



The Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) Rating System

Introduction

The role of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) is to research and provide information on radiation protection issues to improve the health of Australians. One aspect of this work is to raise awareness about the potential dangers of solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure. ARPANSA monitors UVR in all Australian capital cities and provides this data on its web site. ARPANSA also contributes information about UVR to a variety of publications.

The UPF Certification Scheme

In 1990 ARPANSA developed a UPF Certification Scheme. This involves testing materials to determine their UVR protective abilities, then labelling products made from those materials with the highly recognised UPF Certification Trade Mark. The UPF Certification Trade Mark is owned by the Commonwealth of Australia and administered by ARPANSA. ARPANSA may grant use of the UPF Certification Trade Mark on products for which a sample of material of the same type, quality and colour has been tested and has a rating of at least UPF 15. The primary method of use of this trademark is by labelling products with the ARPANSA UPF tags. The label indicates the Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) of the material, which is a measure of how effective it is at sun protection. This labelling encourages manufacturers in the promotion of sun protection products and educates the community about appropriate UVR protection strategies. Consumers can be confident about the amount of ultraviolet radiation blocked by labelled products. ARPANSA issues over five million tags annually for product labelling.

The Australian Standard

In 1996 a joint Australian/New Zealand standard for evaluating sun protective clothing, **AS/NZS 4399:1996 "Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification"**, was released. This standard details how materials are to be tested to determine a UPF rating and also specifies appropriate wording to be placed on UPF labels. The UPF tags issued by ARPANSA comply with the requirements of AS/NZS 4399. Companies wishing to produce their own UPF swing tags, not incorporating ARPANSA's UPF Certification Trade Mark, can obtain AS/NZS 4399 from Standards Australia or Standards New Zealand.

Testing materials for UPF Rating

ARPANSA operates a UPF Testing Service that can test materials and issue UPF test reports that comply with AS/NZS 4399. The standard specifies certain requirements for test reports. These include an adequate description of the type and colour of the material.

If you require ARPANSA test reports for your samples, please complete a UPF Testing Request form and forward it to ARPANSA Ultraviolet Radiation Services with the samples. Representative samples of at least half a meter by one meter of each material type and colour are required. If you have smaller samples please check their suitability with the testing service. Testing can usually be conducted within ten working days of receipt of samples, depending on laboratory workload. The request form and a schedule of UPF testing charges is available from the ARPANSA web site at <http://www.arpansa.gov.au/uv/index.cfm>.

Labelling Sun Protective Articles

Swing tags bearing the prescribed wording from AS/NZS 4399 are available from ARPANSA. The ARPANSA UPF swing tags feature an image of the UPF Certification Trade Mark and companies using the ARPANSA tags must first licence use of this trademark. The tags are available with UPF ratings of 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 50+ depending on the ratings of your materials. Swing tag order forms are issued to licensees after their licence application has been approved. Freight charges are additional to the cost of the tags. The preferred method of delivery can be specified on the order form.

The UPF Certification Trade Mark, and therefore the ARPANSA UPF tags, may only be attached to products by current licensees of the trade mark, and only to products constructed from materials that are listed on their UPF Certification Trade Mark licence agreements.

Products made from two or more materials must be labeled with the UPF rating of the lowest rated material. Products made from rated and non-rated materials cannot be labeled with the UPF Certification Trade Mark. The name of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) may only be used on products, promotional material and web sites if ARPANSA has given specific written authorisation. Companies that licence use of the UPF

Certification Trade Mark are responsible for assuring that products are labeled with the correct UPF ratings and the trademark is only applied to materials listed on the licence agreement. Note that ARPANSA samples licensees' products regularly to ensure that the correct rating labels have been applied. If licensees wish to use this trademark on web sites, packaging where swing tags are unsuitable or in promotional material then they must apply to ARPANSA for prior approval.

Using the UPF Certification Trade Mark

To obtain a licence to use the UPF Certification Trade Mark, complete and sign the application form (Schedule 3), attach complete copies of UPF test reports for all types and colours of materials you intend to label and return it to ARPANSA with the licence application fee. Additional materials can be added to your licence agreement at any time. If articles are marketed under a brand name or label that differs from the licensee name on page one of Schedule 3, the names of all brands and labels to which the UPF Certification Trade Mark will be attached must also be listed on Schedule 3. Advise ARPANSA of any changes to this list. Do not complete Schedule 4 - it is an example only of a UPF Certification Trade Mark licence.

Overview of the licensing procedure

1. The applicant sends the completed and signed licence application forms, licence fee and any other documentation required to ARPANSA.
2. If ARPANSA approves the application, two blank licence agreements are prepared and returned to the applicant for signing. The applicant signs both copies of the licence agreement and returns them to ARPANSA.
3. When ARPANSA receives the signed licence agreements it countersigns them, keeps one copy for its records and returns one copy to the applicant.

Note that any use of the UPF Certification Trade Mark apart from on the ARPANSA UPF tags must have prior approval in writing from ARPANSA – refer to the application form for specific uses of the trademark.

Locating Sun Protective Products

Each year ARPANSA receives many enquiries from consumers about sun protective products and where to purchase them. To address these questions, ARPANSA maintains the **Resource Guide for UV Protective Products** web site which lists a range of companies that provide products and services related to sun protection. The Resource Guide is located at <http://www.arpansa.gov.au/uvrg/main.htm>.

Companies that provide products and services related to sun protection can have their contact details listed on the Resource Guide web site by providing brief information about their products to ARPANSA. Refer to the Resource Guide web site for further details.

Further Information

Please address any questions about the UPF Certification Trade Mark or Ultraviolet Protection Factor testing to:

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