



Investigation Guideline

Product: Amusement Rides

Appendix # : 96

Date amended: August 2004

1. Introduction

A. Background Information

This guideline is a general guideline for amusement ride investigations. It should be used for both on-site and telephone investigations. Assignment messages for individual investigations may highlight particular areas of special interest.

CPSC has authority over *mobile* rides. These rides are moved from location to location as part of fairs, carnivals, parties, or other events. CPSC does not have authority over *fixed-site rides* found in amusement parks, theme parks, or otherwise fixed locations. Often, CPSC is interested in an incident involving a fixed-site ride, because the same or similar ride is used in mobile settings.

In 2002, there were an estimated 6,800 non-occupational amusement rides injuries treated in emergency rooms. Of these injuries, an estimated 3,000 occurred on mobile rides.

In recent years, inflatable rides, such as “bounces” and slides, have grown in popularity and CPSC has observed an increase in injuries associated with these rides. CPSC has issued a safety bulletin for these rides that provides recommendations on the proper setup, the number of operators, the number of riders, and necessary wind conditions. Please, refer to the Amusement Ride Safety Bulletin (Revised 12/5/2001) before beginning the investigation of an inflatable ride.

B. Product Descriptions

The Consumer Product Safety Act Section 3(a)(1) gives CPSC authority over certain amusement rides by including the following in the definition of a consumer product:

...any mechanical device which carries or conveys passengers along, around, or over a fixed or restricted route within a defined area for the purpose of giving its passengers amusement, which is customarily controlled or directed by an individual who is employed for that purpose and who is not a consumer with respect to that device, and which is not permanently fixed to a site.

C. Specific Items of Interest

Assignment messages for individual investigations may highlight particular areas of special interest. The setup and operation of amusement and inflatable rides (who, when, how) are of special interest.

D. Headquarters Contacts

| | | |
|---------------|------|--------------|
| Mark Levenson | EPHA | 301-504-7408 |
| Thomas Caton | ESME | 301-504-7543 |

If excessive delays are expected or there is difficulty obtaining information from the state safety officials, the owner, or the operator, please notify the headquarters contacts.

11. Instructions for Collecting Specific Information

A. Synopsis

Contact the ride owner, ride operator, and local or state officials and then the victim. See “Directory of Amusement Ride Safety Officials” on www.cpsc.gov for local and state officials. If the victim cannot be reached, obtain any information from medical, police, or rescue reports.

B. Description of Incident Environment

Include:

- Location of the ride e.g., theme park, carnival, school. Be sure to state whether the ride is a fixed-site or mobile ride.
- Any safety or warning information posted at the ride
- The number of people on the ride at the time of incident
- The number and roles of the ride operators
- The experience and training of the operators with amusement rides and the particular ride
- The approximate number of people waiting for the ride at the time of incident
- Description of the wind and weather conditions at the time of incident

C. Description of Interaction between Injured Person(s) and Product

Include:

- The height, weight, and age of the victim(s)
- Any relevant information on other riders
- The prior experience of the victim(s) with ride
- Any unusual behavior or condition of the victim(s), riders, or operators
- Any difficulties in the ride seating or restraint because of the size of the victim(s) or other riders
- A narrative of the events prior, during, and post incident, including any factors that may have contributed to the incident

D. Description of Product

Include:

- Ride type e.g., roller coaster, water slide, bounce
- Ride manufacturer and model names
- Information on ride serial number plate
- Description of any restraint system, seats, or cars
- Age of ride
- How long has the ride been set up
- For inflatable rides, describe the anchoring system, including, the number and type of tie downs, and the presence and use of any anchoring weights or stakes

111. Photographs/ Diagrams of Incident Scene

For on-site investigations obtain photographs or diagrams of

- The ride
- The seats, cars, and restraints if applicable for the ride
- The location of the operators
- For inflatable rides, the anchoring system

IV. Obtaining samples and documents related to the investigation

Obtain:

- Any ride inspection certificates or reports issued by the manufacturer, owner, or state or local government
- Any medical, police, or rescue reports