

News from IEA SHC Task 24

October 2000

Solar Heating and Cooling Programme Task 24, Solar Procurement.

The participants from the task met in Luzern, Switzerland in the beginning of October, in order to make status for the task and to plan the future.

The first round of the task, containing forming of buyer groups in the participating countries and national tendering in that connection, is ending in the beginning of 2001. The buyer groups consist of representatives of municipalities, utilities, housing corporations, construction companies, real estate developers, NGOs and other organisations.

The information part of the task, subtask B, is at a milestone, as one of the goals for the first round has been reached when the WEB site with tools for the task is being opened late this year. Also the tendering package has been prepared and has proved useful for the national tenders. Finally a mid term evaluation of the different projects with buyer groups is being prepared, to be carried out in the beginning of 2001.

Results from work in smaller groups at the Luzern meeting can be summed up as follows: There will be further co-operation in the areas of small systems, medium sized systems and tendering packages. Concerning small systems, the co-operation will include proposals to NGO's and other 'green' organisations, forming of virtual buyer groups by web-site registration and quality control systems. Experience from the Swedish Web site can be used by Denmark and Switzerland, as for the quality control the Danes have useful experience with their quality control arrangement. The co-operation concerning medium size plants will be based on the Dutch approach "Space for Solar", and the tendering package includes for instance international standards.

National activities:

The forming of buyer groups is going on in various speeds with especially Sweden and Holland as the forerunners.

Switzerland has been occupied with preparations and carrying out of an energy referendum, where the important question was: will the population support renewable energy by paying 0.003 Swiss Franc per kWh green electricity. Unfortunately a small majority answered no, and this caused some hang over and think-over for the Swiss participants. After that vote we Swiss project members will intensify the planned work. Unfortunately the Swiss manufacturers are not at all in favour of the IEA consumer oriented project. They are afraid of any market influencing activities. The Swiss task members will especially enforce the virtual buyers group in the next year.

In the Netherlands 3 buyer groups have been formed for domestic systems in existing dwellings, including ASN-Bank, WWF and SOL-ID. Besides about 1200 systems have been registered so far in new housing and large renovation. A buyer group - "Space for Solar" - consisting of 59 participant-organisations has been formed for medium sized systems.

In Denmark the campaign "Sun over Thy and Mors Regions" is running with the local electrical utilities. Contacts have been established to other potential buyer groups such as Dansk VVS (Association of Plumbers, KFS house builders, WWF (World Wild life Foundation), and a large franchise food company, but none have registered as buyer groups yet.

In Sweden two buyer groups have been established. The Small Solar Domestic Hot Water Systems where a large number of competition entries were received, and where the internet-based notifications from interested buyers are approx. 1,200. Deliveries of 1,000 - 2,000 systems are planned to start in November 2000.

The other group is consisting of 30 organisations who are going to purchase an area of about 5,000 - 8,000 m² solar collectors in larger systems.

The conclusion at this milestone is that the participants in Task 24 have learned important lessons from each other, and this means good results from the effort put into the task from all the countries.