from the mission. In short:

- All Chinese manufacturers that want to export must have a license. The license can be issued in one of 4 categories, A, B, C or D depending upon the company's skills and the risk of the product. Only companies in the three best categories are allowed to export.



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- All products must be type tested before mass production can start. The Chinese authorities holds a complete file of all these products that includes detailed information about the product and the components and substances in it.
- All products are examined before they can be exported. The extent of the examination depends upon the company's category. If the company is in category D, all products are tested. If it is in category A, some 3 - 10% of the products are tested.

One conclusion from the delegation is that it would be very helpful for European customs and market surveillance authorities to have information about the products that have been tested by the Chinese authorities.

How can dangerous products end in Europe when this system is in place, you may ask? Our discussions with the Chinese authorities revealed that it is possible for criminals to export products "around" the export control scheme. It is also possible to export products to Europe via a third country with less severe safety requirements. The Chinese authorities are interested in input from Europe on such cases to follow up with the Chinese manufacturers.

A mission report is being prepared and will be circulated to the participants of the Joint Action in due course.

AQSIQ-NVWA agreement signed

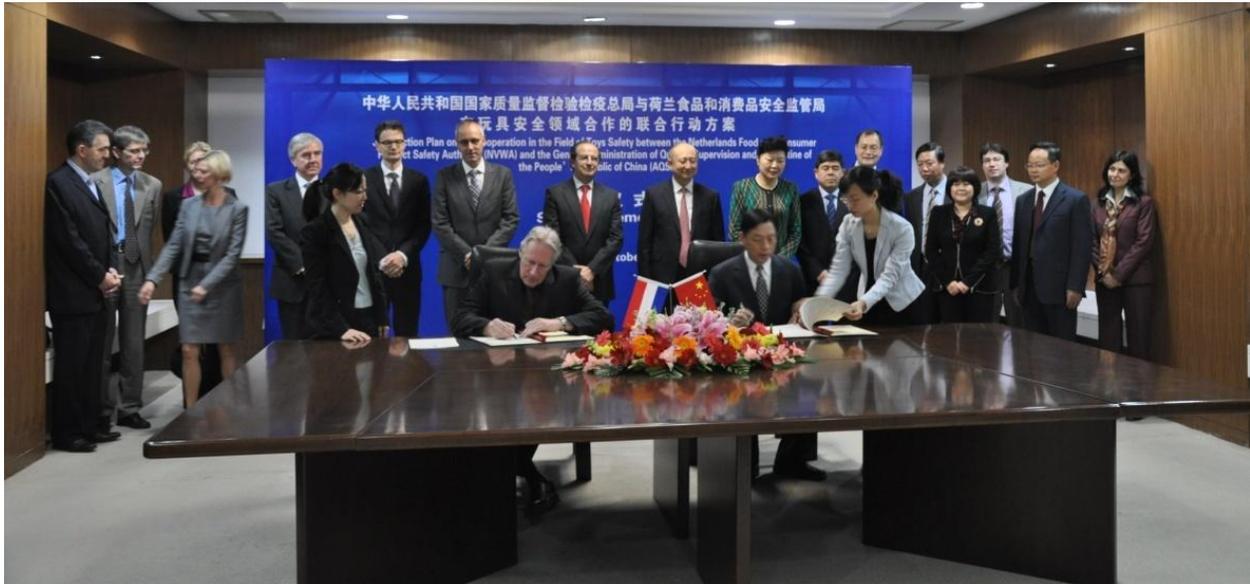
The basis for the Joint Action is an agreement between the Dutch product safety authorities, NVWA, and the Chinese export control authorities, AQSIQ. This turned out to be necessary, because the Chinese authorities needed a formal agreement with a European counterpart to participate in the cooperation. It was impossible for the European Commission to sign such an agreement because it would commit Member States to carry out market surveillance, which is strictly outside the competence of the Commission. Instead the most appropriate solution turned out to be an agreement between the Dutch and the Chinese that on the one hand committed the Dutch authorities and on the other hand referenced the Joint Action thereby allowing its members to join the activities with the Chinese.

This document has been negotiated through the first months of 2012 and an agreement was reached in August. It was formally signed in China on 25th of October by the Acting Inspector General of the NVWA, Mr. Freek van Zoeren and the Vice Minister of the AQSIQ Mr. Sun Dawei.



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The agreement between AQSIQ and NVWA was signed in Beijing 25th of October 2012.

Project group meeting tentatively scheduled for 19 February

The project management considers a JA China meeting for the **whole project group 19 February 2013** in the afternoon to discuss the preliminary findings and the report from the mission to China. Please mark the date until further notice.

The meeting will take place the day before the JA2012 launch event and two days before the final conference of JA2010. This has been chosen to save travel costs (and time!) for those participants that participate in several actions.

Next step - visit from Chinese experts to Europe

The next major activity in the Joint Action step is a visit of Chinese experts to Europe (the Netherlands). It has been agreed that this will include a visit to the harbour of Rotterdam. The programme still has to be developed. The aim of their visit is to discuss the Dutch (and European) import control and market surveillance schemes with the Chinese expert to show them what information can be made available for their follow-up in China, e.g. adjustments of their export control test program. Experts of the core-group will participate fully in the program. It is also being considered if a day could be allocated for presentations of final findings and results from other PROSAFE Joint Actions to show the Chinese representatives what kind of information exists in Europe that could be used for their training of Chinese manufacturers.

Discussions of the scheduling have begun. For the moment the visit is anticipated to take place in March or April.

The final step in JA China is an evaluation meeting in China in May or June where the Joint Action report from our visit to China will be analysed together with the Chinese report from their visit to Europe to find gaps and overlap between the two systems.



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Grant Agreement for JA China 2 signed

Let us finish with yet another piece of good news. The Grant Agreement for JA China 2 was signed just before Christmas by PROSAFE and DG SANCO.

This Joint Action will start in July 2013 and run for 2 years. The kick-off meeting is expected to take place in September. Participants are Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Spain and United Kingdom. This 2nd Joint Action China has the aim to continue the cooperation between China and European Authorities and includes a practical pilot with export/import control cooperation on toys. It is all based on the results of the 1st Joint Action China.

Want to know more?

Please contact the PROSAFE secretariat at info@prosafa.org or check PROSAFE's website www.prosafa.org.

Disclaimer

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