

WHO'S WHO

Founded in 1998, IWMA continues advancing water mist firefighting through research, education, standards, a global collaboration, championing innovation across fire protection



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The International Water Mist Association (IWMA) was founded on 15 April 1998. Back then, the target was to bundle what was happening on an international level, to collect and spread knowledge, and to communicate matters of common interest.

Today, IWMA is still the only association dedicated exclusively to water mist firefighting. IWMA supports research into, and the engineering applications of, generic water mist systems. A special emphasis lies in the education of the market.

Max Lakkonen (IFAB) is President of the association, Kemal Arsava (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) is Chairman of the IWMA Scientific Council. Head of Office is Bettina McDowell. Members of IWMA include manufacturers, distributors, insurance companies, and scientific institutes from countries all over the world.



BETTINA MCDOWELL

In 2001, IWMA held its first International Water Mist Conference. Over the years, the event has been held in many major European cities. In 2026, the only event solely dedicated to water mist will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, on Wednesday, October 7 and Thursday, October 8. In 2027, the venue will be Paris, France, on Wednesday, October 6 and Thursday, October 7.

Since 1998, IWMA and its members have been committed to water mist and its further development. Among their many initiatives was a research project sponsored and organised by IWMA on "Scaling of Fire Suppression Characteristics in Machinery Spaces" carried out on behalf of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Nowadays IWMA holds a consultative status at the IMO.

In 2025, the organisation published their IWMA Water Mist Guide to explain the technology in detail.

In 2020, The Matrix was developed. The Matrix is based on the known facts of water mist usage in different industries: marine, commercial buildings and industry including different types of facilities in these customer groups that may require active fire protection where water mist can be a solution. The Matrix is a chart showcasing all current water mist applications and associated fire test protocols that have been published by certification or test agencies.

Members of the three IWMA committees (Board of Directors, Scientific Council and Marketing Group) as well as members act as representatives for the organisation in a number of expert and working groups as well as technical committees such as CEN TC 191 / WG 10, NFPA 750 and 25, VdS 3188 and IMO (International Maritime Organization).

IWMA bestows the annual Ragnar Wighus Award for the author of the best master or PhD thesis.

The technology was invented more than a hundred years ago by F.E. Myers. But it was only after the adoption of the Montreal Protocol in the late 1980s and a devastating fire on a passenger ferry in 1990 that water mist as a means of fire protection took off. The two events paved the way and made clear that there was a need for alternatives in firefighting. These developments led to renewed interest in water mist as a fire extinguishing agent and ultimately to the establishment of IWMA. **FB**



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