



June 2009 Report

The EFSN financial year ended in June. During the year we had a net gain of 13 members. With growing funding we have been able to co-fund Keith MacGillivray to promote sprinklers in Scotland and have agreed with René Pons that he will begin a similar role in France from September. We also have a funding arrangement agreed to recruit someone in the 2009/10 financial year to promote sprinklers in Spain.

In Brussels the European Commission has pushed the European hotel and restaurant industry to introduce a scheme to improve fire safety, and we are working to ensure that sprinklers have a prominent role in it. We are involved in campaigns in a number of countries, with sprinklers gaining increasing acceptance as a necessary fire safety measure. Where these campaigns have created new markets for sprinklers, those new markets are helping the local sprinkler industry through the current crisis in the construction market.

In this past year the EFSN Technical Committee has been active, with representation in a number of standards committees, the drafting of two position papers and the provision of technical advice. It has also put on a series of nine online seminars that brought in €1,000 of income and provided a cost-effective means to deliver information to designers and inspectors across Europe.

Plans for the conference in Brussels on 21-22 April 2010 are progressing well and I hope that by then there will be signs of economic recovery, with sprinklers more widely used than ever before and a generation of safer buildings in Europe.

Launch of Stockholm Campaign

In December Gösta Holmstedt of Sprinklerfrämjandet and I met Jan Wisén, the Stockholm Fire Chief, to discuss the launch of a campaign in to fit sprinklers in care homes in the Greater Stockholm area. The local government has set aside funds for refurbishment of these buildings so now is the time to fit them with sprinklers. On 4 June I attended the campaign launch in Stockholm. Over 100 politicians, health care providers and officials were present and the presentations were very well-received. Care home providers to whom I spoke after the event said that they now believed sprinklers were a necessary and affordable investment in their properties.

HOTREC

Under pressure from the European Commission, which itself was responding to pressure we had generated in the European Parliament, the European hotel and restaurant association, HOTREC, has come up with a voluntary scheme to improve hotel fire safety. Participating hotels would sign a charter to commit them to certain

actions, including an independent fire safety assessment. In June I attended a meeting at the European Commission in Brussels to discuss the proposed charter and guidance document for the fire safety assessment. While the guidance document is generally positive about sprinklers it needs some strengthening to make clearer when they should be used. I have made some detailed comments. The next meeting is in September.

French Country Manager

I met our future Country Manager for France to discuss contractual terms. His name is René Pons and he recently retired from the CNPP, where he used to give training on sprinkler systems and to inspect installed systems. As such he is well-known and respected in the French sprinkler industry. Before he joined the CNPP he was in the French army for 25 years, where at one point he was a fire-fighter. I believe he has the right background for this role and I look forward to him starting in September.

ENSOSP

I visited ENSOSP, the French fire officer training school in Paris, to agree plans for the future two-day sprinkler system training seminars, which will be held on 21-22 April and 4-5 November 2010.

SCI 2009

SCI 2009 is the bi-annual fire safety conference in Madrid. It was well-attended and sprinklers featured prominently. While there I discussed plans to find someone to promote sprinklers in Spain. The IFSA has offered to co-fund such people to \$50,000, for a budget of \$100,000. Following those discussions I prepared a business plan which was accepted by the IFSA board. The next step is to raise the Spanish contribution to this budget, so that the IFSA funds can be released.

2010 Conference

Plans are progressing for the international sprinkler conference the EFSN will host on 21-22 April 2010 in Brussels. In June the first email with the conference design was sent out to remind potential participants to reserve the date. Working with the conference committee and others I have drafted a programme.

Fire Brigades Union

In June I met Andy Dark of the Fire Brigades Union in the UK, to discuss how his organisation could support our campaigns in the UK and in Brussels. His union has 48,000 members.

Next Steps

- 1) Finalise contract with René Pons and agree initial actions.
- 2) Contact speakers for the 2010 conference and work on registration arrangements.
- 3) Agree new programme of online seminars.
- 4) Write an article for International Fire Prevention Magazine.