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SAFEX International *Safety in explosives*



About this Newsletter

The SAFEX Governing Committee held its annual meeting on 29 January 2006 in Dallas, USA. The meeting had a strategic focus. Among the important issues it discussed were the appointment of a new Chairman and a review of

the most recent Congress in Geneva. This Newsletter focuses on these two issues. Mr Claude Modoux, who has been a SAFEX Governor for many years, was elected Chairman of **SAFEX International** and we are delighted to publish a

message from him. Delegates at the XV Congress in Geneva provided us with valuable feedback on the Congress which we would like to share with you in this Newsletter.

SAFEX Chairman, Claude Modoux, shows the way



The Governing Committee did me the honour of appointing me as Chairman of **SAFEX International** in the place of Boet Coetzee.

The Secretary General is concerned essentially with the administration of SAFEX (really a very large job!). The primary concern of the Chairman, on the other hand, should be the SAFEX

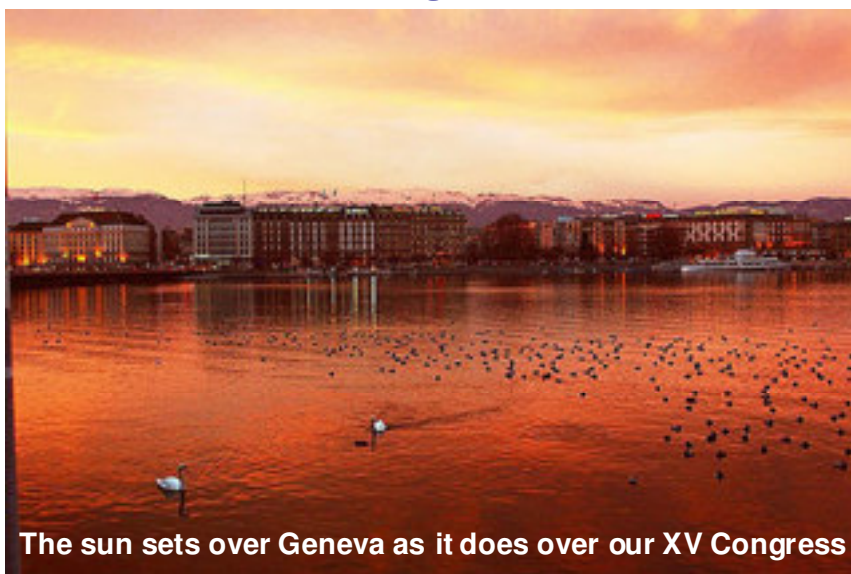
strategy and policy together with their implications. The Chairman also has overall responsibility for the proper governance of SAFEX, which includes its financial affairs.

During my term of office, I shall endeavour to promote SAFEX within the explosives community. After more than 40 years in the explosive business and through the numerous friendships and business relationships I have with many worldwide explosives manufacturers, I shall do my best to offer a substantial contribution to the future of SAFEX. My particular focus will be to reinforce our ties with "small" single company members. This includes extending the SAFEX influence beyond Safety to

encompass matters such as Health and the Environment. It will also include getting the message across to the explosives community that SAFEX is concerned with the exchange of experience among the explosives industries. Its purpose is to prevent accidents that could harm people and damage material assets.

For all these reasons, I dedicate myself to SAFEX and our industry. I would like to thank in advance those who will assist and support me in the coming years, especially the Governing Committee with whom I shall work closely. If you are interested in contributing to SAFEX in any form, please do not hesitate to contact me or the General Secretary.

Geneva Congress reviewed



The sun sets over Geneva as it does over our XV Congress

At its Dallas meeting, the Governing Committee reviewed the recent Congress held in Geneva during May 2005. There were 131 delegates from 28 countries accompanied by some 50 partners who participated in the Social Programme. The Committee was encouraged by the feedback delegates provided in the Congress questionnaires they submitted (see

“XV Congress rated worthwhile”). The Committee reiterated its appreciation to all those who assisted in making the event as successful. The Committee gratefully noted the active involvement of a number of Governing Committee members in the arrangements and presentation of specific activities. It praised, in

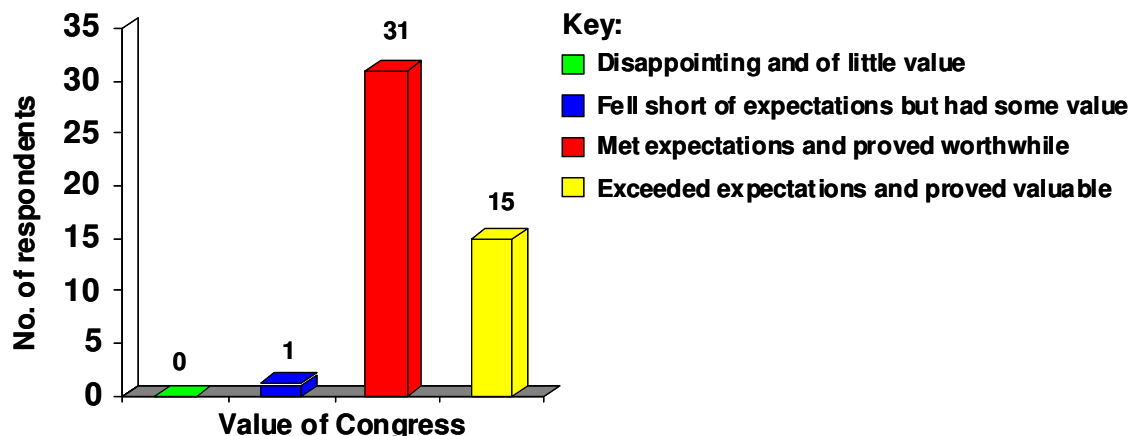
particular, the efforts of Bernard Hueber (former Secretary General), Sally Parry, Claude Modoux (incoming Chairman) and Alice Baez who were intimately involved in the preparations. The review covered both the pre-Congress activities as well as the Congress itself. Details are reported elsewhere in this Newsletter.

XV Congress rated worthwhile

Delegates to SAFEX's XV Congress in Geneva felt the Congress was worthwhile. They were asked to rate their overall experience of the Congress

on a 4-point scale. The results of this survey are presented as follows:

OVERALL ASSESSMENT: XV CONGRESS



Congress structure should be retained



Feedback from delegates to the recent XV Congress indicated overwhelming (95%) support for the current Congress structure. The basic structure entails plenary sessions and workshops around specific themes on the first day (Thursday). The second day (Friday) is devoted to incident reviews. Because the workshops were conducted in parallel, some delegates expressed frustration at not being able to attend both workshops. We also need to find ways of improving delegates' participation in the Workshops. The chief executives appreciated

the event arranged for them on the Thursday, but felt it should be focused exclusively on the chief executive of a member company. While 70% of the respondents said that the 3-year interval is right, the remainder believed it should be held more frequently, like every 2 years. It was generally accepted that the Congress venue should remain in Europe. English should continue to be the Congress language. However, translators should be made available if there are sufficient contributions or delegates from another language group.

Engage more companies from more countries at Congress

This was the plea in some of the feedback we received. SAFEX is a global organization and its strength lies in the diversity of experience among its membership.

Why are we not getting more companies from more countries represented at Congress? The

Governing Committee will be most interested in hearing what it can do to make our Congresses more inclusive.

Strong support for pre-Congress events



These events comprise the two-day training course and the Technical Groups (Seminars) - an innovation at the 2005 Congress.

The training course focused on the technical aspects of accident investigations and was conducted by world-class instructors. Participants rated the course as excellent and having a high technical content. The result was that non-English speaking participants had some language difficulties with the content.

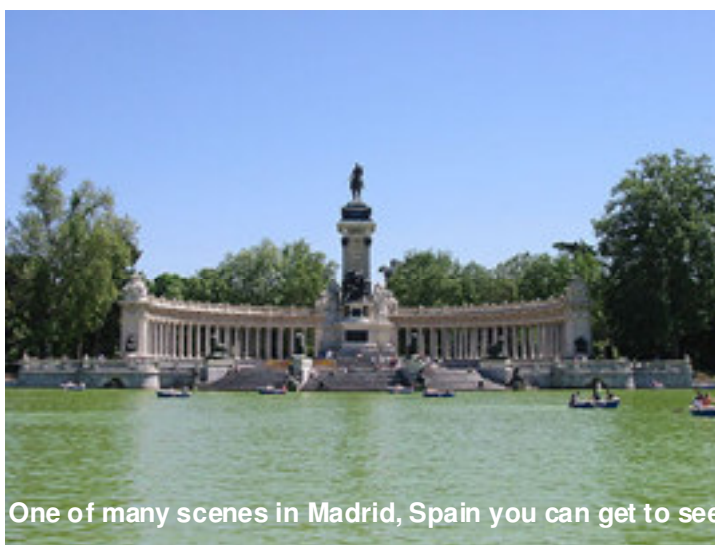
Two Technical Groups met in seminars on the Wednesday. These seminars covered "Pumping of emulsions" and "Remediation of NG contaminated facilities". 70%

of the respondents supported the mission of these Groups, which is to collect and make available "state of the art" material on the topic in which it specializes. Delegates also indicated they would be willing to support the ongoing work of the Groups in the intervening years between Congresses. These respondents felt further Groups should be considered to cover other topics such as Good Explosives Practice (GEP), Explosives waste management, Safety in road transport and Risk assessment/management

SAFEX services are valuable and should be supported

The Committee also used the Congress as an opportunity to canvass delegates on two specific SAFEX services that were launched recently. These are **Topical Papers** and the **Expert Panel**. 75% of the respondents indicated they are prepared to encourage managers and safety specialists to submit papers for consideration as Topical Papers. In the same way 77% of respondents said their companies will, if the need arises, consider using the experts SAFEX has identified in the various fields. A smaller percentage (30%) said they would be prepared to nominate experts that the Governing Committee could consider for the Expert Panel.

Next SAFEX Congress: Date and venue decided



One of many scenes in Madrid, Spain you can get to see

Union Espanola de Explosivos (UEE) is one of our Group members and has invited SAFEX to hold its next Congress in **Madrid, Spain**. The Governing Committee has gratefully accepted this invitation. It has also agreed that this Congress, the XVI Congress, will be held in **2008**

from Wednesday, **28 May** to Saturday, **31 May**. These dates exclude the pre-Congress events. While this date is still some way off, members and Associate Members may wish to note these details and consider them when planning their international travel for 2008.

The following sub-committees will arrange the Congress:

- Logistics and social
- Workshop and Plenary sessions
- Technical groups
- Training

Members who are interested to assist any of these are invited to contact the Secretary General

The Governing Committee asks for help

The Governing Committee has already started planning for the XVI Congress in Madrid and it needs your help. It invites members to let the Secretary General have ideas and suggestions regarding any of the following:

- Topics for the pre-Congress training course(s)
- Topics for Workshop themes
- Specific incidents for review. Based on the feedback from the previous Congress, we need to include more incidents that occur in newer technologies

such as electronic detonators, emulsions, etc.

- Other suggestions that would make the XVI Congress more relevant to members

Once we receive your suggestions, we will discuss them in a future Newsletter.

SAFEX website needs your input

The SAFEX website is going to improve it so that it serves our members optimally. The URL is: www.safex-international.org and the Intranet can be accessed using the User ID's and Passwords issued to the SAFEX Contact Person at each member company. If you don't have the necessary access codes, please contact the

Secretary General.

Please let us have constructive criticism and suggestions for making the website and Intranet something of which SAFEX can be proud. Do so by contacting the Secretary General at secretariat@safex-international.org

SAFEX Contact Persons – unsung heroes of our service

The only way SAFEX can serve its members is through regular contact with them. That is why we place such a premium on the Contact Person at each member company. Without that Contact Person our members cannot receive the value they should from their association with SAFEX. The Governing Committee members themselves are the Contact Persons for their

respective companies. They recognize and appreciate the importance of this role. SAFEX salutes the Contact Person at each member company and thanks him/her for the work they do. We are concerned, however, that there are members who have not yet nominated their Contact Persons. Of even greater concern are the Contact Persons for whom we

don't have an e-mail address. We cannot afford to rely on normal mail or even faxes to communicate with our members these days. Your e-mail is literally the passport to SAFEX value. SAFEX depends on you to let the Secretary General have your current e-mail address, if you are not receiving our communications.

Please help us serve you better.

Have you updated your contact details?

During the world wars of the last century, the military used posters like this one to persuade people to help with the war effort. The posters called upon them to further the greater national cause. Used for the purposes of recruitment, boosting production, motivation, rationing, conservation, security, etc, the posters linked the home front with the military front



SAFEX is about care for people and the environment and is totally apolitical. Its main concern is the international explosives industry and it does not align itself with any national cause. However its appeal to members to update their contact information on the Intranet is as urgent as the appeal in these posters of yesteryear. Can we count on your positive response?

How can you update your contact details? Access the Intranet via the SAFEX website at www.safex-international.org with the access codes for your company. (If you don't have the access codes, please contact the Secretary General). Please remember the access codes are case sensitive. Go to the Intranet Home Page and click "Members" on the navigation bar. Click the link on the third bullet in the Members Directory: "To update your profile, please fill in the form by clicking the following link". Complete the information required and click "UPDATE". Advise the Secretary General immediately you have any trouble.

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Boet Coetzee

Secretary General: SAFEX