

NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER NETWORK

MEETING
12th July 2006

10:30 hours

Venue

Moat House Community School, Coventry

Present:

Peter Holland (Chair)
Ronnie King (Vice Chair)
Les Fielding (Secretary)
Peter Armstrong (BAFSA)
Paul Hardy (Herts. FRS)
Jeremy Williams (Bucks FRS)
Dave Beverly (FBU)
Ian Bitcon (NYorks FRS)
Sir George Pigot (FSA)
Cllr Robert Wilkinson (Lancs. CC)
Steve Mills (WM FRS)
Dave John (WM FRS)
Rob Martin (MAWW FRS)
Alan Brinson (EFSN)
Bernadette Hartley (EFSN)
John Wildish (Kent FRS)
Tony Horne (Project Fire)
Alan Gibson (D & D FRS)
Gavin Pallister (D & D FRS)
Paul Johnston (T & W FRS)
Roger Branson (SY FRS)
Peter O'Brian (Strathclyde FRS)
Robert Notcher (Strathclyde FRS)
Keith Marsh (Lancs FRS)
Mac Eaton (H & W FRS)
Phillip Hales (Cheshire FRS)
Derek Chegwyn (Surrey FRS)
Ian Lacey (Surrey FRS)
Adrian Brown (ESFRS)
Jo Fowler (ESFRS)
Duncan Stainthorpe (West Yorks FRS)
Julian Parsons (Wiltshire FRS)
Iain Hunter (Wiltshire FRS)
John Sparke (Merseyside FRS)
Joe M^cCafferty (Tyco)
Mark Bennet (South Wales FRS)
Andy Rigby (Humberside FRS)
Steve Marin (Humberside FRS)
Mike Nicklin (WMFS)
Brent Carter (WMFS)
Mark O'Nions (WMFS)
Mark Goulding (WMFS)

Apologies:

PMH	Cllr. Dave Wilcox (Derbyshire CC)
RK	Bas Fox (Northants FRS)
LF	Rosemarie Everton (UCLAN)
PA	Bill Goodfellow (Hammersmith & Fulham B/Control)
PH	Martyn Eastman (SY FRS)
JW	Brian Mellor (Kirklees DC)
DB	Stewart Kidd (BAFSA)
IB	Keith MacGillivray (Strathclyde FRS)
GP	Peter Reading (HMPS)
RW	John Russell (Strathclyde FRS)
SM	Gareth Lloyd (SW FRS)
DJ	Chris Hartrick (HMFSI)
RM	Graham Blight (Avon FRS)
AB	Suzanne Taylor (Homesafe)
BH	John Streets (FSC)
JW	John Hoey (SYFRS)
TH	Ken Bishop (Tyco)
AG	
GPa	
PJ	
RB	
PO'B	
RN	
KM	
ME	
PHale	
DC	
IL	
AB	
JF	
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1 Apologies and Introductions.

Before introductions took place, the Chair announced the sad loss of Cllr Glyn Duck of Avon CC who was a staunch supporter of sprinklers. As a mark of respect to Glyn; those attending stood for a few moments silence.

2 Minutes of Last Meeting – 26th April 2006.

2.1 Accuracy (11.2 (f)) changed post the minutes being issued.

3 Matters Arising.

3.1 (6.4) Fire Pro – PR officers from the Fire & Rescue Service have a forum that meets on a regular basis. PMH has fed into this group though Lancashire FRS re publicity following sprinkler stops or where sprinklers would have mitigated the outcome of a serious fire. PMH reported that most Fire & rescue Services were now very proactive in reporting the benefits of sprinklers.

3.2 Parliamentary Year Book – No news yet on publication date, Action: **LF to follow up.**

4 Chair's Address / Report

Sprinklers in Schools

- 4.1 PH briefed the meeting about a meeting that took place on the 4th July with the Schools Minister and Sprinkler representatives. He confirmed that the case for sprinklers in schools has now been proved on whole life costs provided that the provision is incorporated into the design from the onset. He informed the meeting that the West Yorkshire DVD on school fires had been very persuasive communicating the issues. BH informed the meeting that the West Yorks DVD had been circulated to 240 MP's.
- 4.2 Also he informed the meeting that the Lancashire FRS / NFSN Booklet had now been adopted as a CFOA document.
- 4.3 CABE (Commission for Architecture in the Built Environment) Has produced a report that talks about poor school design in the past, and strongly recommends the provision of sprinklers to improve the whole life costs associated with school buildings.
- 4.4 PH Provided a letter from CFOA President Phil Toase to MP Jim Knight the Schools minister that has been signed up to by all CFO's in the UK.
- 4.5 KM Reported on a recent meeting with a School architect who informed him that not now consider the design of modern school buildings without consideration of the inclusion of sprinklers. Keith also reported that Lancashire FRS will be meeting with Carillion and with Warrington Research to further discussion regarding sprinklers in schools.
- 4.6 AB Reported to the meeting data on the cost of sprinklers in schools for over 70 schools and made a request to Fire & Rescue Services for help to collate missing data i.e. the floor areas of some of the schools, **AB will provide names of schools for LF to circulate to FRS members, any help from the FRS in whose area the schools are would be greatly appreciated** as the Government statistics for the cost of sprinklers are based partly on the percentage of the overall development costs per m² which is quoted to be on average £1290.00 Per M².

- 4.7 GP emphasised that we need to establish what makes up the difference between the price sprinkler companies charge which we now have records of and cost of sprinklers in schools quoted by Government departments.
- 4.8 GP reported that the Sunday Express ran an article on sprinklers in schools on Sun 10th July and said that the paper intends to continue to support sprinklers in schools in coming weeks.

Low Cost Sprinklers:

- 4.9 A position paper was circulated to the meeting regarding the recent research into the cost benefit of low cost sprinklers for domestic property.

5 Vice Chair/Treasurers Report.

- 5.1 NFSN Accounts – RK Gave outline of accounts
- 5.2 Subscriptions to NFSN – RK informed the meeting that not all members had paid this year subscription to date and asked those in doubt if their invoice had been paid or not to contact LF to establish.
- 5.3 RK suggested that the coding on the balance sheet be broken down to reflect the actual expenditure of the NFSN, **Action: RK & LF to review.**

6 Secretaries Report

- 6.1 London Sprinkler DVD – LF Provided those attending with a DVD produced by London Fire Brigade in association with the NFSN. The DVD shows a fire in a sprinklered compartment and a fire in an un-sprinklered compartment. This was produced for the Parliamentary seminar in Feb and is now available upon request.

7 Schools Campaign – BB 100 Up-date

- 7.1 KM reported that the BB100 Commons Select Committee report will soon be available on the internet and will provide link when it is.

8 Approved Document 'B' Up-date

PH informed the meeting of a DCLG Report detailing the ADB consultation results. He felt this report would be of particular interest to those officers undertaking Building Control Consultations. Please note that the report only details the results and comments a little on the trends. It does not indicate what action DCLG will be taking over amending ADB, although I believe you can draw some form of indication of the most likely outcome. PH has also provided Herts. consultation response, this is available on request.

For those not wishing to read or study the report in detail, PH highlighted just a few of the items he found of particular interest:

- 8.1 Herts. response is very much in line with the main report conclusions/results and many of our comments have been referred to by DCLG.
- 8.2 Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) were the largest contributor (16% of responses) with Building Control Bodies (BCBs) at 15%. This is a massive 'pat on the back' for FRSs (and I would say some embarrassment for BCBs) as there are 50 FRSs compared with 500 BCBs!

- 8.3 The proposal to remove self-closing devices on doors in dwellings was a close result at 61% in favour (Herts. were against).
- 8.4 Proposal to refer to BB100 for schools was also close (56%) and many commented that this document was inappropriate in its current format.
- 8.5 Proposal to increase the maximum recommended unsprinklered compartment size for single storey buildings was only supported by 31%
- 8.6 Proposal to adopt a national maximum for warehouse compartment sizes was supported by 46%
- 8.7 88% supported sprinkler protecting high rise residential over 30m (Herts. supported but recommended above 18m)
- 8.8 Reference to private hydrants in ADB was supported by 81%
- 8.9 84% supported amending guidance on firefighting shafts to 45m distances (BDAG recommends maximum penetration distances of 34m).
- 8.10 98% supported the idea of a building 'log book' or health and safety file.
- 8.11 86% supported the proposal to sprinkler care homes.
- 8.12 94% supported the proposal to allow firefighting lifts to be used for the evacuation of disabled people.

The above are just a reflection of some of the issues highlighted and commented upon within the report. The full report is available via the link below:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/359/ProposalsforamendingPartBFiresafetyoftheBuildingRegulations_id1500359.pdf

9 BSI Committee Update – Paul Hardy

PH There are three task groups and work is ongoing and he sits on TG 1 & 2:

- 9.1 Task Group 1: PrEN 14972 Fixed fire fighting systems - Water mist systems - design and installation.
- 9.2 Task Group 2: BS 8458 Water mist fire suppression systems for residential and domestic occupancies - code of practice.
- 9.3 Task Group 3: BS xxxx Water mist fire suppression systems for commercial and industrial premises - code of practice.

GP reported that Roy Young sits on all three task groups representing the FSA

10 Presentations:

10.1 Jeremy Williams – Bucks FRS, Sprinklers and Sustainable Development.

JW provided a paper and gave an interesting presentation regarding how Bucks FRS have been involved from the early planning stages with Local Development Partnerships to ensure Fire Safety is addressed in the significant housing development programme for the Bucks area. It is hoped that this will include sprinkler provision in new housing. Bucks have produced a draft supplementary planning guidance document which is in draft form. JW is seeking approval to provide to FRS members for comment. **Action LF to circulate to FRS Members subject to approval from Bucks FRS.**

- 10.2 Sir George Pigot – FSA, Publication of FSA Guide to BS 9251. GP Informed the meeting of the FSA Guide to BS 9251. This is available from the FSA please contact info@firesprinklers.info
- 10.3 Peter O'Brian and Robert Notcher - Strathclyde FRS gave a presentation on Community Safety Fire Engineering demonstrating how CFD Modeling can show the difference of Fires with & without sprinklers. The CFD programme used is the NIST Model, Fire Dynamics Simulator that can be downloaded free from the NIST web site. A paper provided & circulated.
- 10.4 Tony Horne – Sprinkler System developments 15 Min. TH informed the meeting of a new development that allows sprinkler systems to be extended by up to 9 heads without the need for isolating valves and without the pump starting up. This has been well received by the consumers, particularly in retail outlets where historically work on systems had to be undertaken when the store was closed.

11 Reports of Progress - Constituent Organisations.

- 11.1 Kirklees District Council – Also see paper circulated during meeting
- Brian is pleased to report that funding has been secured for two more sprinkler installations in sheltered housing premises in Kirklees, which will bring the total to eight.
 - Low cost Sprinkler system was tested using a live fire situation, this went ahead on the 4th July 2006 and at present the information obtained is under analysis.
- 11.2 West Yorkshire – Duncan Stainthorpe – SD has produced a Case Study paper on the tests conducted by Kirklees, this can be found on the NFSN web site case studies.
- 11.3 Stewart Kidd - BAFSA
- Publication: Sprinklers for Safety: We have now sold more than 150 copies of this; including copies supplied to New Zealand, the USA, Canada and Hong Kong
 - Publication: BIF 9: Water Mist. This publication described the uses (and abuses) of water mist systems and is available to the FRS free of charge from BAFSA.
 - Campaign Wise up to Fire: BAFSA has just launched a campaign aimed at creating awareness of the risks of fires to schools among school governors. Part of the campaign includes letters to every Westminster MP. Initial feedback has been excellent; within a week of the letters going out, 15 written responses have been received from MPs, five of whom have written to the Minister for Schools. A new web site, dedicated to promoting sprinklers in schools will be going live this week. <http://www.wiseuptofire.org>
 - The National Governors Association (<http://www.tmmuk.com/ngc/document.asp?id=66>) have endorsed the campaign and are running a survey of the various LEAs policies on sprinklers.
 - BAFSA's annual conference will be held on 23 November 2006 at the Marriott Worsley Park Hotel and Country Club. Topics include: Care Homes, Fire Safety Order, new developments in sprinklers, New Approved Document B.
 - Work has started on the 2007 Sprinkler Yearbook which will be bigger, better and brighter !

11.4 Kent FRS – John Wildish.

Dwelling fires account for a third of all property fires (i.e. primary fires) and around 80% of all casualties occur in fires in the home. A key priority of Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) is to reduce the number of accidental fires and related deaths and casualties. This can be

achieved by delivering education and advice on how to prevent fire and reduce damage, and improving our operational response to reflect the needs of the community. However, it is that case that in some situations it is impossible to reduce the risk of fire occurring to a satisfactory level, especially in the homes of vulnerable people.

To target accidental fire deaths in the home, with particular focus on reducing inequality in the impact of fire, the government has awarded KFRS a grant of £255.7k for 2006 - 2008. KMFRA intends to direct these funds to the installation of sprinkler systems in high risk residential premises.

KFRS's three Partnership Managers, in liaison with technical fire safety officers, community fire safety officers and housing bodies, will be responsible for selecting premises to be fitted with a sprinkler system. The criteria for the selection of the premises to have sprinkler systems installed will be designed to identify those most vulnerable and at risk from fire; specifically those who are most likely to be unable to escape the premises unaided.

Partnership Managers will be able to select an installer from a list of approved installers, currently being developed through a procurement framework process. The system will be installed in accordance with the requirements of BS 9251².

11.5 Wiltshire FRS –Julian Parsons

As part of a Multi agency Public Protection Approach (MAPPA) arrangement Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service provided advice regarding providing sprinkler protection in a home of a vulnerable person.

As a result a water-mist system was installed in the property. The cost of the installation was split between Swindon Borough Council, Avon and Wiltshire mental health trust and Wiltshire F&RS

11.6 West Midlands – Steve Mills. SM reported that West Midlands had produced Community Safety guidance notes for Firefighters Re: Sprinklers. **Action LF to circulate to FRS Members.**

11.7 Tyco - Joe McCafferty, reported that Tyco hope to conduct residential fire tests in the near future. The NFSN will be advised of details in due course.

11.8 EFSN – Alan Brinson & Bernadette Hartley

Alan Brinson reported that new requirements for sprinklers in high-rise buildings have been introduced in several countries:

- a) Spain for all buildings higher than 80m but Barcelona set a lower limit at 50m. For many years new Spanish hotels higher than 28m have had to be sprinklered
- b) The Netherlands for buildings higher than 70m
- c) Austria for buildings higher than 32m
- d) Germany continues work on its new high-rise code, which would require sprinklers above 22m in all buildings except apartment buildings, where the limit in the last draft is 60m. Thanks to evidence from Alan it may be reduced to 30m
- e) Portugal is expected to introduce a new fire safety code at the end of this year. It would require sprinklers in new hotels and motels, healthcare facilities, public buildings and transportation centres. This would be a major change in Portugal and an example to other European countries of the use of sprinklers as a core fire safety measure.
- f) The Netherlands is revising its 12 basic fire codes, starting with healthcare and prisons. There will be significant opportunities to introduce sprinklers as a core fire safety measure through this process.

- g) Bernadette Hartley reported that the EU Sprinkler Forum, chaired by Peter Skinner MEP and with 8 MEP members from 5 countries, has held four meetings and a reception in the European Parliament. It is campaigning for:
- European Member States to provide fuller and more consistent research into fire deaths and injuries
 - Research into the costs of fire in Europe
 - Fire to become a health and safety issue for action by the European Parliament
 - A Directive on hotel fire safety

With better data we will influence the development of European policy on fire safety. Our first aims are to see sprinklers in hotels, care homes and heritage buildings.

The next reception will be held in the European Parliament in Strasbourg and will be hosted by Scottish MEPs with Jeff Ord to be the speaker. In February a Swedish Fire Chief will speak, probably about heritage and later next year Sir Ken Knight will speak at a reception in Brussels. Members of the EU Sprinkler Forum have raised several questions raised about fire in the European Parliament and introduced Bernadette and Alan to chairmen of European Parliamentary committees and senior members of the European Commission. Alan is now on a European Commission working group on hotel fire safety while Bernadette has been invited to meet the Greek chairman of the European Parliament Culture Committee.

Separately we are setting up a Northern European Sprinkler Network, with initial members from Scotland and Sweden. The issues appear to be similar in these countries, they all have relatively high fire death rates and they are all keen to change thinking on fire safety in buildings to bring down death rates.

- 11.9 South Yorks FRS – Roger Branson. RB reported that there is a major housing refurbishment programme in Rotherham. South Yorks are advising the provision of sprinklers and are hopeful that they will be included.

12 Any Other Business

13 Date of Next Meeting – 31st October 2006, South Yorkshire