

# NEWSLETTER

March 2009



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## Dear EFEE members

*EFEE a growing organisation in action*

Two new national memberships were approved by Council last October in Aachen, the Ukrainian Union of Explosives Engineers and the Hungarian Society for Blasting Technology, at the next council meeting in Budapest, April 2009, two more national memberships - the Estonian Association of Mining Enterprises and the Institute of Explosives Engineers from UK, will be suggested by the Board for approval. Contacts have been carried out with other national society regarding a future adhesion. The number of companies and individual membership is growing too and EFEE have crossed the European frontiers, with members in all continents.

In order to respond to this increasing in number of members and to regulate procedure the EFEE Constitution and Bylaws are under improvement process to be submitted to the next Council meeting. The 5<sup>th</sup> EFEE World Conference on Explosives and Blasting in April in parallel with the technical programme will provide an excellent forum for EFEE members to establish new contacts and to improve the cooperation and participate in EFEE meetings.



In between newsletters, board meetings, council meetings and conferences the EFEE delegates participate in important work in interest of the explosive engineers in Europe and beyond. The work is done though participation and support in projects familiar to EFEE, projects that originate directly from EFEE and last but not least the internal projects inside the organisation, administrated

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and boosted through the respective committees. In the following articles some of the present committees are presented, making status over their achievements, present work and future plans:

- The shotfire committee.
- The membership and marketing committee.
- The conference committee.
- The EU-directives committee.

Apart from the ongoing work the upcoming committee meetings will be held, along with the council meetings in Budapest, spring 2009, followed by the late summer Board meeting in June 2009 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

*José Carlos Gois, EFEE President and*

*Johan Finsteen Gjødvad, Chairman of the Newsletter committee and member of the board*

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## The shotfire committee [\[BACK\]](#)

*Working for a new shotfire certification in Europe*

The EU oriented Inter-European construction market of today is liberalised and open for contractors. This includes the segment of blasting operations. Contractors undertaking demolition or rock blasting are free to tender for contracts in all concerned countries. Discrimination over the borders is not accepted.

The contractors are entitled to use own staff and operators, machinery and equipment for their contracts disregarding country of work. There are, however, a number of obstacles.

A trained shotfirer with license from his country of domicile will usually face a practical problem when crossing a national border. He has to obtain a new valid license before being allowed to fire a blast in that particular country. He has to pass an examination, not only to control his competence concerning the national laws, regulations governing safety and specific regulations for blasting work, but even also for his technical skills.

EFEE wants to change this; knowing that the blasting technology can be learned and used across the borders. EFEE wants to make it possible for blasters to acquire exactly the same up-to-date education in all of the 20 EFEE member countries and also that such training shall be available in the actual mother tongue. Thus to avoid any doubt as to technical competence.

EFEE has previously prepared training requirement manuals for the rock blasting and the demolition blasting work and has initiated the development of the means for the training of blasters. This work is now established within an EU-supported project called ESSEEM – European Shotfirer Standard Education for Enhanced Mobility.

The ESSEEM project runs for 24 months starting 15.November 08. The project aims at preparing educational means for shotfirer training to meet the requirements prepared by EFEE for rock blasting and demolition respectively. The overall intention is to prepare for harmonised technical training of European shotfirers on level 4 and thus to enhance mobility.

The project is supported by EU with SIU (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education) as National Agent. The Beneficiary is NFF Prosjekt, Norway.

The project is divided in 12 work packages covering the training segments as defined by EFEE each allocated to one or more partners. Most of the work packages focus on technology and learning means whereas some few focus on review and dissemination.

The work load is passed on to the Partners in the project, each taking on one or more work packages. The partners are companies, universities and schools in 6 European countries. The work started by the end of 2008, and will be finished by the end of 2010.

*Karl Kure, Chairman of the Shotfirer Committee*  
*Aslak Ravlo, Manager ESSEEM Project*

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## **The membership and marketing committee** [\[BACK\]](#)

*Gathering the explosive engineers, -companies and -organizations of Europe and beyond*

The Membership and Marketing Committee is strongly involved in developing means for expanding membership and establishing membership goals as well as devising ways to attract new members. Being at the heart of the EFEE activity, the Committee encourages collaboration among members and provides for serving all members' needs through publications, conference programming and administrative measures.

As a consequence of its profound work, two new members became a part of the Federation last year, welcoming Hungary, Ukraine, Macedonia and Kazakhstan in EFEE in 2009.

*Valry Mitkov, Chairman of the Membership and Marketing Committee*

## **The conference committee** [\[BACK\]](#)

*Creating an important meeting point for knowledge sharing, networking and business*

Since the year 2000 EFEE is planning and organizing in cooperation with the local country organisation world conferences.

The first EFEE world conference was held in Munich, Germany in 2000 followed by Prague in the Czech Republic in 2003, Brighton in England in 2005, Vienna, Austria in 2007.

This year the world conference will be held in Budapest, Hungary on the 26th - 28th April 2009. The conferences are interesting, and very important, meeting points for EFEE members and professionals of the International Blasting Community.

In order to enable a perfect workflow between EFEE, the local country organization and the professional event manager the Conference Committee was established. I have had the pleasure to be the chairman of the Conference Committee since 2005. At the present the other members of the committee is: Roger Holmberg from Sweden, Jose Carlos Gois from Portugal, Remy Müller from Switzerland, Donald Jonson from Sweden and James Tyler of England.

Despite the current worldwide financial and economical turbulences cast a shadow over the 5th World Conference in Budapest. EFEE together with the event manager is facing a substantial challenge. Nevertheless we are certain that we all will be able to manage this challenge, establishing yet another successful conference, from the 26th till 28th of April in Budapest, and many more to come.

*Heinz Berger, Chairman of the Conference Committee*

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## The EU directives committee [\[BACK\]](#)

### *Enhancing the Security of explosives*

In order to introduce you with the activities of our Committee and our important role in the future, I must first introduce you with a brief summary of some previous findings and causes for the EU Action Plan.

On 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2004, in the immediate aftermath of the Madrid attacks, the European Council, in its Declaration on Combating Terrorism, established as a priority the need "to ensure terrorist organizations and groups are starved of the components of their trade". The European Council noted in particular that »there is a need to ensure greater security of firearms, explosives, bomb-making equipment and technologies".

In response, a policy on enhancing the security of explosives started to develop. One of the key measures undertaken was setting up an Explosives Security Experts Task Force (ESETF), composed of private and public sector representatives, with a goal of preparing recommendations for actions in the explosives security field.

The objective of the Action Plan is to combat the use of explosive devices by terrorists within the EU. This will be done while taking full account of relevant economic issues.

The Action Plan is built on:

- Three pillars: *prevention*, *detection* and *response*, containing specific measures on explosive precursors, the supply chain (storage, transport, traceability) and detection.
- A horizontal set of measures concerning public security which complement and consolidate the three pillars.

The Action Plan contains 47 specific actions under the horizontal, prevention, detection and response headings, along with deadlines for their implementation. If it is possible that a particular action could have significant economic consequences, the implementation of that action will depend on further feasibility work.

Attacks such as the Madrid bombings were carried out using commercially available explosives. More can be done to prevent the use of such explosives, chemical precursors and detonators by terrorists. Under impulsion of the Commission, a group of experts – involving all the relevant civil society stakeholders – investigated the issue and recommended a list of 47 action points now endorsed by the Commission in the form of an action plan tackling the different angles of the issue. The action plan aims to enhance the security of explosives, calling, among other, for the establishment of rapid alert systems on lost and stolen explosives and suspicious transactions, a network of European bomb-disposal experts, the development of an explosive forensic capability in Europol, research on security of explosives and detonators as well as schemes for the vetting of personnel involved in the industry.

On 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2008, the Justice and Home Affairs Council reached political agreement on an EU action plan on improving the security of explosives. This Action Plan is one of the measures proposed in the Commission's package of counter-terrorism in November 2007.

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The Action Plan reflects a comprehensive approach to countering threats linked to explosives and precursors to explosives. The work concentrated on four separate issues: precursors, supply chain, detection and public security.

The strategic objective of the Action Plan is to combat the use of explosive devices by terrorists within the EU.

It should be noted that prevention, detection and response form the pillars of the EU's approach to the security of explosives. At the same time, a horizontal set of measures concerning public security complement and consolidate all of the pillars.

The horizontal priorities in the field of explosives security are:

- improving the exchange of timely information and disseminating best practices;
- establishing coordination mechanisms and taking joint action on particular issues;
- stepping up explosives related research.

The Action Plan was prepared by the Explosives Security Experts Task Force, composed of representatives of the relevant stakeholders, including industry and public authorities.

In June 2007, the Task Force submitted a report, identifying 50 recommendations for measures designed to improve the security of explosives in the EU.

As one of a series of measures helping to combat terrorism, the Commission on 4 April 2008 has adopted measures to strengthen the control of explosives for civil use.

The Commission Directive on the identification and traceability of explosives adopted in the framework of Council Directive 93/15/EEC on the placing on the market and supervision of explosives for civil uses requires Member States to ensure that explosives and each smallest packaging unit thereof are marked with a unique identification. The label shall contain information about the country of production or import, the manufacturer, place of production and a unique product code, both in the form of text, and as a bar or matrix code.

These have to be fixed on the various types of explosives, such as cartridge explosives; two-component explosives, electric, non-electric and electronic detonators; detonating cords and safety fuses, etc.

Undertakings in the explosives sector will have to maintain records for 10 years after delivery of explosives or whenever known after the use, in a way which allows keeping track of explosives in such a way that those holding the explosives can be identified at any time.

This will make it easier to trace the origin of lost or stolen explosives and to quickly establish whether persons holding explosives are doing so legally and what the itinerary of the explosives has been.

Member States should transpose Commission Directive 2008/43/EC before 5 April 2009. The national measures adopted to transpose the Directive should also be communicated to the Commission before 5 April 2009. Member States should apply the provisions of the Directive from 5 April 2012.

Through the upper text, I tried to show you the current work of the working group regarding the Commission Directive 2008/43/EC from April 4<sup>th</sup>. As you probably have already noticed, there have been some difficulties in regard to this year's transfers and licenses (from our side and from

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the side of competent local organs), as a consequence of the implementation of the Directive mentioned above.

It is surprising, that EFFE was not actively included in the discussions at the European Commission meetings, ESETF meetings and the civil associations from industry. From the point of view of civil associations, Deutscher Sprengverbande.V., Euromines, FEEM – Federation of European Explosives Manufacturers and UEPG – European Aggregates Association have already been actively included.

Shot firer and mine companies are the largest final users of explosives and explosive means in the industry, opposed to few large producers of explosives in the EU market, that are in a totally different situation; there is a very large number of small companies, whose beside activity of mining engage in the distribution of explosives in smaller quantities with their own storage facilities; this points out, that there is still no awareness of the effects which the EU Action Plan on Enhancing the Security of explosives will have on their business.

My personal conclusion and notification to all members – shot firers - is, that our work will become even more demanding, we will need further education of our shot firers beside of environment and safety will also be focus on protection against abuse and theft of explosives and explosives means.

In a very short time, the profession of a shot firer will become one of the most demanding professions; beside the industrial accidents at work, we could even become targets of terrorists.

The work of work group for the Explosives EU is still far from being finished, but it is still not too late to include EFFE to cooperate; on the contrary, now is time for our shot firer to actively approach and intervene feedbacks from ground, necessary cooperating with ESETF members, on EU and national level.

My activities done so far were above all examinations of the EU explosives working group and establish a contact with the responsible Commission official, Mr. Maik Schmahl. His response was very positive, for which I would like to thank him. I am thanking also the members of ESTEF from Slovenia, that they equipped me with adequate information.

The work in the EU explosives working group and committee will be very interesting in the future, as will be the program of activity of which is being prepared at this time. I also expect the members of EFEE to make themselves more relevant in this direction and play a more active role.

Plans of the explosives working group for the year 2009 are above all to check, how the Implementation of Commission 2008/43/EC occurs, the setting up, pursuant to Council Directive 93/15/EEC, a system for the identification and traceability of explosives for civil uses how it actually operates in the real world -

The working group will be asked to give its opinion on the conclusion of the contractor compiling the evaluation.

The working group will also be asked if it would consider it worthwhile to make changes to the Explosives Directive and what these changes should be.

Discussions of the working group in the future will be running also in the following fields:

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- Internal Market package The New Legal Framework, the modernisation of the New Approach for marketing of products was adopted in Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008.
  - The Explosives Notified Bodies met on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2008 in Bratislava and predominantly focused on the issue of information exchange. Knowledge of the issued certificates is essential for market surveillance, and therefore each notified body should have a list of the certificates that it has issued on its web site.
  - Technical issue compliance checklists to assess whether the key essential safety requirements for on-site mixed explosives are fulfilled. Due to the specific nature of explosives, the Commission services recommend to apply the relevant general and specific essential safety requirements to all on-site mixed explosives, whether they are placed on the market or not.

I hope that I showed you the importance and the demanding work that awaits the Committee for EU Directive in the future. In the next newsletter – April 2009- I will focus on the project – SCEPYLT- The Pan-European Information System on Explosives Control to Prevent and Fight against Terrorism. The project was created in order to electronically handle requests for intra-community transfers of explosives in line with the intra-community transfer form that was introduced by Commission Decision 2004/388/EC in 2004.

*EU -Directives committee – Chairman PREDRAG SINIK*

## **Papers in the 5<sup>th</sup> EFEE World Conference & workshop [\[BACK\]](#)**

The 5<sup>th</sup> World EFEE Conference in Budapest on April is preceded by a Workshop concerned Electronic Detonators and the Application of Explosives in Welding and Compaction processes. This Workshop will provide a global view of the recent upgrade regarding electronic detonator and give the opportunity to understand the potential of the explosives in other areas less explored by the explosives engineers.

The Conference provides a large number of papers regarding Blasting Experiences, EU Directives and Harmonisation regarding education and vocational training, Health, Safety and Environment and Technical development. This spectrum of communications is enlarged with other subjects as the Explosive Detection, Blast Design and Shot hole development. More than 40 papers will be presented in two parallel sessions during two days. More than three hundred of engineers, teachers, shotfires, managers, authorities and trader concerned to explosives and blasting will be focused in the new trends in vocational training, technology and blasting techniques and on security problems.

*José Carlos Gois, EFEE President*

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## Upcoming events [\[BACK\]](#)

2009	Apr 1-3	12th Int. Seminar "New Trends in Research of Energetic Materials"	<a href="http://www.ntrem.com/">http://www.ntrem.com/</a>
	Apr 26-28	The 5th EFEE World Conference on Explosives and Blasting	<a href="http://www.efee.eu">www.efee.eu</a>
	March 23-27	5 <sup>th</sup> Asia Mining Congress 2009, Singapore	<a href="mailto:winnie.koh@terrapinn.com">winnie.koh@terrapinn.com</a>
	May 19-21	Fundamentals of Directional Drilling (Course)	<a href="http://www.peice.com/eventdetails.aspx?event=104857%20&amp;frfi=16734">http://www.peice.com/eventdetails.aspx?event=104857%20&amp;frfi=16734</a>
	May 23-28	ITA-AITES World Tunnel Congress 2009	<a href="http://www.wtc2009.org">www.wtc2009.org</a> <a href="http://www.ita-hun.hu">www.ita-hun.hu</a>
	May 28-29	Blasting Techniques 2009	<a href="http://www.blastmine.sk">www.blastmine.sk</a>
	June 14-17	2009 RETC - Rapid Excavation & Tunneling	<a href="http://www.retc.com">www.retc.com</a>
	June 22-26	Securing the Future	<a href="http://www.security.skelleftea.se">www.security.skelleftea.se</a>
	July 27-31	22 <sup>nd</sup> International Colloquium on the Dynamics of Explosions and Reactive Systems	<a href="http://www.icders2009.com">www.icders2009.com</a>
	Sept 13-17	Fragblast-9	<a href="http://www.fragblast.org">www.fragblast.org</a>
	Nov 12-13	14th PA Drilling and Blasting Conference	<a href="http://conferences.psu.edu/Blasting">conferences.psu.edu/Blasting</a>