



FIA ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Fire Industry Association

Foreword from the CEO



Ian Moore,
Chief Executive Officer of the FIA

As we embark on the journey into 2024, the global economic landscape continues to be marked by uncertainty and instability. The illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia has triggered a crisis that has upended the global order, resulting in inflation rates not witnessed in over half a century. At the outset of 2023, inflation surged to staggering levels, reaching as high as 10%. While we have observed some semblance of stabilisation, the prevailing global uncertainties offer no guarantees for the future. In this turbulent environment, we find ourselves grappling with a multitude of challenges, from soaring energy prices, which have surged five-fold from pre-pandemic levels to a UK recession forecasted to be one of the most severe in the developed world.

As we collectively search for a path forward, the Fire Industry Association (FIA) remains committed to advocating for its members and the broader sector, guiding and supporting practitioners as we navigate toward a brighter future. Our pride rests in the remarkable contributions of the dedicated volunteers drawn from our membership. Their invaluable commitment, whether through participation on the Board or in our numerous Councils, Working Groups, and Special Interest Groups, empowers us to proactively address the pressing issues facing our industry today and tomorrow.

Year after year, the FIA's activities become increasingly dynamic, prompting us to realign internally. We've strengthened our resources in critical areas such as Marketing, Content, Technical, Membership, and Training. Moreover, we've expanded our presence with the establishment of a Northern hub in Northwich, Cheshire, featuring a state-of-the-art facility that serves as a training and event centre, complete with a 'Centre of Excellence' demonstration facility to showcase our members' products and systems.

Furthermore, we've undertaken significant initiatives such as the establishment of FIA Cyprus as an FIA-branded, autonomous operation, serving as a model for replication in other international territories. October 2023 will see the public launch of FIA Cyprus with a fully-fledged trade mission involving 15 FIA member companies from the UK and will be based around a Fire Summit, the first of its kind in Cyprus.

While it has been over five years since the tragic Grenfell Tower incident claimed 72 lives, meaningful progress has been made after the exhaustive Public Inquiry. The government is now implementing a host of recommendations, introducing new legislation, and amending existing laws and regulations to enhance fire safety across the UK. The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, published in May of that year, is the latest addition, requiring Responsible Persons for high-rise residential buildings to provide vital information to Fire and Rescue Services to ensure an effective response to fire incidents. This regulation also mandates the dissemination of fire safety instructions and fire door information to residents and took effect in England on 23rd January 2023.

One significant development is the Code of Practice, produced in collaboration with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), focusing on Safety information boxes. These boxes, featuring building plans and floor plans, are now a crucial component of the new legislation, and they must be installed and maintained in high-rise buildings exceeding 18 metres in height.

Additionally, the Fire and Rescue sector is undergoing comprehensive reforms outlined in the government's Fire Services Reform White Paper. These reforms aim to enhance public safety by modernising workforce practices, potentially establishing a College of Fire and Rescue, and increasing accountability through the transfer of fire governance to a single elected individual overseeing Chief Fire Officers' operationally independent role.

Brexit continues to present multifaceted challenges, affecting various industries in the UK, including ours. These challenges encompass skills shortages, import/export issues, and concerns about regulations and standards. One significant concern raised by our members was the imposition of the UKCA Mark, which has had a substantial impact. Our persistent advocacy for an extended transition period has been successful as far as the granting of UK products can continue to use the EU CE Mark until the end of 2025. However, in July this year, the UK government announced the retention of the CE (Conformité Européenne) mark for product safety. However, DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities) clarified that this decision does not apply to construction products within the fire industry, this latest U-turn by the UK government is indicative of the Brexit fallout and a source of deep frustration to many companies.

Brexit-related matters continue to be at the forefront of the Export Council's agenda, with our members' experiences relayed to key government entities. Regardless of one's stance on Brexit, data illustrates that while global exports have faced downturns due to worldwide economic conditions, exports to the EU have suffered greater declines compared to the rest of the world.

The FIA remains dedicated to training, with an expanded range of courses tailored to fire practitioners, emphasising the professionalism of our life safety industry. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we adapted swiftly to offer both virtual and traditional classroom training, meeting the evolving needs of our professionals. Our training achievements have been remarkable, with an equal distribution between online and classroom instruction. Last year, 5,000 delegates participated in over 400 courses held throughout the UK, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement and industry growth.

In challenging times, the FIA stands apart by bucking the trend of stagnant trade association membership numbers. Over the past year, we achieved impressive growth, maintaining the milestone of over 1,000 members and a retention rate of over 95%. Our membership serves as a benchmark of competency and best practice within the industry, reinforcing our collective voice and ability to drive positive change in the fire industry for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Our marketing initiatives continue to disseminate vital information to our members and the broader industry through our website, Focus e-zine, and social media channels. Our LinkedIn following surpassed the 40,000 marks in early 2023, showing the broad relevance the FIA holds globally. These platforms enable us to gather insights from our members on critical issues beyond formal committee structures, enhancing our external engagement efforts and project-related activities. A new website is in the final stages of development, designed to bring us into the modern age. It will automate many business processes, benefiting both the FIA Secretariat and our customers.

Recognising the importance of global connectivity, our Internet of Things (IoT) Special Interest Group continues to thrive by addressing the challenges posed by smart cities, the IoT, and the 'golden thread of information.' Throughout the last year, the FIA worked closely with BSI (British Standards Institute) to develop an IoT Kitemark for fire products to be tested under. This was launched in early 2023.

In the realm of industry events, the lunch following the FIA Annual General Meeting remains a highlight of the sector's 4 calendar. Our annual gatherings foster both camaraderie and knowledge sharing, exemplified by the recent record-breaking event at The Brewery in central London.

We are committed to expanding our events program to promote meaningful interaction with our membership and stakeholders beyond electronic communication. The June 2023 FIM Expo at the City Ground in Nottingham provided valuable opportunities for CPD sessions and knowledge enhancement, with more FIM Expo events planned for next year, the first of which will be in Portsmouth in early 2024.

Informa's International Firex Exhibition at the London ExCel in May 2023 was again a huge success. Exciting plans to move the show to the beginning of December for the 2024 show have been revealed, and the FIA will maintain a substantial presence, with our Networking Lounge serving as a hub for business and social interactions.

Finally, we must acknowledge the remarkable industry response to the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces in February 2022. The FIA expressed unwavering solidarity with Ukraine's government and people, urging our members to comply with government guidelines in severing links with Russian-owned businesses in their supply chains. The collaboration of the entire fire industry in supporting practical assistance through Fire Aid, our nominated charity partner, has been heartening. This alliance has led to substantial donations of equipment, including fire engines, Personal Protective Equipment, and mass decontamination equipment, making a tangible contribution to Ukraine's firefighting capabilities during this challenging time.

Work is already underway to establish a permanent mechanism for responding not only to wartime events but also to broader humanitarian disasters, allowing us to build on our experiences and extend our support to those in need, both domestically and globally.

In conclusion, as we navigate the ever-evolving challenges facing our industry and the world at large, the Fire Industry Association remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing fire safety, fostering professionalism, and supporting our members and stakeholders. Together, we will continue to illuminate the path forward, no matter how challenging the terrain may be.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Ian Moore, Chief Executive Officer at Fire Industry Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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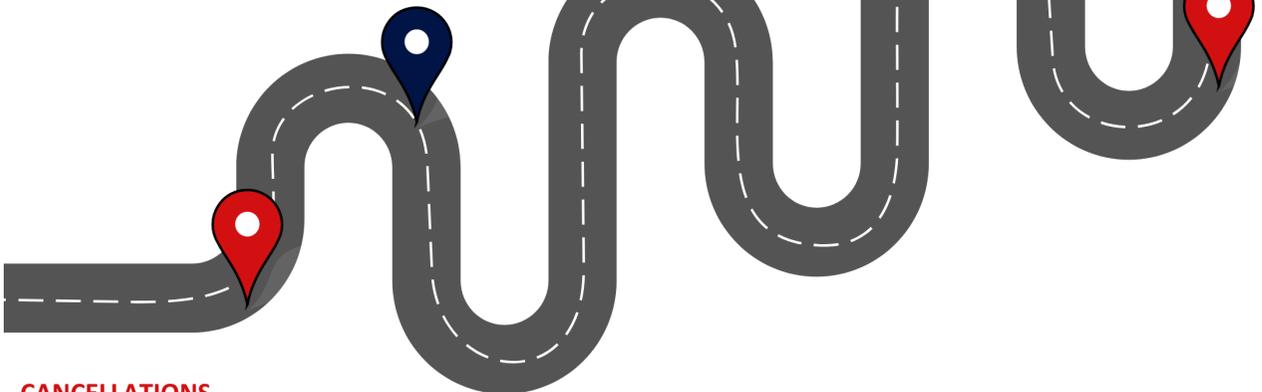
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Membership

GROWTH WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Within the last 12 months, the FIA has continued to build on the previous year by maintaining a steady rate of growth month on month. In the last year, 96 companies have come into membership. This is down by 12% from the previous year, however, the far more interesting figure is the number of companies leaving membership. In the last 12 months, this figure has decreased from 84 cancellations by 44%. Of the 37 companies that left membership only 9 mention some form of dissatisfaction which accounts for less than 1% of the membership base in total.



CANCELLATIONS

The remaining cancellations consist of a mixture of memberships cancelled by the FIA and those who had to resign due to cost-cutting exercises or mergers and acquisitions. Whenever a member company is acquired, it is almost always acquired by another member company and therefore absorbed into their membership. If that is not the case, then the standard practice of the FIA is to approach the acquiring company with our membership offering.

THE REASON WHY?

Of those cancelled by the FIA, the reasons range from payment failure to no longer holding third-party certification.. It is always important to note that the FIA takes an active role in checking its membership base to ensure our members still hold the relevant third-party certifications for the type of work they carry out within the industry. This is a core message of the FIA and a mechanism for raising the bar of professionalism and competency within the industry. Whenever it comes to our attention that a member no longer holds relevant certification, the FIA approaches the company to offer assistance in re-gaining the certification. However, if this offer is refused, the FIA is left with no option but to suspend the membership until such a time as the company is willing to rectify the situation.

NET GAIN

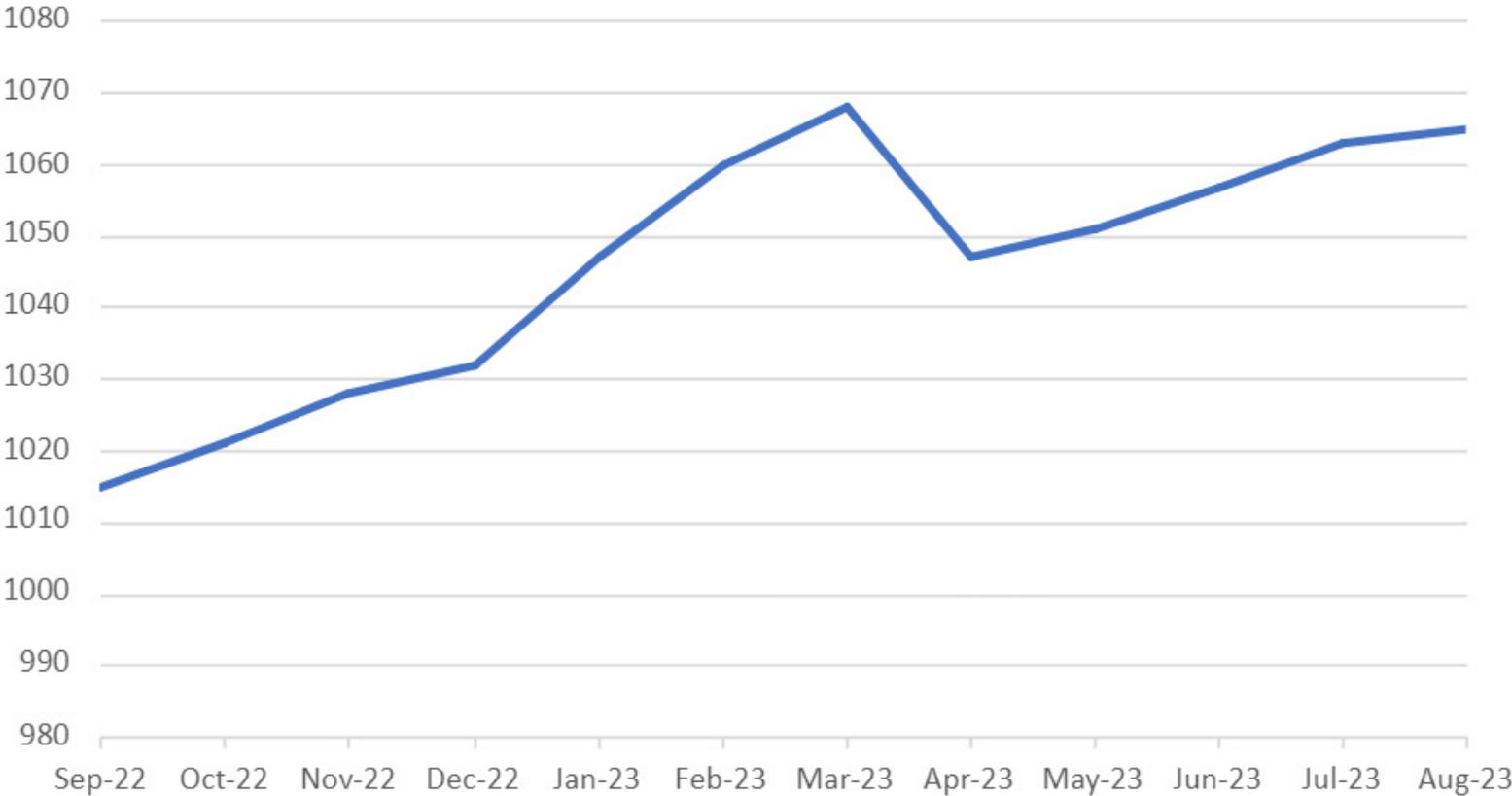
Taking everything into account, the net gain is 47 companies which equates to a growth of 4.4% on the previous year. Again, more important than that is the retention percentage. The Trade Association Forum reports that it is common for trade associations to have a retention rate of 90-95%. We are pleased to say that over the last 12 months, the FIA figures show our strongest-ever retention rate of 96.5%.



Membership

Membership Growth

Total Members Sept 22 - Sept 23





Membership Benefits

This year, the FIA has continued to add to the portfolio of third-party benefits available to FIA members. As a member, you have access to discounted rates and services provided by our partners, all of whom are specialists in their fields. This past year has seen a strengthened partnership with BSI, management consultants, sales and marketing advisors, fuel card providers and many more join forces with the FIA to further increase the value of our membership offering.





FIA's Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Our CPD Certification Centre is an exclusive member benefit that will give member's CPD sessions the FIA stamp of approval, save them thousands of pounds and much more. Being the largest fire-related trade association in Europe means that the FIA has a wealth of technical expertise across the breadth of the fire industry – so who else is better placed to approve these presentations in our sector? This means that we are able to assess the technical content of your CPD sessions and give it our stamp of approval or assist with bringing it up to standard.

When coupled with our unrivalled training experience, this uniquely enables us to be able to assess any presentations that are submitted to us and also give our stamp of approval on their educational quality.

We strive to do all we can to champion, represent and help improve our members and the excellent advice they give to their customers and the wider industry. By checking and certifying our member's CPD we feel this will be of massive benefit to all parties involved and serves as a great way to improve the standards of the entire fire industry.

This service is free of charge to all member companies and so far we have certified over 100 hours' worth of presentations.

Alongside this service, we also developed our in-house CPD offering. All our presentations are now available for our members to use when presenting to their customers.

FIA's Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

These include presentations on, but not limited to:



BS 5839-1: 2017 – Commercial Fire Detection & Alarm Systems

BS 7273-6: 2019 – Ancillary Systems Interfaces

BS 7346-8 – An introduction to smoke control systems

BS 5839-6: 2019 – Domestic Fire Detection & Alarm Systems

BS 8629: 2019 – Evacuation Alert Systems

HTM 05-03 B – Fire Detection & Alarm Systems in the NHS

BS 5839-9:2019 – Emergency Voice Comms Systems (EVCS)

BS 9997: 2019 – Fire Risk Management Systems

Hazardous Areas

Visual Alarm Devices

BS 7273-4: 2015 – Door Release Mechanism Interfaces

BS 5266 – An introduction to compliant emergency lighting

And many more ...

Route to Certification (RTC)

Since the last AGM update in 2022, the following figures are of note:



**38 CURRENT
PROBATIONARY MEMBERS**



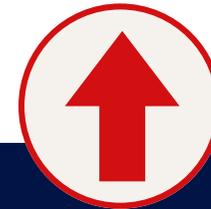
**31 COMPANIES HAVE
ACHIEVED 3RD PARTY
CERTIFICATION WITH 11
DOING SO THROUGH RTC**



**24 COMPANIES SET TO
COMPLETE RTC IN THE NEXT
12 MONTHS**



**WE WORK WITH BSI, NSI,
SSAIB & CERTSURE ON
ACHIEVING THE VARIOUS
CERTIFICATIONS**



**WE CAN NOW OFFER
COMPANIES SECURITY
CERTIFICATION TO THE
REQUIREMENTS ON PD 6662**





Training

Last year's report covered the tail end of COVID and how FIA training was coming out of that having brought in online training as another option to classroom-based learning.

The past year had a semblance of normality about it but the continuing focal point of FIA training remains the resounding success of Fire Detection and Alarm (FD&A) qualification courses. A cornerstone of its offerings, these courses continue to thrive, supported by FireQual, the esteemed awarding organisation behind the qualifications. As FIA training looks ahead, plans are underway to broaden the spectrum of qualification courses. Collaboratively with FireQual, the FIA aims to usher in new qualifications in the coming year.

More and more, the prominence of the BS 5839-1 Fundamentals in FD&A qualification remains steadfast, serving as a bedrock for industry professionals. Notably, achievers of this qualification are increasingly transitioning to a trajectory of growth by embarking on the four distinct Advanced Qualifications in Design, Commissioning, Installation, and Maintenance. While these Advanced Qualifications experienced a tentative start in 2018, their significance has grown over time. More candidates are successfully completing these demanding qualifications.

Simultaneously, FIA's non-qualification training continues to thrive, encompassing a diverse array of topics, including Emergency Lighting, Portable Fire Extinguishers, and various standards like BS 6266, BS 8629, and other parts of 5839. A noteworthy transformation unfolds as the FIA adapts its CPD courses, originally tailored for the COVID era into comprehensive training programs. The introduction of online learning, exemplified by the three-hour course on BS 7273-4 & BS 7273-6 Code of Practices for Fire Protection, underscores the FIA's commitment to accessible and relevant education.

The resurgence in portable fire extinguisher training aligns with the gradual easing of constraints imposed during the 2020–21 period. The FIA adeptly adapted its training programme to accommodate changes in the BAFE exam within the last year.

An intriguing observation emerged during this time: notably 53% of delegates opted for online training. This trend marks a slight increase from the previous year, reinforcing the shift towards the normalisation of online training practices. This progress is a testament to the dedicated effort invested in refining online training methodologies.



The commitment to enhancing both delivery mechanisms and options for online training remains steadfast. Out of the 53% who embraced online training, 67% chose the digital version of training materials. As part of our commitment to sustainability, we strive to transition towards digital training materials whenever feasible.

Striking a balance, we persist in offering a blend of classroom and online courses to suit our delegate's needs and preferences. The widespread acceptance of online training within the industry firmly establishes its integral role. Nonetheless, our dedication to providing traditional classroom-based training across the UK remains unwavering with plans to broaden accessibility and choice for both training formats.

A total of twenty-one distinct training venues were used throughout the year, showcasing the FIA's resourceful collaboration with two member companies that graciously shared their facilities. This strategic partnership is set to expand in the coming year, reflecting our commitment to optimising training environments.

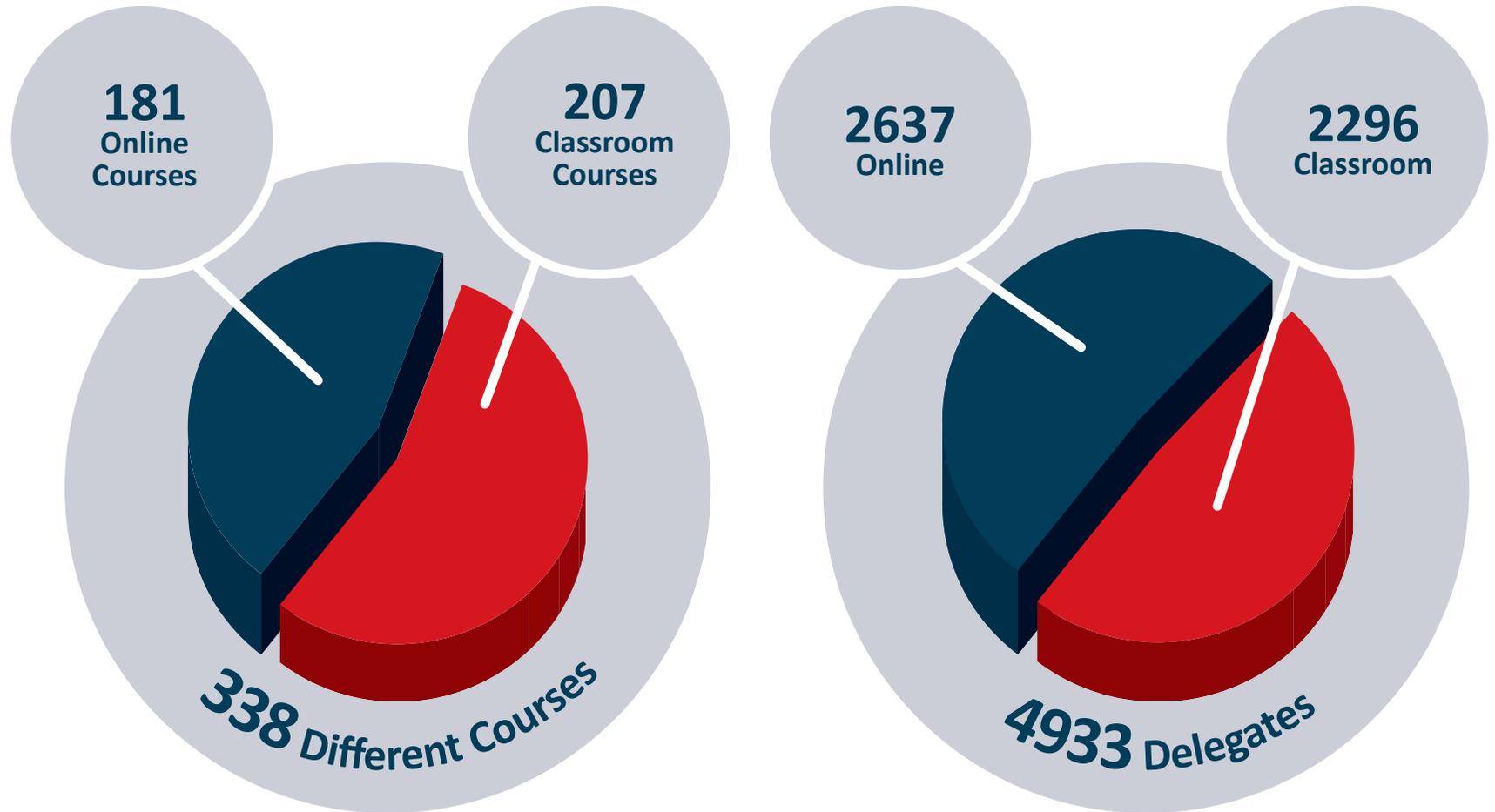
A pivotal milestone unfolded with the opening of a new FIA office in Northwich. This purpose-built facility represents the culmination of nearly a decade of vision and planning. The new office serves as a dedicated training venue, with the added addition of future practical training.

The year 2022-2023 was not without its challenges, navigating a landscape free from Covid-19 restrictions yet marred by cost-of-living and inflation crises.

With unwavering determination, the FIA remains resolute in its commitment to uphold its position as the premier training provider in the industry. With our new Northwich office, expansive online and nationwide training, coupled with innovative and refined courses, sets the trajectory for our path ahead. The legacy of the past and the resilience displayed during challenging times underscore the FIA's commitment to remaining at the forefront of training excellence. The stage is set for FIA training to embrace 2024 as its most remarkable chapter yet.

The statistics over the last 12 months

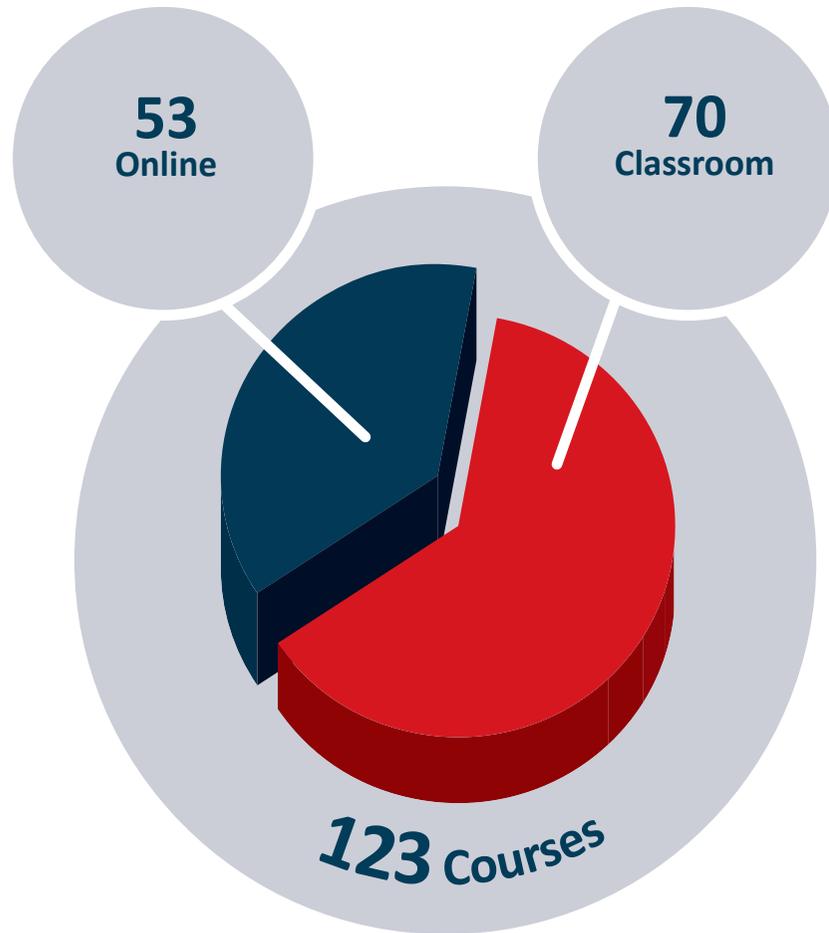
September 1st 2022 – August 31st 2023



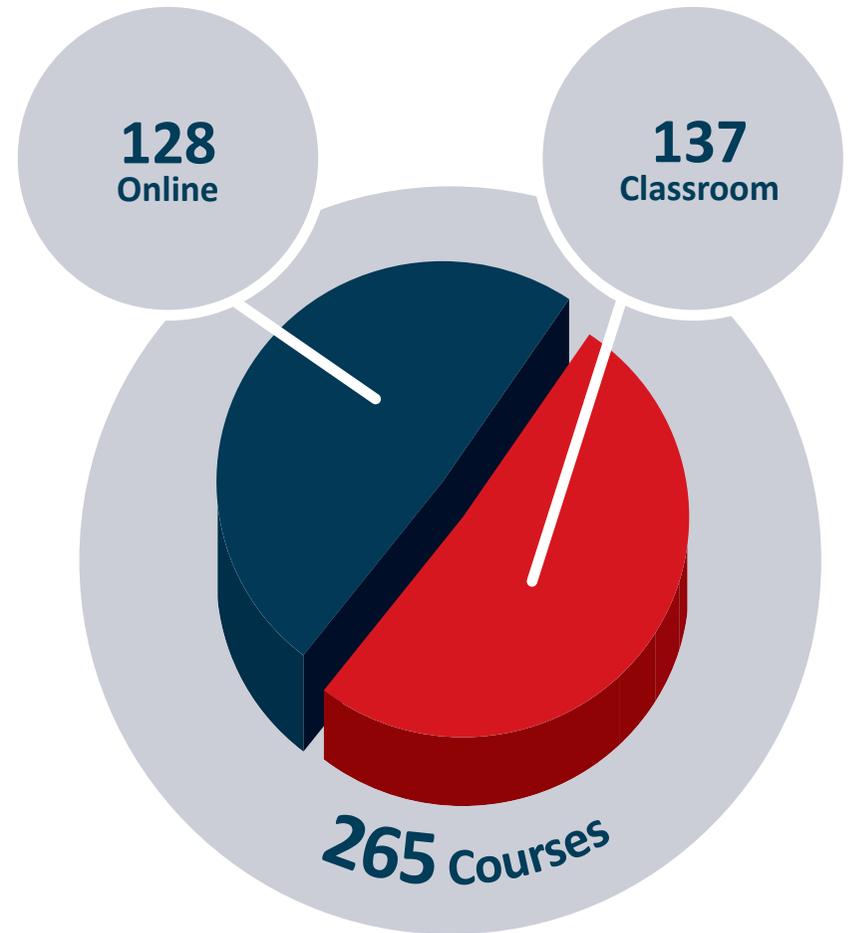
53% of all delegates in the last 12 months took their training online

The statistics over the last 12 months

September 1st 2022 – August 31st 2023



Non-Qualification Courses



FD&A Qualification Courses

The statistics over the last 12 months

September 1st 2022 – August 31st 2023





Marketing

It's been an exceptional year for the marketing department of the FIA. We have been able to focus on meeting the demands of the industry. Through our consistent content creation and timely updates on prominent issues, we have maintained our position as the leading news source for the fire industry and ensured that our sector is informed of the most recent government guidance, regulatory changes, and breaking news. We have worked hard to make sure that the right people are receiving the right messages at the right times, and we will keep up this effort for the years ahead.

But what exactly does this mean? We have made great strides in reaching wider audiences and increasing our engagement across multiple platforms. As we compare our performance to previous years, the improvement is evident.

Firstly, our online content has been a major success. We've managed to post an average of 30 news blogs and articles per month on our website, a metric not even recorded last year. Press releases are also seeing a steady rise, proving that our narrative is gaining traction.

The company's social media metrics show a significant increase in engagement, with an average of 6,332 monthly Twitter impressions and 42,000 LinkedIn followers, compared to 32,405 last year. The company's website traffic statistics show that its content is reaching the right audiences, with over 27,331 monthly sessions and a notable increase in unique visitors. This growth in digital footprint indicates a larger and more impactful digital footprint, setting the stage for an even better year ahead.

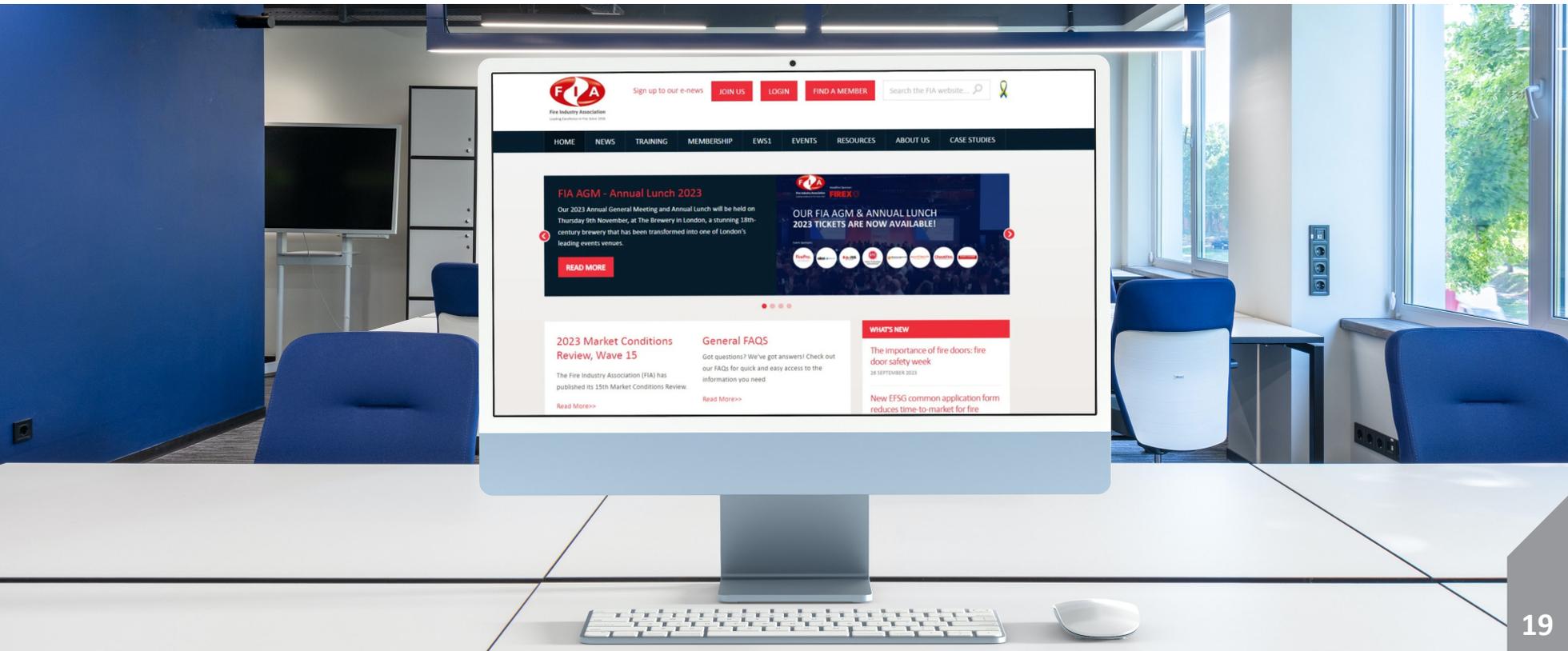
The future of marketing at the FIA looks promising as we have promoted the Marketing Executive to Marketing Manager and transitioned our Membership Executive to a Marketing Content Executive. The two key aims of this are to allow us to create higher quality, longer form articles and reports for our members, our councils and the wider industry;; what's more, this will free up capacity to start investing heavily in Microsoft Marketing and automating and improving much of our communication.



FIA Website and Systems

Since 2022, our website has been a go-to source for people seeking information on the latest technical guidance, government regulations, advanced training, and relevant news related to the fire industry. Additionally, these resources aid fire professionals to get a better understanding of the industry.

We have increased the variety of services we offer to our users by using our content calendar and working closely with different councils and working groups. This ensures that all information is presented at the right time and place, and this will only improve as we instigate the new marketing software packages and website due to be delivered early next year.





E-Communication

Every year, we strive to make our e-communications material more user-friendly and captivating by enhancing both its quality and its presentation.

Our fireside chats have been the main element of every Focus email we have issued since 2022. These presentations highlight the variety of roles and people within the industry for those who are already working there. Members and the greater fire industry continue to find our fireside talks to be quite popular. We are pleased to give the professionals, who make our industry so great, a platform to share their stories and network with the wider industry.

Our Monthly Membership Update, introduced in 2020, offers exclusive benefits, industry news, and highlights of assorted options available to our members. We have been listening to our members' feedback and have made several improvements for their benefit. Now, we provide key highlights and sections to our members, including the Member Benefit of the Month, Technical Guidance, CPD Webinars, and Events. We also offer unique networking opportunities, providing a section to understand our new members who have recently joined. Our Monthly Membership Update had a click-through rate of 4.15% as of October 2022, but as of August 2023, it had climbed to 12.03%, representing an increase of 7.88%.

We have maintained the same format for our training emails, which mirrors the layout of the training section of our website. This consistency has made the email more familiar to our readers and has led to an increase in engagement as compared to its previous format.

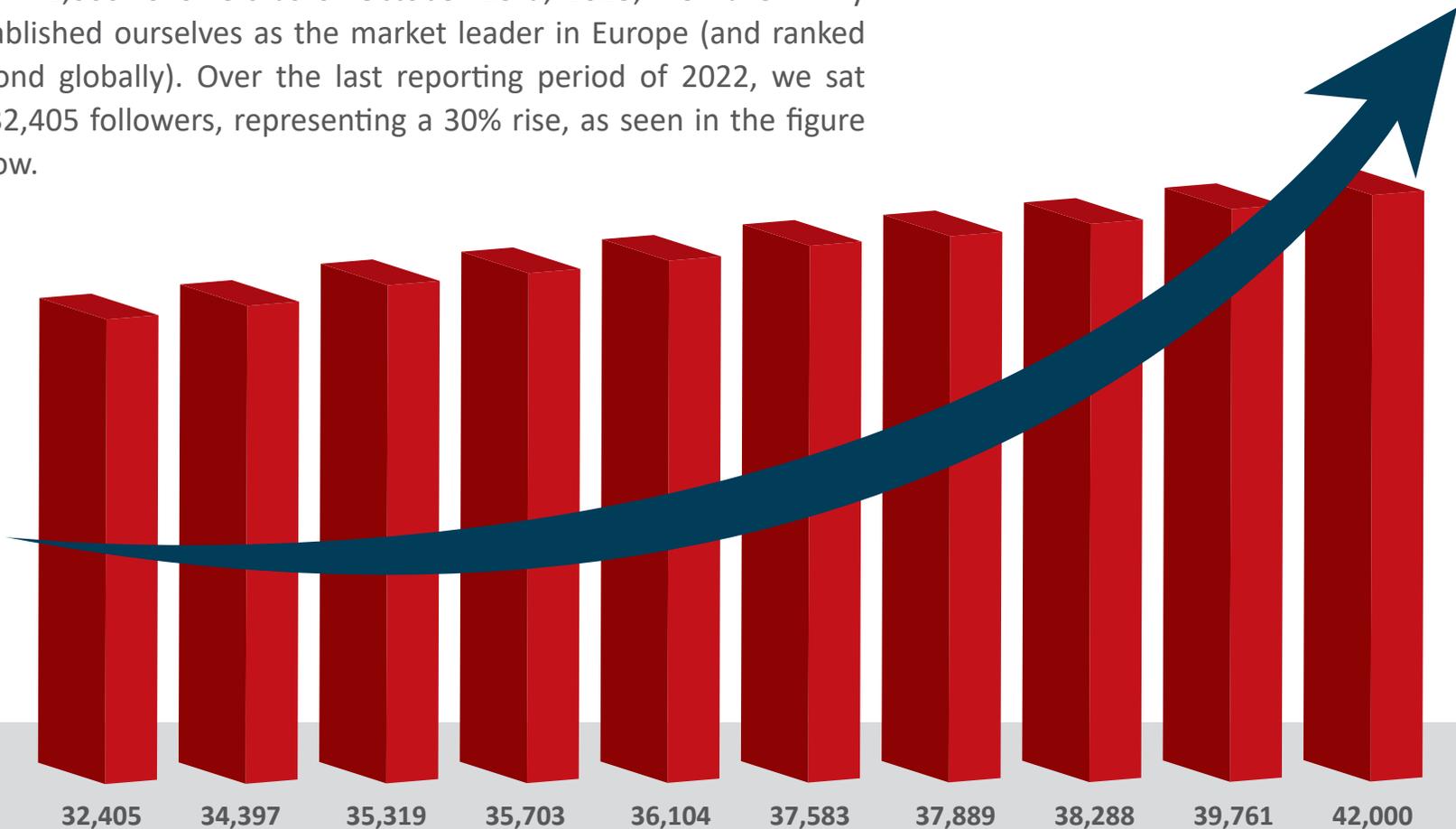


Social Media

All the FIA's social media channels have seen an increase in followers over the past year. Due to its capacity to facilitate contact with both businesses and consumers, LinkedIn has continued to be our strongest and most active platform. It is currently the most significant channel outside of our website and e-communication. With 42,000 followers as of October 23rd, 2023, we have firmly established ourselves as the market leader in Europe (and ranked second globally). Over the last reporting period of 2022, we sat at 32,405 followers, representing a 30% rise, as seen in the figure below.



LinkedIn Company Page Followers 2022-2023





Public Relations

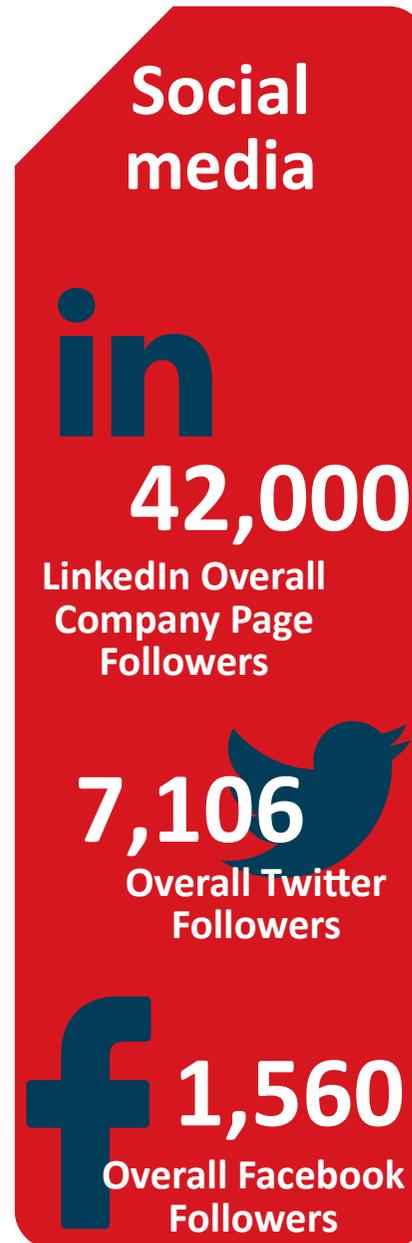
Our CEO has had another busy year ensuring the FIA membership is well represented in as many relevant areas as possible. The pandemic has ended but we still live with the aftermath such as online learning, virtual meetings and working from home etc; the never ending debacle of moving to UKCA markings created by BREXIT; the political and financial turmoil created by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Added to this is the finalisation of a number of pieces of important Government legislative changes; this liaison work has been undertaken with Home Office, DLUHC, All Party Parliamentary Groups, Competency Steering Groups, BAFF, FireQual, Fire Sector Federation, NFCC and many more.

We have had a good year working with the Government export division (UK DSE DBT) in our approach to setting up the FIA's first overseas branch. The Cyprus Branch was formally launched in October this year with the delivery of the Country's first fire conference. On the reverse side of bringing overseas missions to the UK, the Northwich office is now set up as a Centre of Excellence and the UK DSE DBT will be bring interested visitors to look around and understand what UK's fire safety industry has to offer.

Finally, most of the liaison work with the above-mentioned bodies has been associated with the need for change following the Grenfell Tower reports (e.g., Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order, Fire Safety Bill, Building Safety Bill etc). HSE are taking a more dominant position, so we push to get a better understanding of their responsibilities and requirements. And of course – another Fire Minister and shadow fire minister that we need to get to know.

Customer Engagement



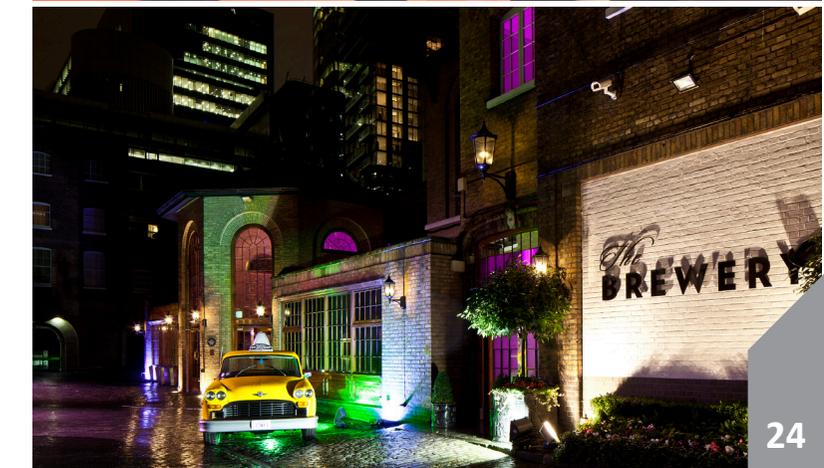
Events

Introduction

This year has seen an increase in the resources the FIA has allocated towards events. With the appointment of a dedicated Events Manager, an exciting programme of events has been delivered with more to come in the upcoming year.

The Fire Industry Association (FIA) AGM and Annual Lunch

The FIA Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Annual Lunch took place on 10th November 2022. Whilst technically two separate events, they effectively combine as one to form the most significant date in both the FIA's and wider industry's calendar. The most recent AGM and Annual Lunch was held at The Brewery in central London, which has become the home of the event. The morning AGM, held exclusively for FIA members, presents the highlights of the FIA's activities over the past 12-month period. During the Annual Lunch, Colin Todd MBE, FIA Director, was presented with the FIA's prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award. The luncheon itself saw a record attendance of over 500+ professionals. 2023's event will be a landmark year for the association as we are expanding the day by hosting networking drinks after the Annual Lunch.



Events

FIM EXPO

Organised every year by the FIA, the Fire Industry Manufacturers' (FIM) Expo features many of the UK's leading manufacturers in the fire industry. It focuses on showcasing the latest products and developments in the industry. With 25 exhibitors, a regional focus, held at prestigious and interesting venues, and high-quality delegates from the industry, FIM expo provides a unique offering from other larger exhibitions in the major cities. In 2023, the FIM Expo took place in Nottingham. During the Expo, we ran a number of CPD sessions on 'Wayfinding Signage for the Fire Service', 'Protecting Educational Premises from and 'Cloud not Clipboard'. Those in attendance took advantage of the chance to expand their professional networks, learn the latest information, and make new connections. We are looking forward to the next FIM Expo in Portsmouth Naval Dockyard in early 2024.



Events

FIREX International

FIREX International provides an excellent mixture of high quality seminars, the latest fire safety technology exhibited on numerous stands and first class networking opportunities when it runs at ExCeL in London's Docklands. Every year, the FIA hosts a Networking Lounge at the show where members and non-members can meet the FIA team and engage with fellow industry professionals.

The FIA Garden Bar, created from a restored fire engine, was once again a standout attraction, with FIA staff readily available to discuss many industry initiatives - as well as our membership, training programmes, events, councils, and working groups. Mates in Mind, a charity group with which we collaborate were also present on the FIA stand. They highlighted their efforts to raise awareness and promote the importance of mental health within the fire industry. We were also joined by Consort, a long-standing member benefit of the FIA, who provided insightful guidance and details on insurance, particularly professional indemnity for professionals operating in the fire industry.



Events

FIA Northwich Opening Event

The opening of FIA Northwich, a state-of-the-art facility was a landmark event for the association. On Wednesday 13th September, FIA Northwich opened its doors for the first time to over 150+ attendees, comprised of FIA Members, Fire and Rescue Services, the National Fire Chiefs Council and government officials.

FIA CEO Ian Moore presented the aims of Northwich as a centre of excellence for our industry, a new home for our leading training, as well as acting as our northern hub for our members in the surrounding regions. The new facility can host exhibitions and seminars, practical hands-on training on a variety of systems, including sprinklers and other fixed extinguishing systems and opportunities for member companies to display their products. The upcoming years will be an exciting time as the FIA seeks to further develop the potential of the Northwich Office.



Market Conditions Survey 2023 – Wave 15

FIA Annual Market Conditions Survey Summary

The FIA conducted its latest Market Conditions Survey (Wave 15) amidst the backdrop of Brexit, a post-pandemic landscape and Russia's incursion into Ukraine – all of which are pushing the UK to the brink of a potential recession. Our report found the fire safety industry, despite facing a slew of challenges, showcases commendable resilience. The current trends underscore the sector's adaptability and emphasise the critical nature of its services, especially in tumultuous times. The FIA remains dedicated to championing high standards and competency levels across the industry. Here are some of the key statistics:



ENQUIRIES AND ORDERS

39% of businesses reported a marginal drop in enquiries, 43% noted a slight increase. There was an uptick in public sector enquiries, jumping from 14% to 56%, possibly hinting at public sector growth spurred by new legislation.



SUPPLIER CHALLENGES

Supplier pricing hikes are stabilising with only 56% reporting increases this year, a considerable drop from 93% the previous year. This could be due to the recent inflationary pressures stabilising and in some cases easing.



LABOUR AND TRAINING

A mixed picture emerges in this sector. 47% of businesses recruited skilled labour, a 6% increment from last year. Apprenticeship intakes rose by 20%, showing commitment to nurturing a skilled workforce.



EXPORT LANDSCAPE

There's a dynamic shift in the export arena. While 37% noted growth, a similar number reported a decrease in their export business. We hope that our move to establish FIA Cyprus can help our members access a new market.



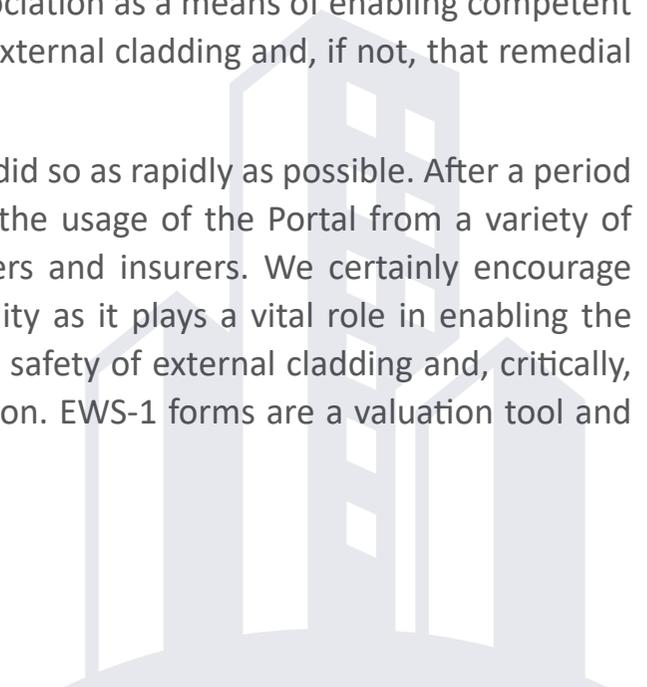
EWS1

The tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire which took place now over six years ago and which resulted in 72 deaths exposed the deficiencies of policies stretching back over decades affecting housing, local government and the Fire and Rescue Services. Cuts in public services, deregulation and other structural changes precipitated a culture in which fire policy and fire safety had fallen below the necessary standards.

The severity and lethality of the fire at Grenfell Tower was due largely to the external cladding on the building which caused the rapid spread of the fire from its source on the 4th floor of the 24-storey block in West London. Other elements of the design and construction of the external walls also contributed including the presence of other combustible materials surrounding the windows and the absence of suitably located and installed cavity barriers.

As a result, many owners were unable to sell their properties subject to determining whether their homes were able to go on the market. EWS-1 forms [EWS standing for External Wall Survey] were developed by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors [RICS], UK Finance and the Building Societies Association as a means of enabling competent fire experts to record whether buildings are fire safe in respect of their external cladding and, if not, that remedial work must be carried out.

As such we developed an easy-to-use platform from a standing start and did so as rapidly as possible. After a period of improving the Portal, we are seeing quite clearly an acceleration in the usage of the Portal from a variety of stakeholders from buyers, sellers, EWS assessors and, of course, lenders and insurers. We certainly encourage all stakeholders and beneficiaries actively to promote and use this facility as it plays a vital role in enabling the identification of domestic buildings that are safe with respect to the fire safety of external cladding and, critically, those which are not safe and will therefore require urgent remedial action. EWS-1 forms are a valuation tool and not a full fire safety report.



FIA's Councils

Our industry-leading councils have been and always will be at the very heart of the FIA and this section is clear evidence why that is the case.



Extinguishing Council

SIG Lithium

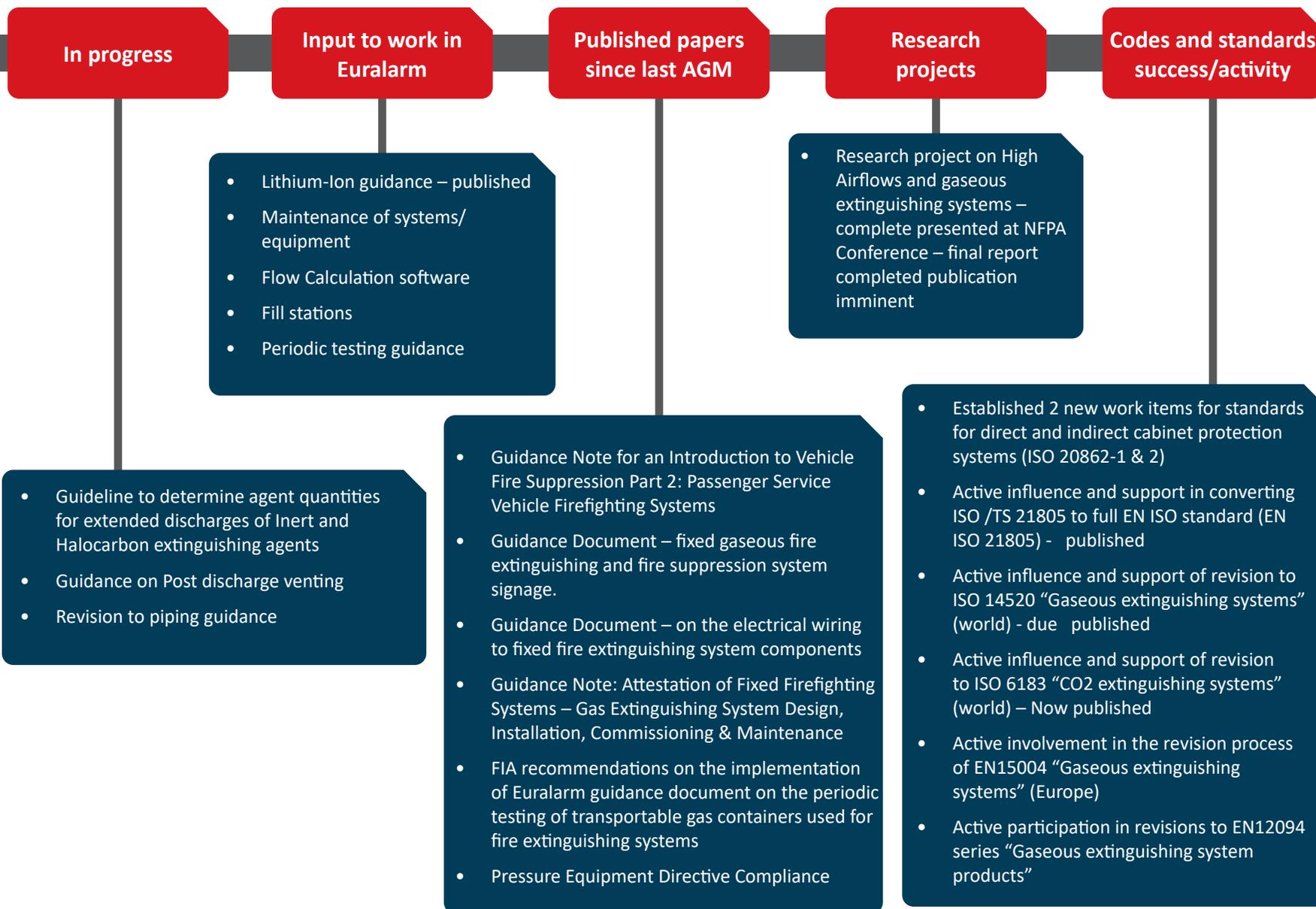
Nearly 200 members from business, government, and universities make up the SIG on Li-ion Battery Fires, which is drafting guidance on battery fire protection.

Activities since last AGM

- New fire Class for Li-ion Batteries - R Thilthorpe convenor of ISO/TC21/SC2 WG 11

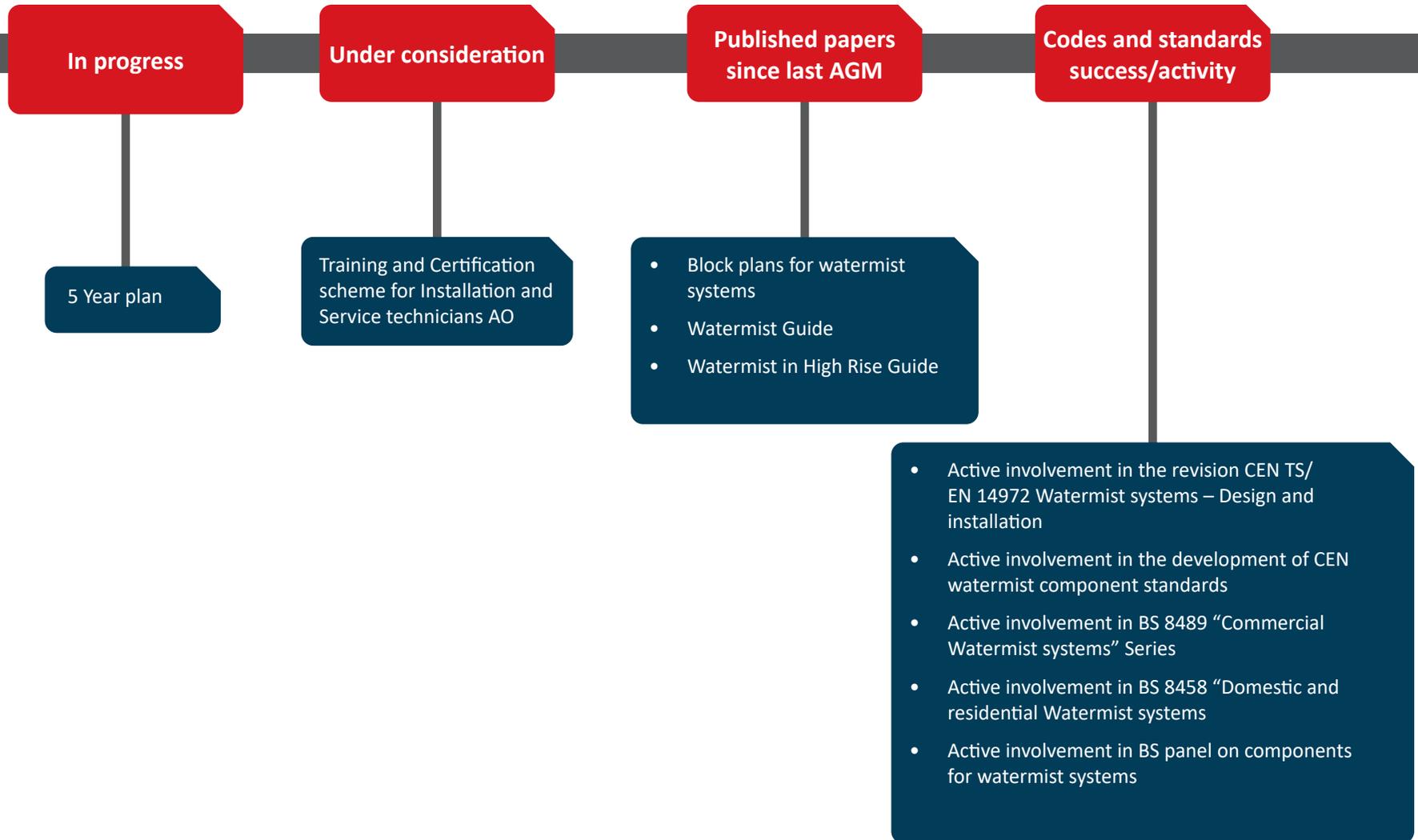
Extinguishing Council

Working Group Gases



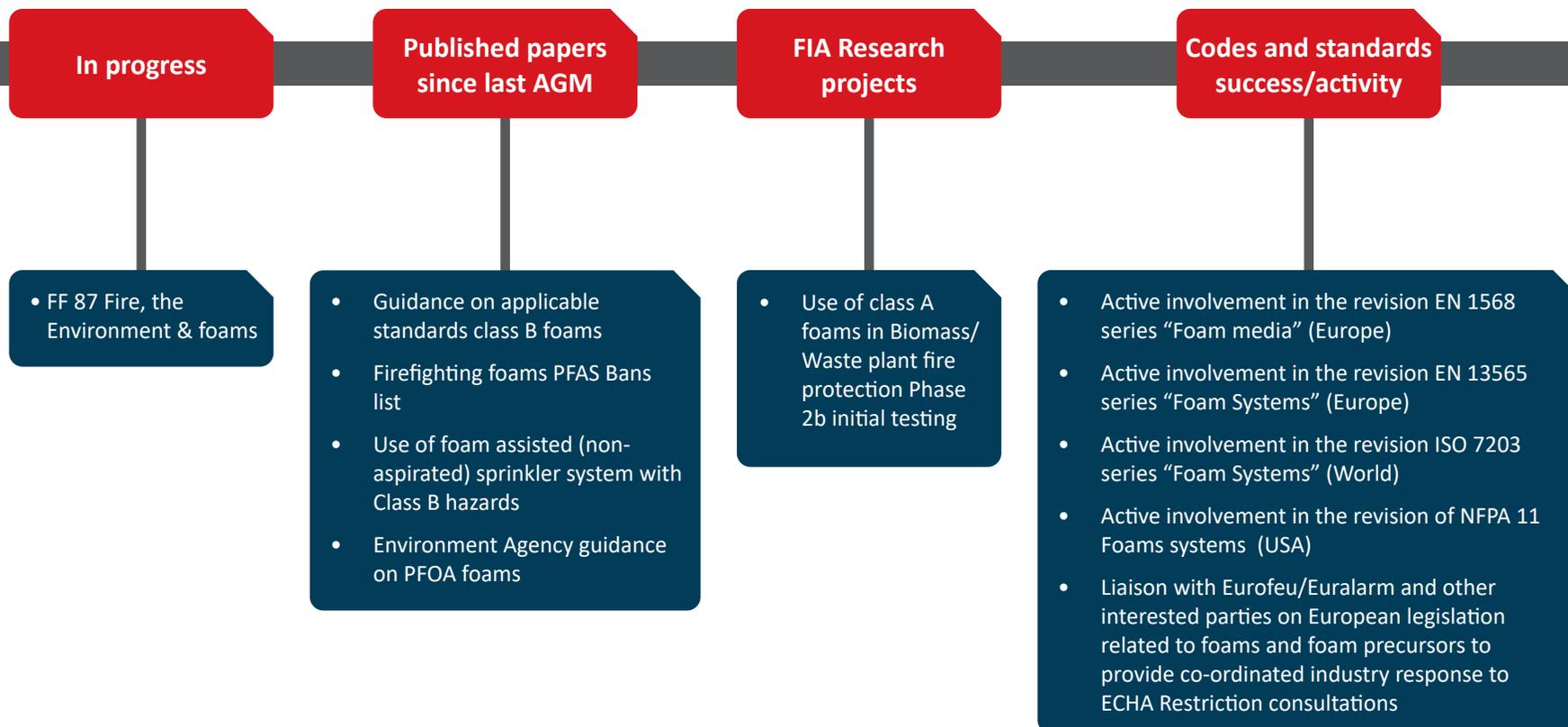
Extinguishing Council

Watermist



Extinguishing Council

Working Group Foam



Extinguishing Council

EMTC (Extinguisher Manufacturers Technical Committee)

Codes and standards
success/activity

- Input into EN 3 “Portable Fire Extinguishers” revisions
- Input into BS 6165 “small Disposable Extinguishers”
- Input into BS 7863 “Colour coding for fire Extinguishers” revision

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG02 – Fire Alarm Communications

Published papers since last AGM

- Guidance on connection to an ARC & EN 54-21 multi path signalling

Ongoing work

- Guidance on IP connectivity and remote services
- Guidance on PD 6669
- Continued liaison with BT/Openreach
- Monitoring ECHO progress
- Ofcom liaison around the 2G/3G switch-off

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG03 – Fire Detectors

Ongoing work

- Revision of ASD Code of Practice
- Code of Practice for VFD Systems
- Video flame detectors LPS standard
- Special Interest Group on PFAS in detection products

Funded research projects

- Smoke detection where stratification is expected
- False alarms and development of an LPS standard
- Performance of older heat detectors

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG05 – Control and indicating equipment

Ongoing
work

- Monitoring of EN 54-2 and EN 54-4
- Guidance on anti-static precautions
- CIE connectivity and remote access

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG24 – Wireless systems

Ongoing
work

- Monitoring & guidance on SRD frequencies allocated by ETSI
- Monitoring & guidance on EN 54-25

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG27 – Alarm Devices

Funded research projects

- EN 54-23 VAD effectiveness – executive summary

Ongoing work

- Revision of joint FIA/BRE CoP 0001 on VADs
- Guidance on the installation of tactile vibrating devices
- Research with LFB and SFRS on the effectiveness of sounder frequencies

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

FDWG SAD (Smoke Alarm Devices)

Published documents

- Guidance on thatched roofs

Ongoing work

- Monitoring of EN 14604, BS 5446-2, BS 5546-4 & ISO 12239
- Research with LFB and SFRS on the effectiveness of sounder frequencies
- Liaison with the National Caravan Council
- Liaison with the Boat Safety Scheme

Fire Detection & Alarm Council

ELWG – Emergency lighting

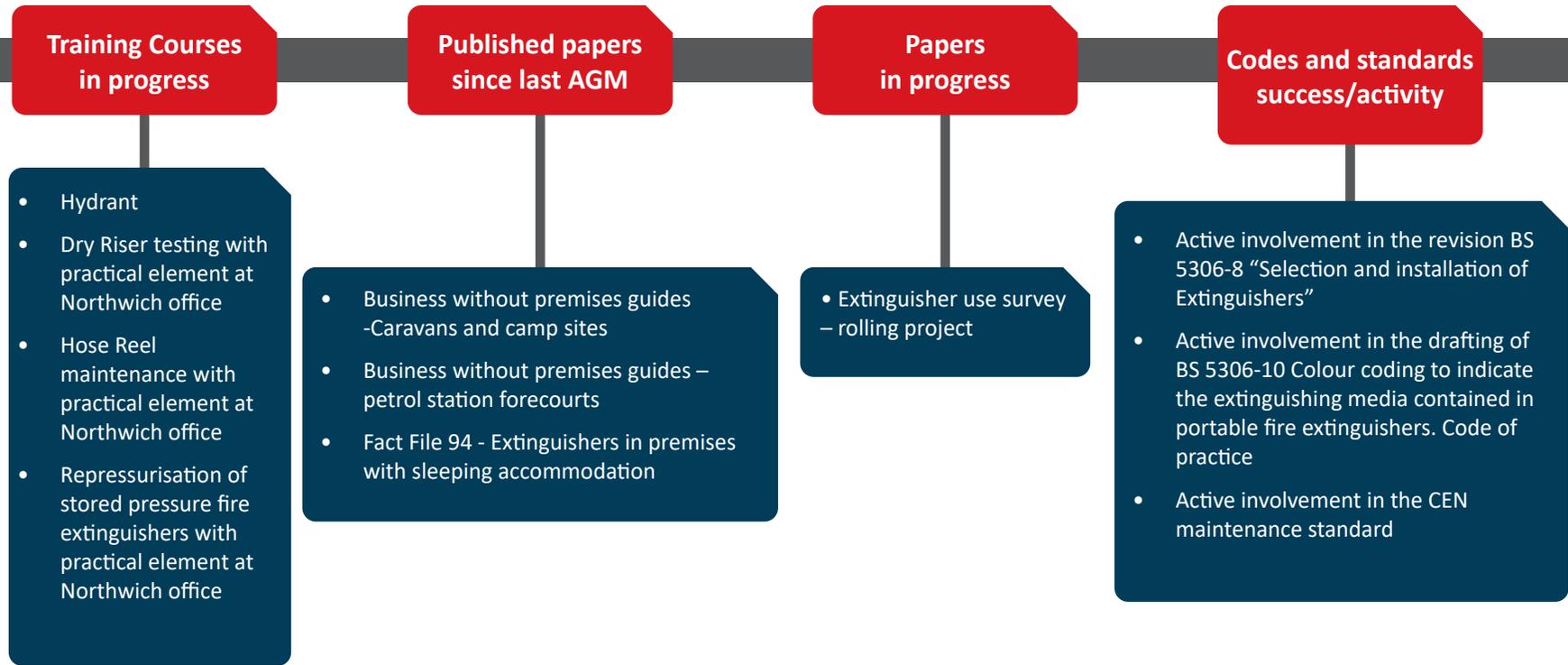
Ongoing
work

- Monitoring of British and European Standards
- Guidance/frequently asked questions for designers and maintainers



Services Council

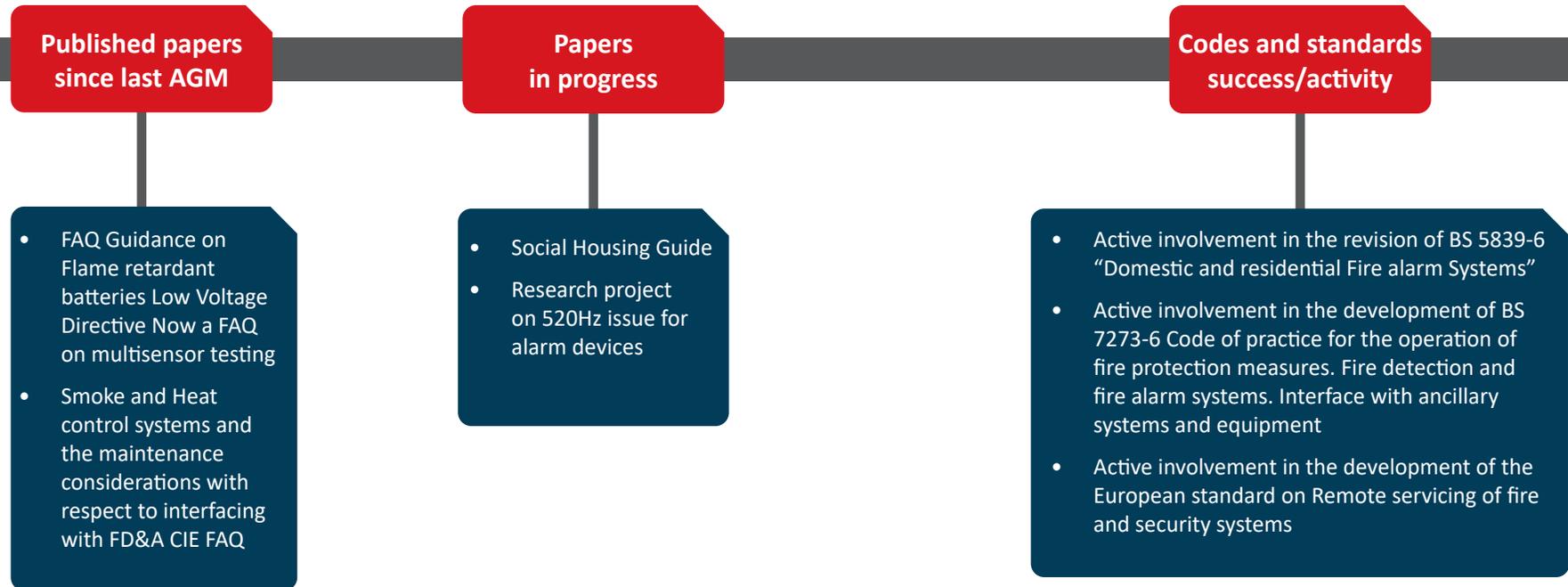
PSC (Portable Servicing Committee)





Services Council

I&MS (Installers & Maintainers Section)



FIRE
EXTINGUISHED



KEEP CLEAR

FIRE ALARM



Fire Risk Assessment Council

The Fire Risk Assessment Council represents the companies that offer fire risk assessment services. The Council's key role is to present the collective views of this sector of the industry, including negotiation and discussion with the government and other external bodies. As well as representing members' interests, the Council monitors and influences the development of relevant standards, legislation, and regulations. It also commissions research and provides guidance for product-related marketing, communications and training issues.

The changes in legislation happening due to the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower inquiry are very much an ongoing situation and with the legislation already published and enacted, there are still many guidance documents to assist and support the Fire Risk Assessment community that are still to be published.

With The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the implementation of The Fire Safety Act, any residential property that is not a house is now within the scope of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The publication of the new PAS 9980 provides a clear methodology for a Fire Risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding. While this guidance has been welcomed, it fails to address one of the main issues for fire risk assessors, which is Professional Indemnity (PI) insurance. Most insurance companies are implementing exclusions to the PI cover they offer which excludes any advice on the external wall. However, this should be remedied shortly with the government's introduction of a PI insurance scheme on a case-by-case basis.

With the Fire Safety Act and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations now introducing the external wall construction into the risk assessment, PI exclusions in this respect have meant that assessors have been unable to offer any advice on the external wall construction of high-rise blocks of flats. It's certainly impossible to determine from a simple appraisal what the composition and construction of the external wall is and what fire risk it may represent.

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FIRE ALARM



Fire Risk Assessment Council

With not all risk assessors competent or willing to carry out a Fire Risk assessment of External Wall construction and cladding, the Responsible person would need to employ a suitably qualified and insured Fire Engineer to obtain a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the premises.

The FIA has been actively talking to the insurance industry and government on a way forward to enable fire risk assessors to have appropriate and cost-effective professional indemnity insurance to carry out fire risk assessments of residential blocks of flats. This should now shortly be remedied with the government's introduction of a PI insurance scheme that can be accessed on a case-by-case basis.

The government response to the emotive subject of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) consultation highlights significant concerns over the proportionality, practicality, and the fire safety case for PEEPs in all high-rise residential buildings. To ensure the safety of disabled people in high-rise residential buildings is not overlooked or forgotten, the government held another consultation on Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS). The Fire Risk Assessment Council formed a Special Interest Group, including members of the housing sector, to respond to this consultation and provide proportional practical and safe guidance to the government on the use of emergency information evacuation sharing.

One of the Grenfell Tower inquiry recommendations was the introduction of Safety information boxes (PIBs) which should be provided in all high-rise residential buildings. A new Code of Practice has been prepared jointly by the FIA and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) with the assistance of the other organisations listed in the Acknowledgements section of the document. The Code is intended to support new legislation and guidance to be introduced by the government in response to the recommendations in the Phase 1 report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

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FIRE ALARM



Fire Risk Assessment Council

The report also recommended that the contents of PIBs should include various information that will be of value to firefighters during an emergency.

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 has renamed PIBs to Secure Information Boxes (SIB). The recently revised Approved Document B highlights the fact that the FIA Code of Practice for the provision of SIBs in residential buildings should be used as the best practice for these items.

It is not just legislation that has been changing due to the Grenfell Tower tragedy but also Standards and Guidance documents. The Fire Risk Assessment Council has always assisted in producing Standards and Guidance along with promoting their use in the industry. With the withdrawal of PAS 79-2 on issues surrounding the evacuation of disabled people and PEEPs, a new British standard is being developed to replace this and our Council with others are actively involved in this.

The proforma templates from both PAS 79-1 and -2 have now been published by the FIA with the permission of the copyright holder C.S. Todd & Associates who are FIA members, with the Managing Director being an FIA board member and Chair of the FIA Fire Risk Assessment Council. These templates cover the three legislative areas of Scotland, Northern Ireland and England & Wales and are freely available on the FIA website both for new risk assessments and the review of an existing risk assessment.

This Council continues its working relationship with the Industry Response Group Working Group 4 which produced a new Code of Practice for risk assessments on High Risk Residential Buildings (HRRBs). It offers a Code for industry best practice that details the defined level of competence appropriate for those fire risk assessors who are undertaking work on high-risk buildings in order to satisfy the legal requirements and performance standards identified as necessary to secure safety in those buildings.

Fire Engineering Council



The FIA's Fire Engineering Council represents fire engineering service providers, with its key role being to present the collective views of this sector of the industry, including negotiation and discussion with the central Government and other external bodies. The council does this by monitoring and influencing the development of relevant standards, legislation, and regulations, commissioning essential research and providing guidance for product-related marketing, communications, and training issues.

The Council has had a busy year in these respects, with new legislation that has been enacted and a new Building Safety Regulator (BSR). The new BSR will enforce a more stringent regulatory regime, looking at buildings throughout their life, from the planning stage through to construction and usage.

Throughout the last year the Council has been working on:

- The changes to The Building Safety Act, 2022 focussing on the following fire safety provisions:
- Banning of combustible materials in (and on) the external walls of buildings
- Consequential amendments following the laying of the Building (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2022
- Updated provisions for resisting fire spread over external walls The resulting changes to secondary regulation which include:
- The Building Regulations etc. (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023
- The Building (higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023

Fire Engineering Council



- The Building Safety Act 2022 (consequential Amendments etc.) Regulations 2023
- The Building (Approved Inspectors etc. and Review of Decisions) (England) Regulations 2023
- New regulations that will need to be complied with:
- The government will require two staircases in all new residential high-rises taller than 18m, rather than the 30m threshold previously proposed which will bring new challenges when designing such types of buildings. Revision of BS 9991 'Fire Safety in the Design, Management and Use of Residential Buildings – Code of Practice'
- This has been a major revision and, while not yet published, the Fire Engineering Council provided commentary and comments to the British Standards Institution during the draft for public comment stage
- The Fire Engineering Council has updated its guidance on Regulation 7 of the Building Regulations, which bans combustible materials on (and under) the external walls of in-scope buildings

FRES Council



Representing our suppliers to the Fire and Rescue sector, we continue our involvement within the Fire and Rescue landscape and beyond in the wider fire safety environment. Liaising with a number of government departments, the NFCC and a host of other stakeholders, we are able to contribute to and influence the changes occurring in the sector.

Highlights over the last year include:

- Responding pro-actively to the evolution of the Fire and Rescue Services
- Growing liaisons with central and local government, NFCC and the Fire Service College among many others
- Participation in exhibitions and other industry events
- Focus on Procurement and Product Innovation
- Practical assistance to Ukraine
- Progressing the PPE and Events Working Groups

Export Council



The FIA Export Council represents over 60 'FIA Exporters' in its efforts to grow the global placement of UK fire sector products and services. We continue to work with partners including DIT UK DSE (Department for International Trade, Defence & Security Exports), overseas fire trade bodies and exhibition organisers to develop tangible opportunities for our exporting member companies.

The latest DSE figures from the DIT show that the Fire Safety sector is incredibly strong. Within security exports, fire equipment exports are second only to cyber security exports. The latest analysis put the size of UK fire equipment exports at £575 million. Over the last 12 months, the Export Council has renewed its commitment to targeting and organising overseas trade missions.

The FIA delivered a Trade Mission to Cyprus on October 2023. The event included an exhibition featuring the best of British and Cypriot companies, alongside a co-located conference focussing on a variety of key issues affecting the UK and Cypriot fire industries. It was a resounding success with over 300 delegates in attendance that took part in a meaningful, insightful and productive discussion on fire safety. The Trade Mission served as a great start to FIA Cyprus which is the FIA's first international branch.

In addition to this, the FIA has recently secured a discount for FIA member exhibitors through the FSAI (Fire Security Association India) for the 2024 FSIE event in Mumbai. This is part of a closer working relationship between the FIA and the FSIE based on a pre-existing MOU between the two organisations. The FIA was also approached by Santander plc in August 2023 to become a partner to the fire industry for a programme called 'Access India'. This is in collaboration with an organisation called Moglix who are India's largest industrial goods marketplace with a specialist distribution business in fire safety and surveillance products by the name of DigiMRO.

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