

NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER NETWORK

MEETING
26th April 2006

11:00 hours
Venue
Armstrong Priestley, Leeds

Present:

Peter Holland (Chair)
Ronnie King (Vice Chair)
Les Fielding (Secretary)
Peter Armstrong (BAFSA)
Karen Taylor(BAFSA)
Adrian Brown (ESFRS)
Jo Fowler (ESFRS)
John Allen (FBU)
John Wildish (Kent FRS)
Steve Mills (WM FRS)
Dave John (WM FRS)
Julian Parsons (Wiltshire)
Suzanne Taylor (Homesafe)
Brian Mellor (Kirklees DC)
Paul Johnston (T & W FRS)
Keith MacGillivray (Strathclyde FRS)
John Russell (Strathclyde FRS)
John Sparke (Merseyside FRS)
Phillip Hales (Cheshire FRS)
Paul Hardy (Herts. FRS)
Gareth Lloyd (SW FRS)
Dave McCabe (NYorks FRS)
Duncan Stainthorpe (West Yorks FRS)
Paul McCartney (West Yorks FRS)
Ken Bishop (Tyco)
Joe M^cCafferty (Tyco)
Ken Wall (M & W Wales FRS)
Roy Sandles (Reliable)
JohnStreets (FSC)
Steve Marin (Humberside FRS)
Keith Marsh (Lancs FRS)
Baz Fox (Northants FRS)

Apologies:

PMH Stewart Kidd (BASA)
RK Michael Clapham MP
LF Lynsey Chatfield (LFCDA)
PA David Edwards (Somerset)
KT Roger Branson (South Yorks FRS)
AB Alan Brinson (EFSN)
JF Rosemarie Everton (UCLAN)
JA Bill Goodfellow (LB Hammersmith & Fulham)
JW Matthew Smith (Zurich)
SM Bernadette Hartley (EFSN)
DJ Martin Eastman (SYFRS)
JP Dave Beverly (FBU)
ST Andy Cloke (SYFRS)
BM Mike Green (SES)
PJ Pete Wignall (Notts. FRS)
KMc John Hoey (SYorks FRS)
JR John Streets (FSC)
JS Nigel Reynolds (Oxfordshire FRS)
PHale Steve Wain (Oxfordshire FRS)
PH Steve Bryant, (M&W Wales FRS)
GHL Norrie Davies (Dumfries and Galloway FRS)
DM Gerry Campbell (Dumfries and Galloway FRS)
DS Alan Gibson (D & D FRS)
PM Brian Allen (Arabact)
KB
JM
KW
RS
JS
SM
KM
BF

Agenda:

1 Apologies and Introductions.

2 Minutes of Last Meeting – 13th December 2005.

3 Matters Arising.

3.1 No matters arising

4 Chair's Address / Report

4.1 NFSN Parliamentary Seminar 6th Feb 2006 – The Chair reported that the Seminar was extremely successful noting that it was pleasing to see that the event had attracted members of the Water Companies. The Chair congratulated Vice Chair, Ronnie King for his hard work and vision in making this event such a success and gave recognition to the support of London Fire Brigade for their support of the seminar and the production of a sprinkler demonstration video for the NFSN. – He also gave recognition to the speakers for success of the event. Speakers notes can be found on the NFSN web site:

http://www.nfsn.co.uk/news-events/news/2006/march/news_mar_001.htm

- GHJ Gave feedback from a conversation he had with Keith Pratley Welsh Water who is setting up meeting with Defra to discuss the issue of water supplies for sprinklers.
- BM Lot of plumbing work going on refurbishing housing stock around the country this would be an excellent opportunity to fit low cost sprinkler systems.

4.2 Schools campaign - Letter, NFSN Schools booklet and West Yorkshire DVD sent to 240 MP's, Letters of support received back from Angela Smith MP, David Ames MP.

4.3 Celia Barlow's EDM supported by CFOA and NFSN is doing well with 109 signatures. SM informed the meeting that there is a suggested letter to your MP on the FBU web site to ask them to support the EDM - **KB to find this and put link on web site**

5 Vice Chair/Treasurers Report.

5.1 NFSN Financial Report – RK reported that there was a December balance at around £4,000 with support towards administration from Homesafe and membership contributions the balance is balance now £15,750.90

- RK reported that quite a number of sprinkler companies and fire authorities had not yet contributed and advised any members who were unsure whether their company/authority had paid to contact the secretary by email. He also suggested that it would be appropriate to send follow up invoice.
- The Chair gave recognition and thanks for the support of the NFSN that is not reflected in the Accounts giving examples i.e. Web Site support from TYCO, his own expenses that are covered by Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service, those who support the NFSN Meeting with venues and catering and the contribution members make in getting to meetings.
- JS suggested setting up Direct Debits or Standing orders, **LF to follow up with Donna Lawson to consider the feasibility.**

6 Secretaries Report

6.1 Web site development <http://www.nfsn.co.uk>

The web site is continuing to grow with news items added on a regular basis, keep the contributions, information, case studies and feed back coming in it needs members input to keep it current.

6.2 Sprinklers in Schools:

- Blakes Parliamentary Year Book – Will be publishing a feature on Sprinklers in Schools a supporting the NFSN campaign to seek assurance that the £8bn. Government grant aimed at improving school building and providing education resources can be used for the provision of sprinklers. There are number of sprinkler companies who are supporting this feature and ideally it would be beneficial for completeness if more companies offered their support whilst gaining a valuable marketing opportunity to ensure this feature goes ahead.
- 11/02/06 News article in The Times re; Sprinklers in Schools see link <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-2034784,00.html>

6.3 Seminars and productions:

- Successful seminar held on 14th December at the Fire Service College
- Parliamentary Seminar held at Westminster on the 6th February was a resounding success with over 100 delegates - http://www.nfsn.co.uk/news-events/news/2006/march/news_mar_001.htm
- Sprinkler video produced in conjunction with London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority **will be circulated to members and those who attended the seminar in due course speaker notes will be included LF.**

6.4 Press strategy

LF Asked for the NFSN to be notified of significant UK incidents and all Sprinkler Stops so that where possible press comment can be made.

- AB reported that Sussex has been working with BBC News round and a programme will feature arson in schools 8th May 2006 PMH asked AB to ask Des Prichard to pass message Regarding this to CFOA
- KB offered support from Tyco.
- ST said that the industry press & pr officers could help to produce quality material,
- PMH most Fire authorities now have PR professionals who meet regularly under the umbrella of Firepro. **PMH to see if Firepro can put together a coordinated policy with regard to reporting sprinkler news items.**
- PMH suggested to members that their PR reps may wish to attend future meetings and help support the NFSN
- SM opportunity to hold a press briefing to raise profile of the NFSN at the next meeting which will be held in the sprinkler protected Moat House School Community, Coventry in the West Midlands on the 12th July.

6.5 NFSN Meetings

The following meetings are planned for 2006:

- 26th April, Armstrong Priestley, Leeds. 10:30 for 11:00 am start
- 12th July, West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service. 10:00 for 10:30 am start
- 31st October, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service. 10:30 for 11:00 am start

LF suggested extending an invitation to members who may wish to give a short presentation to future meetings. It was agreed that informative presentations on industry technical developments or fire authority initiatives would add value to the meetings and offers to deliver a presentation should be made to the secretary by email. This part of the meeting will be restricted to one hour, presentations should be brief 15 -20 minutes and should not be used as an advertising opportunity.

Contact us: nfsn@btconnect.com

7 House of Commons Debate 1st March 2006 – Adrian Brown ESFRS

AB informed the meeting that Ms Celia Barlow MP led sprinkler debate on 1st March – NFSN Contributed to House of Commons Debate by Celia Barlow MP, Labour representative from Hove, led an adjournment debate on sprinklers at the Houses of Parliament on 1 March 2006. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and the FSA with the support of the NFSN ensured that Ms Barlow had all the relevant facts and persuasive arguments to hand in leading the debate, the response on behalf of the Government was by Fire Minister Jim Fitzpatrick MP. AB highlighted significant parts of the debate which can be downloaded using the following link on the NFSN Web Site <http://www.nfsn.co.uk/news-events/news/2006/march/hoc-debate-010306.doc>

8 SES Statistical Data on Sprinkler Stops

Mike Green was unable to attend the meeting but forwarded on Information which was circulated to those attending and which will be available on the NFSN web site along with the SES Sprinkler Activation report form. **LF Graphs provided will be put on the web site with the minutes.**

9 Presentation: Fire Sprinkler Developments in Scotland – Keith MacGillivray Strathclyde

Keith gave an excellent informative presentation on the initiatives and successes in Scotland including report on Rose Park, the high incidents of fire deaths in Strathclyde and what is being done about it, Successful domestic sprinkler stops, and the success in all but one authority in Scotland now having a policy to sprinkler all new and refurbished schools.

Questions / Discussion

- KB suggested putting Keith's presentation and speaker notes on the NFSN web site, KMc agreed to this and will provide notes to the secretary.
- SM informed the meeting that a ministerial response to a letter sent by the West Mids was still insisting that the cost of sprinklers in schools was in the region of 5 – 10 % which in his opinion is far too high.
- KM informed the meeting that in the building schools for the future program 9 new high schools are being built in East Lancashire. These will be fitted with sprinklers which were included in the architects design, he informed the meeting that the local authority had asked the architects to give them a price for the schools without sprinklers and the response from the architects was that to build without sprinklers would actually add at least 10% on the costs to the construction due to savings with the associated design freedoms that sprinklers provide.
- KMc was asked how supportive Scottish Water had been an reported that there were some problems, ST said that Homesafe had been in dialogue with Scottish Water and found them very willing to listen and seek solutions and wondered if they had not been fully consulted

when the new sprinkler legislation was introduced. KMc responded that the Scottish sprinkler legislation had gone through the full consultation process which included Scottish Water.

- When asked about fire deaths KMc informed the meeting that the fire investigation procedure now includes detailed consideration of if a sprinkler system could have saved the person and where it is concluded that sprinkler protection would have had the potential to save the person, this comment is included in the report to the coroner and in press reports.

10 BSI Committee Update – Paul Hardy

- 10.1 Task Group 1: PrEN 14972 Fixed fire fighting systems - Water mist systems - design and installation. The Task Group will review the updated text from CEN/TC191/WG5/TG3 when available and prepare a draft national foreword to assist users of the standard in the UK. This draft is now being developed as a CEN Technical Specification (CEN/TS 14972) and publication is anticipated in December 2007.
- 10.2 Task Group 2: BS 8458 Water mist fire suppression systems for residential and domestic occupancies - code of practice. The Task Group is currently working on the second draft. BS 9251 is being used as the template wherever possible. TG2 next meeting scheduled for 9th May.
- 10.3 Task Group 3: BS xxxx Water mist fire suppression systems for commercial and industrial premises - code of practice. Task Group developing a BS. First draft recently completed and circulated to members for consideration. TG3 next meeting scheduled for 7th June.

11 Reports of Progress - Constituent Organisations.

11.1 West Midlands & Rescue Service – Steve Mills

- a) WMFS are currently working with the National Governors Council to introduce an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons (EDM 1726) as follows.

"This House notes that more than 2,000 schools are damaged by fire each year at an estimated cost of £100 million to local education authorities; further notes that the National Governors' Association has been working with the West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority to raise awareness of fire risk assessment among head teachers and governors; looks forward to their joint publication of a guide for governors on fire risk; and calls upon the Government to broaden its recommendations to make the installation of sprinklers in all new build and major refurbishments of maintained schools mandatory."

Up to 15th March this motion has been supported by 61 MP's from all parties and is also being supported by the FBU who have drafted a letter which can be sent to your local MP asking for support of this EDM. Access is via the FBU website.

- b) We are continuing to press for sprinklers at a local level, especially in schools following the recent fire at Light Hall School in Solihull.

http://www.nfsn.co.uk/news-events/news/2006/march/news_mar_003.htm

- c) Further afield, there has been widespread publicity surrounding the recent major fire loss at the Matalan store in Stechford, Birmingham, following which significant reference to the lack of sprinklers was made. The building was under 2000m² but formed part of a row of similar units. The store was completely destroyed in under 20 minutes and the fire started to penetrate fire resisting walls between the units (JJB Sports next door and a Bedding superstore next to that) but an excellent stop was made at the first barrier. Fortunately a swift evacuation took place and no customers were harmed.

- d) DCFO Randeniya was invited to speak at the IFSA conference in Lisbon on 29th and 30th March.
- e) Work continues with the HFSC initiative and guidance notes for CFS work in relation to this have been produced. These can be made available to interested parties.

11.2 East Sussex Jo Fowler & Adrian Brown

- a) Hilton Hotels now have policy to sprinker this was confirmed by other members who reported that Hilton hotels in London & Swindon also have had sprinklers fitted
- b) Woman's refuge sprinklered
- c) Sprinkler stop in East Sussex chip pan fire, minimal damage.
- d) Fire service not called
- e) Discussions with local University to sprinker an Accommodation Block.
- f) Fire in converted water mill in remote area, open plan three storey. Water mist system installed during renovations. Fire in March 2006. Family roused by remotely monitored fire alarm (ADT). Flames on ground floor around flue area at ceiling height, fire spread into roof void, developed into an 8 pump fire. "The owners stated the mist system had been turned off due to failed attempts to contact the company to repair and the system had been faulty since installation." ESFRS not consulted during design process. This was the 2nd fire in a residential building where sprinklers have been turned off. Have authorities developed any different procedures for dealing with fires in sprinklered residences? Policy for maintenance and testing to ensure availability? Policy for building control consultation on residential?
 - ST solution is that only systems installed to a
 - current standard should be accepted by building controls then maintenance can be carried out by any sprinkler company, where non-standard systems are installed it would be difficult for anyone other than the installer to perform maintenance which leaves vulnerability if the company goes out of business or is unreliable.
 - SM suggested that maintenance needs to be written into standards the maintenance standards for domestic sprinkler systems
 - PH has taken up consultation issue with Anthony Bird and feels that there is an opportunity to identify consultation improvements particularly where B5 access is compromised.
 - PM informed the meeting that in homes where sprinklers are fitted West York's are carrying out system check when doing home fire safety checks

11.3 EFSN – Bernadette Hartley

- a) Letter to Minister Jaqui Smith, also asking for an appointment.
- b) Rosie Cooper MP has raised 3 Parliamentary questions to the Schools Minister raising the profile of fire sprinklers in schools

- c) Preparing for national and Lancashire press conferences with Fire Chiefs, unions and MPs
- d) Bernadette has already contacted 15 LEAs who are in the First Wave of Building Schools for the Future. We need to follow up with contacting the consortia to whom the contracts are awarded when they are appointed and liaise with the local fire service (as of course Lancashire is doing).

11.4 Wiltshire Fire Brigade – Julian Parsons

- a) Seven PFI sprinklered schools are progressing well in Swindon.
- b) Wiltshire has provided a report to ODPM on the sprinkler project at Studley.
- c) The second refurbished Residential care home owned by Swindon Borough Council to feature sprinklers is nearly finished.
- d) Local Sprinkler Company has reported that they are currently fitting two new sprinkler systems in dwellings per month.
- e) Visitors from Japan considering domestic fire sprinklers observed sprinkler demonstration unit at Swindon to consider domestic sprinklers in Japan
- f) Julian reported problems where partial sprinkler coverage was being considered in building regulations proposals, which he felt were not acceptable solutions.

11.5 Kent Fire & Rescue Service – John Wildish

Kent recently carried out a live test of a sprinkler system. Two bungalows were set light to demonstrate the difference between a sprinklered and un-sprinklered dwelling. John gave a presentation of the tests. Footage will be copied and will be freely available to those who request a copy from John.

11.6 John Sparke

- a) 8 learning centres fitted with sprinklers
- b) New fire station fitted with sprinklers

11.7 Kirklees District Council – Brian Mellor

- a) Some problems with water surges operating sprinklers alarms, technical advice given by JM & PA
- b) Kirklees have just completed our fourth sheltered housing premise with a BS9251 Residential Sprinkler at Wessen Court, Marsden. This will be fully commissioned and integrated with the fire detection system. Due to restricted ceiling heights the heads have had to be located below ceiling level and chrome guards fitted for protection. With other extensive building work on the site and with tenants in residence all work was completed satisfactorily. The tenants are grateful for the fire safety work, and feel a lot safer in their home.
- c) Kirklees have two further sprinkler installations in progress, and are nearing completion at Wellington Court, Batley and Walker Street, Thornhill, Dewsbury which brings a total of six to date.

- d) Budget funding for further work is a concern but business cases have been put forward. Retro fitting sprinkler systems does cause disruption, especially with our tenants in residence. With good consultation, Contractor staff working closely with our tenants and carrying out sprinkler installations, along with other building works we are succeeding by the efforts of all concerned.
- e) All New Kirklees schools will be sprinklered.
- f) Kirklees have 50 bungalows due for demolition and Brain is hoping to get sponsorship to carry out sprinklers tests on the Low Cost Sprinklers System using these bungalows.

12 Any Other Business

- 12.1 JS - 2012 Olympics has there been any input into seeking provision of sprinkler protection of accommodation blocks for the games. Opportunity here needs to be pursued
- 12.2 Duncan Stainthorpe CFOA document now complete and needs to be published PMH will discuss with John Hoey.

13 Date of Next Meeting – 12th July 2006, Moat House Community School, Coventry, West Midlands. Start time brought forward to 10.30