



Institution of Fire Engineers Norfolk & Suffolk (No. 5) Branch

2009 AGM

High Rise – High Risk

The AGM was held at Adastral Park, the home of BT Research. The Branch is grateful for the support from Mike Warden and BT in helping organise this successful event.

At the AGM, the Branch President, Eddie Meelan, presented John Hubble with a gift as an expression of our thanks for the hard work John has put in as Branch Treasurer for many years.

After a fine buffet lunch and informal discussion, Paul Woods, Head of Fire Safety in Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, presented the first session, covering the recommendations from the Harrow Court Investigation, with an emphasis on the fire safety provisions.



With his first-hand knowledge, this interesting presentation, including both local and national implications, prompted much discussion: He ably highlighted the interaction between fire protection measures provided in both old and new high rise premises and liaison between these essential disciplines.

As part of the focus on 'High Rise – High Risk' the second excellent presentation was given by Bob Stevenson on the fire investigation that was undertaken at Harrow Court, where tragically two firefighters lost their lives.

Areas examined were the fire safety provisions and how they interacted with the fire growth, together with the fire alarm system. How a detailed scene examination was undertaken and fire simulations were undertaken with BRE, gave the audience a greater understanding of why and how the fire spread, with the time temperature curves giving a clear indication of what was being faced by the operational crews. Bob's presentation enlightened the audience on the need for a careful and methodical approach to fully examine all areas in any fire investigation.

The final presentation, by David Manthorpe, provided the link between the difficulties faced when dealing with these types of premises and how we as a Fire and Rescue Service can overcome them. David's presentation emphasised that there is a lot more to fire fighting than squirting water. It is imperative that we understand the physical demands placed on supplying fire fighting media to the fire fighting floor in a capacity where fire fighters can carry out their task and are appropriately equipped to deal with the anticipated fire loading and fire growth.

To this end, it was very pleasing that the delegates included not only Fire and Rescue Service personnel, but also Local Authority Building Control and private consultants, all of whom have essential parts to play in the process of making buildings safer from fire.

The seminar gave the members of the Institution a great networking opportunity and the chance to catch up with old friends.

Over the years, it has been reinforced to us as a Service that fire fighting is a science and it is imperative that this knowledge and skill is retained and passed on in an effort to ensure the safety of future fire fighters and to maintain the professional integrity and standing we have enjoyed as a Service.

For more information regarding the IFE or details on joining the IFE, log onto the Branch web site [IFE](#) or contact the Branch Secretary Simon Hewitt – simon.hewitt@suffolk.gov.uk, who would be delighted to answer your query.

