



# EUROPEAN FIRE SPRINKLER NETWORK

## **August 2009 Report**

August was a quiet month with many people in Europe, including me, on holiday. There has been a disappointing initial official reaction to the fatal fire in London on 3<sup>rd</sup> July but we are planning political lobbying for the autumn when parliament resumes. On a more positive note, after a three-year delay Belgium has published its new industrial fire safety code, which includes new incentives to fit sprinklers.

### **London Fatal High-Rise Fire**

In August the British government released a preliminary report of the fatal fire which killed 6 people in a London high-rise apartment building on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. It is clear that the government intends to portray this as a unique event, caused by a failure of compartmentation, so that no general lessons need be applied to other buildings of a similar design. We will continue to press for acceptance of a wider problem. Enquiries into the fire will follow and we plan to lobby MPs who have similar buildings in their constituencies.

Related to this fire, the London mayor's office has published a housing design guide, which is intended to shape the way social housing is designed in London in the future. The guide does not even mention fire safety. It is out for public comment so I have sent in a detailed response to inform the mayor that London has a unique opportunity to make a step change in its fire safety, in the same way has been done in other places.

### **Eurofire**

I prepared my presentation for this conference, which will be held on 24-25 September in Bruges, Belgium. The conference is hosted by NFPA, SFPE and other organisations.

### **Belgium**

Belgium has published a new industrial fire safety code, which I have summarised in English and placed on the EFSN web site. The code reduces the maximum unsprinklered compartment size as the fire load increases, so that warehouses will normally need to have sprinklers if they are larger than 5,000m<sup>2</sup>, while factories with a lower fire load can have unsprinklered compartments of 10,000m<sup>2</sup> or even 25,000m<sup>2</sup> if the fire load is very low.

### **French Country Manager**

René Pons will start on 1<sup>st</sup> September. As part of his induction he will attend the EFSN Technical Committee meeting at Lubrizol offices in Brussels on 8<sup>th</sup> September

and the next day in Paris a meeting with French-speaking EFSN members at FM Global offices to discuss and agree his initial objectives. On the 10<sup>th</sup> I will introduce him to my contacts at the Laboratoire Central de la Prefecture de Police de Paris, where we will meet the director and others. That afternoon he will attend a seminar at the Centre Scientifique du Technique et du Bâtiment. René will give parts of the fire brigade officer training seminars I had previously arranged with the French Fire Brigade Officer Training School in Paris, ENSOSP.

### **Netherlands**

The Dutch sprinkler association and EFSN member, VSI, is considering an application to take advantage of the IFSA offer to co-fund the employment of someone to promote sprinklers. I expect to announce more about this and proposals in Spain during the next few months.

### **New Members**

DS Metaal, which sells pipe-welding robots and is based in The Netherlands, applied to join the EFSN in August.

### **Online Seminars**

The first online seminar in our new series will be held on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> September and appropriately is “An Introduction to Sprinklers”. The seminar will be given by me in English. It starts at 15:00 Central European Time (14:00 UK time) and last for 90 minutes. All you need is an internet connection and if you show the slides on a screen you can have several people take part at the same location. To register for this seminar go to [www.eurosprinkler.org](http://www.eurosprinkler.org) and click on “Seminars”. Registration is €100 for EFSN members and €200 for non-members. Online training is an efficient, low cost way to learn. There are not travel costs and the time is all spent on training.

The second seminar will be held at 15:00 CET on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> September and will cover commodity classification. It will be given, in French, by Pascal Pfeiffer of AXA Insurance.

### **Next Steps**

- 1) Make introductions for René Pons in France and agree his initial priorities with French EFSN members.
- 2) Conclude arrangements with Glyn Ford.
- 3) Continue preparations for the 2010 conference.
- 4) Meet European Consumers’ Association ANEC to discuss response to HOTREC hotel fire safety initiative and participate in HOTREC meeting in Brussels.
- 5) Participate in EFSN Technical Committee meeting in Brussels in September.
- 6) Participate in CEN TC/127 Task Group 1 on Fire Engineering in Paris.
- 7) Participate in CEN TC/191 Working Group 5 meeting in Brussels.
- 8) Participate in NFPA 502 meeting in San Diego.
- 9) Give a paper at the Eurofire conference in Bruges.