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BIC FILES A COMPLAINT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR LACK OF SURVEILLANCE OF LIGHTER SAFETY COMPLIANCE IN FRANCE AND IN GERMANY.

BIC announces today that it has filed an infringement complaint with the European Commission for lack of surveillance of non-compliant Lighters in France and Germany. The complaint concerns non-compliant Lighters that are either imported or sold on these domestic markets, impacting the entire European Union due to the free movement of goods.

The seriousness of this issue has been broadly acknowledged by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Highest French Courts, and the relevant NGOs.

In 2006, the European Commission introduced “emergency legislation” requiring that Member States monitor and ensure that all Lighters imported or sold in their markets comply with safety standards (ISO9994, EN138691) and prohibit novelty Lighters. In 2010 infringement proceedings were brought against the Netherlands for lack of surveillance of the lighter market, which remain on-going. In 2016, in France, the Highest Court (*Cour de Cassation*) recognized that lighter models being marketed by the leading French lighter importer were non-compliant.

It is the responsibility of Member States to perform mandatory controls of consumer products and to take effective measures to protect European consumers by ensuring that only safe Lighters are marketed, imported and sold.

According to François Clément-Grandcourt, Head of BIC Lighter Category: *“A lighter is a plastic reservoir filled with pressurized gas that is ignited with a spark to produce a flame. The danger is very real if the lighter is not designed or manufactured properly. The consequences can be severe. Although repeatedly notified by BIC over the past ten years, France and Germany have failed to take the appropriate action that would prevent the marketing of non-compliant Lighters to the public. Year after year, the lighter issue has become emblematic of the lack of market surveillance in Europe. Nevertheless, solutions do exist to prevent the circulation of dangerous Lighters within the European market. Member-States, for example, could be obligated to carry out effective product surveillance on products entering and circulating within the European Union, with infringements sanctioned in a dissuasive manner.”*

73%² of the lighter models available in Europe do not comply with ISO 9994 Safety Standards, which represent a real danger for consumers.

The failure of customs control at the ports of entry to the European Union, particularly in Hamburg (the N°1 port of entry in the European Union for Lighters), coupled with a lack of surveillance on the domestic market, mean that many non-compliant Lighters models are currently available on the European market, particularly in Germany and in France.

It is estimated that:

- **86%³** of the lighter models sold in France and in Germany do not comply with the ISO 9994 International Safety Standard. This Standard clearly defines the basic safety requirements for pocket Lighters, such as maximum flame height, drop resistance, resistance to high temperatures, internal pressure, and continuous burn.

¹ See page 2

² Source: PROSAFE 2010 (Product Safety Enforcement Forum of Europe) - 119 main lighter models imported in Europe

³ Source: Market scanning done by BIC in June 2018

- **97%**⁴ of the electronic lighter models available in Europe do not comply with the EN 13869 Standard, which requires all pocket Lighters sold within the EU to be effectively child-resistant throughout a lighter's shelf-life.
- Novelty pocket Lighters, outlawed in 2008, remain freely available for sale in these countries, with apparent impunity.

Lighters are the cause of almost 30.000⁵ severe accidents per year in the European Union, which costs around one billion euros annually.

The link between lighter-related accidents and non-compliance with Safety Standards has been proven in numerous studies conducted by manufacturers, Institution, and Government. For example, strict enforcement of child Safety regulations in the United States has cut the number of fires, accidents, fatalities and societal costs of accidents involving children playing with lighters by two-thirds⁶.

Two 2018's studies⁷ have revealed that:

- In France:
 - **75%** of accidents with a lighter were caused by an issue addressed by the ISO 9994 Safety Standard requirements. Examples: in **36%** of cases, the lighter exploded; in **32%** of cases, the flame did not extinguish; and in **16%** of cases, the lighter spluttered gas inflamed droplets
 - **13%** of accidents resulted from children playing with lighters.
- In Germany:
 - **80%** of accidents with a lighter were caused by an issue addressed by the ISO 9994 Safety Standard requirements. Examples: in **32%** of cases, the lighter exploded; in **30% of cases**, the flame did not extinguish; and in **21%** of cases, the lighter spluttered gas inflamed droplets,
 - **10%** of accidents resulted from children playing with Lighters.

These studies confirm the findings of an earlier study conducted in 2011⁸ in 9 European-Union Member States which revealed that **79% accidents with a lighter** in Europe were caused by an issue addressed by the ISO 9994 Safety Standard and **7%** resulted from children playing with Lighters.

For Gonzalve Bich, Chief Executive Officer of BIC, "*Too many potentially dangerous Lighters are available for sale in the European market. While the issue has been resolved in many countries around the world, the lack of effective market surveillance in Europe poses a real threat to consumer safety and is a cause for concern. Since day one, BIC has made the quality and safety of its Lighters an absolute priority. By initiating these new proceedings with the European Union, BIC is acting in the interest of all consumers and is committed to assisting those in pursuit of genuine consumer protection.*"

APPENDIX

Applicable Safety Standards:

- The ISO 9994 international Safety Standard introduced in 1989 sets the basic Safety requirements for pocket Lighters, specifically maximum flame height, drop resistance, resistance to high temperatures, resistance to internal pressure and to continuous burning, etc.
- EN 13869 Standard, the child-resistant Safety Standard, which in Europe encompasses ISO 9994, requires all pocket Lighters sold in Europe to be effectively child-resistant throughout the lighter's shelf-life. A "child-resistant" lighter is one for which ignition has been made deliberately more difficult for a child under the age of 51 months. 85% of children under 51 months old should not be able to start the lighter during testing.

⁴ Source: SGS tests on 105 Piezo models with vertical movement- between April 2017 and June 2018

⁵ Source: BIC estimates and European Commission studies

⁶ Source: "Fires Caused by children playing with Lighters CPSC 2000 – post evaluation of Safety Standards

⁷ Source: BIC studies done by an external supplier in 2018

⁸ Source: BIC studies done by an external supplier

CONTACTS

Investor Relations: +33 1 45 19 52 26

Sophie Palliez-Capian
sophie.palliez@bicworld.com

Michèle Ventura
michele.ventura@bicworld.com

Press Contacts

Albane de La Tour d'Artaise
Albane.DeLaTourD'Artaise@bicworld.com

Isabelle de Segonzac: +33 1 53 70 74 70
isegonzac@image7.fr

For more information, please consult the corporate website: www.bicworld.com

2018 – 2019 AGENDA (ALL DATES TO BE CONFIRMED)

Third Quarter 2018 results	24 October 2018	Conference call
Full Year 2018 results	13 February 2019	Meeting – BIC Headquarters
First Quarter 2019 results	25 April 2019	Conference call
2019 AGM	22 May 2019	Meeting – BIC Headquarters

ABOUT BIC

BIC is a world leader in Stationery, Lighters, and Shavers. For more than 70 years, BIC has honored the tradition of providing high-quality, affordable products to consumers everywhere. Through this unwavering dedication, BIC has become one of the most recognized brands and is a trademark registered worldwide for identifying BIC products which are sold in more than 160 countries around the world. In 2017, BIC Net Sales were 2,041.4 million euros. The Company is listed on "Euronext Paris" and is part of the SBF120 and CAC Mid 60 indexes. BIC is also part of the following Socially Responsible Investment indexes: CDP's "Leadership Level" (A-) and "Leadership Level" for the additional "Supplier" module, Euronext Vigeo – Eurozone 120, Euronext Vigeo – Europe 120, FTSE4Good indexes, Ethibel Pioneer and Ethibel Excellence Investment Registers, Ethibel Sustainability Index (ESI) Excellence Europe, Stoxx Global ESG Leaders Index.

