

### PIPA GAINS SUPPORT FROM EVENT ORGANISATIONS

#### **PIPA works with councils to spread the word**

MUTA, the performance textiles industry association, is conducting an ongoing programme of engagement with local authorities this summer, to promote inflatable play safety practices under the PIPA scheme.

The Association, which runs the scheme, wrote to all local authorities at district, borough and unitary level in the UK in order to raise awareness of the standards. Under the PIPA scheme, which is endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive, inflatable play equipment is given a tag and is tested for safety by a registered inspector every year. By entering the tag number on the website, members of the public can check whether a particular piece of equipment has been properly tested.

Council event teams and environmental health departments are being sent information about PIPA's role in meeting the legal requirement to have inflatable play equipment tested annually. Local authorities have considerable influence in ensuring that bouncy castles used in their areas meet health and safety standards, and while many already have a policy of using equipment tested to BS EN 14960, there are many councils that are not aware of the standard or the PIPA scheme.

Andy Grove, chairman of the National Outdoor Events Association's Local Authority Event Organisers Group, said he expected all local authorities to welcome the pack from MUTA. He hoped to reach the point where ["every local authority only accepts PIPA \(or ADIPS\) and it is written into tenders and contracts or just becomes a condition of booking so that those without it have no chance of working at events on council land."](#)

["If they want to remain in the industry they must raise their standards and comply with PIPA,"](#) he added.

Carl Hagemann, event safety spokesman for the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management, praised the transparency and user-friendliness of the PIPA scheme: ["The appropriate 'tagging' of an inflatable allows any person to easily view details of that devices last inspection. It also gives that specific device a unique permanent physical reference point for identification."](#)

Targeting local authorities is by no means a magic bullet to boost recognition of standards. Andy Grove would like to see inflatable hirers targeted and encouraged to become PIPA-accredited because ["at the moment, many organisers find it difficult to find one that is and therefore having the inflatable at their event becomes difficult and sometimes impossible."](#)

#### **PIPA Administration**

There are many within the inflatable play industry who will view these latest developments with some trepidation but others will see it as a tremendous move in the right direction. Any move that helps to remove some of the less professional operators and bad equipment can only help improve the credibility of the industry and raise the overall standard of safety. Operators choosing to ignore these moves will find themselves struggling in an increasingly aware market place

Source: INPA / PIPA Administration

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