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Global Toy Safety Regulations: A Comparative Analysis of Conformity Requirements Across Major Markets

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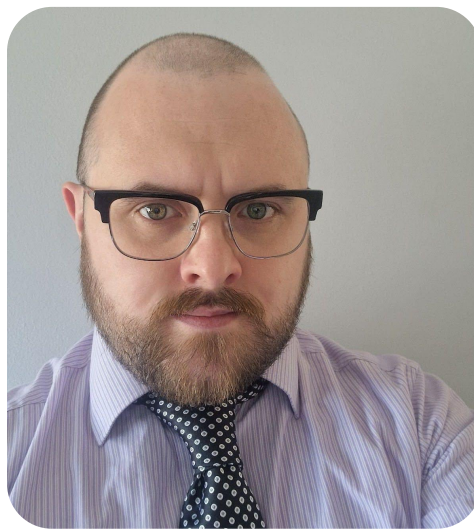
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01. About The Authors



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Andrew's work bridges technical problem-solving with strategic regulatory interpretation, helping organizations navigate complex compliance landscapes while aligning technical innovation with global safety standards.



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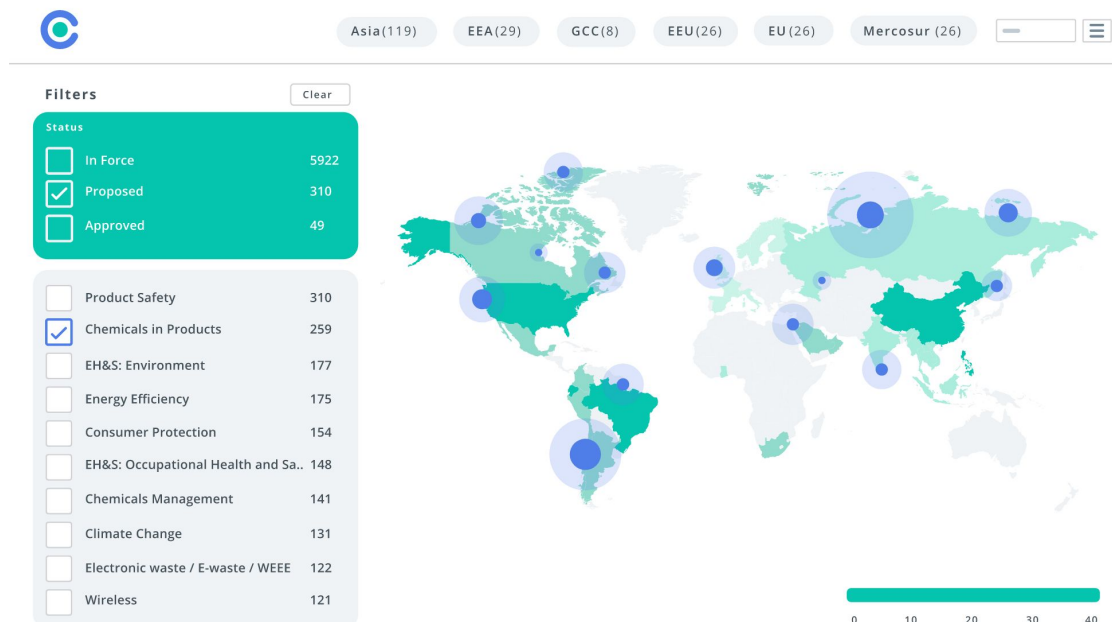
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03. Introduction

Toy safety regulations have evolved into one of the most closely aligned yet procedurally diverse areas of product compliance worldwide.

While regions differ in how they administer conformity assessment - ranging from self-declaration models to strict government-issued certification marks - the underlying safety principles are increasingly harmonized through shared reliance on international standards such as ISO 8124, EN 71, ASTM F963, and their national adaptations.

This whitepaper provides a comprehensive overview of the regulatory frameworks governing toy safety across the European Union, North America, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

It compares the technical requirements, conformity assessment pathways and enforcement mechanisms in these markets. By highlighting key similarities and points of divergence, the paper aims to support regulatory professionals, manufacturers, and importers in navigating global compliance obligations and developing products aligned with the highest standards of child safety.

04. European Union

4.1 Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC

At present, conformity assessment for toys is regulated in the EU under [Directive 2009/48/EC](#) on the Safety of Toys. The Directive entered into force on 20 July 2009 and has applied since 20 July 2011. It has subsequently been amended several times.

The Directive applies to products that are designed or intended, whether or not exclusively, for use in play by children under 14 years of age.

4.2 What is Conformity Assessment under the Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC?

In accordance with Article 18 of the Toy Safety Directive, manufacturers are required to carry out an analysis of the chemical, physical, mechanical, electrical, flammability, hygiene, and radioactivity hazards that their toy may present, as well as an assessment of the potential exposure to such hazards before they place the toy on the market.

The manufacturer must apply one of two types of procedures depending on the nature of the toy, namely self-verification or third-party verification.

4.2.1 Self Verification

This applies in cases where harmonised standards cover all relevant safety aspects of a toy. The manufacturer must apply the existing harmonised standards and ensure that the toy is in conformity. The manufacturer is further required to put in place an internal production procedure in accordance with Module A of Annex II to [Decision No. 768/2008/EC](#). This module does not require the involvement of a notified body.

4.2.2 Third-party Verification

This relates to conformity with Module B and Module C of Annex II to Decision No. 768/2008/EC. It is often referred to as "EC-type examination".

EC-type examination and certification is required, together with the conformity-to-type procedure set out in Module C of Annex II to Decision No. 768/2008/EC, in cases where harmonised standards do not exist; harmonised standards have not or only partly been applied by a manufacturer; one or more harmonised standards have been published with a restriction; or the manufacturer considers that the nature, design, construction, or purpose of the toy requires third-party verification.

An application for EC-type examination, performance of that examination and issue of the EC-type examination certificate will be carried out in accordance with Module B of Annex II to Decision No. 768/2008/EC. EC-type examination will be carried out as specified in the second indent of point 2 of Module B of Annex II to Decision No. 768/2008/EC.

Applications for EC-type examination will include a description of the toy and an indication of the place of manufacture, including the address.

The EC-type examination certificate will include:

- A reference to this Directive;
- A colour image;
- A clear description of the toy, including its dimensions; and
- A list of the tests performed, together with a reference to the relevant test report.

4.3 What does Enforcement Look Like Under the Toy Safety Directive?

In general, market surveillance is governed in the EU [by the Market Surveillance Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1020](#). The Toy Safety Directive is included among the EU harmonisation legislation covered by the Regulation. Article 41 of the Regulation relates to penalties for non-compliance and stipulates that penalties applicable to any infringements of the Regulation and of Union harmonisation legislation that impose obligations on economic operators are to be laid down by Member States. Member States were also required to notify the Commission on those provisions. [This document](#) provides an overview of penalties in EU countries related to violations of the Regulation.

The Toy Safety Directive itself requires manufacturers who discover that products they have sold are unsafe must take action to fix the issue. These would include issuing new product instructions, making changes to the product or conducting a product recall.

Regarding enforcement and recalls, the EU operates the Rapid Alert System for [Dangerous Non-Food Products](#) (RAPEX). This allows Member States to share information about unsafe toys. This system allows for prompt actions to be taken where a toy is found to pose a risk to children. In 2019, the EU Commission issued [a report on application of the Directive](#). In the report, it was noted that all 27 Member States confirmed that they use the RAPEX notification system.

The European Commission provides guidance to manufacturers on how to organise a product recall and furnishes details on all products recalled throughout the EU on the [Safety Gate \(also known as RAPEX\) website](#).

4.4 Safety of Toys Regulation

A repeal of the Toy Safety Directive was proposed in the form of the [draft Safety of Toys Regulation](#). The draft was subsequently approved by the [EU Council](#) on the 13 October 2025 and the [EU Parliament](#) on the 25 November 2025. It is currently pending signature by the Presidents and the Secretaries-General of the Council and the Parliament. Once it has been signed, it will be published in the Official Journal of the EU and will enter into force twenty days following its publication. Articles 17(10), 24 to 40, and 46 to 52 shall apply from the date of entry into force. All other Articles shall apply from the first day of the month following 54 months after the date of entry into force of the Regulation. The shift from Directive to Regulation means the Regulation will be directly applicable and binding in all member states.

4.4.1 What is Conformity Assessment Under the Safety of Toys Regulation?

The Regulation calls for either self verification or third-party verification, similar to the Directive. Module A: Internal production control relating to self verification is set out in Part I of Annex IV of the Regulation. Module B : EU-type examination and Module C: Conformity to type based on internal production control relating to third-party verification are set out in Part II of Annex IV and Part III of Annex IV of the Regulation.

05. North America

5.1 United States

Legal Framework: In the U.S., toy safety is governed by federal laws and regulations enforced by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

The cornerstone is the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) of 2008, which made the ASTM F963 toy safety standard a mandatory rule for all toys intended for children 12 years of age or under. As a result, ASTM F963-23 (the latest version, effective April 2024) is the binding safety specification for toys, covering mechanical, physical, flammability, chemical, and electrical hazards. CPSIA also introduced strict limits on toxic substances: for example, lead in surface coatings is capped at 90 ppm and total lead content at 100 ppm in accessible parts, and certain phthalates are banned above 0.1% in toy components. These limits are codified in CPSC regulations and supersede any voluntary standard provisions.

5.1.1 Testing Protocols

All children's toys in the U.S. must undergo third-party testing by a CPSC-accepted laboratory before they can be sold. This is a legal requirement under CPSIA: manufacturers or importers must have each applicable safety provision of ASTM F963 (and other applicable rules such as lead and phthalate bans) tested by an accredited lab. Only laboratories that have been accredited and registered with the CPSC can perform this testing, ensuring consistency and reliability in results. Once testing is successfully completed, the U.S. importer or domestic manufacturer must issue a Children's Product Certificate (CPC) certifying that the toy complies with all applicable federal toy safety standards. The CPC references the tests and regulations (e.g., 16 C.F.R. Part 1250 for the toy standard) and accompanies the product at importation or distribution. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, in coordination with the CPSC, will often check for compliance documentation at the port of entry to prevent non-compliant toys from entering commerce.

5.1.2 Conformity Assessment and Import Process

The U.S. does not require a government-issued certificate or mark (no equivalent of a CE mark), but the Children's Product Certificate serves as a self-issued attestation of conformity backed by third-party test reports. Compliance is enforced by post-market surveillance and import inspections. If a toy is found non-compliant (e.g., containing excessive lead or failing mechanical tests), the CPSC can mandate recalls and levy penalties. In practice, manufacturers and importers maintain diligent testing and quality control programs to ensure each production batch meets the standards.

The presence of accredited third-party testing and mandatory certification has significantly raised compliance rates; it is essentially illegal to distribute a children's toy in the U.S. without a valid CPC and supporting test documentation. In summary, the U.S. approach emphasizes pre-market testing, self-certification with government oversight, and detailed hazard-specific rules (small parts, lead, phthalates, etc.) to comprehensively address toy safety.

5.2 Canada

Legal Framework: Canada regulates toys under the Canada Consumer Product Safety Act (CCPSA) and its corresponding Toys Regulations (SOR/2011-17). All toys manufactured, imported, or sold in Canada must meet the broad safety requirements of the CCPSA, which include a general prohibition on products that pose a "danger to human health or safety".

The Toys Regulations set specific safety standards for mechanical hazards (sharp edges, small parts, projectiles, etc.), flammability of certain toys, toxic substances, and other hazards, very much analogous to the scope of ASTM F963 or ISO 8124. For example, the regulations prohibit small parts in toys for children under 3 (using a similar small-parts cylinder test as in other countries) and set limits on certain chemicals.

Additional regulations under the CCPSA address specific hazards: there are separate regulations for surface coating materials (limiting lead in paint to 90 mg/kg, and banning harmful metals or asbestos), for phthalates in vinyl toys, for toys that are science education sets, and so forth. Canada's approach thus layers general toy requirements with targeted rules for certain substances and products. Notably, Schedule 2 of the CCPSA outright bans certain dangerous items (e.g. lawn darts with metal points, baby "teethers" containing fluid that is poisonous, etc.) from sale.

5.2.1 Testing and Certification

Unlike the U.S., Canada does not mandate third-party testing or certification pre-sale for toys. The onus is on the industry to ensure products comply with the law, but there is no requirement to submit test results or certificates to the government before marketing.

Health Canada strongly recommends that manufacturers or importers conduct rigorous testing (preferably using labs accredited to ISO 17025 for toy testing) to verify compliance before sale. Most serious importers will test toys to the relevant standards (Canada's requirements closely mirror international standards like ISO 8124 and ASTM F963) as a

due diligence practice. There is also no official mark or certificate (no Canadian "CE mark" equivalent); instead, compliance is typically verified through market surveillance. Provincial electrical safety laws do require certification marks for electrically operated toys for instance, an electric toy must bear a certification mark (from agencies like CSA, ULc, etc.) indicating compliance with the Canadian Electrical Code. This means if a toy plugs into an outlet or has certain electrical features, a nationally recognized testing laboratory must approve it and the toy will carry the "cUL" or "CSA" mark as evidence.

5.2.2 Enforcement and Importation

Toys enter Canada without a pre-certification step, but importers should be prepared to show test reports or evidence of compliance if inspected.

Health Canada's product safety officers conduct inspections at retailers, border checks, and product inspections. If non-compliance is found (e.g. a toy fails the drop test and breaks into small parts, or contains excessive lead or banned phthalates), authorities can order a stop-sale, seize products, or negotiate recalls. The CCPSA also mandates incident reporting: if an incident (like a child choking or a toy malfunction) occurs, companies must report it to Health Canada. This helps the regulator identify hazardous toys and take action.

In summary, Canada's regime is one of mandatory standards without pre-market certification: it aligns closely with international norms and relies on industry self-compliance backed by government surveillance. Firms selling in Canada often leverage testing done for U.S. or EU markets, since Canada's mechanical and chemical requirements are similar (with minor differences). For example, Canada currently does not require a specific "choking hazard" label on all toys with small parts (unlike the U.S.), but it does ban the sale of toys with small parts for under-3 children, just as others do.

5.3 Mexico

Legal Framework: In Mexico, toy safety is governed by Normas Oficiales Mexicanas (NOMs), which are official mandatory standards.

Compliance with relevant NOM standards is required for toys to be imported and sold. Two key NOM standards for toys are NOM-015-SCFI-2007 (which covers commercial labeling requirements for toys) and NOM-252-SSA1-2011 (which establishes toy safety specifications, particularly chemical safety limits). NOM-252-SSA1 sets limits on the bioavailability of heavy metals in toy materials (such as lead, mercury, arsenic, etc. in paints and coatings) and specifies test methods.

In essence, it serves a similar purpose to ASTM F963's heavy metal limits or Europe's EN 71-3, ensuring that children are not exposed to toxic elements from toys. NOM-015-SCFI-2007, on the other hand, requires that toys be labeled with certain information in Spanish, including the importer or manufacturer's details, appropriate age rating, safety warnings, and any usage instructions. For example, if a toy contains small parts or is not suitable for children under a certain age, this must be clearly stated on the packaging in Spanish.

5.3.1 Evolving Standards

Historically, Mexico did not have a single comprehensive mechanical/physical safety standard for toys like ASTM F963, but it has been updating its regulations. A draft standard PROY-NOM-253-SE-2021 has been under development, aiming to cover mechanical, physical, electrical, and flammability safety for toys in a unified way. This draft (not yet fully in force as of 2025) indicates Mexico's intent to harmonize with international toy safety norms, it

lists various categories of toys (from non-powered toys for under 36 months, to electric trains, ride-on toys, rattles, etc.) that would be within scope.

Once implemented, NOM-253 will likely align with ISO 8124 or similar standards for mechanical and physical tests (e.g., drop tests, tension tests, sharp points, etc.), and flammability tests. For now, manufacturers exporting to Mexico ensure compliance with existing NOMs (chemical and labeling) and generally adhere to international safety standards as a best practice in anticipation of NOM-253.

5.3.2 Conformity Assessment

Mexico operates a certification system for NOM compliance. Many regulated products must obtain a NOM Certificate (often accompanied by a NOM mark on the product) before customs will allow entry. To achieve this, importers work with Mexican government-authorized certification bodies and testing laboratories. For toys, an importer typically submits the product to an accredited lab (in Mexico or an approved foreign lab) for testing against NOM-252 (and any other applicable NOMs).

Upon passing, a certificate is issued and the product can bear the official NOM compliance logo.

Mexican Customs will require presentation of this NOM certificate or a compliance declaration for the shipment. The NOM mark is a label on the product/package that includes the NOM logo and the code of the certification body, indicating approval. This system ensures that toy imports meet Mexican standards at the point of entry, NOM compliance is often verified before or during customs clearance as a condition of entry. Failure to comply can result in the goods being held or rejected at the border. Because of this, many toy manufacturers include Mexico in their test planning from the design stage, to avoid last-minute issues at customs.

5.3.3 Enforcement

Mexico's consumer protection agency (PROFECO) and its standardization bodies enforce toy safety through market surveillance, testing, and sanctions if needed. Imports that circumvent NOM certification may be seized.

Overall, Mexico's regime is moving toward greater alignment with global standards, but still uniquely requires that importers navigate a formal certification process

(NOM Certification) as "Mexico's stamp of approval" for quality and safety. This means regulatory professionals must budget time for certification when planning to enter the Mexican toy market, and coordinate testing well in advance to prevent customs delays.



06. Asia

6.1 China

Legal Framework and Standards:

China has one of the most stringent toy compliance regimes in Asia, driven by both national standards and a government-run certification program.

The fundamental standards for toy safety in China are captured in GB 6675-2014, a set of compulsory national standards that replaced the older 2003 version and became effective January 1, 2016. GB 6675-2014 is structured into four parts:

1. **GB 6675.1 (Basic Code):** General requirements, definitions of toy categories, and overarching safety principles, including the obligations of manufacturers/importers and the role of regulators.
2. **GB 6675.2 (Mechanical and Physical Properties):** Detailed criteria similar to ISO 8124-1 for hazards like small parts, sharp edges, projectiles, moving parts, etc., and it introduced specific requirements for acoustics (toy noise levels) and magnets in toys.
3. **GB 6675.3 (Flammability):** Requirements to ensure toys are made of materials with acceptable flammability properties, addressing scenarios like toy costumes or toys a child can enter (tents) these are analogous to ISO 8124-2 or EN71-2 and prohibit highly flammable materials in toys.
4. **GB 6675.4 (Migration of Certain Elements):** This part, based on ISO 8124-3, sets maximum permissible levels for toxic elements (lead, mercury, arsenic, selenium, etc.) that can migrate from toy materials if sucked, ingested, or contacted. For example, the lead migration limit is similar to international norms to prevent heavy metal poisoning.

In addition to the GB 6675 series, China has specific standards for certain toy types (e.g. GB 19865 for electric toys safety, analogous to IEC 62115) and mandatory standards for labeling of toys (GB 5296.5 specifies the required warning and information labels on toys, such as age grading and instructions in Chinese).

6.1.1 China Compulsory Certification (CCC)

A critical aspect of China's system is the China Compulsory Certification (CCC) scheme, a government-administered product certification program. Many categories of toys are included in the CCC scheme (for instance, electric toys, plastic toys, metal toys, dolls, and ride-on toys are explicitly listed). Manufacturers of these toys must obtain a CCC certificate and mark before the products can be imported into or sold in China. The GB 6675 Basic Code (Part 1) outlines that toys in scope must meet CCC

requirements, meaning they must be tested by designated laboratories in China and certified by authorized certification bodies (such as CCIC or CQC). Once certified, the toy will bear the CCC mark, which is a logo printed on the product or packaging indicating compliance. No toy in a CCC-applicable category can be legally distributed in China without this mark. Customs will deny entry to shipments of toys lacking CCC certification, and domestic factories cannot release them for sale.

6.1.2 Testing and Conformity Assessment

To obtain CCC certification for toys, a manufacturer typically submits samples to a Chinese accredited lab for testing against all relevant GB standards. A factory audit is also usually required for initial certification to verify the manufacturer's quality control. This process is managed by the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) and designated certification bodies. The protocol is rigorous: every batch or model of toy must be covered by a certificate. Testing encompasses mechanical tests (drop tests, tension tests for small parts, etc.), flammability tests for materials, chemical analysis for heavy metals and (if applicable) phthalates, etc., as defined in GB 6675.

If a toy passes, a CCC certificate is issued, and the manufacturer/importer can then use the CCC mark. The system thus acts as a pre-market gatekeeper, unlike the U.S. or Canada. It significantly reduces the chance of unsafe toys reaching consumers in China because non-compliant products should be filtered out during certification. Chinese authorities also conduct random port inspections and market spot-checks to enforce ongoing compliance.

6.1.3 Import/Export Requirements

When importing toys into China, foreign manufacturers usually work with a local Chinese importer or agent who helps navigate the CCC certification. Without a CCC certificate, Chinese Customs (part of the China Inspection and Quarantine authority) will hold or reject toy shipments. Conversely, China is a major exporter of toys – interestingly, toys manufactured in China solely for export do not need CCC certification, but they must of course meet the destination country's requirements. Factories often maintain two production lines: one for domestic (CCC-certified) goods and one for export goods (tested per the overseas market standards).

Chinese regulators have heightened enforcement in recent years, especially after incidents of unsafe toys, to ensure that domestic-market toys are compliant. In summary, China's regime is characterized by mandatory national standards plus a government-controlled certification mark (CCC) that together impose a high level of scrutiny on toy safety. Regulatory professionals should ensure products destined for China are designed to Chinese GB specifications and plan for the certification timeline in their market entry strategy.

6.2 Japan

Legal Framework: Japan's toy safety oversight combines government regulation for basic health aspects with a robust voluntary industry standard for comprehensive safety.

Legally, the Japan Food Sanitation Law (JFSL) covers certain safety aspects of toys, particularly for younger children. The JFSL has provisions (often cited as Section 4 of the JFSL and related ordinances) that set standards for chemical and material safety in toys intended for children up to around 6 years old. For example, pacifiers, teething toys, or toys that infants are likely to put in their mouths must not contain harmful substances (such as lead, toxic plastics, etc.) as per JFSL specifications. Compliance with JFSL is mandatory; these requirements function similarly to a technical regulation focusing on materials in contact with food or mouth. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) approves laboratories (including some foreign labs) to test toys for JFSL compliance.

In addition to the JFSL, Japan has the ST Standard (Safety Toy Standard), which is a comprehensive toy safety standard maintained by the Japan Toy Association (JTA), a non-governmental industry body. The ST Standard is voluntary but widely adhered to. It covers mechanical/physical safety (Part 1, aligned in large part with ISO 8124-1 mechanical tests), flammability (Part 2, aligned with ISO 8124-2), and chemical safety (Part 3, including limits on lead, cadmium, and specific banned substances). The latest version (e.g. ST 2016 or ST 2020 series, recently updated to ST 2025) is regularly revised to keep in step with international norms and emerging issues (e.g. new phthalates or magnets hazards).

6.2.1 ST Mark Certification

The hallmark of Japan's toy safety is the ST Mark program. While not a legal requirement, toys that carry the ST Mark are trusted by retailers and consumers as safe. In practice, most major toy companies in Japan will only market toys with ST certification, and large retailers prefer or even require it. To obtain the ST Mark, a toy must be tested by a JTA-accredited laboratory (which may be in Japan or overseas labs recognized by JTA) and shown to conform to all parts of the ST Standard. The process usually works as follows: the importer or manufacturer applies to JTA (or via an authorized lab like SGS, BV, etc.), the toy is tested to ST Part 1-3 requirements, and if compliant, the company is granted a license to use the ST mark logo on that product.

The ST mark is a triangular symbol with "ST" that is placed on the product packaging. It signals that the toy not only meets mandatory requirements (like JFSL) but also the broader safety considerations of the ST Standard. Notably, the ST program also requires factories to have certain quality control processes, adding an extra layer of assurance.

Scope: The ST Standard covers toys intended for children up to 14 years old (mirroring the definition of a toy as under 14). By contrast, the Food Sanitation Law's toy provisions mainly apply to toys for younger children (under 6) or those intended to contact the mouth. Therefore, an electronic toy for a 10-year-old might not fall under JFSL, but it would still be expected to meet ST standard if the maker wants to use the ST mark.

6.2.2 Conformity Assessment

Japan does not mandate pre-market government certification for toys (except for JFSL testing where applicable). However, as mentioned, the de facto conformity route is the ST Mark certification, which is industry-driven. MHLW maintains a list of approved test labs for JFSL, and JTA maintains a list of approved labs for ST. Companies often do a single testing program that covers JFSL chemical tests and ST mechanical/physical tests together. Japan's market is very quality-conscious, and a toy safety incident can severely damage a brand. This has led to a high rate of voluntary compliance. Toys that lack an ST mark can be sold in Japan legally (provided they meet JFSL and are not violating any law), but they may face consumer skepticism and liability risk. From a regulatory professional's perspective, obtaining ST mark certification is highly advisable when entering Japan, even though it's "voluntary,"

because it streamlines compliance, it ensures you've met all relevant safety benchmarks in one go.

As SGS notes, toys entering Japan are expected to comply either with JFSL (mandatory for <6 years toys) and/or the JTA ST Standard (voluntary for up to 14 years), and only those in compliance may display the ST mark.

In summary, Japan's toy safety regime is a blend of mandatory chemical safety law and a voluntary comprehensive standard that has industry-enforced ubiquity. This model shows how an industry association can effectively raise safety standards with the cooperation of manufacturers and retailers. The presence of the ST mark on a toy's packaging in Japan is analogous to a mark of quality and safety, complementing the government's baseline regulations.

6.3 India

Legal Framework: India has in recent years significantly tightened its toy safety requirements.

The key development was the issuance of the "Toys (Quality Control) Order) 2020", under India's Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Act. This order made it mandatory that all toys (for children under 14 years) manufactured in or imported into India conform to Indian Standards and be certified by BIS. In other words, as of 2020–2021, toys in India cannot be sold without the ISI mark (Indian Standards Institute mark, now the BIS mark) indicating compliance.

This effectively moved toy safety from a mostly unregulated space to a strictly regulated one. The applicable standards are IS 9873 (which is an Indian adoption of ISO 8124 parts 1,2,3 etc. for mechanical, flammability, chemical safety) for non-electrical toys, and IS 15644 (similar to ISO 8124-7/EN62115) for electric toys. The Quality Control Order lists these standards and makes them compulsory.

6.3.1 BIS Certification Process

To obtain the BIS mark for toys, both domestic and foreign manufacturers must go through the BIS certification scheme. Foreign manufacturers specifically have to use the Foreign Manufacturers Certification Scheme (FMCS) of BIS. The process involves: application to BIS, submission of product samples for testing in BIS-approved laboratories in India, a factory audit by BIS inspectors, and implementation of a BIS-approved quality control system. Only after successful testing and inspection will BIS grant a license, and then the manufacturer can put the ISI/BIS mark on the toy. The BIS mark on toys is

usually a standard logo with the BIS license number. This certification must be renewed periodically (licenses are generally valid for 1 or 2 years and then renewable). Importers in India must ensure the overseas factories they source from have this BIS certification; otherwise, the goods will not be cleared at customs. In fact, Indian Customs will not allow the import of toys without a BIS license number. This has been strictly enforced from January 2021 onward, with only a few exceptions (e.g., toys used for exhibition or samples for testing can be imported with special permission).

6.3.2 Standards and Testing

The content of India's toy standards (IS 9873 parts 1-9 and IS 15644) mirror international norms, since BIS often adopts ISO or EN standards with minor tweaks. For example, IS 9873 Part 1 covers mechanical and physical properties (equivalent to ISO 8124-1), Part 2 covers flammability (ISO 8124-2), Part 3 covers migration of certain elements (ISO 8124-3), etc. So the safety parameters (drop tests, sharp point tests, heavy metal limits, etc.)

align with what one would expect in Europe or the US. BIS also has introduced limits on phthalates in toys similar to global trends. All these have to be tested in India's labs. Notably, BIS does not accept foreign laboratory reports for certification; products must be tested in BIS-recognized labs in India as part of the certification process. This can be a logistical hurdle for foreign companies, as it requires sending multiple samples to India and possible delays in testing.

6.3.3 Conformity Mark and Enforcement

The outcome of certification is the ISI mark on the toy. As of October 2025, no toy (domestic or imported) can be sold in India without the BIS standard mark – it's a legal requirement, not just a guideline. Non-compliance can result in severe penalties: customs will seize shipments, BIS can order recalls, and there are provisions for fines or even imprisonment for violations.

BIS has been actively enforcing this, making India one of the strictest jurisdictions. The government's rationale is to curb cheap, sub-standard toy imports (historically a lot of low-cost toys were imported) and ensure only safe, quality toys are in the market. This has caused consolidation; many smaller importers had to either certify or exit the market.

6.4 South Korea

South Korea enforces toy safety through the Special Act on Safety of Children's Products, which covers toys among other juvenile products. Under this law, all toys intended for children under 14 years must comply with applicable safety standards and obtain the KC Mark (Korea Certification) prior to sale.

The KC mark is South Korea's national conformity mark, introduced to unify previous separate certification systems. Toys fall into different categories under the act: some are designated as "Safety Certification" items, others as "Safety Confirmation" items, depending on risk level. For example, baby toys or electrically operated toys may require full Safety Certification

(which involves a factory audit and product testing by Korean authorities), whereas some low-risk toys might go through Safety Confirmation (self-declaration after testing). In either case, a third-party test from an authorized lab in Korea is required, and the product must be registered with the Korean Agency for Technology and Standards (KATS) or relevant authority to get the KC mark.

6.4.1 Standards and Testing

Korean toy safety standards (often labeled "K" standards) are largely based on international ones (KS harmonized with ISO 8124, etc.), but are issued as Korean Standards. The mechanical and physical tests, flammability tests, and chemical limits (including limits on heavy metals and phthalates) align with global norms. There are also specific requirements in Korea, such as stricter testing for certain chemical content or specific age grading rules, but generally a toy that passes EU or ASTM standards will need minimal adaptation to pass Korean standards. All testing must be done by a Korean accredited laboratory. The process for Safety Certification requires that the manufacturer (or importer) submit samples for testing and also undergo a factory inspection by Korean inspectors if it's the first time or a high-risk category. For Safety Confirmation, the importer can have the product tested and then submit the results to obtain the certificate without a factory audit (this is typical for simpler toys).

South Korea also has a category called "Supplier Conformity Confirmation" for very low-risk items where the company just registers a statement of conformity.

KC Mark and Labeling: Once approved, the toy must bear the KC mark label, which includes the KC logo and the certification number. The label is usually required to be permanent on the product or, if not feasible, on the packaging, and must be in Korean. In addition, toys in Korea must have Korean-language warnings and age labeling. For example, if a toy has small parts and is not for under 3, it should have the equivalent Korean text warning. Instructions should be provided in Korean as well. The KC mark effectively assures consumers that the product has met all safety criteria. All toys sold in Korea are required to affix the KC Mark, selling a toy without it is illegal.

6.4.2 Enforcement

The Korean Consumer Product Safety Authority and KATS actively enforce compliance. Products arriving in Korea can be stopped by customs if not accompanied by the proper KC certification. Additionally, the Special Act gives authorities the power to sample products from the market for testing. Penalties for non-compliance include fines and mandatory recalls. Korea has in the past seized and destroyed non-compliant toys, especially those containing banned substances or lacking the KC mark. Since the KC system was introduced (around 2009), it has simplified things in that one mark covers various safety approvals (electrical safety, radio frequency if applicable, etc., are sometimes integrated). For toys that have electronic components, there may also be EMC (electromagnetic compatibility) testing and other requirements under the KC umbrella.

Regulatory professionals entering South Korea should plan for the KC certification timeline. Typically, collaboration with a local partner (importer or consultant) is needed to navigate the application in Korean and coordinate with test labs. The overall approach is similar to China's or India's in that it is a pre-market mandatory certification system with a national mark. South Korea, however, often recognizes test reports from certain foreign labs under mutual recognition agreements for some tests to ease the burden, but final certification is always granted by Korean authorities. In summary, KC certification ensures toys meet Korean safety and chemical standards, and it is required that the KC mark be obtained and placed on toys before they are imported or sold in Korea.

07. Other Asian Markets

Many other countries in Asia have toy safety regulations inspired by either the ISO 8124 international standards or the European and American models:

7.1 Taiwan (Chinese Taipei)

Maintains its own CNS toy safety standards (similar to ISO 8124) and requires mandatory testing and certification for certain toys. Taiwan has a certification mark (the Commodity Inspection Mark) for toys that pass testing by the Bureau of Standards, Metrology and Inspection (BSMI). Phthalates in toys are regulated by CNS 15138, and labeling must be in Chinese. Taiwan's regime is somewhat similar to Korea's in requiring pre-market approval.

7.2 Hong Kong

Does not have unique toy regulations and instead accepts toys that comply with ASTM F963, ISO 8124, or EU EN 71 standards. The Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance in Hong Kong essentially mandates compliance to one of those international standards. Therefore, manufacturers have flexibility, and no additional certification mark is needed for Hong Kong; it relies on post-market surveillance.

7.3 Malaysia

Adopts MS ISO 8124 standards as Malaysian Standards for toys. These are technically voluntary, but Malaysia's regulator can enforce them under consumer protection laws. Malaysia currently does not require a pre-market certificate specifically for toys; however, importers must ensure compliance and might have to provide test reports if requested.

7.4 Singapore

Has no mandatory toy certification; it refers importers directly to ISO 8124 and EN 71 as the benchmarks. Essentially, compliance with international standards is expected (and large retailers often demand proof of such compliance), but the government doesn't issue a local certificate. General consumer protection law would apply if a toy is unsafe.

7.5 Thailand

Implements compulsory standards for toys through the Thailand Industrial Standards Institute (TISI). TIS 685-2540 is the Thai Industrial Standard for Toys (Parts 1-3) and is mandatory. Importers need to get a TISI license for the toy; the standards are based on older ISO 8124 versions.

7.5 Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines

These countries currently have less developed specific toy regulations, but generally they align with either EN 71 or ASTM F963. For instance, Indonesia often references international standards and has broad consumer protection laws. The Philippines Bureau of Standards has published PNS (Philippine National Standards) for toy safety aligning with ISO 8124, and while not strictly enforced at customs yet, there is movement toward more oversight. Importers in these markets typically follow international standards voluntarily and may need to meet labeling requirements (like bilingual labels in the Philippines, English and Filipino).

In summary for Asia (excluding major players above), a common trend is increasing harmonization with ISO 8124 and requiring proof of conformity at import. Even where formal certification schemes are not fully in place, countries often require a Certificate of Conformity or test report as part of import documentation (sometimes under broader schemes like Pre-Export Verification of Conformity for consumer goods). Asian countries also pay attention to labeling, often requiring the local language and importer details on packages. As a regulatory professional, it's prudent to identify if a country has a mandatory standard or accepts a foreign standard, and whether an official certification mark is needed or a self-declaration with test evidence suffices.



08. Africa

Regulation of toy safety in Africa varies widely across the continent, but a common approach is emerging: many African nations require proof of conformity to international standards at the point of import.

Rather than each country developing unique toy standards, they often reference established standards (ISO 8124, EN 71, etc.) and use import inspection programs to enforce them.

8.1 Regional and International Standards Adoption

For example, South Africa has adopted the ISO 8124 toy safety standards as South African National Standards (SANS 8124). Parts 1, 2, and 3 of ISO 8124 (covering mechanical/physical, flammability, and toxic element migration) are issued as SANS 8124-1, 8124-2, 8124-3 and are available for industry use. While South Africa does not currently mandate a pre-market certification mark for toys, products are expected to comply with these standards, and the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) can certify products on a voluntary basis. If a safety incident occurs or a product is found unsafe, authorities can invoke the standards to deem it non-compliant. SABS also runs a regulatory permit system for certain products, but toys have not been a major focus of mandatory permits to date. However, South Africa's alignment with ISO means that a toy that meets EU or US requirements generally meets local expectations as well.

Pre-Export Verification Programs: Several African countries use Pre-Export Verification of Conformity (PVoC) or similar programs to check product safety before goods leave the exporting country. Under these schemes, an exporter of toys to countries like Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Cameroon (and others) must obtain a Certificate of Conformity (CoC) from an approved inspection company (such as SGS, Intertek, Bureau Veritas).

The CoC is issued after the toys are tested or the reports are reviewed for compliance with the destination country's standards (which usually are based on ISO 8124 or the equivalent). For instance, Kenya's PVoC program lists toys as regulated products; exporters need to present a CoC at Kenyan customs, confirming the toys meet Kenya Standards (often KS which mirror ISO 8124). If electrical toys are involved, the CoC will verify they operate on the correct voltage and plug type (Kenya requires 240V, British-standard plugs for electrical items). Kenya also requires marking of the country of origin on all products, including toys.

Similarly, Nigeria's SONCAP (Standards Organisation of Nigeria Conformity Assessment Program) mandates every toy shipment to Nigeria have a SONCAP Certificate.

This certificate is obtained after the toys are tested to Nigerian standards (which typically adopt ISO 8124 or sometimes ASTM) and an inspection of the consignment is done. Electrical toys for Nigeria must be rated 230V/50Hz and use specific plug types (British BS 1363 or older BS 546) otherwise they fail conformity. The SON (Standards Organisation of Nigeria) only allows imports with this certificate, effectively banning substandard toys at entry.

Other countries like Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Cameroon, Gabon, Ethiopia etc. have similar import control schemes, often facilitated by international inspection companies. These programs protect local consumers by ensuring imported toys (and other goods) aren't dangerous. They typically require testing to international standards – e.g., an Intertek or SGS lab might test a toy to EN 71 or ISO 8124 and use that result to issue the CoC acceptable to the African authorities.

8.2 African Domestic Regulations

Many African nations currently do not have elaborate in-country toy safety laws beyond these import checks. However, general consumer protection or product quality laws exist. If an unsafe toy somehow bypasses import checks and causes harm, a government can recall it citing general safety provisions. Egypt and Morocco, for instance, have been aligning with EU requirements due to trade agreements, even looking at CE marking as a model; Nigeria has published Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) for toys that mirror EN 71. Ghana has GS standards for toys too. Enforcement internally, however, is still primarily at borders.

8.3 Certification Bodies and Import Controls

The enforcement of these rules is often outsourced: e.g., Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) contracts companies like SGS or Intertek to do PVoC. In Tanzania, the Tanzania Bureau of Standards does the same. These agencies verify test results and physically inspect shipments for compliance, then issue the CoC which customs will check. Without the CoC, the shipments can be denied entry or subjected to costly testing on arrival.

In summary, across Africa, the prevalent model is "test abroad, certify abroad, verify at entry."

This means as a regulatory professional, one should ensure that toys destined for an African market have documentation (test reports to ISO 8124/EN 71 or ASTM, as applicable) and go through the required inspection process before shipping. Once in the market, ongoing surveillance is less rigorous than in the U.S. or EU, largely due to resource constraints, but it is improving. Countries are increasingly cooperating on standards (the African Organisation for Standardisation, ARSO, has toy standards initiatives) which may lead to more unified rules in the future.

09. Australia (and New Zealand)

9.1 Legal Framework

Australia has a well-defined regulatory system for toy safety, largely enforced under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) and implemented via mandatory safety standards declared by the Australian government (through the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, ACCC). There are currently five mandatory toy safety standards in Australia, each targeting a specific hazard category or toy type:

- Toys for Children Up to and Including 36 Months of Age addresses choking and ingestion hazards from small parts.
- Children's Projectile Toys addresses eye injuries or impact injuries from projectile-launching toys.
- Toys Containing Magnets addresses the severe internal injury risk if powerful magnets are swallowed (in effect since 2020).
- Aquatic Toys covers flotation or water toys to ensure they carry warnings about drowning risk, etc.
- Toy Materials and Heavy Elements limits the presence of lead and other toxic elements in toy substrates and finishes.

These standards are law; non-compliance is an offense under the ACL.

9.2 Alignment with International Standards

A key aspect is that Australia's mandatory standards are largely aligned with international standards (ISO, EN, ASTM), often accepting compliance with any one of a set of standards. For example, the 2023 safety standard for toys under 36 months explicitly allows compliance if the toy meets certain clauses of AS/NZS ISO 8124.1:2023, or the equivalent clauses of EN 71-1:2014+A1:2018 or ASTM F963-17, as listed in the regulation.



This means a manufacturer can choose a pathway (European, American, or the local Australian/New Zealand standard which mirrors ISO) to demonstrate the toy's safety for mechanical/physical hazards. Australia and New Zealand jointly publish standards (AS/NZS) that typically adopt ISO 8124 with minor modifications, ensuring that if you test to AS/NZS, you're essentially meeting ISO. The mandatory standards often reference only certain clauses of those standards focusing on the most critical points like small parts, sharp edges, etc., rather than the entirety of the standard. In practice, however, most companies will test to the full standard (e.g., EN 71-1) to be safe.

9.3 Specific Provisions

The toys for under 36 months standard is particularly important. Its goal is to prevent choking or suffocation incidents. It requires that any toy intended for age ≤ 3 cannot have small parts that come off in testing. It also goes further to mandate design features, such as secure battery compartments for any battery-operated toy in this age range (the battery cover must require a tool to open, to prevent toddlers accessing button cells). This is explicitly in the standard and aligns with global awareness of button battery dangers. The regulation also carved out certain exceptions (like crayons, playground equipment, etc. are regulated separately or not considered toys), and it introduced a unique requirement for toys made of certain foamed materials: those toys must bear a very conspicuous warning label about not being for under-3s because pieces could break off and choke a child. The label format is even specified e.g., the word "WARNING" in red, 5mm high, and a specific wording about foam pieces and choking, also in

red text of a certain size. This level of detail exemplifies the prescriptive nature of ACCC's standards.

For projectile toys, the standard effectively says the toy must meet the relevant sections of EN 71-1 or ISO 8124-1 dealing with projectiles. It also likely adds that certain projectile toys (with sharp points or high kinetic energy) simply cannot be sold. The magnet toy standard requires that if loose small magnets or magnetic components are part of a toy, they must either not be accessible or the product carries a warning and meets a swallowing risk test. Aquatic toys must have warnings that they are not safety devices and only to be used in shallow water under supervision.

The toxic elements standard essentially adopts AS/NZS ISO 8124.3 (which is like ISO 8124-3 / EN 71-3) for migration of elements. It caps the migration of lead, mercury, etc., from toy materials, again matching international consensus.

9.4 Conformity Assessment

Unlike the EU's CE marking process, Australia does not require manufacturers to affix a special "safety mark" nor to obtain government or third-party certification before selling toys. Instead, compliance is met by self-declaration, companies ensure their products meet the mandatory standards, typically by testing in a lab (often to the EN, ISO or ASTM methods allowed). There is no requirement to file results with the government prior to sale. However, the ACL is actively enforced by the ACCC and state consumer law agencies.

They will perform market surveillance, check toys in stores, and even do random testing. If a toy is found non-compliant, the supplier can be compelled to recall it and can face fines.

While no pre-market certificate is needed, in practice manufacturers/importers must exercise due diligence. Most will keep test reports on file (from labs showing the toy passes AS/NZS ISO 8124 or EN 71, etc.) in case they need to demonstrate compliance. In some cases, the ACCC has worked with Customs to stop blatantly dangerous products at the border, but there isn't a systematic customs check for toy standard compliance.

9.5 Enforcement and Recalls

The ACCC publishes recall notices for toys that fail standards – for instance, if a rattle marketed for babies comes apart and releases a small ball, that's a recall as it violates the under-36-months toy standard. Suppliers are expected to stay updated (ACCC frequently updates standards; e.g., the 2023 update replaced a 2003 version, providing a transition period until March 2025 for compliance). During such transitions, products can comply with either the old or new standard, but after the effective date, only the new one applies. The ACCC often gives an 18-month transition, recognizing supply chains need adjustment time.

In conclusion, Australia's toy safety system is characterized by mandatory compliance to specific standards with flexible compliance

pathways and strict enforcement through market surveillance and recalls.

There is no required mark like CE or CCC, but non-compliance carries legal consequences. For a regulatory professional, it's critical to ensure any toy intended for Australia meets the clauses of EN/ISO/AS-NZS or ASTM that Australia mandates (e.g., small parts and use-and-abuse tests for under 3 toys), and to apply the exact warning phrases where required (such as the foam toy choking hazard label). Often, leveraging test reports from Europe/US can cover most bases, with perhaps minimal additional testing for AS/NZS nuances. The clear structure of five standards makes it relatively straightforward to check off compliance points, but it demands attention to detail in labeling and design (like secured battery compartments) that some other jurisdictions may not explicitly spell out in legislation.



10. Comparative Analysis of Global Toy Safety Regulations

Despite variations in implementation, the toy safety regimes in North America, Asia, Africa, and Australia share the common objective of mitigating risks such as choking, poisoning, fire, and injury from toys. Several common themes and key differences emerge:

Convergence of Safety Standards: Virtually all regions have based their technical requirements on a few well-recognized international standards principally ISO 8124, ASTM F963, and EN 71 series. For example, the U.S. mandatory standard IS ASTM F963 (very similar to ISO 8124); China's GB 6675 mirrors ISO 8124 and EN 71 in structure; India straight-up adopted ISO 8124 parts as IS 9873; Australia/New Zealand use AS/NZS ISO 8124 and even accept EN 71 or ASTM F963 results as evidence. This means the fundamental tests like checking small parts, conducting drop tests, testing material flammability and chemical composition are globally aligned. A toy designed to pass one of these major standards typically can pass the others with minimal modification.

This is a win for manufacturers, as it enables a "design global, test once, certify many" approach (with due caution for local nuances).

10.1 Hazard Focus

Across jurisdictions, choking hazards (small parts) and toxic elements (like lead) in toys are top priorities. All regions ban small parts in toys for young children and limit heavy metals in coatings. Many also now regulate magnets in toys, the U.S. via ASTM F963 and federal rulemaking, Australia with a dedicated standard, and China/ISO including magnet tests. Strangulation hazards from cords or pull strings are also addressed universally. Sharp points/edges and mechanical integrity (toys shouldn't break into dangerous pieces) are likewise ubiquitous requirements.

10.2 Chemical Restrictions

Beyond heavy metals, phthalate plasticizers (used in soft plastics) are commonly restricted: the U.S. bans certain phthalates in toys >0.1%; the EU (though excluded here) does similarly; China and ISO have equivalent requirements; India and others follow suit. Some countries like Canada separately regulate specific chemicals (e.g. certain flame retardants or azo dyes) through general consumer product regulations often aligning with broader international chemical safety norms.

10.3 Testing and Certification Models: Here Lies a Major Difference

The North American model (US/Canada) historically relies on a mix of industry self-certification and post-market enforcement. The U.S. shifted somewhat by requiring third-party lab testing and a self-issued certificate (CPC), but still no government pre-approval or mark is needed. Canada remains fully trust-based (no certificate required). This model demands manufacturers police themselves under threat of recall/litigation.

The Asian model (China, India, Korea) leans toward government-controlled pre-market certification requiring a government-recognized certificate and a mark (CCC, BIS-ISI, KC) before sale. These are more akin to the European CE system but often even more centralized.

Japan is an outlier in Asia, using a voluntary certification (ST mark) rather than mandatory government sign-off (though JFSL is mandatory for chemicals).

Australia's model is middle-ground: it has mandatory standards like a regulated market, but uses a supplier's declaration of conformity (no pre-approval, but strict liability if you don't comply). South Africa and some others follow this pattern too, standards are mandated or adopted in law, but enforcement is via marketplace checks rather than pre-market certification.

African import-control model: Many African nations enforce via import certifications (CoCs) using third-party inspectors rather than domestic infrastructure. It's a preventative measure at borders more than a continuous market surveillance program.

10.4 Certification Bodies and Marks

In practice, this means a toy might carry different proof of conformity in different markets:

- A toy in the U.S. will have no specific safety logo, but the manufacturer must be able to produce a CPC and the product likely has a tracking label.
- The same toy in China must bear the CCC mark.
- In India, it must have the ISI/BIS stamp.
- In Korea, the KC mark.
- In Australia, no mark is required, but if it's for toddlers it better have a warning label if applicable (and it might voluntarily bear a Standards Mark if tested, but not obligatory).
- In Kenya/Nigeria, no mark on product, but each shipment will come with a Certificate of Conformity and sometimes a sticker on the cargo or documents indicating inspection done.

Labeling and Language: All jurisdictions emphasize clear labeling for safety. Commonly required or recommended labels include:

Age grading – e.g. “3+” or “Not for under 36 months” either as an icon or text. The form varies: U.S. uses the text with an explanation, EU has the 0-3 symbol (though not covered here), China uses Chinese text, etc.

Specific hazard warnings – e.g. “Choking Hazard – Small parts” in English in U.S./Canada, bilingual in Canada by recommendation, Chinese warnings in China, etc. Australia prescribes exact wording for certain hazards.

Tracking/identification – U.S. uniquely mandates tracking labels; others require manufacturer/importer info on labels (Canada, Australia, etc., require supplier name and address).

Language – Each country expects the national language: Spanish in Mexico, French/English in Canada, Chinese in China, etc. Bilingual requirements exist in multilingual nations (Canada, and South Africa might require English plus perhaps another if marketed in certain provinces).

One sees that meeting all labeling requirements for all markets is challenging – many companies produce region-specific packaging to handle language and regulatory differences.

10.5 Import/Export Enforcement

At Import: North America and Australia/New Zealand traditionally did not systematically inspect each toy shipment for compliance, but they reserve the right to do so (and do targeted checks). Asia and parts of Africa actively demand certificates at import. As noted, India/China will flat out refuse entry without certification. African PVoC countries will too – shipments lacking the inspection certificate can be turned around or destroyed.

Post-Market: Once in the market, the effectiveness of surveillance varies. The U.S. CPSC and ACCC in Australia are quite active with testing and recalls. Canada reacts to incidents (and also can request test data from companies). China has domestic market surveillance (e.g., periodic campaigns to test toys in shops) and severe penalties for non-compliance (including public “blacklisting” of companies). Countries with fewer resources might rely on consumer complaints or serious incidents to trigger action.

10.6 Emerging Trends: Across all These Regions

- Inclusion of new hazards like sound level limits (to prevent hearing damage) – U.S. ASTM F963 and EU have it, China's GB added it, others likely follow.
- Button battery safety – Australia's law on secure battery compartments is among the strictest;
- U.S. considering similar rules due to accidents; other countries likely to incorporate that.
- Chemical expansions, new limits on allergens, endocrine disruptors, etc., might appear. For instance, Canada was considering adopting ISO 8124-11 on chemical toys sets (indicating moving toward more chemical oversight).
- Digital aspects and new technologies not covered above, but as toys get "smarter" (IoT toys, etc.), regulations in these regions will start covering data security or battery lithium safety. Already, some countries require conformity to wireless regulations if a toy has a transmitter (e.g., KC or CCC might include RF requirements).
- Harmonization vs. Divergence: The comparison shows a high degree of technical harmonization (everyone agrees what a safe toy is, more or less), but a divergence in conformity assessment approaches:
- Self-declaration (US/Can/Aus) vs. Third-party certification (most of Asia).

There is a trade-off: mandatory third-party certification arguably catches issues earlier (since a lab and auditor review the toy before it's sold), whereas self-declaration relies on the company's commitment and the fear of penalties.

For global companies, meeting both is standard: they test and certify for markets like China/India and use those same test results to self-certify for US/Australia. Small companies, however, sometimes find the certification markets harder due to cost and complexity.

From a regulatory professional's standpoint, these comparisons mean that one should design a toy to the highest common requirement among target regions and then ensure procedural compliance for each: e.g. design for EU/US standards which covers technical safety, then get CCC and BIS for China/India, file CPC for US, etc. In many cases, ISO 8124 is the common thread referenced in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania heavily. ASTM F963 is essentially the North American implementation of the same principles. Thus, investing in testing to the ISO/ASTM standard thoroughly (including all clauses) will satisfy most jurisdictions' safety requirements. Differences in testing (like one region might require 24-hour soak for a part before testing, another 72-hour those minor differences need attention but are manageable).

Finally, an encouraging trend in global toy safety is mutual recognition and cooperation. Regulators like the U.S. CPSC and Health Canada regularly share information and align certain requirements, as do Australia and New Zealand. Through forums like the International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organization (ICPHSO) and memoranda of understanding (e.g., CPSC has one with China's AQSIQ, and with Health Canada), regulators are working toward more consistency. This should gradually reduce redundant testing and allow focus on emerging hazards. For now, however, anyone selling toys globally outside Europe must navigate a patchwork of certification schemes (NOM, CCC, BIS, KC, etc.) and ensure stringent labeling localization, all built on a broadly similar safety foundation.



Conclusion

Despite the complexity of global toy regulation, a clear pattern emerges: most jurisdictions rely on a common technical foundation rooted in ISO 8124, ASTM F963, and EN 71 standards, even as they diverge sharply in conformity assessment and enforcement. Markets such as China, India, and South Korea mandate pre-market government certification and safety marks, while the United States, Canada, and Australia emphasise manufacturer responsibility supported by post-market surveillance. Many African and emerging markets enforce compliance through border-level inspections and certificates of conformity, underscoring the growing trend toward import-control-based safety systems.

For companies operating internationally, success requires both designing toys to the most stringent global safety benchmarks and understanding the procedural nuances of each market whether that means securing a CCC certificate, issuing a Children's Product Certificate, preparing for BIS factory audits, or meeting local labeling and language requirements. As global regulators continue to collaborate and refine standards to address emerging hazards, from powerful magnets to button batteries and chemical exposures, the path toward greater international harmonization is becoming more evident. However, until procedural alignment catches up with technical alignment, regulatory professionals must remain vigilant in managing market-specific obligations to ensure safe, compliant, and globally acceptable toys.

OUR NUMBERS

300+

CUSTOMERS WORLDWIDE

195

COUNTRIES COVERED

100,000

REGULATIONS