

COST ACTION C17: FIRE LOSS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS
WORKING GROUP 3: CULTURAL AND FINANCIAL VALUE

Kewb/cost17/minuteswg305Helsinki

2005.11.29

**Minutes from joint Working Group meetings, Helsinki 14- 15 th October 2005
WG 3 and 4, WG 1 and 3, WG 2 and 3; Kerstin Westerlund**

PRELIMINARY NOTES *Please contact me if You want to add something. I have lost my notes about who participated in which meeting. Please look after that You are in the right meeting!*

Place: Helsinki Culture Hall

Purpose of the Meeting. To spread information between working groups, to get a broader discussion, to ensure that important issues will be covered and to limit unnecessary overlapping,

Next MC/WG meeting will be in Slovenia in may 2006. It will be the last working group meeting in COST 17. That means that written contributions has to be sent to the working group chairmen *as latest beginning mars 2006*

Part 1 Friday 10.45 – 12.45

WG 3 Cultural and Financial Value / WG 4 Property Management Strategies

Participants

Kerstin Westerlund/Wolfgang Kippes Joint chairs

WG 3) Dietmar Wohltan (Austria), Galina Mileva (Bulgaria), Petar Hristov (Bulgaria),

Valentin Vladimirov (Bulgaria), Simon Singer (France), Jacques Akerboom (Netherlands), Einar Karlsen (Norway), Ivar Clausen (Norway), Josip Korosec (Slovenia), Mariana Llinares Cervera (Spain),

WG 4) Luca Nassi. Thorbjörn Thedeén, Alfred Moser?

The following issues were discussed:

Special measures to take in assessment or evaluation of consequences and risk in historic buildings WG 3.4.2

1) How to handle the special cultural value in risk assessment and analysis

[WG 3 will describe what is special for historic buildings. WG 4 will use the WG 3 report in handling the managerial aspect of work with risk evaluation, risk analysis and risk assessment ie to improve methodology, create manuals, knowledge among property managers etc.](#)

2) Philosophy and ethics in practice

Different aspects of the risk and consequences of a fire in a historic building (Risk = Probability x Consequence) was discussed. A building **can be seen as irreplaceable by community** also if specialists in cultural heritage not value it from a professional point of view. As property owner and fire protection specialists we have to take that into consideration. The real value can be seen as what we want to pay for safeguarding a building (if we understand the risk and the consequences of a fire). We discussed the example that a pair of Wellingtons shoes can be more valuable to people than the whole building.

Bad knowledge about the real costs to recreate a destroyed building or part of a building leads to bad safeguarding. It also leads to lack of money if a fire occurs. Different examples of fires in churches were discussed.

If because of antiquarian aspects no or limited fire protection is chosen, it has to be a **decision about that on high level in the owners organisation**. In some cases it can be better to take the risk than to destroy the impression of the original building.

Alternative ways of protection instead of very intruding technical protection always have to be seriously discussed. Managerial protection or other ways of protection always has to be calculated and discussed

Loss recovery Special measures to take regards to historic buildings WG 3.5.1

1) The ethical aspect on impact on historic authenticity and prioritation of efforts.

[WG 3 will describe what is special for historic buildings. It was decided to stress the ethical aspect related to the historic property. WG 4 will use the WG 3 report in handling the managerial aspect of work with loss recovery to improve methodology, create manuals, knowledge among property managers etc.](#)

Buildings of cultural historic value means much more to people than modern buildings. Property owners and community therefore has a **very special responsibility to protect historical buildings**. Saving people is of course of first priority. Saving the building is very close to it. **How to raise awareness** among people engaged in fireprotection and firefighting was discussed. Work to protect people is a good also for the protection of the building. But because of the special threats to historic buildings it is not enough.

2) Alternative approaches to stemming loss levels

General conditions that cover historic buildings would be the best but it is probably a dream.

To find the appropriate use of the building to limit the risks is important

3) Case studies

It is a need for short descriptions of case studies. *The participants were asked to contribute with short texts*

It was noted that during the Siena meeting it was decided that two new case studies about “Principles of deciding about reconstruction or not” will be added.; Hofburg – Wien [by WOLFGANG KIPPES](#) / other church – Finland [by SAKKARI MENTU](#)/ Weimar, library fire – by P. ROHLEN

Management with regards to the special risks in historic buildings

Insurance is important also as a tool to avoid fire loss. Without insurance we miss an important actor that will insist on appropriate protection for the building against fire.

1) Challenge for future and best practise for insurance of historic buildings (WG 3.3.3)

The issue will be handled as a whole by working group 3 with help from WG 4 even if it is a managerial question. WG 4 will help to spread the message about that among property owners and insurers.

When historic buildings are insured they are usually not insured or protected in relation to their cultural historic value or to the real **costs to get it reconstructed** in a proper way. Serious attempts have to be done to get examples of what reconstruction of different kinds of buildings and rooms will cost. That is also important to raise understanding of the importance of safeguarding. Schönbrunn palace is insured. Work is going on to estimate the costs of reconstructing different parts.

The chair men reminded the participants that during last meeting was decided that: “A general text about the use and possible techniques in collecting preliminary **documentation** of a building in order to make reconstruction possible will be written by A. DE NAEYER (measured drawings, ortho photogrammetric systems, remote sensing methods , geo-data systems, ...). He also will take contact on this matter with the appropriate ICOMOS international committee. ANDREJ REBEC promised to contribute with the ICOMOS recommendations on documentation

Part 2 Friday 15.30 – 17.00

WG 1 Data, Loss, Statistics and Evaluating Risks / WG 3 Cultural and Financial Value

Participants

Ingval Maxwell / Kerstin Westerlund Joint chairs

WG 1) Stewe Emery, Dietmar Wohltan

WG 3) Dietmar Wohltan (Austria), Galina Mileva (Bulgaria), Petar Hristov (Bulgaria),

Valentin Vladimirov (Bulgaria), Simon Singer (France), Jacques Akerboom (Netherlands), Einar Karlsen (Norway), Ivar Clausen (Norway), Josip Korosec (Slovenia), Mariana Llinares Cervera (Spain), Steve Emery (UK), Ingval Maxwell (UK),

Various attempts to estimate the economic value of historic buildings for society 3.2.1

The Norwegian estimation by Terje Nypan was noted as a very good attempt to catch the big influence especially on the tourism economy. There are also some examples about willingness to pay. The chairmen asked for **more examples**

Costs for reconstruction related to cost for new buildings WG 3.2.3

The chairmen asked for **more examples**

Challenge for future and best practise for insurance of historic buildings WG 3.3.3

Key questions were discussed. **Full value of worst case insurance** when possible. First loss insurance gives the owner the full responsibility for the insurance amount. The owner often has limited knowledge about what that means. In negotiations about the insurance there must be **focus on what will occur after a fire**. The existing insurance conditions must be clarified. The decision about if the insurance will cover special **grade of reconstruction** or not has to be taken. Use of historic materials and construction techniques must be taken into account. Calculations of costs for relevant reconstruction has to be done.

Fire protection must be based on risk assessment or risk analysis with the **economic value of the historical value and costs for reconstruction** taken into account. Powerful **incentives** must be given because of level of security according to the needs of the special building. The degree of protection of the building must effect on the insurance fee.

The insurance company provides the customer with **full understanding** of the risks, risk management principles and specialists who can help the customer.

Afternoon next day (An interesting example of lack of insurance was the fire in the Mornington house. The saving of the books were paying the rebuilding of the building and much more)

Loss recovery Special measures to take regards to historic buildings WG 3.5.1

1) The ethical aspect on impact on historic authenticity and prioritation of efforts.

The discussion was very similar to the discussion between WG 3 and WG 4.

2) Alternative approaches to stemming loss levels

Server for valuable contents in buildings were discussed. Than access only have to be possible in case of fire.

There is a need to get better lists of historical buildings and also a list with damaged buildings. Ingvall asked for that from the countries who still have not contributed with that.

3) Case studies

It is a need for short descriptions of case studies. *The participants were asked to contribute with short texts*

Part 3 Saturday 9.30 – 11.00

WG 2 Available and Developing Technology / WG 3 Cultural and Financial Value

Participants

Stewart Kidd / Kerstin Westerlund Joint chairs

WG 2) Jan Holmberg (Sweden), Marti Jokine (Finland), Vincenzo Nuzzolese (Italy), mirella. Bindo (Italy), Jolanta Muskalska (Poland), Andrej Rebec (Slovenia)

WG 3) Galina Mileva (Bulgaria), Petar Hristov (Bulgaria),

Simon Singer (France), Jacques Akerboom (Netherlands), Einar Karlsen (Norway), Ivar Clausen (Norway), Josip Korosec (Slovenia), Mariana Llinares Cervera (Spain), Steve Emery (UK)

Research, methods and models with regard to special state of things in historic buildings that increase the risk; WG 3.4.1

Special state of things in historical buildings are that they usually are: built with **combustible material**, also walls and roofs, built with a **one cell structure**, uninhabited, situated **far away** from

watching people and from the fire brigade, **no use** or used for special **occasional purposes** as exhibitions, parties, organisations etc, housing old **worn electrical equipment**, housing **flammable items**.

It was noted that many buildings were used for **wrong purposes**. On one hand as storage for tiles on the other hand as museums housing valuable items, animals in alcoholics and equipped with a lot of electricity.

It was also stated that the **special values** of the building and in what way these values will be disturbed by technical installation **has to be clarified** before the decision about technical protection. Protection by management or other ways of protection also have to be discussed before decision about technical protection is taken

It was discussed how much the special sources of risk was focused on in the WG 2 discussions about protection of historic buildings. Surely not enough. There is space for new inventions or application and more focus on the special situation for the historical heritage.

WG 3 will develop its papers about the special situation for historic buildings. **WG 2 will examine** if there are aspects in the WG 3 analysis of special state of things and special sources of risks up till now that still is not covered in its work and look after if **complementary additions** can be done.

Kerstin Westerlund

Bilaga

From Bulgaria 14 April 2005

-Fire protection in historical buildings

-A review of some problems concerning the Estimation of the Cultural and Financial value of historical Heritage in Bulgaria

-Approaches and Methods of Fire Risk Quantitative Evaluation for Heritage Buildings I Bulgaria

From Slovenia 5 April 2005

Report General situation