



INTERNATIONAL WATER MIST ASSOCIATION

THE INTERNATIONAL WATER MIST ASSOCIATION (IWMA) WAS FOUNDED TO PROMOTE THE WATER MIST TECHNOLOGY. THE IWMA WAS FOUNDED ON 15TH APRIL 1998 AND IN 2018 CELEBRATED ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY.

The IWMA has a number of roles and purposes. One is to provide the water mist community with a networking platform and a knowledge exchange. This is achieved via the annual International Water Mist Conference and the association's website. The IWMA also organises educational and topical seminars.

The 19th International Water Mist Conference takes place on 23rd and 24th October in Berlin.

Early in 2019 the IWMA will be in Dubai at Intersec with a general educational seminar. In March last year, the IWMA was in the UK and focused on fire protection with water mist for high-rise buildings.

Apart from events, the IWMA is also part of different initiatives. The association has – amongst others – a liaison with CEN (the European Committee for Standardisation) and some of its members are currently working on the establishment of the European Standard. The IWMA also has consultative status at the IMO (International Maritime Organisation), observer status at the EMSA (European Maritime Safety Agency – a committee of the EU) and it has made contact with FIEP, the Fire Information Exchange Platform (also part of the EU), to check if there are possibilities to co-operate.

The IWMA is currently working on its next steps, as well as looking at how

the technology will eventually evolve. Interest in the technology has grown a great deal over the past 20 years. Through this, there are countless buildings through the world that are protected by water mist, such as the clock tower in Mecca and La Scala in Milan.

Water mist systems use notably less water than traditional sprinkler systems. They also do not have a lasting impact on global warming, do not produce toxic by-products when applied to a fire and do not require complex decommissioning procedures.

Bettina McDowell, from the IWMA, commented:

"When IWMA was founded, water mist – and consequently the association – was met with scepticism and open opposition. But the board, the members were enthusiastic about the technology. During the initial phase some of the water mist manufacturers were ridiculed, because they came from water hydraulics or other industries and were more or less

new to the firefighting industry.

"Much has changed since then, mainly due to the natural learning process and some important turning points. IWMA was there basically from the beginning and we are still around. The interest in the technology is constantly growing. These days, there are water mist manufacturers around the world and quite a few sprinkler companies have added water mist systems to their portfolio."

The IWMA is the basis through which this new found interest can be coordinated. It is a platform where parties can exchange knowledge, initiatives and information. It can help put technological advances into more minds of crucial people and groups. While there have been significant advances for water mist technology in recent years, there is room for more architects, building engineers and fire consultants to understand the benefits. ■

