



**INDEPENDENT CONSUMER AND  
COMPETITION COMMISSION**

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***Media and Resource Centre***

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**ICCC: Yoyo water balls are dangerous**

THE Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) is proposing a ban on yo-yo water balls as these products can cause strangulation and other adverse effects to children.

Yo-yo balls have been banned in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and two states in the US. During a recent toy survey, the Commission found that these items were sold in a major retail store in Port Moresby.

ICCC Commissioner Dr Billy Manoka said: “The ICCC is concerned that the products pose a risk of harm or even death to the most vulnerable section of the society, which are the children.”

A ban on these products was gazetted on Friday 22 March in the National Gazette.

Dr Manoka said: “Yo-yo balls are balls made of synthetic materials that are attached to an elastic cord and are intended to be thrown out and be returned to the hand.”

The cord is about half-a- metre long and has a loop on one hand to attach the fingers to.-

The balls may be filled with air or liquid; contain a novelty figure like a flashing light; and resemble the form of a cartoon character.

The toy allows the child to swing the ball around the head, stretching the string and bouncing back like a yo-yo. The ball can be bounced, squeezed, squished and twirled like a lasso.

Because of the rubbery properties of the cord and the weight of the water balls at the end, the swing can generate significant momentum, making it hard to control.

Children between ages four and eight are the most vulnerable to injury, since they have the strength to swing the yo-yo quickly but may lack the dexterity to control the toy's momentum.

This poses the risk of strangulation as the cord can swing around the neck when out of control and cause choking.

Also the ball, if pierced, can result in the liquid pouring out and may be swallowed by the child causing the child to be sick.'

Any retailer or supplier of these products may contact the ICCC if they wish to hold a conference with it on these products.

**Contact Dr Billy Manoka on 3252144 or email [bmanoka@iccc.gov.pg](mailto:bmanoka@iccc.gov.pg) for more details.**

## **Background**

The Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) is responsible for administering the ICCC Act as well as a number of other pieces of legislation. The law is designed to enhance the welfare of the people of PNG by encouraging competition, fair trading and efficiency in business as well as preventing anti-competitive behaviour.

The ICCC has specific wide ranging powers in relation to consumer product safety. It takes its responsibility under these provisions seriously and will take immediate action when it becomes aware of a product that can affect the health or safety of consumers.

Its powers include:

- warning consumers of the possible danger of particular goods and conducting an assessment of the risks involved;
- recommending to the Minister to declare a standard that suppliers of the product must meet or for the provision of information in relation to such a product;

- issuing interim bans where the Commission is of the view that such goods are unsafe; and there is imminent danger;
- issuing of permanent ;bans on unsafe goods; and
- requiring compulsory recall of products that are unsafe, or not compliant with a product or information standard.

The Act provides that the Commission will on request hold a conference with any supplier who may be adversely affected by its actions.

If a conference is requested the Commission must decide as soon as practicable after the conference whether the notice is to remain in force, be varied, or be revoked. (and give a copy of the notice to each supplier at the conference)