



Raising standards for consumers

# ANEC and the revision of the EN 60335 standards

**Stephen RUSSELL**  
**ANEC Director-General**





# Why this case matters

A technical standard with very human consequences

**EN 60335** covers the safety of electrical household appliances - ovens, toasters, vacuum cleaners, microwaves, washing machines and many more.

It supports the **Low Voltage Directive** and shapes what “safe use” means across a very large share of consumer products.

**Question for ANEC: who is really included in this idea of safe use?**

**Part 1**  
**General safety rules**

**Part 2-2** Vacuum cleaners

**Part 2-6** Cooking appliances

**Part 2-9** Grills and toasters

**100+ more** Product-specific rules

# The problem: the exclusion clause



“... does not in general take into account the use of appliances by children and infirm people without supervision.”

## What that clause assumed

- Children would not use appliances on their own
- Older people would always be supervised
- Persons with disabilities were outside the normal user model

## What everyday life showed

- Children were already using household appliances
- Independent living was increasing across Europe
- Foreseeable users were being left outside the standard

**ANEC’s core argument: if this use is reasonably foreseeable, the standard cannot ignore it.**



# Evidence from everyday life

ANEC's 2003 survey in five countries

**66%**

of parents with children aged 4-13 said their children used one or more domestic appliances

**<10**

average age at which children started using most appliances

**<8**

age at which grills, toasters, vacuum cleaners and microwaves were already being used

**35%**

of parents did not supervise first use of a vacuum cleaner

## The finding was simple:

unsupervised or partly supervised use was not exceptional. It was a foreseeable, everyday situation.





## Mandate M/392:

the turning point in 2006

The European Commission asked CENELEC to review the EN 60335 series and amend Part 1 and the relevant Part 2 standards.

**Reasonably foreseeable situations where children, older people and people with disabilities come into contact with electrical household appliances**

This changed the discussion from a marginal complaint into a formal standardisation task linked to EU law.

# How ANEC drove the revision



2003



## Survey

Evidence that children were already using appliances, often without supervision.

2004



## Legal study

Gap identified between the standards and the Low Voltage Directive.

2006



## Mandate M/392

Commission requested a review focused on foreseeable contact by vulnerable consumers.

2008-11



## Revisions adopted

Part 2 revisions, then Part 1, brought the new approach into the standards.

**ANEC worked on several fronts at once:  
evidence, policy, technical drafting and national advocacy.**

# Working inside the standardisation system



Direct participation mattered too: ANEC brought blind experts and other consumer perspectives straight into the room.

# What changed in the standards



**A**

## Clearer instructions

Safety information moved to the front, in larger print and in alternative formats.

**B**

## Child-sized probe

Holes and gaps were tested with child-sized as well as adult fingers.

**C**

## Accessible switches

On/off controls had to provide tactile, audible or visual feedback.

**D**

## Lower temperatures

Surface temperature limits were reduced to improve practical safety.

**These are technical details - but together they reshape how millions of ordinary products are experienced in the home.**



## Impact - and what remains to be done

### 500 million+

electrical appliances sold each year are estimated to be safer and more accessible thanks to this work.

#### Still on ANEC's agenda

- further reduction of maximum surface temperatures
- a child-sized test finger for very young children on floor-level appliances

Today much of the follow-up continues at international level in IEC TC 61, with ANEC participating through Consumers International.

**Key lesson: consumer representation is not an optional extra in standardisation. It changes the result.**



Thank you!

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