



# EUROPEAN FIRE SPRINKLER NETWORK

## **October 2008 Report**

The highlight of the month was the announcement by Commissioner Kuneva that the European Hotel and Restaurant Association has committed to introduce a fire safety charter for hotels, which will require independent risk assessment and guidance on measures to achieve acceptable safety. While this will not lead to all hotels being fitted with sprinklers it will lead to more hotels being fitted with sprinklers.

Meanwhile our lobbying network has grown with commitments from Nick Raynsford MP to advance our cause in the British Parliament, and from Paul Villain, President of the French Burns Victims' Association to use his political contacts and networks on our behalf in France.

### **EU Sprinkler Forum**

Our next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> December in the European Parliament in Brussels. I have drafted a briefing note for MEPs. This will be a working meeting where we will aim to agree actions for MEPs and others. Next month I plan to meet John Monks, who is the General Secretary of the European Trades Union Confederations, to secure ETUC support for our campaign. Meanwhile Glyn Ford MEP will speak at the BAFSA conference in November and I have drafted a speech for him.

### **Hotels Campaign**

On 8<sup>th</sup> October Commissioner Kuneva announced that HOTREC, the European Hotel and Restaurant Association, had written to her to say it would introduce a charter for fire safe hotels. It would encourage its members to sign up to this charter, which would commit hotels to follow a methodology that considers structural fire safety, fire safety systems (this is the sprinkler part) and fire safety management. The EFSN will be involved in drafting the guidance document. While we would of course prefer a mandate to fit sprinklers in all new hotels this is unachievable without a clear majority of national governments supporting it. Meanwhile Arlene McCarthy MEP is planning a meeting in the European Parliament of its Internal Market and Consumer Affairs Committee to discuss hotel safety. I will be invited to this meeting.

### **France**

At the last Council meeting I was asked to find someone to promote sprinklers in France, in particular to the French fire service. I have put out informal enquiries but not yet found anyone with the right background who is also available. I therefore plan to advertise the role. Meanwhile I am now sending out news bulletins in French, which is increasing the profile of the EFSN in France. I have also agreed with the French Burns Victims' Association that it will support out campaigns for sprinklers.

Its President, Paul Villain, will attend our next EU Sprinkler Forum meeting in Brussels and I will meet him in November to agree other actions.

### **CEN TC/191**

In Prague I attended the annual meeting of CEN TC/191, which agrees what work items may be followed by the various working groups within CEN TC/191. Regarding sprinklers the following resolutions were agreed:

- Drafting of a deluge valve standard. Work was started long ago on EN 12259 Part 9 but inconsistent changes required by a series of CEN consultants have delayed finalisation of the text.
- Revision of EN 12259 Part 1 – Sprinklers. This work item will allow the committee to draft product standards for sprinklers not in the current edition and to make any necessary changes to the current test methods.
- New edition of EN/TS 14972 – water mist systems. This will allow more applications to be included in this Technical Specification.
- Amendment A3 to EN 12845 – sprinkler systems design, installation and maintenance.

### **Dutch Residential Sprinkler Experts' Meeting**

I gave a presentation at this meeting, which was organised by the Amsterdam Fire Brigade. There is considerable support for residential sprinklers in The Netherlands and the market is developing. Sprinklers are being installed in high-rise apartment buildings or to compensate for restricted fire brigade access or inadequate compartmentation, or in care homes to protect the vulnerable. Interestingly, the local water supplier was in favour of sprinklers if the fire brigade would reduce the minimum flow requirement from hydrants to 500 l/min from 1,000 l/min. That would allow narrower pipes, which are cheaper, and the reduced flow during hydrant testing would reduce the tendency to stir up sediment in the mains pipes. We agreed to meet again soon and to form working groups to address the various issues.

### **Online Seminars**

On 13<sup>th</sup> October Peter Thomas gave the second EFSN online training seminar. This seminar was on sprinkler system hydraulics. 15 locations paid and logged in, from all over Europe as well as from India and China. The next seminar will be on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> November and will be given by Joachim Böke on “Commodity Classification”. Details of the seminars are on [www.eurosprinkler.org](http://www.eurosprinkler.org). Participants can register and pay online using a credit card. Seminars cost €200 for non-members and €100 for EFSN members. All you need is an internet connection to participate. The full list of seminars is:

- Introduction to Sprinklers
- Sprinkler System Hydraulics
- Commodity Classification
- General Storage
- ESFR Sprinkler Systems
- Design of Sprinkler Systems in Earthquake Zones
- High Rise Building Fire Sprinkler Protection

### **2010 Conference**

I have now booked the Hilton Brussels for the EFSN Conference on 21-22 April 2010. I am looking for a venue to hold a networking buffet dinner on the first evening and another venue for a gala dinner after the conference.

### **Web Site**

The new version of the [www.eurosprinkler.org](http://www.eurosprinkler.org) web site is now live. I have begun to send out news bulletins in French and German, as well as the original English. The bulletins are posted on the French and German language versions of the site. Where I have photographs or a video of the incident I am now able to post that as well, making the stories more interesting and informative. I have already posted several videos on the sprinklers explained section of the site. The calendar of events lists all sprinkler seminars and trade shows of which I am aware. Lastly, there is a forum to which members can login and discuss items of mutual interest. Next month I will send out information to members on how this works.

### **Nick Raynsford MP**

With Stewart Kidd of BAFSA and Ronnie King of the NFSN I met Nick Raynsford, a Labour Member of the British Parliament who is a former fire minister. He agreed to help us campaign for sprinklers within the House of Commons, where he will be able to ask questions, introduce petitions and access Ministers without their civil servants, who often make it hard for myself and others to access their Ministers and to have open discussions when we do meet.

### **NFSN Anniversary**

I attended the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Fire Sprinkler Network in the UK. The NFSN has strong fire service support, with its first chairman and current chairman both being Fire Chiefs. It has played an influential role in advancing the sprinkler cause in the UK and could serve as a model for other European countries.

One area where the NFSN has recently focussed is on resolving the difficulties with the various water companies regarding direct connection to the mains for domestic sprinkler systems. Some companies routinely accept such connections whereas others do not, usually because the pressure and flow available would be insufficient for a domestic sprinkler system, which typically requires 100 l/min at about 1.5 bar. There are also differences in whether to accept water connections upstream or downstream of the metre. Since the metre can cause significant pressure loss a connection downstream of the metre can make a direct mains connection unviable.

### **Construction Law Journal**

I met the Editor of the Construction Law Journal, a reference journal for lawyers in England and Wales. He was very interested in the EFSN and would like to publish occasional news bulletins. This is a way of getting our message about sprinklers out to the legal profession in the UK.

### **Next Steps**

- 1) Attend Expoprotection in Paris.
- 2) Present at NFPA/APSEI conference in Lisbon.
- 3) Advertise for French consultant.
- 4) Prepare next EU Sprinkler Forum meeting in Brussels.
- 5) Review accounts with auditors.
- 6) Attend Finnish Sprinkler Association meeting in Helsinki.
- 7) Speak at BAFSA conference in Newport, Wales.
- 8) Participate in EFSN Technical Committee meeting in Windsor.
- 9) Meet Paul Villain and attend SFPE board meeting in Paris.
- 10) Present at sprinkler conference in Slovenia.
- 11) Prepare for Council and IFSA meetings in December.