

NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER NETWORK

MEETING

4th June 2009

10.30 hours

Venue

Lothian & Borders Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters

Lauriston Place EH3 9D

Present:

| Name | Surname | Initial | Organisation |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Martyn | Brandrick | MB | Central Scotland |
| Noel | Cornforth | AC | Cleveland FRS |
| Barry | Waller | BW | Cleveland FRS |
| Gary | Bennet | GB | Braidwood |
| Alan | Gibson | AG | Darlington & Durham FRS |
| Mark | Earwicker | ME | Essex FRS |
| Colin | Grieve | CG | Fife FRS |
| Gary | Dutton | GD | GMC FRS |
| Paul | Hardy | PH | Hertfordshire FRS |
| Lutz | Johnen | LJ | Homesafe |
| Susanne | Taylor | ST | Homesafe |
| John | Ivison | JI | Intfire |
| Ray | Cassar | RC | Lancashire FRS |
| Mike | Dunne | MD | Lothian & Borders FRS |
| David | Mallin | DM | Lothian & Borders FRS |
| Iain | Cox | IC | NFSN Chair / RB FRS |
| Les | Fielding | LF | NFSN Secretary |
| Ronnie | King | RK | NFSN Vice Chair |
| Phil | Smyth | PS | Staffordshire FRS |
| Henry | Lloyd | DL | Staysafe |
| Daniel | Doherty | DD | Strathclyde FRS |
| Joe | McCafferty | JM | TYCO |
| Max | Fowler | MF | Vipond |
| Steve | Mills | SM | West Midlands Fire Service |
| Duncan | Stainthorp | DS | West Yorkshire FRS |

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Web Address: <http://www.nfsn.co.uk/index.htm>

Apologies:

| Name | Surname | Initial | Organisation |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Peter | Armstrong | PA | Armstrong Priestley |
| Stewart | Kidd | SK | BAFSA |
| Jeremy | Williams | JW | Buckinghamshire FRS |
| Chris | Hartrick | CH | Devon & Somerset FRS |
| Jo | Fowler | JF | East Sussex FRS |
| Alan | Brinson | ABri | EFSN |
| Dave | Beverley | DB | FBU |
| Jim | Marsden | JM | Greater Manchester FRS |
| William | Butler | WB | Homesafe |
| Steve | Griffiths | SG | Kent FRS |
| Cllr Robert | Wilkinson | RW | Lancashire Fire Authority |
| John | Cook | JC | Lincolnshire FRS |
| Caroline | Davis | CD | London Fire Brigade |
| Chris | Howard | CH | Merseyside FRS |
| Myles | Platt | MP | Merseyside FRS |
| Robert | Martin | MR | Mid & West Wales FRS |
| Richard | Elliott | RE | Norfolk FRS |
| Baz | Fox | BF | Northamptonshire FRS |
| Baz | Fox | BF | Northamptonshire FRS |
| Nick | Bateman | NB | Oxfordshire FRS |
| Rosemarie | Everton | RE | Retired |
| Keith | MacGillivray | KMc | Scotland |
| Tony | Derricutt | TD | Shropshire FRS |
| Ian | Sloss | IS | Staffordshire FRS |
| George | McGrandles | GMc | Strathclyde FRS |
| Lewis | Ramsey | LR | Strathclyde FRS |
| Ken | Bishop | KB | TYCO |
| Richie | Rickaby | RR | Tyne & Wear FRS |
| John | McCann | JMc | Vipond |
| Keith | Pratley | KP | Welsh Water |
| Andy | Goves | AG | Wiltshire FRS |
| Tim Gray | Gray | TG | Wiltshire FRS |
| Julian | Parsons | JP | Wiltshire FRS |
| Ian | Whitaker | IW | Yorkshire Water |

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| Item | Discussion | Action By: |
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| | Mike Dunne welcomed the NFSN Meeting to Lothian & Borders. | |
| 1. | Minutes of NFSN Last meeting 05/03/09 | |
| 1.1 | Accuracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Phil Lancaster Cleveland attended AGM and Meeting and was not included in the attendance list. | |
| 1.1 | Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) (2.4) SM reported that Low Cost Sprinkler Design Guide 7a had been selected. | |
| 2. | Chairs / Vice Chairs Report / NFSN Progress | |
| 2.1 | FOSI (Fires of Special Interest) Explore using the list that CLG/CFRAU keep as a way of capturing major cases of rapid fire-spread (Chair) <p>Developing the idea of tapping into this system, every FRS has to report FOSI and we need to look how we can tap into this information. For example the CNY warehouse fire in East Sussex where the fire spread rapidly.</p> <p>This is the sort of fire we need to capture to emphasise the need for sprinkler protection.</p> <p>SM There are confidentiality issues that would make it difficult for individuals in FRS's to offer this information so this should be sought from the CLG.</p> <p>IC this information could be requested under the freedom of information act.</p> <p>RC The request would have to be carefully worded.</p> <p>IC We would need to reinforce diplomatically in writing the case to the CLG for this information to be provided to the NFSN. Paul Woods from the FPA is recording timber framed building fires, of which there have been a number.</p> <p>Criteria:</p> <p>Death or Injury, rapid fire spread, failure of compartmentalisation, large commercial loss, Heritage loss, fires in Crown premises.</p> | IC |
| 2.2 | Water Liaison Group - Water Industries Act 1991 proposed revisions / consultation. (Vice Chair) <p>The last meeting of the group essentially discussed one specific issue i.e. To respond to DEFRA Consultation under the draft Flood and Water management Bill, where under section 4.4 of that consultation, an opportunity exists to seek changes in the Water Industries Act 1991, to make water connections to sprinklers, via water utility pipes a legitimate use of water under the Act. It was</p> | |

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agreed that this will require a new section; "Water Supplies for Firefighting Systems, using fixed pipes and will give automatic fire sprinklers a much higher status in the legislation than hitherto.

The Water Companies and Water UK have been especially cooperative with this and whilst there have been lots of differing views, the final letter will hopefully find consensus which is significant to its success.

The secretary will circulate the agreed letter to all members when it is sent later this month.

The closing date for the consultation is 24th July 2009 so there is still opportunity should any members wish to support this initiative. This can be found on the DEFRA Web Site under consultation. Follow link: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/flood-water-bill/index.htm>

2.3 Low cost sprinkler pilots. (Chair)

Meeting took place in Staffordshire on 6th April 2009

Ray Cassar has been involved in the working group to develop a cost model for these systems and will report back on findings when this is completed. I.e. what is the real cost of these systems.

The Chair reported that the first idea of limited trials has now been extended to include FRS's who have offered to support larger projects.

Proposals on how this will move forward will be finalised by the end of June.

2.4 Welsh LCO – update. (Vice Chair)

RK gave an update on the Welsh Assembly Legislative Competence Order, being led by Assembly Member Ann Jones. The LCO is presently being considered in Westminster, the Welsh Office and CLG. It will then go back for what is termed as MEASURES still to be addressed.

A member of the Welsh Assembly was also seeking to have control over Building Regulations in Wales which could have had an impact on this, however, this has now been resolved.

HL asked what the conservatives support for sprinklers might be. The Chair responded that initial contacts had been made with Stewart Jackson and Justine Greening which was well received but there was no indication of commitment at this time.

2.5 Sprinkler coordination group – update. (Vice Chair)

The Vice Chair reported that the group is working well and has been a great success.

The various organisations represented include the NFSN, BAFSA, EFSN,

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CFOA, and Business Sprinkler Alliance which represents the interests of insurance companies and is represented by Brendan McGrath of FM Global.

The combined focus is able to achieve much greater consistency in supplying information responding to issues and giving opinions.

Information sharing has significantly improved and a collective voice is making it more difficult for the Government and others to challenge.

Some specific matters discussed:

- a) BAFSA have resumed annual meetings with the ABI
- b) Speakers quickly put together for the parliamentary Seminar on the 13th July.
- c) Continuance of the use of Local Acts where they exist, as these have precedence over the building regulations.
- d) Insurers (ABI and RICS Authority) are keen to be more involved.
- e) Political Representation (Considerations for Nick Raynsford / Justine Greening.
- f) Lower Cost Sprinklers.
- g) Water Supplies for Sprinklers.
- h) Means of escape from open plan apartments, using sprinklers as a compensatory feature. (BAFSA would consider funding some work on a basis of research, before an appeal is lodged) A determination not binding but once the Secretary of state has made a determination BCO's tend to use it as case law.
- i) US Multiple fatality in special needs care home..

Action for LF to circulate minutes of meetings to members, minutes of last meeting will be appended to minutes.

Lengthy discussion took place on item 3 the determination of the use of sprinklers for AD-B compensation.

2.6 Business Sprinkler Alliance. (Chair)

The core principle of this will be to develop a Business case for Sprinklers in Businesses, with the following mission statement: "The BSA is a coalition working to achieve greater resilience for business against fire, while also reducing its impacts, through increased acceptance and use of fire sprinklers in commercial and industrial premises."

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| | <p>Discussion:</p> <p>IC If we persuade Architects, Association of Fire Consultants, and others of the value of sprinklers in aiding their design, then they will be designed into buildings and bypass the regulatory route.</p> <p>IC, LF are developing flow chart demonstrating how the different pressure groups can be best placed to deal with legislators and end users.</p> <p>Jl offered support to secure links with the Association of Fire Consultants.</p> <p>ST More representation from enlightened fire engineers is needed to ensure that appropriately fire engineered solutions are implemented.</p> <p>HL Approved Inspectors also add to confusion with inappropriate schemes being put forward where the fire engineered design is not appropriate for the use of buildings.</p> <p>Jl the competence of some fire engineers is lacking in many respects when it comes to sprinkler design and this should be highlighted.</p> <p>RK mentioned sustainability and impact on the environment. The BSA is picking up on this and looking for any area that will influence providing sprinkler protection. This is a big issue that insurers can have an impact on. Follow link FM Global information:</p> <p>http://www.fmglobal.com/assets/pdf/Societal_Impact_Fire_Sprinklers.pdf</p> <p>RC reminded the meeting of the work done by Jim Marsden in this area which had previously been reported at NFSN meetings and at the 2008 Parliamentary Seminar.</p> <p>LF will circulate minutes of future BSA meetings to members once agreed and confirmed.</p> | |
| 2.7 | <p>ENTEC study – High Risk Buildings. (Chair)</p> <p>Chair attended recent meeting on the 23rd April 2009</p> <p>Identify the risks, grade them and identify those at risk.</p> <p>Seminars are planned 9th, 10th & 11th June London, Birmingham and Manchester.</p> <p>RK mentioned The 26th March CLG Circular - Fire Safety Update and made the point that CLG had placed a much “watered down” emphasis in the wording in the ENTEC report for high risk buildings. Using the phrase “commissioned work on a CBA model for businesses who may wish to consider the installation of sprinklers” Whereas the original research was to “find levers to persuade businesses to install sprinklers”!!!</p> | LF |

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| 2.8 | <p>NEARA Study</p> <p>The Vice Chair advised that this study is looking at the cost benefit of sprinkler coverage for large new development compared with extending fire cover by the increase of FRS resources e.g. new fire stations.</p> <p>Initial work was done and taken away for fine tuning and this now seems to have stalled completely. RK has chased this up with no success.</p> | |
| 2.9 | <p>Car Parks (Vice Chair)</p> <p>Ian Gough reported at the recent SCG meeting that tests have been conducted on normal family cars and all tests proved that fires do quickly spread beyond the car of origin and in the case of the test with sprinkler coverage the fire was controlled and fire spread prevented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report has been produced to this effect and this information is likely to be put into the public domain but without and guidance or legislative impact. • Car Stacker tests proved that fires in this type of facility spread extremely rapidly. <p>BAFSA have the opportunity for to carry out further test with BRE that could be appended to the Government report although funding would need to be agreed by BAFSA members first.</p> | |
| 2.10 | <p>Matters arising from NFSN meeting with Minister. (Vice Chair) (Letter from Minister and Vice Chair's post meeting letter and subsequent response appended to minutes).</p> | |
| 2.11 | <p>Matters arising from NFSN meeting with key Insurers. (Vice Chair)</p> <p>Positive dialogue with the insurers;</p> <p>The main thing arising from the meeting, being that the insurers were all highly supportive of what we are doing, and agreed to work more closely with us.</p> | |
| 2.12 | <p>Schools:</p> <p>The recent debate in the Houses of Parliament was discussed, and in particular the statement made by Jim Knight MP, the then Minister for Schools.</p> <p>Extract from recent H of C Debate:</p> <p><i>"As right hon. and hon. Members have said, fires in schools inflict considerable damage both in the risk that they pose to staff and pupils and in terms of cost. In March 2007, as I said, my Department introduced a new policy on fire sprinklers in schools. We announced our expectation that almost all new schools and some refurbished schools should have sprinklers fitted. My right hon. Friend the Member for Makerfield was right to say that that is not a compulsory measure. The decision to install sprinklers is one for local authorities, but with the presumption that I have</i></p> | |

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articulated and which is articulated in guidance.

In terms of how the decision making works, I would like to read out part of a letter that I sent to my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew), who slipped me a note saying that unfortunately he had to get away to attend a meeting with another Minister about an important matter in his constituency. In that letter, I stated:

“The current version of the risk analysis tool is more heavily weighted than the original version and the vast majority of schools will now be assessed as ‘average’ or ‘high’ risk using it.”

That refers to the new tool that we introduced in 2007 to assist local authorities in measuring their requirement for sprinklers. The letter goes on:

“In the earlier version of the risk analysis tool, we asked for sprinklers in ‘average’ risk schools to be considered using the Cost Benefit Analysis Tool which accompanies the Risk Analysis Tool...whereas in the latest version of the tool we now recommend that ‘average’ risk schools are fitted with sprinklers notwithstanding the results of any cost benefit analysis.

The difference between the earlier and the current version of the DCSF risk analysis tool is largely due to the increased weight given to the loss of community facilities”—

to which many hon. Members referred—

“and pupil’s coursework which it was felt could not be adequately reflected in cost terms.”

Those are important areas of progress “:

Links to DCSF schools risk assessment tools and schools fire safety information:

- a) The Fire Safety page on Teachernet has links to the risk assessment tool and other information too: www.teachernet.gov.uk/fire.
- b) The sprinklers link at the bottom of the page takes you to: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/schoolbuildings/legislation/firesafetyforschools/sprinklers/>
- c) That page links to the download page for the fire risk assessment tool: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=12203>.

The NFSN welcomes the latest initiative but sees the need for members to maintain continual pressure to ensure the risk assessment tool is applied correctly.

Jl Commented that whilst there was now wider acceptance by government that sprinkler protection is necessary to protect the asset of school buildings, the mechanism for risk assessment is still based on life risk rather than property protection, therefore the basis of risk comes out generally as lower than it would be if the risk assessment was designed to assess fire risk in general.

2.13 Large Warehouses – Parliamentary Seminar 13th July 2009. (Vice Chair)

RK provided information regarding this seminar and encouraged members to

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| | attend. | |
| 3. | NFSN Finance | |
| 3.1 | Subscriptions Update (Vice Chair) Subs to date 2009 £12,650 RK advised that some members were asking for an order No. to be included on the invoice, explaining that this would be very difficult to administer as membership renewal was instigated on an annual basis through a direct invoice. ST suggested that it would be useful to have a membership application form on the NFSN web site. | |
| 4. | NFSN Events 2008/09 | |
| 4.1 | Meeting September 2009 - (Avon Severn Side - To be confirmed) | |
| 4.2 | Meeting 25 th November 2009 – Staffordshire | |
| 4.3 | NFSN Parliamentary Seminar 8th Feb 2010 RK asked members to consider what might be a good theme for the forthcoming event. | |
| 4.4 | AGM & Meeting Feb / March 2010 - (Tyne & Wear - To be confirmed) Venues are required for meetings in 2010, any members able to support please contact the secretary. | |
| 5. | Matters from Scotland | |
| 5.1 | Note from Strathclyde appended to minutes. | |
| 5.2 | The Chair congratulated Scottish members on their success in promoting sprinklers and asked what the recipe for success is: MB, DM reported that the Scottish FRS's work closely together and have a good relationship with the Scottish Building standards agency. The outcome of Rose park has also had an influence on the provision of sprinklers in care homes. IC asked if there would there be value in bringing a seminar to the Scottish Parliament. JI said the heritage would be a good focus for this and the Scottish Parliament | |

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| | in Edinburgh would be a good venue. | |
| | The Chair will discuss with Keith MacGillivray and take forward | IC |
| | RC suggested having the success in Scotland brought to Westminster, Chair contemplated that this might be good theme for the Parliamentary Seminar on 8 th Feb 2010. | |
| | George McGrandles provided a briefing note on the developments in Strathclyde. This was circulated to those attending and is appended to the minutes. | |
| 6. | Presentation – Grey Flow Sprinkler Systems Suzanne Taylor & Lutz Johnen | |
| | Suzanne and Lutz gave a very enlightened presentation on the, Technical, Environmental and Economic benefits of combining rain water harvesting technology with the provision of water for sprinkler systems. The British Standard for rain water harvesting is BS 8415. | |
| | The presentation raised debate on: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of and reliability of pumps utilised for the sprinkler system? • The cost: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Topping up from mains supply in times of low rainfall? This would be from a metered supply but water companies where this is installed have agreed to credit for water used for firefighting! ○ Cost compared to other water sources? This is the whole purpose of using the RWH supply as it is already a requirement of many developments so it makes sense to use it as a supply for sprinklers! • Certification? | |
| | Suzanne has kindly agreed to provide a PDF of the presentation; this will be available on request to the NFSN Secretary. | |
| 7. | Reports of Progress - Constituent Organisations. | |
| 6.1 | West Yorkshire FRS – DS reported the recent successful sprinkler stop in a Leeds school, this information had been previously circulated. | |
| 6.2 | West Midlands FRS | |
| | SM reported on what was happening in the West Midlands at the moment; | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11th June Entec/CLG seminar re use of sprinklers • 16th June R&D sprinkler seminar for Walsall MBC • 8th July BAFSA/FIA Warehouse seminar • Ongoing negotiations with Lovell Homes regarding 'Low cost sprinkler' pilot scheme for Winson Green, Birmingham | |
| 6.3 | <p>Staysafe:</p> <p>HL reported that a Guide to Standards to be Applied to Houses in Multiple Occupation had recently been published for the Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames. He reported that this did not have a single reference to sprinklers in it.</p> <p>He has now expressed his concern on this to London Fire Brigade advising that similar documents developed for Watford and Kent have a more enlightened approach.</p> | |
| 6.4 | <p>Hertfordshire FRS:</p> <p>PH reported that he had recently had a paper published in the Fire Risk management magazine outlining recent consultation with regards to the provision of water supplies for a sprinkler protected school, where significant savings were made by using supplies from the towns mains rather than utilising a tank and pump supply.</p> | |
| 6.5 | <p>Vipond:</p> <p>MH reported that there had been 3 successful sprinklers stops in as many months in a single domestic property in Ayrshire. The system had been provided for the protection of a known fire setter.</p> | |
| 6.6 | <p>Staffordshire:</p> <p>PS reported that Staffordshire will be holding a Seminar on the 3rd July 2009 focusing on sprinklers and the environment. Anyone wishing more information Phil's contact details can be provided by the NFSN Secretary.</p> | |
| 6.7 | <p>Intfire:</p> <p>Jl reported that he was working on a project looking at the protection of historic piers following a number of recent high profile fires where piers had been severely damaged, advising that he was looking at the application of NFPA Standards to utilise a continuously pumped fresh water ring main. By having the main flowing continually this would prevent the possibility of freezing.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Any Other Business – there was no other business - The meeting closed at 13:45</p> | |

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| 9. | Date of Next Meeting – September 2009 Severnside Avon To be confirmed | |