



Federation Newsletter

Spring 2020

Number 18

EVENTS

- 6 May 2020
Federation AGM
Virtual Meeting
- 21 May 2020
Webinar
8-10 September
2020
FIREX at EXCEL
- 15 May 2020
Webinar
22-24 September
2020
Fire Safety Event
NEC Birmingham
- Fire Safety
Conference
4 November 2020
QEII London
- INTERSCHUTZ
14 to 19 June 2021
Hannover.

Directors

Michael Harper – Chair
Andrew Lynch
Dave Russell
Dennis Davis
Jon O'Neil
Niall Rowan
Tom Roche

Links

[http://www.
firesectorfederation.co.uk](http://www.firesectorfederation.co.uk)

Dennis Davis

[executive@
firesectorfederation.co.uk](mailto:executive@firesectorfederation.co.uk)

Alternate
firstfirecall@aol.com

Through the Looking Glass



As the Prime Minister returns to Downing Street and tentative discussions start on how to ease out of lockdown the UK, like the rest of the World, finds itself peering through the looking glass of the pandemic emergency. Members know, from the previously circulated information, [ministers-advice](#) how difficult it is to have clear guidance and that need can only intensify going forward.

The country will of course move on and the Board is keen to look at how the Federation might assist the fire sector recover in what most commentators now call "the new normal". Ideally to enable the Board to support the sector – right now where that can be done safely, sensibly and practically – and progressively by suggesting measures that keep pace with the government release of the lockdown - we need to plan.

The Board's current approach is to develop a revival framework; enabling suggestions, ideas or issues deserving wider consideration to be refined so they can then be used to inform and influence policy and practice. No doubt many members are already doing something similar and if you are willing to share those thoughts please do so to help the Federation add voice to the Sector's call. [Executive](#)

Annual General Meeting 6 May 2020

Like many organisations the Federation has embarked upon its first virtual AGM and papers are being distributed. The impact of the pandemic remains foremost in the Board's considerations and this is reflected in the budget proposal for the current year. There were no alternative nominations for Directors so a 'block re-election' is proposed. If any member cannot find the details to join the AGM please make contact. [Executive](#)

Fire Safety Bill 2020

The Federation has continued to work with Home Office to address some of the implications arising from the proposed amendment of the Fire Safety Order. [RR\(FS\)O Bill](#) Most recently this has involved concerns on updating fire risk assessments to include the external walls of multi occupied residential buildings. The Bill's impact assessment suggests around 1.6 million buildings may be affected by this clarification and the Federation, highlighting limited industry capacity, has suggested a phased introduction will be required to meet the probable demand.

In an associated activity related to industry wide improvements arising from the Grenfell tragedy the Federation led work group considering fire risk assessor competency is now moving towards proposals on how best to implement its formal recommendations possibly through a new sector wide code of practice.

A Reformed Building Safety Regulatory System

The early April announcements of the results of the Building Safety Proposals consultation linked to the two published outcomes, Response and Economic Impact [BSP Response](#) [BSP Impact](#) offer considerable insight of the government intent to: improve the current system; advance remediation of unsafe cladding, and update Approved Document B.

More recently in another consultation a questionnaire was issued by MHCLG with the very short response deadline of 1 May 2020 [Survey](#). Looking at current capacity and capability in competence the survey presents a real challenge to anyone who might try to complete it but equally it does provide reassurance that introduction of the new building safety system is continuing at some pace.

A further strand of this BSP work is extension of the Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety (CROSS) managed by the Institute of Structural Engineers (ICE) through a project that plans to update the existing site [CROSS](#) to include fire safety reporting; some members may recall the presentation made at the last Forum.

ICE have a branding agency who are inviting feedback from people who are likely to use CROSS now, and in the future, and who have an interest in safety, residential buildings or tall buildings [Feedback](#)

Methods of Construction

After contacting the Secretary of State MHCLG on fire safety in the built environment a dialogue with the government champion of MMC Mark Farmer, author of the Construction Leadership Council report 'Modernise or Die', [Report](#) has commenced. The shared aim is that all homes, regardless of whether constructed by traditional or modern methods, first have to be safe, including fire safe.