

# News

## GOLF CARS

### Manufacturers move toward safety standard

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With the government on hand to put in its opinions on the subject, the biggest golf car makers met in Chicago in December to nail down some industry safety standards.

As liability problems begin to loom larger in the market every day, the car companies have been sped along in their collective surge toward safer vehicles by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. John Liskey, from the CPSC's voluntary standards division, was on hand in the Windy City to see what the manufacturers had come up with. The process, though, has dragged on for more than 6 years.

On hand for the companies were James Wenzel, Don Dickman, and Jack Woods from AMF Harley-Davidson; L. A. Benton from Johns-Manville; R. Davis Taylor from Taylor-Dunn; John Dwyer from Polaris E-Z-Go, and representatives from HMK-Marketeer and Pargo.

In all, the government and the manufacturers discussed 26 separate areas of contention on the proposed standards. Both sides made compromises, as the manufacturers strive toward having the standards adopted and then published by ANSI (American National Standards Institute),

national clearinghouse for all such safety material.

The gathering was instituted by the National Golf Foundation, which has been involved directly with the companies since the ineffective American Golf Car Manufacturers group disbanded in 1973. The manufacturers met in Chicago as a subcommittee of the NGF and not as a committee for writing ANSI standards. Such a group of manufacturers was organized in 1970 and dubbed the "Z-130."

To prepare for the meeting, Liskey took the manufacturers' proposed standards and circulated them around the various bureaus and divisions of the CPSC to get other staff opinions on the code.

A major disagreement between the government and the manufacturers came on the rate of acceleration achieved by the vehicles. Engineers for the commission felt the average rate of 15 feet per second was excessive, but the manufacturers stood pat, contending a major redesign of the vehicles would have to be accomplished to decrease the acceleration capability. Liskey conceded that testing had not established the present rate of acceleration to be a direct cause in

any accidents.

On new 1977 models, the manufacturers will be placing a warning label on the cars indicating to drivers several items they should be aware of when operating the car. One item the CPSC recommended and adopted was to tell the driver not to start the car until all passengers are seated in the vehicle.

Liskey and the government did try to underscore the need for more visible safety features on the car itself. Some sort of handholds and body restraint system will become standard equipment on models in the immediate future.

Cars may eventually also be inspected by the government or an "independent third party," Liskey told GOLF BUSINESS. All in all, Liskey was optimistic about the movement the car people had been making toward safer cars, and the Chicago meeting was another step in the right direction.

Harley-Davidson's Wenzel is in charge of making the contact with ANSI now and filing the safety proposals with them. ANSI personnel will then analyze the standards through its bureaus and will look at each standard individually, accepting or rejecting each.

Attempting to simulate every conceivable golf car accident, a test crew from Johns-Manville gives one of their units a 360-degree roll to check the structural integrity of the car. One check done afterwards was to see whether the batteries stayed in place.

