

LIF President's Report for 2008 – 2009

The past 12 months have proved to be a very busy time for the Lighting Industry Federation (LIF) and the Industry Committee for Emergency Lighting (ICEL) with good progress in a number of areas. Much of the detail is covered in the other sections of this Annual Report, so I will limit myself to the following headlines:

Environment and Energy/CO2 reduction continues to be the main drivers of legislation and related standardisation and some key examples are:

1. A considerable amount of our resources have gone into working with both the UK Government and the EU Commission/Parliament (via our European associations CELMA (Luminaires) and ELC (Lamps) to ensure that the Energy Using Products (EuP) legislation was developed in as practical a way as possible. As you will see elsewhere in this report two of the related Implementing Measures have now come into force and another is under development. The key impact of the EuP is to raise minimum energy efficiency levels of products with the result that products that don't meet those levels, can no longer be sold in EU markets. This will result in major changes for our markets but these in turn represent opportunities and there is no doubt that the work of the Industry bodies both in UK and at EU level have helped to make sure this legislation is as practical as possible.
2. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), which is implemented in the UK via the Building Regulations, Part L, are also undergoing revisions and LIF is actively involved in presenting the Industry's position to the Regulators. A key issue that LIF argues is that to significantly improve energy efficiency there needs to be a faster refurbishment of the existing stock of buildings in the UK – both commercial/industrial and household.
3. In terms of environmental legislation regarding waste and use of hazardous materials, both the WEEE and RoHS Directives are currently in process of formal reviews by the EU and national Governments and LIF is working closely with the UK Government in order to ensure that the voice of the industry is heard.

Legislative and standardisation change does present the industry with challenges but also with opportunities to demonstrate that it can make a positive contribution to environmental improvement and so LIF and ICEL have also been working on behalf of the Members, to promote the market as demonstrated by the following two examples:

1. We continue in dialogue with the Government to find ways to improve the effectiveness of the Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECA) scheme as it affects lighting products with the aim of making that scheme more available to support Users investment decisions in upgrading lighting installations.
2. We've launched a pilot Awards Scheme (called EMILAS) to focus on recognising refurbishment of existing lighting schemes with significantly more energy efficient solutions. This links very well with the EPBD and Part L of the Building Regulations referred to above.

The first awards will take place at the Annual Lunch on May 19th 2009, which we believe will lead to extensive PR opportunities to promote the industry. The pilot will be assessed and it is anticipated that it will be rolled out into a full Scheme for the next year.

On the marketing side LIF and ICEL have invested over the past year in adapting corporate image but more importantly in developing their website and associated material. We shall be launching the new websites at the Annual Lunch, plus an updated, web-based, lamp guide. With web-based materials development is never completely finished, so this knowledge base will continue to be developed for the benefit of members and will consist of a public site and a members-only area. Related particularly to the implementation of the EuP Domestic products legislation and the planned phase-out of incandescent lamps LIF has also played its role in seeking to counter negative media stories by providing additional information to the media in the interests of a more balanced analysis. LIF will also be supporting its members by providing marketing materials to support the implementation of the EuP Regulations.

LIF Training continues to be very popular with both Members and non-Members. 2008 was a record year and whilst in the current economy a slowdown may occur, there is no doubt that LIF training courses continue to be highly respected and we plan to progressively extend our range of courses starting with some to support the implementation of the EuP Regulations.

The start of 2008 saw the formation of a specific working group regarding LED's, combining Technical and Commercial input. The aims of the group are to speed up and increase the adoption of LED and solid state lighting products and luminaires and to drive standards in favour of quality solutions. This group is also liaising with other industry bodies and interests and the Government and its agencies to ensure a more consistent approach and information relating to LEDs. I am pleased to report that the group is moving forward in achieving its objectives and one of its first outputs will be "Frequently Asked Questions" documents aimed at assisting the OEM and Specifier markets, which are expected to be on our website in the near future.

Lumicom, the Company that LIF established to operate a WEEE Compliance Scheme for luminaire manufacturers has further established its operations over the past year and is progressively extending its services to members. Together with Reelight, the Lamps WEEE Scheme set up by the Lamps industry, it means the UK lighting industry is able to offer a comprehensive and focussed solution to WEEE for the industry.

In a brief review such as this, it is impossible to cover the whole range of what LIF does in a year but I hope that you find that this gives you a flavour of some of the activities and the benefits for the industry of membership. I would also like to record the thanks of the LIF Council to all our members for their support; to all the representatives from our members who contribute their time to the various committees of LIF and ICEL which leads to position papers etc., without their support we would not deliver the results we do. Finally on behalf of all Members I would like to express our thanks to the LIF, ICEL and Lumicom staff who deliver the day to day work of the organisations.

Best wishes for the next 12 months and success with all the challenges and opportunities that will arise.

Peter Denny
LIF President