

## IEA Task 24 Newsletter

### April, 2000

The IEA Task 24 has held its experts meeting in Ottawa, Canada, March 2000, with participation of experts from all the participating nations: Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

The Canadian host, Natural Resources Canada, took the opportunity to arrange a workshop for possible new Canadian buyers and industry. It turned out to be a very successful meeting with approximately 25 representatives from utilities, municipalities, NGO's, and consultant companies. Each country was represented by IEA Task 24 experts, who gave presentations about their ongoing activities.

One of the objectives in an IEA task is to inspire one another. Of particular interest at this workshop were the successes in the Netherlands and Sweden. A new Dutch company, SOL\*id (which means Solar-Idea), is owned by installers. SOL\*id allows installers to co-operatively pool resources for marketing, procurement, and financing. In Sweden they were ready with a tender in March 2000, where they expect to obtain a price as low as 1,675 Euro per system for 2000 systems.

#### National Activities:

##### Denmark

In Denmark we have decided to address more specific target groups for buyers. At the moment the utility Thy and Morsø Utility seems most interesting. Thy and Morsø Utility has 18.000 customers of which about 1000 have electricity heated houses. Also a housing developer has been addressed, and in the near future contacts will be taken to private companies in order to form a buyer group out of the employees at these companies.

Denmark is task leader of the information and dissemination part, in which a "Book of Tools" is included. However, the Book has been transferred to a WEB-Tool-Box, which contains tools and inspiration for buyer groups, tendering, marketing etc. This WEB-Tool-Box will be ready for the public later this year.

##### Sweden

In a Technology Competition, Sweden had tenders coming in on Small Systems, DHW, in the end of March, 2000. Then the evaluation phase will run until August, 2000. Hopefully a winner will be appointed in August/September 2000. The conditions in the specifications are shortly described above. Deliveries will hopefully start in the autumn of 2000.

Almost parallel an invitation for tenders on Large Solar Collectors has been sent out. The purchase will extend a total of 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>, solar collector area, and the cost that is set out in the mandatory request is aiming for a substantial price reduction for the buyers that are participating. Deliveries will hopefully start in the winter of 2000.

##### Canada

Currently in Canada two community-based organisations are working toward expanding the market for solar water heaters within their regions. The leader, Peterborough Green-Up, is currently installing their first 9 systems. These systems were tendered and selected from three manufacturers and are also undergoing extensive testing at the National Solar Test Facility. The second organisation, EnerACT (Energy Action Council of Toronto) has a long-standing history of delivering energy efficiency products and services to the people of Toronto. EnerACT will install their first 9 systems from the same suppliers during May 2000. Local utilities, municipal governments, and Natural Resources Canada are co-sponsors in these two projects.

It is expected that the two organisations will form a buyer group and will jointly issue a tender for 20 systems/city in June 2000. The workshop mentioned in the introduction inspired other utilities and municipalities in doing similar projects in their regions; it is expected that 1-3 more organisations will join in the June tender.

##### Netherlands

Concerning domestic systems for existing buildings the work includes solar water heating campaigns using buyer groups such as SOL\*id, the ASN Bank and the World Wild Life Fund. The ASN Bank campaign started with an announcement in their magazine in December 1999. About 1,000 reactions had been received up to the end of February. This campaign also included different financing possibilities either through banks or through renting of the water heaters and parts of the solar systems The WWF campaign started in March 2000.

Also there is collaboration on the level of housing associations. Together with the Dutch umbrella organisation of all housing associations named 'Aedes' and it's European counterpart Cecodhas a European survey named 'Solhas' has started. The goal is to develop a market strategy for solar water heaters for the market sector of housing associations. Starting from an investigation of the housing corporation sector in 10 different European countries, our goal is obtain a clear image of the possibilities and bottlenecks for further introduction of solar water heaters. The survey will form the basis of the demands of a European scale buyer group of housing associations to be established at the end of 2000, beginning of 2001. This buyer group will tender during the second, more international part of IEA task 24. During the survey in 2000 national projects, especially in The Netherlands, will take place in cooperation with Aedes and the utility

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There has also been work for medium-size systems through the "Space for Solar" initiative. This is a buyer group of 59 participating organisations most housing associations and rest homes. To give this buyer group a legal basis a foundation in which all participants are represented has been created. The initiative has a portfolio of more than 100 projects, with a total of approx. 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> which are to be realised the coming years. The foundation has an open character, new parties are invited to join the "Space for Solar" initiative. Since medium size systems are more tailor made, various solar services will be offered, including buying and leasing.

Another way of creating buyer commitment and giving it a legal basis is to create a special company. An example of this is the SOL\*id company. This solar company is owned by 40 installers. The company also has an open character, so other installers can join, however they have to prove that they can offer a certain quality level. SOL\*id is the only Dutch installation company that offers solar sales and installation services on a national scale. A national call centre has been established for facilitating customer contacts. This approach offers an opportunity for customers to have only one contact to take the whole responsibility, transferring matters of warranty etc. to the installers and the manufacturers. This makes it easier with central marketing and publicity, stressing the importance of the system buyer and central logistics. SOL\*id is now working on feature packages, also offering some more features, such as standard black collector edges and solar viewers - instruments installed which provides the tenants with the possibility of seeing that the system is actually working.