

Successful Euralarm symposium and debate on certification and standardization

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Vienna, May 2015 – Following the Euralarm General Assembly a symposium was organized in Vienna with around 100 attendees, representing the fire safety and security industry, certification and standardization organizations. The symposium ‘International debate towards a common road-map on certification and standardization’ consisted of two keynote speeches that were followed by panel discussions.

The first panel discussion focused on the progress towards a pan-European certification scheme for the security industry. Kristien van Goey, policy officer of DG HOME, discussed in her keynote speech the current requirement for multiple submissions in order to obtain full pan-European security certification. The lack of a harmonized certification scheme is seen as both fragmenting the market and as a hindrance towards European and international competitiveness.

Vital for Europe

In her speech Kristien stated that innovation and the security industry itself are of vital importance to DG HOME. The Directorate General is convinced that a strong, EU based security industry is the very basis for the implementation of any successful security policy. The capability of the security industry to compete with its American and Asian counterparts is bound to diminish if we do not create a suitable regulatory framework. Such a framework is also a necessity for giving the industry a strong home basis.

Kristien van Goey referred to the political guidelines that were given by EU President Mr. Juncker in his document on strengthening the industrial European base. As far as the security industry is concerned, the guidelines mention an industrial policy action plan for an innovative and competitive industry as confirmed by the European agenda on security. The agenda refers specifically to alarm systems and is considered to be relevant since it underlines that the security industry is seen as important by DG HOME, with the standardization of certification as one of the targets.

Proper functioning market

Kristien van Goey confirmed that DG HOME is aware of the fragmentation and lack of mutual certification acceptance on the market of alarm systems and realizes that this affects the manufacturing industry, the certification bodies, testing laboratories and end-users.

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The legal proposal of the directorate will focus on ensuring the proper functioning of the EU internal market for alarm products and to increase the competitiveness of EU companies operating in this sector. One problem that DG HOME is currently facing and working on is how to find the right balance between general and specific policy objectives. In finding that balance, DG HOME is working closely with Euralarm and other key stakeholders.

The keynote presentation was followed by a lively expert panel discussion with Euralarm General Manager Glen Dale as moderator and Dominique Taudin (chairman Section Fire Safety) and Darren Owens as experts. Several topics related to the progress towards a pan-European certification for the security industry were discussed. They varied from the common installation practices in the several European countries to the growing base of CertAlarm certification schemes and the European investments in standardization to guarantee the highest security levels while taking away fragmentation.

The second panel discussion focused on the question whether the European standardization process is helping or hindering the fire safety and security industry. The background for this topic is the Euralarm briefing on market-driven standardization. As keynote speaker Elena Santiago, general director of CCMC of CEN/CENELEC was invited.

The Euralarm briefing 'Market Driven Standardization' emphasizes the importance of a faster, more efficient standardization process. The current structure and the role of the National Committees are causing the European security industry to lose too much time and money on slow processes. With the proposals in the briefing, the industry can quickly and easily speed up these processes, so it can adjust its standards to the rapidly changing fire safety and security industry and make them compatible across borders.

Facts and figures

Elena Santiago first of all presented some facts and figures on the European standardization industry and the role of CEN/CENELEC. Part of the presentation was the CEN/CENELEC Work Program for 2015 and the sector Work Programs giving a broad view of what the organization does and what their focus is. Via CEN/CENELEC more than 200.000 experts are connected.

The advantages of the European standardization system, where CEN/CENELEC are the effective users of stakeholders' resources, is the coherence of the European market without fragmentation and competitiveness in the global market.

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Role of European standardization

Mrs. Elena Santiago also presented the role of the European standardization for the business/industry. It not only is a tool for improving the competitiveness of the European business but also creates markets for innovative products and services. To allow this, the standardization should be voluntary and business-led with the market as the driver for the standardization process.

This is underlined by the fact that 95% of the costs of the European standardization system are supported by industry. In terms of standardization the role of and co-operation with Euralarm are seen as of vital importance. Euralarm's members contribute significantly to the generation of standards thus ensuring the quality of a single European market. In that respect both organizations contribute to European economic growth and safety while fostering global market access.

Overview of fire safety and security standardization

CEN/TC 391 'Societal and citizen security'

- New WI proposal 'Indicators for quality services for safety and security' recently submitted by Euralarm

CEN/CLC TC 4 'Services for fire safety and security systems'

- prEN16763 'Services for fire safety and security systems'
Benefits of using the standard: increased quality of fire and security services, simplification of procedures and mutual recognition of the qualifications of security service providers

CEN/TC 72 'Fire detection and fire alarm systems'

deliverables: 55 (41 published, 14 under development)

Most relevant: EN 54 series(30 parts) harmonized standards cited in the OJEU under Construction Product Regulation

CLC/TC 79 'Alarm systems'

deliverables: 144 (120 published, 24 under development)

CLC/ TC 215 'Electrotechnical aspects of telecommunication equipment'

deliverables: 48 (45 published, 3 under development)

CENELEC/TC 216 'Gas detectors'

deliverables: 21 (15 published, 6 under development)

Panel discussion

Following the keynote presentation of Elena Santiago a panel discussion was held, moderated by Euralarm Vice-President Rolf Sigg.

Together with Elena Santiago participated Euralarm experts Philippe Lecuyer, Carlo Loi and Maximilian Strohmeier. One of the questions the panel tried to answer is "Where do we stand in terms of an effective and efficient standardization process?" According to the panel members, the European market for standardization is still very fragmented especially when it comes to installation guidelines. This not only influences the

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internal European market but also the export ambitions outside of Europe. Here the NFPA approach of 'adopting and adapting' is considered to be a good example of a pragmatic approach towards the standardization process.

This approach is related to the marketing strategy of the standardization process. Although the PULL-strategy is often used to introduce standards, it well might be better to develop a standardization process that is based on a PUSH-strategy. This strategy proved to work in several cases and could also be used within the European standardization process.

One of the remarks made during the panel discussion focused on the mutual sharing of information during the standardization process. "We are not always well informed about the follow up of standardization phases and feel that the co-ordination is not always the way it should be". According to Elena Santiago, CEN/CENELEC are working on that and are open for every proposal for improvement.

Future Euralarm event:

The next Euralarm event will take place during IFSEC in London's ExCeL on 17th June 2015. Here a new half-day conference on 'Smart Cities: Safer & Secure' will be organized. The conference will explore how those responsible for protecting key assets can obtain the tools to ensure Smart Cities remain safe and secure and how Fire Safety and Security can be automatically included into a holistic review of Smart City development.

About Euralarm

Euralarm represents the electronic fire and security industry, providing leadership and expertise for industry, market, policy makers and standards bodies. Our members make society safer and secure through systems and services for fire detection, intrusion detection, access control, video monitoring, alarm transmission and alarm receiving centres. Founded in 1970, Euralarm represents over 5000 companies with an estimated cumulated revenue of 18 bn Euros. Euralarm members are national associations and individual companies from more than 17 European countries.

More information

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Photo material



Keynote speaker Elena Santiago



Keynote speaker Kristien van Goey

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First expert panel discussion (from left to right: Darren Owens, Dominique Taudin, Kristien van Goey, Glen Dale)



Second expert panel discussion (from left to right: Maximilian Strohmeier, Carlo Loi, Philippe Lecuyer, Elena Santiago, Rolf Sigg)