

# Submission on options to address the safety risks of corded window coverings

## Your name and organisation

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| <b>Name</b>                         | Nicky Holland  |
| <b>Organisation (if applicable)</b> | N/A (Consumer) |

## Responses

| Statistical Information |  |
|-------------------------|--|
|                         | <p>Which of the following are you?<br/>(tick all that apply)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Consumer/user of window coverings</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retailer of window coverings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Installer of window coverings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Importer or distributor of window coverings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturer of window coverings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Health or safety related organisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Regulator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other interested party (please specify)</p> |
|                         |  |
|                         | <p>For manufacturers of window coverings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of window coverings do you manufacture?</li> <li>• What proportion of your window coverings have exposed cords?</li> </ul>   |
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|                         | <p>For importers or distributors of window coverings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of window coverings do you sell?</li> <li>• What proportion of window coverings you sell are imported?</li> <li>• What countries do you import window coverings from?</li> <li>• What proportion of your window coverings have exposed cords?</li> </ul>   |

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|                               | <p>For retailers and installers of window coverings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of window coverings do you sell?</li> <li>• What proportion of window coverings you sell are imported?</li> <li>• If you sell imported window coverings, what countries are they imported from?</li> <li>• What proportion of your window coverings have exposed cords?</li> </ul>                               |
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| <b>Problem</b>                |   |
|                               | <p>1. Do you agree that corded window coverings in New Zealand currently present a significant safety risk?<br/>Why?/why not?</p>   |
|                               | <p>No more so than the risks that electrical appliances pose, or lack of smoke detectors or renewal of batteries for the same, or a myriad of other things.</p>   |
|                               | <p>2. Do you believe that government intervention is suitable to address this problem?<br/>Why/why not?</p>   |
|                               | <p>Other than perhaps “educating” people as to the risks, no I believe that govt intervention is overstepping. Parents need to be responsible for safety issues of this level around the home.</p>  |
| <b>Objective and criteria</b> |   |
|                               | <p>3. Do you agree with the proposed objective?<br/>Why?/why not?</p>   |
|                               | <p>I believe that education around this issue is a sensible approach, and perhaps some funding availability to consumers, for installation of safety devices, for those who could not otherwise afford it. Nothing further though as this would just be the start of “political correctness gone mad”. There are so many potential hazards for toddlers around the house...electrical sockets, choking hazards, etc, etc.</p> |
|                               | <p>4. Do you agree with the use of net benefit as the main criterion to determine suitability of the options?<br/>Why?/why not?</p>   |
|                               | <p>I’m not sure I understand what is meant by “net benefit”. Yes I believe the outcome of this process should be the result of considering all elements contributing to the problem and possible resolution??</p>   |
|                               | <p>5. What other criteria are important to consider?</p>  |

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|  | Although Australia's stats improved following introduction of regulations it does not automatically follow that this result was due the regulations. And clearly the improvement is marginal, so could have been achieved by education or availability of funding?   |
| <b>Options for managing potential risk</b> |  |
|  | 6. Are there any options missing?  |
|  | Yes, now that we have regulated standards for rental accommodation it seems logical that the installation of safety equipment (such as safety boxes or cleats, or the removal of cords or strings on curtains/ drapes) form part of this "WOF" under the Healthy Homes requirements. This would potentially reduce the Govt funding required to support households in installing safety equipment.   |
|  | 7. Do you agree with the advantages and disadvantages of the options identified in the discussion paper?   |
|  | Yes  |
|  | 8. Do you have further information on the advantages and disadvantages of the options?   |
|  | No   |
| <b>Approach to analysis</b>                |  |
|  | 9. What other costs or benefits need to be taken into account?   |
|  | I think that most consumers would be horrified at increasing window treatments pricing due to Govt Regulation at this time, with the general cost of living increasing as it is. The same applies to businesses. Most of these NZ manufacturers are small to medium sized and are already suffering due to the difficulty in keeping staff and the resulting wage increases, increased freight costs, increased overheads, increased fuel costs, etc. It doesn't seem fair to make manufacturers financially responsible providing these safety measures, especially when it will still be up to parents to ensure products are installed as they should be. |
|  | 10. What other data could you make available, or are you aware of, that may be useful to inform this analysis?   |
|  | I have roller blinds with metal control cords and was supplied, by the manufacturer, with a safety bracket for the loose chain as part of the standard cost of the blind. I have previously purchased from a different supplier and found the same thing there.  |
| <b>Preferred options</b>                   |  |

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|  | <p>11. Do you think the Government should intervene through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. information and education to educate and encourage consumer behaviour (e.g. communication programmes, social media campaigns, etc.),</li> <li>2. providing funding for household to install safety devices/replace existing corded window coverings with cordless options,</li> <li>3. encouraging voluntary modification by businesses to reduce risks (e.g. selling safety devices or cordless designs, providing advice to consumers, etc.),</li> <li>4. putting in place a mandatory standard for window coverings to be manufactured, sold and installed in the future, or</li> <li>5. a combination of the above options? Which options?</li> </ol> <p>Why do you think this option is best?</p> |
|  | <p>I think option 1 is most sensible, but 2 is an option perhaps via WINZ for those that cannot otherwise afford it. As previously mentioned, I also think that the installation of safety devices should be included in the healthy home check requirements for landlords. Option 3 is also sensible, and I think a lot of businesses are already doing this.</p>  |
|  | <p>12. If you selected option 4, 'putting in place a mandatory standard', do you think the mandatory standard should require:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4A. corded window coverings to include mandatory safety features (e.g. warnings, safety devices), or</li> <li>4B. prohibit window coverings with exposed cords?</li> </ol> <p>Why do you think this option is best?</p>  |
|  | <p>I don't think either of these options should be mandatory but if I had to choose one it would be 4A.</p>   |

## Questions for industry and consumers

### Questions specific to industry

| For manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers and installers |  |
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|  | <p>13. What would be the impact on the industry of a mandatory standard regulating the installation of safety features (option 4A)?</p>  |
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|  | <p>14. What costs would be incurred by your business if a mandatory standard was introduced regulating the installation of safety features (option 4A)? Can you provide monetary estimates of these costs?</p> |
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|  | 15. What would be the impact on the industry of a mandatory standard requiring window coverings to be cordless (option 4B)?   |
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|  | 16. What costs would be incurred by your business if a mandatory standard was introduced requiring window coverings to be cordless (option 4B)? Can you provide monetary estimates of these costs?  |
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|  | 17. Are you aware of any technologies offering safer, affordable, and easier-to-use alternative operating systems for window coverings? If yes, what are these technologies and how are they safer? |
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|  | 18. Would cordless window coverings be more expensive for the consumer than the current corded designs? Manual or motorised? Vertical or horizontal? Why? How much more expensive?                  |
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### Questions specific to consumers

| For consumers |  |
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|               | 19. Would you be willing to pay a higher price for cordless or corded window coverings that are safer for young children? Why/why not?   |
|               | If purchasing window coverings came at an increased cost I would need to consider whether this was priority spending. I no longer have children of this age, but when they were young I was a responsible parent and removed or minimised any obvious hazards. |
|               | 20. How much extra would you be willing to pay (percentage) for a compliant design that is safer for young children?   |
|               | ?  |

### Other comments

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