

Post-Manufacturing Traceability: Legal/Market Trends and Best Practices

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Abstract

Since WTO (World Trade Organization) had its agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) signed by its members in 1994, manufacturing centers shifted to Asia and more particularly to China which manufacturing exports have been rising exponentially for the last decade. The outsourcing strategy led by global retailers, though it substantially cut down immediate manufacturing costs, also showed a spectacular increase of consumer products notifications and/or recalls, in every field of consumer goods. Meanwhile, neither the import verification programs nor mandatory verification of conformity provide enough guarantees that the retailed products are devoid of any defect or can be recalled in a fast and effective way. Consequently, a new class of regulations was born in 2009, widely based on the post-manufacturing traceability principle. The common backbone of these regulations is analyzed to highlight the key building blocks upon which current regulations are based on. Then, cross industry traceability standards are reviewed and the lessons learnt from the latest pilot projects led in different sector areas will highlight current best practices and stakes while implementing a postmanufacturing traceability system.

Keywords: post manufacturing traceability, product, quality, safety, conformity, authenticity, regulation, market, surveillance, critical tracking events, key data elements, RFID, data matrix, bar code, retail, manufacturing, control, notification, recall, ISO 1736

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