

**INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PREVENTION
AND EXTINCTION OF FIRE**

(CTIF)

COMITÉ TECHNIQUE INTERNATIONAL DE PRÉVENTION ET D'EXTINCTION DU FEU
INTERNATIONALES TECHNISCHES KOMITEE FÜR VORBEUGENDEN BRANDSCHUTZ AND
FEUERLÖSCHWESEN

**NOTE OF MEETING
EUROPEAN UNION COMMISSION
NOTE OF SIXTH MEETING – BRDO SLOVENIA**

1 Convening the Meeting

The 6th meeting of the European Union Sub-Commission was convened by the Chairman Dennis Davis at the Koka Hotel Brdo on 21 September 2006.

2 Registration of Representatives

10 Nations were represented with the following members attending

Anton Brandauer	Austria	Tibor Kovacs	Hungary
Ain Karafin	Estonia	Tony McCarthy	Ireland
Christophe Mignot	France	Michael Rafferty	Ireland
Sylvie Godard	France	Natalia Restuccia	Italy
Pentti Partanen	Finland	Dana Sebestova	Slovakia
Ralph Ackermann	Germany	Ivar Ronnback	Sweden
Cornelia Andree	Germany	Dennis Davis	UK

Apologies were received from Svetla Mateeva Bulgaria and Bjorn Albinson Sweden.

3 Minutes of 5th Meeting Brasov Romania

The minutes of the 5th meeting held in Brasov Romania on the 9th September 2004, which are attached, had been published and distributed in 2004.

4 Matters Arising from 5th Meeting

The EU Fire Safety Network.

The issue of Fire Safety in Europe had received considerable progress following the work undertaken by Bjorn Albinson and the Swedish Rescue Agency. This item would be discussed at item 6 on the current agenda.

EU Civil Protection Unit

A meeting with the Civil Protection Unit was held last year and attended by the CTIF President and Vice-President Ralf Ackermann. EU Commission [EUC] members were unaware of the meeting date and consequently no one from EUC was present during the meeting except Ralph. Although no minute was available Vice President Ralph Ackermann had alerted CTIF national committees twice of EU Call for proposals. The last [2006/C 176/13] called for projects to improve cross border co-

operation in disaster preparedness in the areas of forest fires, floods, severe hydro meteorological conditions and earthquakes and is attached.

CTIF EU Fire Directory

Little progress had been made regarding the EU Fire Directory since Dennis Davis had been unable to obtain sufficient information from the EUC's representatives. In discussion those present agreed that a Fire Directory would be useful and that they were willing to contribute material. Dennis Davis agreed to draft a suitable information summary form, which the individual EUC member could complete so the Directory could be produced.

Action: EUC members to respond with suitable material when the information summary form is distributed.

Community Action Programme

No proposal would be made under the Community Action Programme so is this now can within the scope of the CTIF Europe Strategy referred to at an item 7 on the current agenda.

Action: Minutes of 5th Meeting were approved.

5 2006 Annual Report to Delegates Assembly

Dennis Davis referred to the 2006 annual report made to the Delegates Assembly and thought to have been circulated prior to the Assembly meeting to national delegations. Cornelia Andree confirmed that the report had not been issued but was available from the CTIF office. It became apparent that many of the EUC's members had therefore not seen the report, a copy of which is attached. Dennis identified the key points that are not on the current agenda. These included the changes in the *EU Constitution and Articles* including the establishment of the *Community Mechanism*, the work being undertaken following the issue of the *Construction Products Directive* and the considerable work on fire protection in cultural heritage and historic buildings arising from the working group of the *COST 17 Project*, which is available on the COST website <http://www.cost.esf.org/>.

Action: The Delegates report was noted.

6 EU Fire Safety Network

The successful establishment of the EU Fire Safety Network has resulted in four meetings; Brussels in October 2004, Frankfurt in May 2005, Warsaw in December 2005 and Amsterdam in May 2006 [Copy attached] with a further meeting planned this November in Vienna. The minutes indicate a considerable area of interest and copies of the minutes are available from either the national representative, who is a government appointee or via the Swedish Rescue Agency.

<http://www.raddningsverket.se/firesafetynetwork>.

Action: Commission Members would identify their national representative and send to the representative EU related fire safety matters for that individual's attention.

7 Commission Europe Strategy

As mentioned in the annual report to the Delegates Assembly the Chairman Dennis Davis had met with the CTIF Executive in Salzburg on 24th May 2006. At this meeting a new strategy was agreed to re-energise the work of the CTIF Europe Commission and this was attached to the Delegates Assembly report. Both Dennis Davis and Vice-President Ralf Ackermann would report upon the first stages of the strategy actions, which were already under way.

Essentially the strategy allowed for the development of a more focused CTIF Europe. This required a stronger relationship between all CTIF representatives of Member States to first identify the key issues that could only be progressed outside the existing EU mechanisms available to all fire professionals and fire interest groups. The first two meetings, in Brussels and in London, were designed to identify the CTIF European priorities so that a wider group of interested parties could then be invited to a meeting of experts and associations from throughout Europe.

Action: Commission Members agreed that the strategy was sensible and should be progressed.

8 Meeting in Brussels 7 and 8 November 2006

Vice-President Ralph Ackermann introduced a programme for the meeting being arranged between the 7th and 8th November 2006. The meeting would commence and conclude at noon on each date and briefings would be provided on how the EU Parliament and Commission operated together with information on the Civil Protection Unit and the NATO. A detailed programme and invitation for two representatives from each Member State CTIF national committee would be sent out quite soon.

Action: Commission Members to alert their national committee and nominate representatives to attend when invitation is received.

9 Meeting in London 26 January 2007

Dennis Davis introduced the programme for the meeting being arranged for 26th January 2007 in London. The programme in London involved a morning of briefings from individuals who represented the Fire Rescue Service Associations in France Germany and the UK together with European public service unions and fire service academies. A detailed programme and invitation for one member from each Member State CTIF national committee would be sent out during October.

Action: Commission Members to alert their national committee and nominate a representative to attend when invitation is received.

10 Finnish Presidency

Finland currently hold the Presidency of the EU and Pentti Partanen gave the following briefing.

[1] Discussions have continued regarding the EU crisis co-ordination for significant events that occur from time to time, such as the recent conflict in Lebanon, and involve relationships between the EU Parliament and Commission and those foreign delegations based in Brussels. This is an ongoing political discussion with possible practical impacts for Civil Protection.

[2] Continuing clarification and definition of response roles between the EU and United Nations is being undertaken.

[3] The current Community Action Programme concludes in 2007 and discussions on future funding for Civil Protection Unit and the EU Mechanism for co-operation are underway. Work on renewal proposals is proving very difficult although the object remains of reporting to the Council of Ministers on the 13th and 14th October 2006. The difficulties arise from a split between Member States as to whether future funding should be made and if the situation is not resolved funding for the Civil Protection Unit next year is not certain.

[4] In October 2006 an Instrument relating to the Protection of Critical Infrastructure should be released and members of EUC should consider this document and make comment.

[5] Comment is still awaited from the EU Commission regarding proposals made in a report prepared by previous French Minister of Foreign Affairs and EU Commissioner Michel Barnier which relates in part to disaster preparedness and is entitled, *For a European civil protection force: europe aid*, [[Available at ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/president/pdf/rapport_barnier_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/president/pdf/rapport_barnier_en)]. The report proposals are seen by some as controversial in that they seek greater EU involvement in Civil Protection activities thereby challenging the principle of subsidiarity.

Dennis Davis thanked Pentti Partanen for his helpful contribution.

Action: Commission members noted the oral report.

11 Next Meeting

The meetings scheduled include the 7 and 8 November 2006 and 26 January 2007. The Italian delegation indicated that they would wish to make arrangements for a meeting to be held of the Commission in Rome during April or May 2007 and this would be followed by a further meeting at the time of the 2007 Delegates Assembly in Luxembourg. The objective of this series of meetings is to understand how the EU is now working, to then obtain the priorities of key groups, to discuss these views within the EUC and then decide actions that can be reported and if required approved at the next Delegates Assembly in Luxembourg.

Action: Commission members to note dates.

DENNIS DAVIS

CTIF Europe Commission Chairman, Chester, UK, 27 September 2006

APPENDIX 1

NOTE OF MEETING EUROPEAN UNION COMMISSION NOTE OF FIFTH MEETING – BRASOV ROMANIA

1 Convening the Meeting

The 5th meeting of the European Union Sub-Commission was convened by the Chairman Dennis Davis at the Anna Hotel Brasov on 9 September 2004.

2 Registration of Representatives

10 Nations were represented with the following members attending

Raimmud Pamlichka	Austria	Ralph Ackermann	Germany
Manfred Seidl	Austria	Tibor Kovacs	Hungary
Marcus Ebner	Austria	Tony McCarthy	Ireland
Toshko Barzilov	Bulgaria	Kizysztov Pazderski	Poland
Svetla Mateeva	Bulgaria	Bjorn Albinson	Sweden
Christophe Mignot	France	Ivar Ronnback	Sweden
Sylvie Godard	France	Dennis Davis	UK
Pentti Partanen	Finland		

Apologies were received from Georges Scheidweiler Luxembourg, Dieter Farrenkopf Germany and Jukka Metso Finland.

3 Fire Safety in Europe

Members agreed to take this item first to allow Bjorn Albinson to travel. Bjorn advised that the project had advanced and that a meeting was now scheduled on the 6-7 October in Brussels when the PNNC Committee would consider the proposed working arrangements for the introduction of a fire safety advisory group of experts. CTIF was not involved since the arrangements excluded non-governmental organisations and the representatives will come from Member States. Commission members welcomed this step forward although disappointed that the CTIF was not to be an active participant.

Austria Denmark Germany Greece Finland Ireland Italy Norway Portugal Sweden Netherlands and the United Kingdom had all participated in the project conducted by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency. High-level questions had been asked about National Goals, Community Fire Safety, Statistics and Basic Facts, forming a Better Understanding between Nations, and Using Response Experience in Prevention. The broad conclusion was to set up a Network between National Agencies with the support of the EU Civil Protection Unit.

National Goals were to be Measurable, involve Stakeholders and have more elaborate Indicators. Community Fire Safety needed national and local support with legislation, techniques, information, education and exercises under Fire Service leadership as part of a wider role. In terms of Statistics and Basic Facts again a national system was essential with emphasis on fire prevention and fire safety, including fire investigation although some information needed to be presented at EU level. This required more work. To build a better understanding between Nations Statistics information and basic facts were needed with less ambitious aims and better EU guidance.

Setting up a Network between National Agencies was the purpose of the meeting scheduled 6-7 October 2004. With Member State government representatives the group would raise issues where a common EU approach useful, make submissions to initiate and support PNNC Committee and other services decision making and inform and report on general fire safety matters.

The Chairman thanked Bjorn on behalf of the Commission for this briefing and it was **agreed all would make contact with their National PNNC representative before the 6 October to indicate CTIF was supportive of the expert group and wished to assist in the programme of work when this was appropriate.**

4 **Minutes of 4th Meeting Budapest Hungary** The note of the meeting paper 04/1 was considered and it was noted that action had been taken by the Chairman as required.

5 **Matters arising from 4th Meeting**

Ireland reported upon correspondence between the Chief Fire Officers Association and PNNC and concluded that further effort through the PNNC and EU Civil Protection Unit route was unlikely to be successful in achieving recognition for CTIF.

Italy had not been able to host the meeting in Rome scheduled earlier in the year.

The EU CPU had not notified the CTIF of the call for proposals as indicated and opportunity was now lost for a bid into the 2005 Community Action Programme.

Following discussion of the above the minutes of the 4th meeting were accepted.

6 **Annual report to Delegates Conference**

The report presented by the Chairman earlier in the day was **accepted**

7 **Meeting with Civil Protection Unit**

Members considered paper 04/4 and the comments relating to the new EU Constitution, enlargement and the impact of the Community mechanism. The clear view emerged that a new more overtly political approach was needed if the desired aim of a focus on fire safety and the emergency first responders was to be achieved in the EU. This became more essential now that 25 Member States existed and the role of first responders broadened to meet the threats posed by climate change and global terrorism. **All agreed this must become the new priority.**

8 **European Fire Directory**

The Chairman outlined this proposal that had now advanced to a drafting stage and circulated a copy of the formatted document. Members were fully supportive of the idea and offered comments. France indicated that web based updating software now existed to ensure any posted contacts remained accurate. Sweden and Finland questioned how extensive the information needed to be feeling that national contacts would suffice and be able to signpost enquiries. Germany shared this view and thought the inclusion of key associations might be sufficient in their country. Each member accepted that individual countries might have differing solutions and **all agreed to assist the editor in compiling the right data.**

9 **Impact of European Law**

Unfortunately since Dieter Farrenkopf was unable to be present and no paper for discussion had been circulated this **matter was deferred.**

10 **Future Action**

The Commission considered paper 04/6 and **agreed to fully support a bid under the Community Action Programme.** The proposal to have an Associations meeting was discussed with the conclusion that the Spring of 2006 would be ideal at a venue chosen to assist in the logistics. The Chairman would produce the outline bid and circulate this for comment before submission to the EU. **Members agreed they would inform their PNNC of this proposal to gain advance support before the bid is submitted.**

11 **Statistics**

Members noted that the CTIF Centre for statistics had recently published its 2004 report.

12 **Next Meeting**

It was agreed that a meeting be scheduled in early 2005. The Chairman would contact Italy through Fabrizio Colcerasa to see if they were willing to host the meeting in Rome. Bulgaria indicated that a meeting could be held in Sofia if Rome was not possible.

DENNIS DAVIS
Chairman
Chester
27 September 2003

APPENDIX 2

**REPORT: DELEGATES ASSEMBLY
BRDO 21 SEPTEMBER 2006**

**EUROPE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DENNIS DAVIS
ACTIVITIES REPORT**

Introduction

1 This report is very brief since there has been no substantial activity or meeting held by the Europe [European Union] Commission in the last year.

2 On 23 May 2006 in Salzburg, Austria, the Executive Committee, were present and held discussions with Commission Chairmen including the Chairman of the Europe Commission at which the Commission agreed a revised strategy for action.

Activity

3 Since the formation of the Europe Commission in 2000 a number of matters have changed including the European Union Constitution and Articles, which established a Community Mechanism for emergency response. Other changes involve the extension of the Construction Products Directive, a new EU focus on wildfires, a heritage working group under the COST17 programme, internal change in the DG Environment Civil Protection Unit and the notable success of the creation of an expert inter governmental panel for fire safety, the EU Fire Safety Network that has already held 4 meetings.

4 During 2005 all CTIF National Committees in European Member States were circulated to gauge their continued support for working on the CTIF Commission. Disappointingly only six out of 25 replied and one indicated that their involvement would decline following the successful introduction at the EU Civil Protection Unit level of the Community Mechanism and Fire Prevention Expert Panel.

5 A Europe Commission meeting that had been scheduled for Rome in 2005 could not be held due to a late change in circumstances, which resulted in a loss of contact and withdrawal of the Italian host. A meeting has been organised for January 2007 in the UK to enable active participation to be assessed.

6 CTIF Head Office has advised the membership twice in 2006 of calls for proposals relating to civil defence. The last call priorities relate to cross border protection in the fight against natural disasters.

7 The CTIF Executive agreed new strategy is Appended.

8 A meeting of the Europe Commission has been arranged for 16:00 on the 21 September 2006 to discuss this proposal.

Chairman
Dennis Davis CTIF UK

**REPORT: DELEGATES ASSEMBLY
BRDO 21 SEPTEMBER 2006**

**EUROPE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DENNIS DAVIS
APPENDIX TO ACTIVITIES REPORT
CTIF EXECUTIVE APPROVED EUROPEAN STRATEGY**

1. Rename the CTIF Europe Commission in „CTIF Europe“ with all 25 States being members.
2. Arrange next meeting this autumn in Brussels of interested states (CTIF President to sign the invitation).
3. Arrange meeting in London at House of Commons to raise funds with France, maybe other countries too.
4. Visit Civil Protection Unit to advise them of CTIF Europe.
5. Make a bid in proposals to EU for 2007: “Europe meeting of experts” via Berlin office.
6. Arrange meeting with European Parliamentarians possibly same time as No.2 organised by Mr. ACKERMANN.
7. Ask 25 States for their priorities for action 2007 – 2010 at meeting 2007.
8. Confirm that as Chairman I take these actions supported by Mr. ACKERMANN to avoid confusion.

Dennis Davis
Salzburg, Austria
24 May 2006

APPENDIX 3

EU FIRE SAFETY NETWORK: 4th MEETING Amsterdam, 22-23 May 2006

Present:

Björn Albinson (Chairperson)	(Sweden)
Mette Lindahl-Olsson	(Sweden)
Igors Ponomarjovs	(Latvia)
Simon Hunt	(UK May 22)
Bernhard Jily	(Austria)
Alex Maire	(France)
Jacqueline Buitendijk	(The Netherlands May 23)
Marjan Heijman	(The Netherlands May 22)
Wim Klijn	(The Netherlands May 23)
Jürgen Domke	(Germany)
Helge Stamnes	(Norway)
Kaur Kajak	(Estonia)
Ronnie Bech	(Denmark)
Kirsi Rajaniemi	(Finland)
Jaana Rajakko	(Finland)
László Barta-Vámos	(Hungary)
Marek Podgorski	(Poland)
Mojca Zupan	(Slovenia)
Ales Zupanc	(Slovenia)
Apostolos Paralikas	(Greece)
Rudolf Kaiser	(Czech Republic)

1. Welcome

Welcome to all. Our Network now includes 22 states. The Slovak Republic joined last week. The list of participants will be updated. A letter is sent to the other states to inform about the Network. We have also a new contact person at the Civil Protection Unit within DG Environment,

The hotel fire safety organisation was presented by the assistant security officer. The participants found that we stayed in a hotel where the management understands the importance of fire safety and especially the staff training.

2. Minutes from meeting in Frankfurt

The minutes of the last meeting were **approved**.

3. Annual reports

Bjorn opened a discussion on whether there was a need to maintain the annual report (now 17 states) or make it more seldom. General consensus was that there were merits in maintaining the annual report, and that overall having produced the first report it was not too onerous to keep this updated. It was **agreed** to produce a report a further report for next summer with facts from 2006.

1. European Fire Statistics.

Björn attended meeting at DG Sanco in April 27th on need for statistics and the difficulties in producing statistics across Europe. The idea was to find problems within the wide area of consumer product area where the Commission needs to act. Since the hotel fire safety was on the agenda Björn was invited together with CTIF and FEU. They proposed a European fire database managed by CTIF. At the meeting Björn opposed and explained some known difficulties. There are problems in defining for example deaths and injuries in fires and there are varying levels of reporting within states.

Overall position in the Network was that rather than progress European statistics it was felt more appropriate to maintain records in individual countries that would allow Commission to seek information when appropriate. This is also one of the recommendations in the “Fire Prevention...” report. It was hoped that the annual report could be refined to include more statistics over time. It was suggested that definitions could be included in the annual report to assist in providing a clearer position in different countries. Trends and explanations are as important as the numbers.

Agreed – our position on fire statistics is not changed and we will use the annual report to share some basic facts.

2. RIP cigarettes

Group advised that Commission were progressing child safe lighters into a EU Directive. They were also to look at cigarettes and start the process that the Network had in mind. In particular, the Committee on product safety directive (CSWP) will meet on the 13th June in Brussels to discuss both fire safety in hotels and fire safe cigarettes. With respect to RIP cigarettes they may even decide if they need to have a European standard for RIP cigarettes. There was still the view that the ASTM standard was good enough and more standard development would introduce unnecessary delays.

The smoking members of the Network were invited to make personal tests of the Marlboro version that was carried to Björn by the State Fire Marshall in New York. There were no complains on the taste.

Action: Björn to circulate parts of ASTM standard and our letter as a reminder of the background. Done, excl ASTM, May 27th

3. Fire safety in hotels.

After the last meeting a letter was sent to the Commission offering the group support in revising the guidance from 1986. A meeting had been held on 27th April with most stakeholders concerned on fire safety in hotels. Several members of the Network (Kirsi, Marek, Alex) and participating agencies attended. There had been proposals between Commission and CEN TC127 (Fire Safety in Buildings in connection with the Construction Product Directive) to put the issue into a CEN technical report (TR). On behalf of the Network Björn, and also others, opposed that approach. Minutes from that meeting will be sent to the Network. It still contains a proposal of drafting a CEN technical report and /or reviewing the recommendation in a functional manner. This will be discussed with member states at the next meeting of CSWP (Consumer Safety Working Party) on 13th June 2006. The Commission will also draft an outline of EU needs as regards hotel fire statistics and discuss

with experts and Member States the possibility of a pilot project in this area as CTIF and FEU suggested.

Suggestion for members of our Network to discuss or inform their representatives in CSWP. Similar information can be given to national members of CEN Technical Committee 127. Since we need no more details on the buildings we do not see CEN suitable for this task. A CEN/TR will have no status and as always CEN standards would only apply to new buildings and wouldn't pick up the problem in existing premises.

Documents to follow such information are minutes from 27th of April, the original letter from the Network and a list of members in CSWP.

Action: Björn to circulate previous correspondence to members. Done May 24th

4. European Fire Safety Concept

The item needs to be a living topic for some time and we can wait for more suggestions from The Netherlands. Some general strategies can be found that are applicable to most buildings.

At the meeting on fire safety in hotels, it was clear that CEN were pushing to develop standards for all building types and intended to use the hotels as a pilot project.

Agreed - keep the item on the agenda

5. Principle of design for universal accessibility

There are some general principles that buildings should be accessible for all. Norway outlined (in appendix) that the UN have issued regulations on this issue. Members outlined their approach to the issue;

Some members say that there are growing concerns or that they have not started yet, some have rules for access but not for evacuations.

Hungary has a universal regulation that includes rules also for elderly.

Norway – for special groups and special buildings. Now a general obligation, take part in the process and details will come on “right to safe exit”

Austria – fire brigade have been asked but is it costly. The society does not accept such problems. It is separate questions if people can evacuate themselves or need to get help.

Elevators can be changed and upgraded to be accepted as a fire escape.

The Netherlands – a task force is dealing with the topic.

Slovenia has access requirements. There have to be plans how to evacuate disabled people.

Sweden – has been discussed in a “health” network. Now also ideas to include plans for evacuations. Install forgiving systems, more sprinkler, sections and upgrading of fire safety.

In a ten-year plan. We need to be on the arena where this is discussed. Studies have been done on heritage buildings.

France – has rules for public buildings, protected elevators and more fire detection systems. Lot of actions last year after a new law for disabled people. Difficulties are in the costs.

Poland – no rules for evacuation but for access. Public owners prepare a guide, organisation is crucial. The Pope was coming to Poland next week – 500.000 people expected and among them there are some disabled.

UK Functional terms on access. British Standard Institute has advice on evacuation on disabled people and they will be updated. Lifts will be upgraded to better resist fires. It is a public service to take care of the needs of disabled. The management shall ensure that they also can be evacuated.

There was a general consensus that in developing improved access to buildings the Network must lobby to ensure that egress in the event of fire is an essential element of those arrangements. There may be more intensive discussion in all nations. Solution can be found where techniques and planning are combined. It is mainly a political issue since it costs a lot.

Agreed – an important issue where exchange of experiences and national strategies will be useful. The topic will be on our agenda for some time.

6 Questionnaire on fire extinguishers (FE) in residential buildings and cars

Slovenia represented the results from the questions. Eleven states had answered and a final version will be published on the web.

Action; Mojca and Ales send the presented result for some corrections and include plans for the future in the final version. It is enough with answers from 11 states.

There was a discussion on small aerosol type extinguishers. Some meant that those small FE are useless. But they are allowed to sell. They can be sold and that is regulated. The government in Finland promotes NOT to buy them. In Sweden the recommendation is to buy at least 6 kg dry powder (as in the EN3-standard). A problem is that people are not used to use a FE so the effectiveness is small for FE in their hands. Those small are even less effective. EN 3 demands at least 1 kg media and duration of at least 12 seconds and 1 kg if the seller likes to call it a Fire Extinguisher.

7 New extinguishing systems, agents and standards

Apostolos introduced a question on extinguishing systems or agents and how to permit or accept the trading of new fire safety products for which there are no harmonized standards and other common requirements. There has to be possibilities to accept inventions that in some way can be as good as “old” systems or agents. Examples were mentioned – aerosols in sprinkler systems, mobile water mist sprinklers and system that gives a permanent reduction of oxygen concentration. It was also noted that new standards are introduced in different manners.

Action; questions will be sent to Member States from Greece. The questions shall be discussed by Apostolos and Björn.

8 Fire in old church in Gdansk

Marek informed on the fire that started yesterday in a very old and famous church in Gdansk. The nave was destroyed, but the tower was saved by firefighters. This heritage building was saved thanks to fire prevention efforts, planning and fire fighting.

9. Fire risk and fire safety in vehicles incl. extinguishing systems

Austria (Bernhard) had prepared a questionnaire and nine answers were collected. From the answers the following conclusions was made:

- not all states collect data about vehicle fires;
- no fire brigade data collected specially to aircraft, ship and train fires, and there are rare data about the causes of vehicle fires;
- in some countries the number of vehicle fires increased, but in most countries it was at the same level year by year;

- for cars the number of fires are 0,3/1000 car in average, but for buses and trucks the number of fires are 1/1000 bus and truck, however buses and trucks are used much more than cars;
- the members of Network agreed not to handle this topic besides perhaps fires in buses;
- in most countries only fire extinguishers in trucks and buses are required, there are no other regulations;
- there are no official, governmental demand and action for stricter regulations for fire safety in vehicles, the vehicle manufacturers on their own make steps for better fire safety.

Action: The collected data and the summary of the topic will be put on the web by Björn. No further steps were recommended.

11. Expanded polystyrene (EPS) as insulation

Poland made an overview of experiences about EPS. In Poland the 80-90 % of thermal insulators is made from EPS. To categorize the insulators a Polish classification system is used, which was compared with the categories of EN 13501-1, and the differences was presented. In Poland it has not been allowed since 1 April 1995 to use EPS buildings higher than 35 m In 1999-2004 117 fire events were in connection with EPS and 58 other with mineral woods or mixed materials. These insulators made the rescue and extinguishing operations more difficult, because the fire spread rapidly.

In Sweden the EPS was in major media last December and Swedish Rescue Services Agency expressed concerns and warned about the fire behaviour but also explained that the construction was according to the rules. Some insurance companies raise the rates.

Marek asked how to deal with the problem, and how the Network can take part in it. In Björn's opinion the owners and constructors attention have to be informed. Wim (The Netherlands) mentioned that, in his country their Ministry plans an investigation in connection with EPS fire behaviour, fire mechanisms and development incl injuries. He asked the Network if it is possible to collect data from Member States. The answer was yes. Alex said in France it is not allowed to use EPS in public buildings. It was also said that an Austrian expert has already done fire tests with EPS. Poland and The Netherlands agreed to cooperate. Questions will be sent to Member States.

In Greece and France (1972?) problems have been found in interior fires where EPS was used for decoration purposes in night clubs. There are some rules.

Action: Questions will be sent to our Network but also to the fire investigators that participated in a workshop last year. A draft has been discussed earlier (Björn and Marek)

Coordination and cooperation will be made. Suggest that the Network ask for experiences from real fires and if there are any rules for the use of EPS.

The questions on real fires are collected and commented by Poland (Marek).

10. Cooperation with other European fire organisations

Björn asked for comments on a document that presents other fire organisations. It was agreed that further information is not necessary. The report is useful and the texts will be checked. The question was how to cooperate with these organisations. Björn may meet the chairmen and it was suggested to cooperate on targeted topics, for example RIP cigarettes.

Action: Björn

11 Insulation on LPG ADR tank cars

Wim asked where they could seek advice, support or knowledge that could result in better fire insulation on some transports.

Agreed; it is a question that can be asked to the Network

12. News from the Commission

Now there are two project proposals, which include fire prevention. One project is about the exchange of practices, experiences, etc, and one in connection with fire inspections. The Civil Protection Action Program – within the framework of the Program started the Network – ends this year, so fire prevention will perhaps leave the agenda. The former programmes have been useful for fire prevention experts of Member States. Björn will make a report in June 9 about the activity and experiences of the Network and from the Fire Investigation workshop.

Result; the Committee was satisfied with our Network and what we achieve. From some countries it was asked for more projects on everyday accidents, incl fires, meaning that too much efforts are spent on disasters and terror threats /Björn

13. Documents on the web

Documents, minutes and general information are published in the site of Swedish Rescue Services Agency: <http://www.raddningsverket.se/firesafetynetwork>.

14. Experiences from our procedures

The topic was the future of the Network. Everybody in the meeting – 15 member states – agreed to continue in the Network. The cooperation is useful and so is the exchange of experiences.

Agreed – to make the Network permanent

It came up again, because of the cost of the meetings, how many meetings there need to be.

Agreed - two meetings should be held every year.

There were different opinions about the place of the meetings and it would be good if the meetings will be held somewhere in the centre of Europe. This is also a cost aspect.

Agreed – do not plan meetings in remote states and try to arrange it at fire stations or similar places.

15 Next meeting

There were three offers from our last meeting (Greece, Austria and Finland)

Agreed – Austria will host the next meeting somewhere in the autumn.

In that meeting the Network has to make decision about the chairman, because Björn assumed the chair for two years. If he would like to chair the Network in the future and the members of the Network agree, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency make it possible and support him.

10 Appendix

11 The program of action for Universal Design as it now is presented in Norway /Helge Starnes

The principle of Universal Design is a principle of design for universal accessibility. It means in our national program that buildings and constructions, and outdoor areas that are open to public should as far as possible be designed to be accessible to all, without the need for special equipment or supporting facilities.

The primary aim is to develop general solutions that fulfil the needs of all user groups. The unique should be incorporated into the general. For people with disabilities, there is an inherent dilemma in, on the one hand, the need to be respected as different and, on the other, the need to be acknowledged as a member of mainstream society, with all the rights and opportunities this implies. The latter forms the basic idea for the program, of course.

This view that conventional solutions should cover the needs of a broad segment of the population is not a new one. And it is based on international conventions and also on antidiscrimination legislation.

Life-span housing is a concept, which I suppose is well known in many countries. It means that dwellings should be designed in such a way that you may stay in your home from youth to old age. But up to now this has been looked upon as a special task to deal with, concerning elderly people and handled as a task with a particular fire safety issue. The new is that the principle of universal design is generalized. Not focused on appointed categories of buildings, but all buildings and areas open for public. So somebody has to shout, "fire safety" again. Because the fire safety aspect is not necessarily an integrated part of the concept of universal design.

The aspect covers a wide range of activities in the society and from that follows that virtually every ministry will be involved in this program in one or another way. So to follow up this policy can be quite difficult and labour-intensive. We have to work on a ministerial level as well as on a local level.

I suppose that we have to focus even more on means for safe exit in buildings. I suppose we have to put more focus on automatic extinguishing systems, fire suppression systems, fire alarm systems and operational procedures.

I think we more often will meet situations where the principle of universal design will collide with the principle of fire safety.

The discussion is as mentioned a natural follow up of international conventions and policies. So this discussion should be viewed within the context of an ongoing international process. Our government has already taken the position that we take part in a variety of international fora and networks in which universal design is, or may become, a key topic, and there is a need for two-way exchange of views and information and international cooperation. It is crucial to continue to promote development in this sphere, and to ensure that practical use is made of experience gained at the international level.

So what I do for my part is to follow up this honourable intention in this network. I am of course interested to know if you do experience a similar focused attention on universal design in your country and if so how you meet that challenge.

I believe this issue falls within the framework of this network, as it also falls within one of the main topics in our first report, namely the topic of national objectives and strategies for fire safety.

APPENDIX 4

Call for proposals for Pilot Projects on civil protection cross border co-operation in the fight against natural disasters (2006/C 176/13)

I.1. The European Commission, Directorate-General for 'Environment', 'Civil Protection' Unit, is launching a Call for Proposals with the aim of identifying actions which might be eligible for financial support in the framework of Pilot Projects on civil protection cross border co-operation in the fight against natural disasters. These projects should aim at raising awareness and providing a framework for closer cooperation in cross border civil protection. This financial support would take the form of grants.

I.2. The fields concerned, and the nature and content of the actions as well as the conditions for granting assistance and application forms are set out in the documentation relating to the call for proposals. Detailed instructions on where and when to submit a proposal are also contained in the documentation. This documentation may be consulted on the Europa website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/funding/intro_en.htm

I.3. Proposals must be sent to the Commission to the address indicated in the documentation relating to the call for proposals by 25 September 2006. Proposals must be submitted by post or private courier no later than 25 September 2006 (evidence shall be constituted by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip). They may also be delivered by hand to the specific address indicated in the documentation relating to the call for proposals, no later than 25 September 2006 at 17.00 (evidence shall be the acknowledgement of receipt dated and signed by the responsible official).

Proposals sent by the fixed deadline but received by the Commission after 9 October 2006 (final receipt date) will not be considered eligible. It is the duty of the applicant organisation to ensure that the necessary precautions are taken to respect this deadline.

Proposals submitted by fax, electronic mail, incomplete applications, or applications sent in several parts will not be accepted.

I.4. Procedure for the examination of proposals:

The procedure for the appraisal of proposals is as follows:

- Receipt, recording and acknowledgement of receipt by the Commission;
- Examination by the services of the Commission;
- Formulation of the final award decision and communication of the result to the applicants.

Beneficiaries will be selected on the basis of the criteria set out in the documentation mentioned in point I.2. and within the limits of the available budget.

The entire procedure is strictly confidential. In the event of approval by the Commission, a grant agreement (made out in EUR) will be concluded between the Commission and the party submitting the proposal.

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What is the Call about?

The Call for Proposals for pilot projects on civil protection cross border cooperation in the fight against natural disasters aims at raising awareness and providing a framework for closer cooperation on civil protection among European countries. This should be done by developing cross border early warning, coordination and logistical tools with a view to preventing or at least minimising the consequences of natural disasters.

The pilot projects should further the resolution of the European Parliament adopted on 8 September 2005 on the fight against natural disasters as well as the recently adopted reports of the European Parliament on this matter. The pilot projects should also build on the proposal presented by the Commission for establishing a Rapid Response Preparedness Instrument (COM (2005) 113) and the Commission proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community civil protection mechanism (recast) (COM (2006) 29 final). Finally, the pilot projects should take forward work on the EU civil protection rapid response capability, as called for by the conclusions of the European Council of 16-17 June 2005, the Justice and Home Affairs Council Declaration of 13 July 2005, the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of 18-19 July 2005.

More in particular, the scope of the Call covers projects aimed at addressing the increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters, by devising appropriate preparedness and response tools. Its intention is to test some innovations such as cross border civil protection modules, sharing of transport and equipment as well as to enhance early warning systems and rapid response plans.

The Call is open to any legal person (public or private) established in the EU Member States and Accession States, supported by their central civil protection authorities. EEA Member States may participate in proposed pilot projects at their own cost.