

**APPENDIX B: CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING TECHNOLOGICALLY AND
COMMERCIALY FEASIBLE**

Criteria for Determining Technologically and Commercially Feasible

Health and Safety code (HSC) section 41712 requires that the consumer product regulations be technologically and commercially feasible. Health and Safety Code section 41712 also requires aerosol adhesives, which are part of the consumer product regulations, to meet best available retrofit control technology (BARCT). Best available retrofit control technology is defined in the Health and Safety Code section 40406 as “an emission limitation that is based on the maximum degree of reduction achievable, taking into account environmental, energy, and economic impacts by each class or category of source.” ARB staff has developed a guideline document to determine BARCT. The document is entitled Determination of Reasonably Available Control Technology and Best Available Retrofit Control Technology, March 1990. Criteria to determine whether the consumer product regulations are technologically and commercially feasible have also been developed and have been used in prior consumer product rulemakings. The criteria is summarized below.

Technologically Feasible

Health and Safety Code section 41712(d) requires the Board to adopt consumer product regulations that are “technologically feasible.” Technologically feasible is a different concept than “commercially feasible,” and does not take into account the cost of the complying product. The staff believes that a proposed limit is technologically feasible if it meets at least one of the following criteria: (1) the limit is already being met by at least one product within the same category, or (2) the limit can reasonably be expected to be met in the time frame provided through additional development efforts.

Commercially Feasible

Health and Safety Code section 41712(d) also requires the Board to adopt consumer product regulations that are “commercially feasible.” The term “commercially feasible” is not defined in State law. In interpreting this term, the staff has utilized the reasoning employed by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in interpreting the federal Clean Air Act. In the leading case of International Harvester Company v. Ruckelshaus, (D.C. Cir. 1973) 478 F. 2d 615, the Court held that the United States Environmental Protection Agency could promulgate technology-forcing motor vehicle emission limits which might result in fewer models and a more limited choice of engine

types for consumers, as long as the basic market demand for new passenger automobiles could be generally met.

Following this reasoning, the staff has concluded that a regulation is “commercially feasible” as long as the “basic market demand” for a particular consumer product can be met. “Basic market demand” is the underlying need of consumers for a product to fulfill a basic, necessary function. This must be distinguished from consumer “preference”, which may be towards specific attributes of a particular product. A “preference” is the choice of consumers for a certain product or products based upon fragrance, cost, texture, etc. By way of example, a consumer may need a glass cleaner to remove soils, grease, dirt or grime from their windows. Glass cleaners are formulated with glycol ether solvents or with ammonia. Consumers may choose an ammoniated glass cleaner because they prefer the performance characteristics, or they may choose a non-ammoniated glass cleaner because they dislike the smell of ammonia. This distinction is not recognized by all parties. Some commenters have expressed the view that consumers do not have a “basic market demand” for a general class of products, but that consumers instead have a number of separate and distinct “basic market demands” for many specialty products with differing characteristics.

The ARB staff believes the consumer “preference” interpretation of “basic market demand” is inconsistent with the reasoning from the International Harvester case. To adopt such a narrow interpretation would be inconsistent with the clearly expressed legislative intent that “...the state board shall adopt regulations to achieve the maximum feasible reduction in reactive organic compounds emitted by consumer products...” (Health and Safety Code section 41712(a)). In order to achieve emission reductions, manufacturers of high VOC products which perform the same basic function as lower VOC counterparts must reduce the VOC's in their products. It is expected that when a product formulation changes, some attributes of the product will also change. If ARB were to establish limits which accounted for every distinct feature of every product, then each product would require a limit unto itself. Using this approach, it would be difficult to achieve the maximum feasible reduction in VOC emissions because changes in formulation would change product features.

Every currently marketed product has some unique features that differentiate it from other products. Consumers who purchase a product have demonstrated a preference over other competing products. This distinction between “preference” and “basic market demand” was clearly made in the International Harvester case. In the International Harvester case, the court stated that the proposed emissions limits would be feasible even though they might result in the unavailability of certain kinds of vehicles and engine types people preferred (e.g. fast “muscle” cars), as long as the basic market demand for passenger cars could be generally met. Applying this principle to consumer products, the proposed amendments allow the basic market demand to be met for each product category, even though it may no longer be possible to

manufacture products with some specific attributes. The ARB staff believes that this approach complies with section 41712.