

8. Februar 2010

INTERSCHUTZ – Der Rote Hahn 2010 (7. bis 12. Juni) in Leipzig:

**“INTERSCHUTZ is now an international brand”**

**Interview with Hans Jochen Blätte, President,  
German Fire Protection Association (GFPA)**

**Mr. Blätte, you’ve been following INTERSCHUTZ for several decades. How would you describe its development over the years?**

Its development over the past decades can’t exactly be described as “rapid”. But then, that’s precisely the nature of our industry: onwards and upwards at a steady pace, and always solid and sustainable. INTERSCHUTZ has gained in status each time it’s been held and has made a name for itself as the only trade fair of its kind in the world. It is now an international brand. You can mention the name “INTERSCHUTZ” to any fire protection professional in the world and they’ll know what you’re talking about. That opens up huge opportunities, especially for an industry of SMEs such as ours. INTERSCHUTZ is a regular and highly valuable opportunity to connect with a global market.

**Despite the recession and reduced customer budgets, INTERSCHUTZ 2010 now has more confirmed registrations than it did at the same point in its cycle five years ago. That points to strong interest in the fair. What are the challenges facing the industry?**

INTERSCHUTZ has developed a strong position in the non-police public safety sector. The assets we protect are real – and not ephemeral share

prices or the like built on hype and speculation. Nevertheless, the current sorry state of the global financial system is eroding even our resources. Therefore, the challenge for our industry is to become more cost-effective and then to communicate these efficiencies to the public. The big increases in exhibitor numbers are in the theme areas of rescue services and fire protection. What sorts of innovations will the fair be offering in these areas?

At the moment the manufacturers are for obvious reasons being tight-lipped about their own innovations. Talking openly would be like telling someone what they're getting for Christmas. So my response to your question can only be very general: we will see improved quality in all areas and greater IT-support for rescue and firefighting operations.

**What do you hope to achieve at INTERSCHUTZ?**

INTERSCHUTZ is an opportunity to showcase the entire non-police public safety sector to a global audience. This will also further enhance our worldwide reputation for excellence in standards and procedures. Our industry needs this global leverage in order to make up for the currently underperforming markets of Central Europe.

**What sorts of activities is the GFPA planning for INTERSCHUTZ?**

As you'd expect, given our name, we will be promoting the German fire protection industry. We will be running a series of large international congresses, and will also be staging or supporting a number of smaller meetings and events. Our pavilion, which we will be running in partnership with VdS Schadenverhütung, will again be a Who's Who of the German fire protection industry. Visitors to the pavilion will be able to find out about the GFPA's Elearning courses and the specifications and standards we contribute to and support, about fire protection education, about the excellent work done by the Federation of the

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European Union Fire Officers Associations (FEU), and much more. One of the technical highlights will be a display of a highly innovative drone concept that is cost-effective and suitable for use in day-to-day disaster relief operations. Keen to find out more? Then be sure to visit our pavilion. We'd be delighted to see you.

Your contact for further information:

Andrea Staude

Tel. +49 511 89-31015

E-Mail: [andrea.staude@messe.de](mailto:andrea.staude@messe.de)

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