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Minutes of World Plumbing Council General Meeting

Monday 13 March 2017

Messe Frankfurt, Germany

PRESENT

Executive Board

Shayne La Combre, Chair, Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (Australia); Thomas G. Bigley, Deputy Chair, United Association (USA); Ken Gardner, Hon Secretary/Treasurer, Master Plumbers (Australia); Alberto Fossa, Abrinstal (Brazil); John Joseph, Indian Plumbing Association (India); Dr. Henry Hung, China Construction Metal Structure Association, Plumbing Facilities Committee (China); Dave Viola, International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials (USA); Kevin Wellman, Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering (UK)

Members

Billy Smith, American Society of Plumbing Engineers (USA); Douglas Marian, ASSE International; Yvonne Orgill, Bathroom Manufacturers Association (UK); Christian Taylor-Hamlin, BMA (UK); David Gong Wei, China Building Ceramic & Sanitaryware Association (China); David Otterstein, National Inspection Testing Certification Corp (USA); Matt Sigler, Plumbing Manufacturers International (USA); Rene Machler, RMC Consulting (Switzerland); Christopher Strobel, Strobel Verlag GmbH (Germany); DJ Nunez, IAPMO (USA); Russ Chaney, IAPMO (USA); Pete DeMarco, IAPMO (USA); Lee Mercer, IAPMO (USA); Paul Bonsak, IAPMO (USA); Ute Alexandrowice, Westfalia University of Applied Sciences (Germany); Jeff Patchell, Plumbing Connection, (Australia).

Guest speakers

Iris Jeglitza-Moshage, Messe Frankfurt (Germany); Volker Meyer, Figawa (Germany)

1. MEETING OPENING

Welcome and thanks

The Chair Shayne La Combre welcomed attending members and thanked them for taking part in the General Meeting.

The Chair thanked Messe Frankfurt for arranging a presentation by Senior Vice President Iris Jeglitza-Moshage along with provision of the excellent meeting room and overall assistance with the event arrangements. The Chair noted Messe Frankfurt is providing free membership to its VIP Tulip Club for all Council members attending today and thanked Messe Frankfurt for this generous offer.

The Chair stated the WPC is committed to promoting attendance at Messe Frankfurt's ISH events and urged members to also promote attendance at Messe Frankfurt ISH events through their own communication channels.

The Chair expressed thanks to ZVSHK for its strong continuing support of WPC. He reported Mr. Andreas Mueller, Managing Director of ZVSHK, had arranged for the presentation to the meeting by Volker Meyer of figawa and had invited WPC members to the ZVSHK lounge in Hall 8.0 C 94.

Speaking on behalf of the Executive Board, the Chair further thanked ZVSHK for sponsoring an enjoyable dinner for the Board the prior evening, hosted by WPC member Erwin Reisch, Managing Director, Gentner Verlag.

Apologies

Apologies were received from: Hans Tiedmann, formerly Mechanical Contractors Association, Alberta, Canada; Bernard Bateman MBE, Chairman ICD Travel UK; Hans-Peter Kaufmann, Director, suissetec (Swiss-Liechtenstein Building Services Association); George Bliss, United Association; Professor Mete Demiriz, Westphalia University; and Juzer Nalwala, Indian Plumbing Association.

Introductions

The Chair asked all those attending to give a brief self-introduction.

The Chair introduced Haydn Wood, carrying out Secretariat duties for the meeting.

The Chair noted the availability of a list and contact details for those members who had notified WPC stating their intention to attend the meeting.

Acknowledgements

The Chair requested acknowledgements of service for former Chairman Sudhakaran Nair, six recent former Directors and the Secretariat position holder, Stuart Henry. The Chair noted the paid Secretariat position within the WPC is being terminated at the end of March 2017. He called on attendees familiar with the individuals involved to deliver the acknowledgements.

Former WPC Chairman Russ Chaney gave the acknowledgement for Stuart Henry, noting he had served as Vice Chairman from 1999 to 2002 and as Chairman from 2002 to 2005, before being appointed to the Secretariat position in 2011.

In addition to being a major driving force behind WPC overall for many years, Stuart Henry was a leader in several specific key developments, including negotiation of a Memorandum of Understanding with WorldSkills and establishment of the Exclusive Industry Member agreements with Messe Frankfurt.

The Chair expressed the acknowledgement for Sudhakaran Nair, describing his many contributions to WPC as a Director from 2005 to 2011, as Deputy Chairman from 2011 to 2013 and as Chairman from 2013 to 2016. He noted that throughout this long period of service on the Executive Board Sudhakaran Nair showed a strong commitment to the Council along with an enthusiasm to drive WPC initiatives, such as World Plumbing Day.

An early highlight of Sudhakaran Nair's period as Chairman was the 10th World Plumbing Conference in India, which had over 600 delegates from around the world and was an outstanding effort by the Indian Plumbing Association in conjunction with the WPC. Another early highlight of his Chairmanship was the introduction of a WPC scholarship specifically targeted to applicants from Least Developed and Developing Countries, sponsored by the Indian Plumbing Association.

Sudhakaran Nair ensured new WPC social media channels were established and led development of a WPC promotional video "Seeing is Believing". The Chair said, in summary, Sudhakaran Nair worked to consolidate and strengthen the Council in a wide range of ways and he sincerely thanked him for his service on behalf of the Executive Board and the WPC membership as a whole.

Kevin Wellman contributed the acknowledgement for Elmar Esser, who served as a very active Director from 2011 until his resignation in late 2016. Kevin Wellman particularly highlighted Elmar Esser's contributions concerning the successful *Water is Life* international poster competition, amendment of WPC bylaws, deepening the working relationship with Messe Frankfurt, support for the WPC scholarships program and his involvement with the redesign of bathrooms to facilitate older people staying in their homes.

Dave Viola gave the acknowledgement for Allen Inlow, who was elected as a replacement Director in 2015 and served until the full election for the Executive Board in September 2016. Allen Inlow also was honorary Secretary of the WPC in the 1993-95 period.

Billy Smith of the American Society of Plumbing Engineers volunteered the acknowledgement for Jim Kendzel, who was a Director during the 2013 to 2016 Executive Board tenure.

Tom Bigley gave the acknowledgement for Mike Massey, elected as a Director in 2013, resigning in early 2015 because of a change in employment. Mike Massey headed the Marketing & Communications Committee and managed production of the WPC promotional video.

Ken Gardner gave the acknowledgement for Steve Brown, who was a Director over the 2013 to 2016 term representing the Institute of Plumbing South Africa. Ken Gardner noted the huge effort contributed by Steve Brown leading to the World Plumbing Conference in South Africa in 2016. Ken Gardner commented that, while no longer a Director, Steve Brown was still a committed and active member of the WPC.

Henry Hung expressed WPC's acknowledgement of the services performed by Mingjiu Hua, commenting on his willingness to contribute strongly to WPC, but being forced to resign for health reasons. During Mr. Hua's tenure as a Director, a very successful WPC General Meeting was hosted in China, around 50 new Chinese Individual members joined the WPC, China sent a strong delegation to the 2013 World Plumbing Conference in India and WPC information materials were translated into Chinese.

Russ Chaney moved a motion to accept these acknowledgements of service and Dave Viola seconded. Motion was carried.

Notification of these acknowledgements will be posted on the WPC website.

Agenda overview

The Chair noted the design of the General Meeting is aimed at minimizing the time spent on internal administrative matters and maximizing the opportunity for members to gain insights and contacts and for WPC to develop members' active involvement with WPC activities.

The Chair stated the aim is to build a reputation for WPC General Meetings as events clearly worth attending by plumbing industry associations, businesses and stakeholders.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND BUSINESS ARISING

The Chairman requested the Minutes of the General Meeting of the World Plumbing Council held on 14 September 2016 in Cape Town South Africa be accepted as a record of that meeting.

It was moved by Kevin Wellman, CIPHE, UK that the Minutes as circulated with the agenda and notice of meeting be accepted as a true record of the meeting, seconded Tom Bigley, United Association, USA. The motion was carried.

The Chair invited members to raise any matters or items of business arising from the Minutes not listed on the Agenda. No matters raised.

3. ELECTION OF REPLACEMENT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER

The Chair reported that on 31 January 2017 Full Member organisations were invited to nominate candidates for election to the Executive Board, as a replacement for resigned Director Elmar Esser, with nominations closing after 30 days, i.e. midday (GMT) Thursday 2nd March 2017.

This process resulted in two nominations, Peter Jackson, nominated by the New Zealand Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, and Salim Visram, nominated by the London-based City & Guilds organization.

Consequently invitations to vote for a candidate were sent to Full member organizations on 7th March, along with accompanying information supplied by each candidate. The Chair noted the WPC bylaws allow one vote per country, with caucusing required within a country where necessary, and that the ballot is to be returned within 20 days. Accordingly, 27 March is the deadline for all votes to be returned. The new Director will be determined by the majority of ballots received.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair stated the Strategic and Business Plan Summary document provided to the General Meeting was intended to capture and progress the work carried out at the strategic planning meeting held by the Executive Board in Hong Kong in December 2016.

The eight portfolio plans with their specified accountabilities and outlined actions are aimed at implementation of the strategic imperatives agreed in Hong Kong, over the current Executive Board's tenure through to 2019. The overall structure shown in the last page of the document is intended to summarise the operation of the WPC over the next three years. Directors also have shorter term action plans for their portfolios.

The Chair informed the meeting that a new program of monthly Executive Board meetings via the internet had been established, in conjunction with maintaining the approximately six monthly in-person meetings of the Board.

The Chair noted the portfolio plans and action plans are working documents that will evolve with changed circumstances, over time and with inputs from WPC members. He emphasized implementation of the portfolio plans will require active engagement of WPC members beyond the Executive Board.

The Chair asked for comment on the Strategic & Business Plan Summary by participants in the meeting. Russ Chaney congratulated the Executive Board for producing the plans and giving a strategic direction for the WPC. Other members made approving comment on the value of the plans.

The WPC Strategic & Business Plan Summary will be available on the WPC website.

5. EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIOS

Finance and governance

The Honorary Secretary/Treasurer Ken Gardner tabled the WPC financial statements for 2015.

Russ Chaney raised the question of whether or not WPC should continue to be domiciled in Zurich Switzerland for banking and other purposes. The General Meeting discussed the history and outcome of the Swiss VAT issue and factors concerning the location of the WPC registered office.

Members decided the appropriate location for the WPC office and banking should be addressed but a decision was not urgent. The Honorary Secretary/Treasurer will produce a paper investigating the matter late 2017 or early 2018.

The Honorary Secretary/Treasurer gave a summary of the WPC Balance Sheet and Income Statement results for 2015. Operating income increased by about US\$14,000 and operating expenses decreased by about \$24,000, resulting in an operating profit of \$21,281 compared to a loss of \$16,575 in 2014. After making a \$22,000 provision for VAT along with other short term liabilities, the association's equity was \$509,708 at the end of 2015, compared to \$489,392 in 2014.

It was moved by Dave Viola that the WPC 2015 Financial Report as presented be accepted, seconded by Henry Hung, carried.

Ken Gardner reported that under Swiss law, because of its size, the WPC is required to have a 'review' of its financial statements but not an audit. Accordingly, the WPC's Swiss accounting firm, KPMG, gives a review statement rather than an audit opinion.

Ken Gardner then tabled the WPC financial statements for 2016, not yet reviewed by KPMG, and initial statements for the first two months of 2017.

Ken Gardner commented that Full, Affiliate and Individual membership income was lower in 2016 compared to 2015, because of substantial non-renewals over 2016, and that sponsorship income declined from \$30,000 to about \$4,000. Total operating expenses were lower for 2016, but the net operating profit still declined from \$20,317 to \$7,663.

Regarding the initial two month financial statements for 2017, the Honorary Secretary/Treasurer noted these were unable to provide an indication of likely WPC membership income for the year because 2017 invoices were only issued late February and early March. The January-February statements show an unusual interest expense, arising from the WPC's VAT liability.

Ken Gardner noted the Secretariat expense being incurred by WPC would cease at the end of March. He reported the WPC balance sheet continued to be healthy, with US\$512,252 in the association's Swiss bank accounts.

Russ Chaney raised a question with the Chair about how the cost of necessary Secretariat tasks would be met in future, in light of WPC no longer having a contracted Secretariat position.

The Chair reported that administrative costs would primarily be borne by the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC) led by the Chair and that accounting costs would mainly be borne by Master Plumbers organization led by the Honorary Secretary/Treasurer.

In addition, The IAPMO Group is making a major contribution in the form of specialized staff working on WPC communications and marketing, led by Dave Viola.

Until WPC is able to generate a higher income, the association will operate under a shared-management approach, in which responsibilities for WPC administrative tasks are distributed across

the organizations of the Executive Board members versus having these tasks centralized within a Secretariat position.

The meeting agreed that having a professional paid Secretariat within the WPC was the preferable method for administering the association and that, while not affordable at present, this management approach should be re-instated if sufficient funds become available. The Chair stated a key focus into the future will be development of a new level of financial resources for the WPC.

The tabled financial statements will be available to Members who log into the WPC website.

Education & training

Director Tom Bigley briefly discussed the aim and the tasks involved in his WPC Education & Training portfolio. The portfolio's purpose has been defined as 'create an educated and trained workforce which can promote the links between plumbing, sanitation, public health and the environment'.

The five broad tasks of the portfolio are: maximize the impact of plumbing training scholarships; improve access to plumbing training globally; improve the standards of plumbing training globally; establish a plumbing education seminar; support WPC communications concerning education and training.

Ute Alexandrowice of Westfalia University raised the issue of non-English language and information technology barriers to accessing WPC education and training opportunities. The Chair responded, saying WPC would be attempting to provide access in a larger range of languages.

Jeff Patchell of Plumbing Connection suggested widening the eligibility for WPC scholarships beyond people holding a formal qualification in plumbing training. The meeting agreed a wider definition of those eligible would be preferable.

Marketing & communications

Director Dave Viola provided a presentation on his actions and plans to date for his WPC Marketing & Communications portfolio.

The presentation described the initial assessment and updating work the IAPMO team needed to perform. This included carrying out an inventory of the various WPC communication channels and marketing materials, making essential updates on the WPC website and other key channels and establishing how WPC communication and marketing can best be managed into the future.

With this assessment and initial update phase now largely completed, Dave Viola further described the state of play for WPC across a range of social media and outlined a range of steps aimed at upgrading WPC's overall communication and marketing, including consolidating the WPC and World Plumbing Day websites and renewing the format and timing of the WPC Review newsletter.

Dave Viola urged all members to contribute items and create links to the WPC communication channels and social media sites.

This presentation will be available on the WPC website.

Meetings & events

Director Kevin Wellman presented an overview of his WPC Meeting & Events portfolio. The purpose of the portfolio is defined as 'ensuring maximum benefit is obtained from World Plumbing Council

meetings and events, for those participating, for worldwide plumbing industry and for the WPC itself'.

Tackling the portfolio tasks has been divided into five areas: General Meetings, Conferences and Executive Board Meetings; national and regional meetings; participation in joint events with industry and stakeholder partners; financial oversight of WPC meetings and events; and support for WPC communications concerning meetings and events.

Kevin Wellman emphasized that his aims for the WPC meetings and events included promoting engagement with WPC activities among its grassroots membership and developing collaboration with other organisations, such as WorldSkills.

Kevin Wellman distributed an initial draft of a WPC events calendar as a basis for discussion, but details of upcoming General Meetings were not yet able to be confirmed. WPC has proposed holding a General Meeting coincident with the next WorldSkills Competition in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 14 to 19 October 2017, and WorldSkills staff are investigating the availability of accommodation and a meeting room for WPC, but confirmation has not yet been received.

If the proposed Abu Dhabi General Meeting is not feasible, a further attractive option is a General Meeting coincident with the construction phase of the next Community Plumbing Challenge in Jakarta, Indonesia 5 to 10 November 2017.

Kevin Wellman noted discussions and investigations are also underway to decide the 2018 WPC events calendar. Members will be notified about upcoming events as soon as details are confirmed.

Strategic alliances & policy

Director Henry Hung spoke to his WPC Strategic Alliances & Policy portfolio plan, noting the portfolio's purpose is 'continually strengthening World Plumbing Council networks and the WPC's influence on global plumbing industry and related issues'.

The work of the portfolio ranges across five broad tasks: establish new WPC strategic alliances; contribute to strengthening existing alliances; update current WPC policy positions on key issues; establish new WPC policy positions on key issues; and support WPC communications on strategic alliances, policies and issues.

Henry Hung discussed the value but also the challenges of WPC establishing new strategic alliances, and talked of focusing more on China and countries such as Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. He emphasized that development of alliances needed to be a joint effort across members versus a solo effort, and noted the contribution of Russ Chaney and others in maintaining a strong relationship with the WHO.

Henry Hung also reminded members of the World Plumbing Conference planned for 2022 in China.

World Plumbing Day

Director Alberto Fossa discussed his activities to date and his further plans for tackling his World Plumbing Day portfolio.

In the WPC Strategic & Business Plan Summary, the purpose of the portfolio is described as 'ensuring World Plumbing Day continues to grow as the key date for worldwide recognition of the plumbing industry and its contribution to health, amenity and environmental sustainability'.

Alberto Fossa gave details about how he and his staff are taking action across the five areas of responsibility within the portfolio: information gathering and review of 2017 and past World Plumbing Day (WPD) celebrations; developing a global level promotion strategy for WPD; providing operational leadership of WPD activities; pursuing UN recognition of WPD; and supporting WPC communications concerning WPD.

Alberto Fossa noted Brazil celebrates World Plumbing Day on 23 September versus the standard 11 March date and discussed his efforts to establish WPD celebrations in South America more broadly.

Development projects

Director John Joseph briefly discussed the purpose and main tasks identified in his WPC Development Projects portfolio plan, and then gave a presentation on his ideas about how best to carry out and meet the goals of the portfolio.

The purpose of the portfolio is to create a strong WPC contribution to plumbing-related development projects in less developed countries and in less developed communities.

The main tasks stated in the portfolio plan are: produce a development projects strategy for WPC; support the development projects in which WPC is currently involved (only Community Plumbing Challenge at this point); expand the capability of WPC to support development projects; identify new development projects for WPC; support WPC communications concerning development projects.

In his presentation, John Joseph mainly identifies a strategy appropriate for WPC and addresses how it can be pursued. Broadly, in the short to medium term WPC will endeavor to be an effective facilitator, or enabler, of development projects, rather than trying to itself fund and directly manage such projects. WPC will work to gain engagement from partners able to contribute resources and will then match these with projects needing assistance. Over the longer term, WPC will take steps to develop its own capacity to lead development projects.

This presentation will be available on the WPC website.

Planning, organisation, membership, resources

The Chair addressed his Planning, Organization, Membership & Resources' portfolio plan. The defined purpose of the portfolio is: 'ensure the World Plumbing Council has the vision, plans and capacity needed to achieve its goals'.

The main demands of the portfolio are clustered into four areas: planning; organization; membership; and resources. In addition the portfolio supports WPC communications concerning all of these areas.

With respect to membership, the Chair stated that 2017 invoicing of 2016 members has recently taken place and was gaining a good response. In this initial wave of invitations to rejoin, 51 invoices were sent to Full members, 50 invoices to Affiliate members and 135 invoices sent to Individual members.

As of the date of the meeting, WPC had approximately 44 Full Members, 150 Affiliate Members and 110 Individual Members. Membership numbers will be clarified over the course of the next month after the results of the 2017 invoicing become clear.

After this initial wave of invitations to rejoin, WPC will be issuing membership invitations to recent former members and other organizations identified as potential members.

The Chair raised the idea of offering honorary memberships to the plumbing competitors in the WorldSkills competition, along with their supporting country organization.

The Chair commented that WPC needs to be a better expression of its purposes and the benefits of being a member, to support efforts aimed at increasing the size of the WPC membership.

6. WPC HIGHLIGHT REPORTS

Community Plumbing Challenge

Director Dave Viola, The IAPMO Group, gave an update on the exciting Community Plumbing Challenge (CPC) project that will take place in Indonesia later this year.

Dave Viola discussed how this CPC is a major evolution in the CPC concept, building on experience from prior CPCs and drawing on expert advice concerning the best approach to community development in the context of an Indonesian village. The project is principally supported by the International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (IWSH) Foundation and The IAPMO Group more broadly.

There will be two main phases: a design and scoping phase in early August and the construction phase involving the international teams over the 5th to 10th November. The project team is taking an approach that includes creating comprehensive developmental links between the project and the village community overall.

The project tasks will include: design and installation of septic tank, water supply and wastewater systems; an upgrade of existing toilet facilities; and community activities and games reinforcing health and hygiene awareness.

Dave Viola commented the approach being taken in this project has the potential to be reproduced in multiple other villages across Indonesia.

Participants in the meeting made suggestions about approaches to community development and the need for associated training and followup. Dave Viola responded that training and followup have been incorporated in CPC planning, noting IAPMO staff recently returned to the Diepsloot community in South Africa to continue and expand the impact of that CPC project. Community development experts from the University of North Carolina are giving advice and will evaluate the project.

The Chair reported the CPC in South Africa was largely driven by the community itself. He noted participants in the two Australian teams had themselves greatly benefited from the experience.

Dave Viola emphasized the desire of IWSH and IAPMO to gain greater involvement in CPC by the broader plumbing industry, via www.iwsh.org and multiple social media contacts.

A copy of the presentation will be available on the WPC website.

World Plumbing Council South Africa Conference

Director, Kevin Wellman, Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering, gave a brief report on the 2016 World Plumbing Conference, organized by the Institute of Plumbing South Africa and held in Cape Town South Africa.

Participants in the conference were very positive about the topics covered and the expertise of presenters. The conference theme 'Regulations for sustainable plumbing – a case for international standards' proved to be well chosen and the event featured plenary and breakaway sessions with four themes: Energy, Environment, Sanitation and Water. Attendance was less than expected, but there were approximately 200 delegates and 145 exhibitors.

WPC Engagement with World Health Organisation and WorldSkills Foundation

Russ Chaney, Chief Executive Officer of IAPMO and former Chairman of the WPC, informed the meeting about the history of the WPC relationships with the World Health Organisation and the WorldSkills Foundation.

Russ Chaney noted WPC involvement with WHO had been difficult in recent years but the Community Plumbing Challenge was providing a basis for a renewed worthwhile relationship. A proposal is underway to involve WHO in a CPC project for a medical facility in a less developed country.

Russ Chaney raised the requirement to submit a report every three years to maintain WPC's NGO status with WHO, and that a report is now due. Russ Chaney generously offered to produce and submit the report and the meeting was happy to accept his offer.

Russ Chaney noted WPC commenced its strong ongoing relationship with WorldSkills in 2002-3. Generally there are about 25 plumbing industry competitors in the WorldSkills Competition. Only the plumbing industry gives recognition, in the form of medallions, to the participants representing an industry. IAPMO is now a World Partner of WorldSkills.

WPC Scholarships

Director Tom Bigley, United Association, responsible for the Education & Training portfolio of the WPC, gave a presentation, primarily covering WPC scholarships, although also addressing better global access to plumber training more broadly.

The initial slides in the presentation described the WPC scholarships framework and gave details on recent applications and a report by a 2015 scholarship winner. The presentation then turned to new initiatives for the scholarship program, including: new efforts to solicit scholarship funding from industry partners; teaming manufacturers with applicants through sponsorships; creating recognition for sponsors on the WPC website; increasing the number and value of the scholarships; and modifying the scholarship procedures to enable a wider scope of applicants.

Tom Bigley further raised a range of initiatives aimed at creating better global access to best practice plumber training, drawing especially on the very extensive training resources of the United Association.

The presentation will be available on the WPC website.

7. PRESENTATIONS

Overview of ISH 2017

Iris Jeglitza-Moshage, Senior Vice President, Messe Frankfurt gave a presentation on the 2017 Frankfurt ISH trade fair and other ISH trade fairs in India and China planned for later this year.

Iris Jeglitza-Moshage gave insight into the strategy, decision making and effort behind producing such a hugely successful event. In deciding the event's themes and partnerships, Messe Frankfurt management works to be at the cutting edge of technological and market trends, along with taking

account of governmental developments and political issues. For example, energy use and efficiency will be increasingly be a major component of ISH.

The 2017 Frankfurt ISH was expected to again attract approximately 200,000 visitors and there will be 2,482 exhibitors. The event is truly global, with 64% of exhibitors coming from outside Germany and large delegations attending from countries all over the world. The ISH trade fair is also being successfully held in Beijing and Shanghai, and in India in conjunction with the Indian Plumbing Association.

Drinking Water Installations in Europe -State of Play

Volker Meyer, Managing Director, Water, figawa, provided an extensive presentation *Drinking Water Installations in Europe -State of Play*.

Founded in 1926, figawa is a federation of German companies in the gas and water sector. Its membership is comprised of more than 1,000 manufacturers of gas and water products and suppliers of gas and water services. The association describes itself as 'technical-scientific'; its aim is to ensure the safety, hygiene, environmental protection and profitability of its members' products and services.

Volker Meyer pointed out that, despite the European Water Directive being in place since 1998, the lack of both harmonized regulation and mutual recognition across EU Members States results in:

- differences in levels of drinking water protection for consumers
- a fragmented EU market for products and materials used in drinking water installations
- additional time and money costs for testing and certification of these products and materials
- a competitive disadvantage for European firms operating in this sector.

As an illustration, a survey of German firms supplying products used in drinking water installations showed only 13% of the products gain certification in more than four EU States in addition to Germany, and 40% of the products are certified only in Germany. Over 40% of the products experience a waiting period of 7 to 12 months to gain certification.

Volker Meyer attributes the narrow scope and time consuming process of certification for drinking water products to differing legislation and standards across EU States and lack of an adequate mutual recognition framework. He noted there is no recognized EU safety mark for products and materials in contact with drinking water.

figawa has led an effort resulting in the recent formation of European Drinking Water (EDW), an alliance of 29 trade associations representing suppliers of products and materials used in drinking water applications. EDW is aimed at achieving harmonized regulatory requirements and conformity assessment for products and materials used in drinking water installations throughout the European Union. Its advocacy is presently focused on a review of the European Water Directive and revision of European mutual recognition regulations.

A new EDW website will be available shortly. EDW and figawa are holding the 3rd *Symposium on Materials and Products In Contact With Drinking Water* on 18 May 2017 in Brussels.

A copy of the presentation will be available on the WPC website.

Plumbing Efficiency Research – Multi-National Collaboration

Pete DeMarco, Executive Vice President, Advocacy & Research, The IAPMO Group, led discussion based on his presentation *Water Efficiency Research – Fostering International Collaboration*.

Pete DeMarco began with a powerful case for investing in plumbing research, pointing out the challenges faced globally include:

- opportunistic pathogens in water distribution and premise plumbing – such as legionella
- dispersion of resistant pathogens from sanitary systems
- new models for pipe sizing in domestic, commercial and institutional buildings
- increased use of non-potable water systems in buildings
- transport of solid wastes in building drains and sewers
- best practices for improved water and sanitation in developing nations.

He outlined the context and historical development of the WPC research database leading up to its launch in December 2015. He then gave his frank assessment that the impact of the database to date has been “nil”, noting 120 users had registered, whereas the potential registration was around 1,000. As a basis for discussion, Pete DeMarco also identified a range of obstacles to international collaboration on plumbing issues.

Pete DeMarco then posed the question: ‘So what can WPC and its members do to foster better levels of international collaboration on plumbing research?’

Meeting participants had a general discussion addressing this question. Russ Chaney asked whether WPC could do its own research, in conjunction with members. The Chair suggested the WPC R&D database should act more like a noticeboard on which industry posted issues requiring research.

Meeting participants discussed about the need for better funding for plumbing research, and that there needed to be greater resourcing from the private sector. Jeff Patchell of Plumbing Connection raised engaging more plumbing product suppliers in the WPC and asking them to nominate their technical directors or other R&D staff. Meeting participants commented WPC’s role should include promoting the application of R&D results within industry.

Pete DeMarco urged members to support the Emerging Water Technology Symposium to be held in Ontario California during May 2018. He challenged members to submit at least one abstract – see http://www.iapmo.org/Documents/EWTS_Call_for_Abstract.pdf.

The Sixth Biennial Symposium is being convened by The IAPMO Group, the American Society of Plumbing Engineers, the Alliance for Water Efficiency and Plumbing Manufacturers International, in cooperation with the World Plumbing Council.

A copy of the presentation will be available on the WPC website.

European Water Efficiency Labelling

Ms. Yvonne Orgill, Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. Christian Taylor-Hamlin, Technical Director, UK Bathroom Manufacturers Association, jointly gave a very informative presentation titled *European Water Efficiency Labelling*.

The presentation began by reinforcing the clear need for water efficiency labelling and outlining the history of efforts to establish effective labelling schemes in the UK and by the European Commission.

The European Water Label is a voluntary, industry-backed, labelling scheme for water consuming products in the bathroom and kitchen. It is aimed at being a simple classification scheme applicable

throughout Europe, and potentially elsewhere. The label clearly shows the maximum volume of water the product will deliver.

The scheme now incorporates 127 brands and the database presently has 9,700 product registrations. Over 13,000 products have been registered over the course of the scheme's history. The database of product registrations is regularly updated as products become obsolete, and the accuracy of the self-labelling is regularly audited to ensure integrity. Checks are also made to ensure published marketing material and websites are using the label correctly.

The scheme is based on the principle that the best approach to water efficiency labelling is to inform and educate consumers. In addition to English, details of the scheme are available in the German, Spanish and Turkish languages.

The European Water Label scheme is operated by the European Water Label Company Limited (EWL), administered by the Bathroom Manufacturers Association, partnered with eight national trade associations from across Europe. Applications to join the scheme as registered companies or scheme partners are invited. See: www.europeanwaterlabel.eu.

EWL and other stakeholders recently met with the Directorate General for the Environment of the European Commission as part of efforts to consolidate the scheme as the preferable approach to water efficiency labelling in Europe.

A copy of the presentation will be available on the WPC website.

8. CLOSING REMARKS AND CHAIR'S THANKS

The Chair reminded members to make early arrangements to attend the World Plumbing Conference in Melbourne Australia over 11th to 13th September 2019. He restated members would be notified about the location and timing of the next General Meeting as soon as investigation into holding the meeting in Abu Dhabi was completed.

The Chair commented on the excellent quality of the Executive Board portfolio reports, the Highlight reports and the guest presentations, and thanked all those who had made these contributions.

The Chair invited participants to remain after completion of the formal meeting for further individual discussion and drinks.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked participants for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed

Shayne La Combre
Chair

Ken Gardner
Honorary Secretary/Treasurer