

VIPA International Global Office
142 Avenue Jules Bordet, Brussels 1140
Phone: +32 2 761 1681 Fax: + 32 2 761 16 99
Mail: VIPA-international@kelleneurope.com
Web: www.vipa-international.org



**Vacuum Insulation Panel Association
Communications & Public Relations Working Group Conference Call
Tuesday, 24 May 2016, 14:00 to 15:00 CET**

Participants:

John Garbutt, Kingspan
Gregor Erbenich, Porextherm
Raquel Ponte Costa, VIPA International Secretariat

Apologies

Insook Yoo, va-Q-Tec
Michel Chavois, Rexor
Alison Navon, Hanita Coatings
Maja Tomazin, Knauf Insulation
Reiner Wartusch, Evonik Industries

Minutes

1. Welcome

1.1 Governance rules

Raquel Ponte Costa welcomed participants to the call and reminded them to the VIPA Antitrust Compliance Statement.

1.2 Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved with no changes.

1.3 Approval minutes previous conference call 24 April 2015 and review of action items

The minutes were approved with no changes. Raquel Ponte Costa went through the actions of this conference call. All actions about the website and collateral materials related to IVIS 2015 were completed. Regarding the website's keywords and metatags, Raquel reported the IT company used the following words: insulation, European Union, energy policy, energy savings, vacuum insulation panels, appliances, buildings, construction, retrofit, building renovation, zero energy buildings.

On the action related to the list of external contacts, Raquel reminded members she has not yet received contacts especially institutional contacts (government authorities, national associations and interest groups). Gregor suggested Raquel to send to the members the VIPA list of contacts so everyone has a look and sees which contacts need to be added.

Action:

Raquel to send to all WG members the VIPA list of external contacts so members can have a look and send institutional contacts that might be missing, especially at national level.

About the IVIS mailing list, Raquel mentioned that as VIPA had volunteered to organise the event in 2017, she did not ask the Advisory Board for the list because VIPA would get it in any case. The situation has now changed and VIPA is no longer co-organiser. Raquel suggested asking Daniel Quénard, closer to IVIS 2017 if he can share the mailing list with us.

Action:

Raquel to ask the IVIS Advisory Board and Daniel Quénard for the mailing list of IVIS.

2. Governance

2.1 Terms of Reference of the Working Group

Raquel shared with the group the Terms of Reference document which was drafted by the secretariat to all the Working Groups of the association. Gregor and John had no comments to it. The document is a useful guideline about the objectives and working procedures of the Working Group.

2.2 Election chair of the COM & PR WG

Participants discussed the purpose of the Working Group and the low engagement of the members. John Garbutt suggested combining the COM & PR Working Group with the Public Affairs WG. In his view, trade associations should focus on standardisation and advocacy and leave any marketing or commercial activities to the companies. Raquel agreed with the comment but highlighted that VIPA does not aim at organising commercial activities to market VIPs but to communicate about the association and the product to a general audience and especially to stakeholders and decision-makers.

Agreement was reached on this recommendation to merge both Working Groups. All VIPA communication activities should be connected to the public affairs objectives of the association.

Decision:

Recommendation to merge the Communication & Public Relations Working Group with the Public Affairs Working Group.

Raquel concurred with the members on the lack of engagement and low participation at conference calls. She suggested organising a one-day meeting with all Working Groups somewhere in Europe in the second half of 2016 so everyone can be present and participate actively in the discussions. As the association is now completely established and the first two years are now gone, it is a good time to discuss a plan for the next 3 to 5 years.

3. Website statistics

Raquel went briefly through the meeting slides (see presentation in annexes) and pinpointed the fact that the website traffic went down a little bit in the beginning of the year because no new content was posted.

Gregor suggested drafting a press release about the standardisation process and the active participation of VIPA to it. Gregor mentioned that the GSH website has frequent updates on the standardisation process and that such information is missing on the VIPA website.

Action:

Raquel to draft a press release about the standardisation process on VIPs.

4. 2016 Communications activities

2.1 Case studies

Raquel asked members to send more case studies covering other applications. The purpose is to rotate as much as possible between applications and companies.

2.2 Speaking slots at events

Members felt that participating at events should be connected to the objectives and priorities of the association. Raquel mentioned that this year the main goal of the association is to conclude the co-operation agreement with the GSH on the usage of the RAL quality mark and to fasten the standardisation process via the studies that are on-going. In addition, the advocacy case that is being drafted by the PA WG will be a great basis for further PR and PA activities. As soon as the Commission publishes a new proposal replacing the energy efficiency directive and the energy performance of building directive, than advocacy will definitely become a top priority for VIPA. Gregor mentioned that the main barrier for VIPs is not legislation but the price and the quality as well as some misconceptions about VIPs. These are the three aspects that need to be improved.

Regarding the list of events that Raquel compiled, Gregor mentioned he did attend the IEX Insulation Expo Europe. The exhibition was very small and he did not see any conference taking place. The event is not so relevant for VIPA and focuses on industrial insulation. John Garbutt said the EcoBuilt focuses on architects and contractors which relate more to commercial and marketing activities which are the responsibilities of the companies and not of the association. John suggested looking at events as a vehicle to achieve the objectives of the association. If the objective of the association is to focus on advocacy then high level policy events where key MEPs and Commission people are present should be the priority. All agreed that the Renovate Europe Day would be a good event to be attended by the VIPA secretariat but also by the members.

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Members discussed the value of the sponsorship of the Annex 65 meeting in February in Turin. Raquel mentioned that the Annex 65 is the best platform for VIPA to get new members because all relevant companies are there. Perhaps the 2000 EUR invested in the sponsorship could be better capitalized by having a stronger presence at the event but for sure the Annex 65 meeting is the best platform to get new members. Raquel added that she did not receive any request for membership after the Annex 65 meeting.

2.3 Promote studies commissioned by VIPA

Three studies have been commissioned the past months:

- Compressive strength measurement of VIP according to EN 826
- Develop an advanced technique for measuring the effect of moisture content on the thermal conductivity of VIPs
- Calibration of the lift-off technique for measuring the internal pressure of fumed silica VIPs and determination of boundary conditions for the lift-off measurements and processing of measurement raw data

The first one should be completed during the summer. The studies are very technical so it will be difficult to communicate about their results. Members suggested communicating about the importance of these studies to the standardisation process.

2.4 Other communication activities

Members agreed with Raquel's suggestion of organising a meeting with all the Working Groups to discuss the objectives of the association for the next years and to put together a plan with concrete milestones to be achieved. As part of the plan, concrete tactics and communication activities shall be decided like speaking at events or creating any sort of collateral materials.

5. AoB & date of next conference call

No other business was discussed.

The conference call finished at 14:30.
