

An International Platform for the Exchange of Experience in the Field of Automatic Alarm Systems

1. The history and goals of EUSAS

The foundation of the European Society for Automatic Alarm Systems (EUSAS) dates from 1989, when 10 fire detection experts met to discuss possibilities to intensify the exchange of experience in the different fields of fire detection.

The participants in this circle came from the industry, insurance associations, testing institutes, universities and authorities. All of them were active in national and international standardization and provision committees and played an essential role in the development of the first European provisions and standards (EN54) for components of fire detection systems. However, for reasons of time, the regular meetings of the technical committee unfortunately left no room for in-depth discussion, so that progress was made only very slowly. The participants thus decided on intensifying the exchange of experience outside the official work of the committee, in order to facilitate the work of the committee as such and to accelerate the success of the work on European standards. In addition, this information exchange between experts should on the one hand contribute to maintain a high scientific and technology standard, which forms the basis for future product development; and on the other hand it ensures that the fire and security alarm industry remains sufficiently attractive for young engineers.

With this in mind, the **European Society for Automatic Alarm Systems (EUSAS)** with its domicile in Switzerland was founded on 11 December, 1989. Prof. Luck, professor in ordinary at the University of Duisburg, was chosen as the society's chairman.

2. Work program of EUSAS

At the beginning the society concentrated its work on the field of fire detection, as standardization activities had progressed the furthest in this field. Later, the activities were extended to other fields of danger detection.

Today, the committee's work comprises all activities in the fields of fire and intrusion detection, i.e. fire detection, extinguishing, intrusion detection systems, access control and video surveillance.

EUSAS does not consider itself merely as an association in which representatives of different fields, such as industry, insurance associations, testing institutes, universities and authorities pursue their subjective goals. Moreover, EUSAS wants to be a platform on which representatives of all groups of interest meet and exchange experiences in unconstrained discussions. For this reason, the membership in EUSAS is *ad personam*, i.e. the members do not represent their employer, but themselves. Of course, companies and organizations, which as associated members want to promote the work of EUSAS, are addressed as well.

Due to the limited number of experts in the fields mentioned above, it was clear from the beginning that EUSAS would remain a relatively small community; i.e. the number of members was initially limited to approximately 50 experts from Europe. Later the circle of candidates was extended, with the goal to be able to transfer the experts' knowledge to young development engineers, who did not yet possess notable experience themselves.

3. The instruments of EUSAS

The most important instruments by which EUSAS pursues its goals are:

- Workshops and conferences
- Publications
- Cooperation with the industry, universities and testing institutes

Probably the best known and globally most renowned, international seminar in the field of fire detection, "AUBE", taking place at Duisburg every four years, is sponsored and actively supported by EUSAS.

As a general rule, two conferences are held every year. During these conferences selected topics are discussed, and they are organized in such a way that they leave enough time for in-depth discussion.

The presentations are highly up-to-date and do not only impart state-of-the-art technology, but also future perspectives. Current topics are:

- Integrated security systems in building automation
- New protection concepts
- Multi-sensor technologies
- New testing methods & equipment
- State-of-the-art extinguishing systems and control thereof
- Special applications, e.g. tunnel protection

A complete list of workshops can be looked up in the table of contents of the EUSAS Newsletters, to be found at the EUSAS website under the item "Publications".

The workshops and conferences are public; results are made available to all participants. In addition, results will be published in the "EUSAS Journal" or are available on CD ROM.

4. EUSAS – Organization and membership

The chairman represents the society to the outside world; the work is led and coordinated by the board of management. Statutes, structure, organization and programs are described on the website under www.eusas.ch and are continually updated. The work program is worked out by the management board and is accredited on the occasion of the annual general assembly.

EUSAS is financed from the membership fees and is, according to the statutes, a "non-profit organization". A cost-covering contribution towards expenses is charged for the participation in the workshops.

People interested in becoming a member of EUSAS may address an informal letter to the EUSAS Office, P.O. Box, CH-8722 Kaltbrunn. For "Ordinary Members" the membership fee is €100 per year; for "Associate Members", i.e. companies, organizations, sponsors etc., it is €1000. For young engineers or students who do not yet have considerable experiences in the fields mentioned, it is possible to become a Junior Member (€50 per year).