

Mr. Robert Turnbull
Senior Coroner
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25th August 2017

Dear Mr Turnbull

Re: Death of Mr. Joseph Francis De Pellegrino-Farrugia.

Further to our communication regarding the death of Mr Joseph Francis De Pellegrino-Farrugia's death and subsequent Coroner's investigation, I write to respond to your questions regarding any actions that can be taken to prevent future deaths caused of a similar nature.

AJ Ways can and do fit a sensor strips or a protective screen to the underside of the side and back of the chair to avoid accidental trapping. These are not a mandatory attachment and therefore are only added to the chair in response to orders placed by the retailer who sells the chair to a consumer who identifies that there may be a risk of entrapment to small children and animals.

To assist in the investigation I have enclosed a copy of the User Instruction booklet which is included with every chair delivered, I think there are several areas of relevance to the suitability and risk analysis for the use of an AJ Way riser recliner that may be important to consider, notably:

1. Section 2 – Essential Information
 - a. Page 4, gives instruction on the suitability of the user, assessment and the environment it will be used in.
 - b. Page 5 highlights the potential entrapment risk
2. Section 3 – Recommended Users
 - a. Page 6, highlights who is/is not suitable to use the chair.
3. Section 5 – General Operation
 - a. Page 11, gives a warning to check for obstructions during the movement of the chair.
4. Section 9 – Hazard Sensor Device
 - a. Page 20, highlights the fact that the Hazard Sensor if fitted, does not cover the legrest of scissor action.
 - b. Points out that care needs to be taken when lowering the legrest to ensure that the user's legs do not become trapped underneath.

Having looked at the evidence presented on how this accident happened I can see that the entrapment occurred at the front of the chair underneath the legrest, the sensors that are used are not suitable for this part of the chair due to the fact that the legrest flexes hence highlighting this in the user instructions.

The sides and back are less visible to the user; this is where a small child or animal could access the underside of the chair without the user noticing when in its raised position therefore this is the area where sensors can be fitted to avoid entrapment. Furthermore we highlight the importance of a risk assessment and care and attention when the chair is being operated to ensure that the user is suitable and there is no risk of entrapment when the chair is being used.

I also note that the part that Mr De Pellergrino-Farrugia's foot was caught in the metal action that raises and reclines the chair, although AJ Way and Co Ltd is the manufacturer of the Riser Recliner chair involved in this accident, it does not manufacture the metal action that provides the lift and recline function, there are many manufacturers of the metal action frames, similarly there are many manufacturers of Rise and Recline chairs.

AJ Way and Co Ltd, although a long established UK manufacturer of Rise and Recline chairs, is one of the smaller manufacturers of Rise and Recline chairs producing just 1-2% of the total chairs sold in the UK each year. Many of the other UK manufacturers offer similar sensors to us to reduce the risk however I estimate that up to 50% of the Rise and Recline chairs purchased annually in the UK are imported from low cost countries who do not offer the sensor solution.

I hope this assists with your investigation and will be happy to assist further if required.

Yours faithfully



██████████
Managing Director
AJ Way Co Ltd
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