

July 2022 Report

Preparations are well-advanced for our conference in Rome and I look forward to seeing many of you there. A new German code requires sprinkler systems in electrical service rooms used for energy storage systems. I drafted a position paper on sprinkler protection of car parks and circulated it to the EFSN Technical Committee for comment.

Fire Sprinkler Europe – Rome

On 28 September we will co-host a one-day conference and exhibition in Rome with the Italian Chapter of the SFPE. Fire Sprinkler Europe – Rome will be held at the sprinklered Hotel Cavalieri. It will be a bilingual event with simultaneous interpretation and we hope it will serve to launch a future sprinkler campaign in Italy. The [web site](#) is up, with the programme, accommodation and how to register. We have received the first delegate registrations. If you are interested in exhibiting please contact wendyotway@gmail.com.

Sprinkler Outlook

Our next edition of Sprinkler Outlook will also serve as the programme for the Rome conference. In July I wrote two articles for this publication. John van Lierop and Alfredo Álvarez also wrote articles.

France

The French Ministry of Culture [has announced](#) that the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre de Beauvais will undergo refurbishment, with the work starting in September. The wooden roof structure and vault will be protected with water mist. Parts of the building date from the tenth century.

Germany

The ARGEBAU committee, which brings together representatives of the government of each German state to produce model codes, has published a revised model regulation on the construction of service rooms for electrical systems, [MEltBauV](#). The new model regulation is only four pages and includes a requirement for sprinklers:

§ 8 Additional requirements for electrical service rooms intended for energy storage systems

¹Room-enclosing structural components of electrical service rooms for energy storage systems shall have the same fire resistance as the supporting walls and storey columns, where the electrical service room is built, but shall at least be fire-retardant. ²The safe operation of energy storage systems shall be ensured; where necessary, the electrical service rooms shall be heated or cooled for this purpose. ³Electrical service rooms must be able to be cleared of smoke and have an automatic extinguishing system, if the total capacity of the energy storage systems within an electrical service



room is more than 100 kWh. ⁴§ 7 The fourth and fifth sentences of paragraph 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis.

Netherlands

John gave a presentation at a NEN working group on building with wood. Like other countries, The Netherlands would like to use more wood in construction because it is seen as a renewable material. John also participated in a NEN sub-working group on fire safety in tall buildings. The Dutch fire safety code applies to buildings up to 70 m and does not require sprinklers. This is far higher than in most other countries and well beyond the reach of external action by most fire appliances. As a result, intervention is slower and those in the building are at greater risk than in low-rise buildings. Sprinklers are the best way to address this increased risk.

Spain

In Madrid Alfredo and I met representatives of Affiliated FM and the president of [APPUNLE](#), the Spanish association of promoters, owners and users of logistics buildings. He said his members fully support the fitting of sprinklers but was concerned about how the regulations could be deliberately misinterpreted to avoid sprinklers, for example by underestimating fire loads or ignoring a predictable change of building use or materials stored. He also objected to regulatory requirements to fit draft curtains as well as sprinklers. His organisation has excellent political contacts, while we know a lot more about fire protection, so we may be able to complement each other.

I also attended a meeting at Tecnifuego offices of our Spanish stakeholders, organised by Alfredo, where we discussed progress and agreed next steps. One idea is to hold an event in the spring. We discussed different concepts.

At both meetings I heard that draft updates to two documents, the industrial fire code (RSCIEI) and the regulation for fire protection system components (RIPCI) are to be published in the coming months for comment.

UK

The government published [consultations](#) on:

- implementing its building control regime for higher risk buildings
- its safety regime for occupied higher risk buildings
- descriptions of higher risk buildings

I responded to all three consultations. It is very encouraging to read that the consultation for the building control regime states, *‘These standards and the industry competence frameworks will be key to supporting dutyholders in meeting the competence requirements and we expect dutyholders to demonstrate that they meet the standards and competence frameworks. Robust accreditation arrangements by a publicly recognised third-party body are vital to ensure consistency in the application of the frameworks and rebuild confidence in the industry. We expect that organisations wishing to assess individuals against the British Standards Institution’s and sector-specific frameworks will be third-party accredited.’* Whether in practice this will mean that installers need third party accreditation remains to be seen.

Those who attended the water mist workshop at FSI 22 in London will be aware that there are issues with the quality of installed systems, particularly in the UK. This is harming the image

of water mist, including among government officials. I convened a meeting in July of water mist representatives, consultants and insurers to air the problems, inviting participants to find solutions for a subsequent meeting in August.

I participated in a comment review meeting for BS 9991.

Sprinkler protection of car parks

While there is already a strong case to require sprinklers in car parks, some countries do not. The increasing presence of electric vehicles as well as charging stations has led to calls for change in those countries and for sprinklers to be installed. At the same time there are questions about whether the sprinkler system design should apply more water. Systems must work but applying more water would make it harder to supply them from the mains. A pump and tank significantly increase costs, particularly for small car parks and this would increase resistance from regulators to sprinklers. To help our members address these issues I have drafted a position paper which I sent to the EFSN Technical Committee for comment.

CEN TC/191/WG5

CEN has circulated EN 12845-3 *Guidance for earthquake bracing* for enquiry.

CEN TC/191/WG10

The following draft water mist system fire test protocols have passed the CEN enquiry:

- prEN 14972-6, automatic nozzle systems to protect false floors and ceilings
- prEN 14972-7, automatic nozzle systems to protect low hazard occupancies
- prEN 14972-11, open nozzle systems to protect cable tunnels
- prEN 14972-17, automatic nozzle systems to protect residential occupancies

CEN Smoke Control in Car Parks Guidance

TS 12101-11, a Technical Specification for the design of powered smoke and heat control systems for enclosed car parks, is about to be published. It includes guidance to prevent these systems from interfering with sprinkler systems, as well as incentives to fit sprinkler systems if a decision has already been taken to have a smoke control system.

Next Steps

- 1) Continue preparations for Fire Sprinkler Europe – Rome.
- 2) Collate and edit the articles for Sprinkler Outlook.
- 3) Attend a CEN meeting in Paris to address comments on prEN 12845-1.
- 4) Draft a business plan for the Belgian Fire Sprinkler Network.
- 5) Address EFSN Technical Committee comments on the draft position paper on sprinkler protection of electric vehicles.
- 6) Look for venues for a FSI 2025 conference in Germany.