

## **Chartered Trading Standards Institute's response to the Coroners Service Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths**

CTSI was deeply saddened to hear of the deaths of Champagauri and Dipak Bhatt. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the findings in the coroner's report, and we fully support the call for further action to be taken to prevent future deaths.

CTSI has long campaigned about the safety of appliances in consumers homes and that there must be mechanisms in place to ensure that when issues are identified with certain makes and models that these are addressed as urgently, effectively and efficiently as possible. When dealing with a recall of possibly thousands of appliances, across differing makes and models, supplied at differing times by multiple retailers, this is not something that one local authority Trading Standards has the resources or mechanisms to deal with.

CTSI called for the creation of a Government body to be responsible for national product safety issues and the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) was set up in 2018 with a specific remit to deal with national product safety issues and recalls.

### **About CTSI**

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) is one of the world's longest-established organisations dedicated to the field of Trading Standards and Consumer Protection.

At CTSI, and through the Trading Standards profession, we aim to promote good trading practices and to protect consumers. We strive to foster a strong vibrant economy by safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of citizens through empowering consumers, encouraging honest business, and targeting rogue practices. We provide information, guidance and develop evidence-based policies and campaigns to support local and national stakeholders including central and devolved governments. CTSI also provides the secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Consumer Protection and campaigns on range of topics including product safety issues. CTSI is responsible for business advice and education in the area of Trading Standards and consumer protection legislation, including running the Business Companion service to provide clear guidance to businesses on how to meet their legal and regulatory obligations.

### **Response to findings**

We note that the coroner's report in this case has ruled that there was a 10% chance the EMI filter in the appliance caused the fire and a 90% chance the condensate pump caused the fire.

CTSI understands that Hotpoint UK Appliances Ltd has a Primary Authority agreement with North Yorkshire Council Trading Standards, and in regard to this incident the Trading Standards team are leading the activity with Hotpoint UK Appliances Ltd directly.

CTSI believes the correct action in this case is for Hotpoint UK Appliances Ltd to work closely with North Yorkshire Council Trading Standards to further investigate the safety of the product, and if an issue is identified to take appropriate steps, including to instigate a product recall if necessary.

CTSI recognises that OPSS as the National Regulator for product safety continues to support North Yorkshire Council Trading Standards to understand the true scale and risk of the problem, agree the actions needed to prevent any further harm or injury occurring, and the timescales in which this should happen. This must be done to ensure that consumers are being protected from any unsafe appliances in their homes.

If OPSS find that appropriate action is not being taken by Hotpoint UK Appliances Ltd, or have concerns that the actions are not being taken with enough speed to protect consumers, they can use their powers to start corrective action. CTSI, along with local authority Trading Standards Officers, can work with OPSS to ensure the message around any such safety issue and recalls are implemented effectively and have the greatest impact.

CTSI would also like to see OPSS look at the wider recommendations made in the report as we believe these require a national approach to address national issues.

In the EU and Northern Ireland, it is now mandatory for manufacturers to report dangerous products on the safety business gateway and there is a consumer gateway where consumers can report dangerous products. To ensure that all consumers are protected this should be an option available to GB consumers.

In conclusion, CTSI remains committed to ensuring that electrical products are safe, and that processes for keeping consumers informed of risks and dangers are robust to ensure that preventable deaths or deaths injuries are avoided.