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3D Printing community – Action needed on consumer product safety

Consumer level 3D printers are now available and increasingly affordable. Officeworks for instance sells *The Cube* printer for under $700 in Australia. Prices overseas are generally on a downward trend.

This means that people can now manufacture products in their own homes. However, the systems that work to keep products safe in mass production are not all present in the consumer 3D printing world.

At the Inside 3D Printing Conference Melbourne 2015, members of the 3D printing community will be urged to think about consumer product safety.

Product Safety Solutions is a Melbourne-based consulting business and its Director, Gail Greatorex, will address the conference on Tuesday 22 May 2015.

Gail has published a white paper that discusses the impact 3D printing will have on consumer product safety. http://productsafetysolutions.com.au/3d-printing-product-safety

While there are some clear benefits, there are also a number of challenges.

 'As with all product safety measures, each sector needs to play a part. A raft of strategies is needed from within the 3D printing industry, the supply sector, governments, educators and consumers', Gail said.

The white paper contains a number of recommendations for action to address the challenges.

Recommendations for the 3D printing industry (and its supporting organisations) are that it should:

> ➢ make consumer product safety a priority for its growing market

> ➢ support and educate its customers in product safety – including consumers, new product supply businesses and 3D print shops

- ➢ work with product design developers and design schools to support safe design

- ➢ monitor the safety of feedstock/filament available for use in consumer product 3D printers and actively manage the risks

With the consumer 3D printer market growing rapidly, those in the business of supplying 3D print designs, 3D printers and consumables will need to be careful about product safety.

Gail is now calling on the 3D printing industry and associations to incorporate product safety into their business models.

Further details

More detail on the impact on product safety

While 3D printing brings some potential product safety benefits, such as easier prototyping and customised (so more comfortable) protective gear, it also presents some challenges:

- ➢ New entrants into design, production and supply will not be experienced or aware of product standards, regulations or ways of reducing hazards

- ➢ Both physical and chemical hazards may be created in products through home and small business 3D production

- ➢ Pop-up factories and suppliers may become prevalent in the market, including some rogue operators

- ➢ Incorrect parts created for existing products may render them unsafe

- ➢ The quality of raw materials may be not be subject to checks

About Inside 3D Printing Conference, Melbourne, 26-27 May 2015

AMTIL (Australian Manufacturing Technology Institute Limited) and Inside 3D Printing are pairing up to host an impressive exhibition hall and two-day conference entirely focused on additive manufacturing. The two-day conference will take place May 26-27 with the exhibit hall remaining open from May 26 until May 29. Session topics will explore new opportunities and challenges for industrial and consumer 3D printing efforts, as well as the best strategies for a range of industries including product development, medicine, automotive, technology, software, and more

About Gail Greatorex

Gail Greatorex is a passionate advocate for product safety and good product design. Gail worked in consumer product safety with the Australian government for 25 years, mostly at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. In 2012 she set up her own

product safety advisory business. Throughout her career Gail has built her knowledge of safety principles, risk management, legal compliance and technical standards.

About Product Safety Solutions

Product Safety Solutions is Gail's business - assisting companies, associations, government agencies, and consumers in product safety and compliance. The business offers guidance in consumer safety standards and bans, product safety compliance, assessing and analysing product hazards, product recall issues, compliance undertakings and other remedies, product testing and certification, technical evidence, and similar business needs.

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