

Report on EWWF Activities during January to March 2017

This is a brief report of the England and Wales Wildfire Forum's (EWWF) involvement in four key events/meetings held during January to March 2017. The meetings and events are arranged in date order, starting with the earliest.

EWWF Representatives attend the 14th International Wildland Fire Safety Summit, 31st January 2017

The first International Wildland Fire Safety Summit was held in 1997 and since then the events have provided a gathering place for members of the global wildfire community to meet and focus on safety.

The 14th Safety Summit was held at the Pedralbes Royal Palace in Barcelona, Spain. The event was organised by the [International Association of Wildland Fire](#) in conjunction with the [Pau Costa Foundation](#) and the Catalan Fire Department. The specific theme of this year's event was "Decision Making in High Risk and High Consequence Environments", exploring how key decisions made in pressurised environments (i.e. wildfire incidents) often have far reaching consequences for people and communities.

The event included keynote presentations, numerous parallel session presentations and a number of poster presentations. There was also a large trade stand exhibition for wildfire suppliers and an art display related to the topic of wildfires. A full list of presentations and sessions is available on the [conference website](#), but to provide a summary the keynote presentations and presenters were as follows:

- *Safety as a Culture of Decision Making* – by Marc Castellnou of the Catalonia Graf Bombers, Spain
- *Fire Survival Systems – The Future* – by Dr Richard Thornton of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, Australia
- *The History and Development of the Fire Shelter* – by Antony Petrelli of the US Forest Service

The event was very well organised and was attended by wildfire practitioners, researchers and equipment suppliers from around the World, including a delegation of wildfire practitioners from the UK and representatives of the EWWF.



Pedralbes Royal Palace, Barcelona

The event organisers have developed a number of multimedia resources to summarise the event. These can be accessed using the following links:

- [YouTube Video Album](#)
- [Flickr Photo Album](#)
- [Story Telling](#)
- [Press compilation](#)
- [Book of Abstracts](#)
- [Incandescent Memories – Art and Fire Exhibition](#)

Further information about the event can be found on the event website at: <http://www.paucostafoundation.org/ICoPFires/wildland-fire-safety-summit/>

EWFF representatives attend the International Congress on Prescribed Burning (ICOP Fires), 1st to 3rd February 2017, Barcelona, Spain

The ICOP Fires was the first international congress on prescribed fires in Europe and was held at the University of Barcelona. The aim of the conference was to connect diverse stakeholders in forest management (i.e. local authorities, firefighters, foresters and land managers) with researchers from a number of different specialist fields (including: biology, geography, ecology, sociology, meteorology, climatology and soil science). The event was planned to coincide with the 14th International Wildland Fire Safety Summit and was organised by the Pau Costa Foundation and a number of other partner and supporting organisations (see the [conference booklet](#) for more details).

The event included 6 parallel sessions of presentations and additional plenary sessions and poster presentations spread across two days. There was also a [field visit](#) to the Collserola Natural Park on 3rd February 2017 to the site of a prescribed fire.

A full list of presentations and sessions is available on the [conference website](#), but to provide a summary the keynote presenters were as follows:

- Marc Castellnou of the Catalonia Graf Bombers, Spain
- Tina Bell, University of Sydney, Australia
- Paulo Fernandes, University of Tras-os-Montes e Alto, Spain
- Jeremy Bailey, Nature Conservancy, United States of America



University of Barcelona

The ICOP Fires event was very well organised and extremely informative. It was interesting to learn how many countries are experiencing similar problems with regards to retreat from rural areas and a decline in land management through burning. It was also interesting to see some of the unique problems experienced within some countries, many of which revolve around the different legislative requirements and restrictions that are placed on prescribed burning.

The event was attended by wildfire practitioners, researchers and equipment suppliers from around the World, including a delegation of wildfire/prescribed burning practitioners from the UK and representatives of the EWWF.

The event organisers have developed a number of multimedia resources to summarise the event. These can be accessed using the following links:

- [YouTube Video Album](#)
- [Flickr Photo Album](#)
- [Story Telling](#)
- [Press compilation](#)
- [Book of Abstracts](#)
- [Incandescent Memories – Art and Fire Exhibition](#)

Further information about the event can be found on the event website at: <http://www.paucostafoundation.org/ICoPFires/>

EWWF attends Meeting with Minister for Agriculture for Catalonia, 1st February 2017

The EWWF Secretary and other members of the EWWF were part of a small international delegation that met with Meritxell Serret Aleu, the Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food for Catalonia on 1st February 2017. The meeting was organised to take coincide with the ICOP Fires Conference and discussed past, present and future initiatives on wildfire issues. The EWWF Secretary and other representatives from the UK, including the Scottish Wildfire Forum and Chief Fire Officers Association, discussed current and previous collaboration with colleagues in Catalonia (including the Catalonia GRAF Bombers and the Pau Costa Foundation) and expressed gratitude to colleagues in Catalonia for their willingness to share good practice. They also raised awareness of multiagency partnership working in the UK on wildfire issues, through the work of the EWWF and Scottish Wildfire Forum, at the national level, and through regional and local wildfire groups.

The Minister expressed her hope and commitment for continuing this longstanding collaboration on wildfire issues between the UK and Catalonia. This hope and commitment was reciprocated by the EWWF and other organisations present.

EWWF attends Meeting at the Argentine Embassy in London, 16th February 2017

The EWWF Secretary and two other members of the EWWF were part of a small UK delegation that attended a wildfire meeting at the Argentine Embassy in London on 16th February 2017. The delegation met Minister Bergman, the Argentine Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, and Mr Carlos Sersale di Cerisano, the Argentine Ambassador to the UK. Minister Bergman is currently gathering information and examples of best practice from several countries to help inform the development of plans to reform civil protection, emergency response and land management infrastructure, systems and training in Argentina.

Discussions were broad and strategic, from the UK's experience of Fire Service Reform in the general sense to the UK approach to wildfire prevention, preparedness and response. An overview of the work of the EWWF and local fire groups (including fire plans, training exercises and prescribed burning projects) was provided, as well as a summary of some of the ongoing wildfire projects that are being delivered by UK partners at local, regional, national and international level.

All present agreed that the meeting was very informative and successful. A second meeting with a broader range of participants was proposed and may be arranged for the future.

Further Information

If you have any queries regarding this report, or would like further information about the conferences or meetings, please contact the EWWF Secretary using the contact details below.

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