



EUROSHNET

Joachim LAMBERT

Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung

Alte Heerstrasse 111, D-53757 Sankt Augustin

The foundation of the European network for occupational safety and health experts, EUROSHNET, resulted from the 1st European Conference on Standardization, Testing and Certification, which was held in Dresden in October 2001. It was recognized that better coordination and consultation within the European OSH community were necessary in order to be better able to take up the challenges arising from the globalization of markets and the resulting internationalization of standardization.

An internet-based communications platform was developed; an area not open to the public offers experts from European OSH institutions a fast and easy way to coordinate their views and to adopt common positions. After a one-year test period involving six EU member states, the system was opened to experts in all EU and EFTA countries in October 2004.

By the end of May 2005, 230 experts from 16 countries had signed up to EUROSHNET. Eight fora currently exist where topics relevant to occupational health and safety are discussed; these topics are related to standardization or to fundamental questions of testing and certification, particularly in the areas of machinery, personal protective equipment, electrical safety, and emissions. The system also permits to search for experts according to criteria such as country, profile of interests or participation in specific standards committees. Practical examples will be given to demonstrate the benefits that such a communications platform provides for occupational health and safety in Europe.