

European Heat Pump Association - Chair's report 2003

Following a strategic report to the Commission's directorate for Energy in 1998, the EHPA was founded in February 2000 to develop and transform the market for renewable heating and cooling using heat pump technologies.

Our activities are primarily undertaken within a series of committees covering strategy (Roar Rose), labeling (Arne Logdberg) and education and training (Brigitte Bach). This system works well and has led to closer co-operation between members, and to specific initiatives three of which will be launched during this year.

Successful 2003 initiatives

A proposal involving certification of installers was submitted to DG TREN in spring 2002 and was finally accepted for funding in the autumn of 2003. The launch meeting was held immediately prior to our annual meeting and involves 10 partners from 7 countries. Suitable training based on current best practices is an important step in helping heat pump technology to be adopted.

In addition a proposal was also accepted by DG Research for developing the next generation of components and heat pumps using environmentally friendly natural refrigerants. This collaboration will involve 22 SMEs and 10 RTD institutions and no doubt other enterprises will also link into this work.

Thirdly the EU eco-label board has agreed to finance a study which will lead to heat pumps becoming eco-labeled. This will complement the EU scheme for energy labeling of room air conditioners which also have a heating function. It will then be possible to identify appliances which are both energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

Information

The EHPA web-site is our primary method of communicating with and informing the public and interested persons. We are grateful to Axel Lehmann for his enthusiasm and willingness to develop the potential of this site

We have been less successful with publishing our newsletter on a regular basis since Gerdi Breembroek resigned as editor. This needs to be reconsidered during the coming year because it is an important means of keeping members and stakeholders informed of our activities

On a local scale many of the national heat pump associations also have their own local newsletter so information is being dispersed in many different forms.

Long term outlook

Member States are struggling to meet their Kyoto commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for a variety of reasons. What the EHPA can do is to remind Member States that heat pump technologies can significantly improve end use efficiency in heating and cooling of dwellings thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Simply having the technology is not sufficient to transform the market for energy efficient appliances.

Implementation of the directive on energy performance in buildings will require heat pump technology to be considered amongst other renewable resources and the EHPA must ensure that it is involved at national level through its members. Two specific initiatives with which the EHPA has to be involved is green heat and green buildings. The promotion of renewable heating alongside renewable electricity is a further area with which we must be involved

Where the EHPA has yet to establish a strategy concerns replacing oil heating in buildings by more environmentally friendly systems including heat pumps. This is becoming of ever greater strategic concern as the price of oil rises due to difficulties of production meeting demand.

A strategic study for the Commission like that undertaken in 1998 for electrical heating is required in order to consider options for transforming the market.

Membership

This continues to expand as does our geographic coverage. It is essential that new members contribute some of their time and energy to the Association in order to expand our activities to meet the challenges that lie ahead as we have no paid employees. We hope that many of the enterprises associated with our new EU funded projects will consider joining the EHPA in order to strengthen our activities in dissemination, information and education.

Thanks

Our thanks go to those who are actively involved in our activities including our committee chairs, Bob Garwood (Secretary) and Michaela Vetzmar (Treasurer).

It has been a privilege to lead the Association in its start up phase and I hope we can build together on the foundations that have been laid.

Rayner M Mayer
14 March 2004
Yateley