

REPORT ON MEETING OF COMMISSION XIV

Graz, Austria

July 2008

By Ed Whalen

- Minutes were modified to reflect that there was an election for Vice-Chair and there was a vote on the status of the Commission
- Shortage of Welders (Vic Mathews): Presentation
 - Only 25,000 welders being trained – need 50,000
 - Issue with welder certification (the presentation identified this as an industry requirement) – this word kept coming up in the two presentations
 - Presentation on how to get a career in welding
 - Iron Man comic and Career magazine
 - Average age of the welder in the US is 54 – average retirement age 55-60
 - Had a good list of the careers in the presentation
 - Promoted that welders are good at and could be involved with: building things, diver, artist, math and science, communication, entrepreneur
 - Image of Welding awards
 - Foundation SOS
 - Raised \$5M for one high school for a model training school
- Germany also mentioned Europe is having the same issue with shortages and suggested harmonizing standards could help. He mentioned that they have tried for years to integrate AWS but this hasn't happened. These large welding societies are blocking progress. Complained about the formalism in the Canadian Alberta system (Journeyman – apprenticeship system does not recognize European systems)
- Spain also complained about shortages
- The US mentioned that salary was the biggest attraction
- The French experience was that they have been able to increase the number of welders by adding CS Wave (welding simulators).
 - CSSI (CS Wave) stated though this is true, welders are welding in real life on the shop floor. We need a change in the education system to move towards more trades training from the very beginning
- Most schools in the US have better success with older students (mid 20's). Suggest prisons are the best opportunity (captive audience).
- Poland said they were very successful in getting candidates but many were leaving because of salary. In many cases companies have many contracts but not enough welders. Due to supply and demand wages are increasing and they are starting to see welders returning home from abroad.
- In Finland the problem was a lack of training locations. Now salaries are getting higher and welders also are also coming back.

- The Chairman asked it needs to be sexy and it is not now. Why should people want to weld
- Welding Simulator (Jose Piquer/CESOL and CS Wave)
 - Presented the French CS-WAVE and also the Canadian simulator
 - One of the big problems these days is finding trainers – more of a problem these days than 5 years ago. No trainer - no training
 - SIMFOR (RV-Sold (Spain)) and one from Ukraine (Paton Institute), VRSym, 123 (Canadian), CS WAVE (French), Germany
- RV-SOLD Welding Simulator (Spain)
 - Typical accidents at the first stage of training are avoided
 - Includes tube welder
 - Comes with theory and practical sessions
 - Designed to have 120/175 hours of equivalent practical training but in a shorter period of time
 - It comes loaded with 44 lessons/IIW following the IIW IW program which allows the ATB's to incorporate this into their IIW IW program
 - The system records the welder records and the results per pass
 - The teachers can view this information and is saved
 - Vibration holder is incorporated into the system. It goes off when the electrode hits the plate
 - It has sound and relatively good graphics. The sound changes when the stick-out gets too long. It also creates more sparks.
 - This product does not have variable difficulty levels to assist the teacher or student to get better.
 - One week of training on the system is included in the system. It also come with technical support
 - There is voice feedback with this product
- Japan stated that Toshiba is currently working on a simulator using a video. It was suggested that they are developing this for the nuclear industry. CSSI (CS Wave) stated that there are other companies that are developing a simulator (including Toshiba that are not intending to market this technology but have it for competitive purposes.
- Future:
 - Delegates to a report to the Commission on what the country is doing for the shortage of welders
 - The Commission will try to meet every 6 months to generate some momentum