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## NEWS RELEASE

### IAEM-Europa Announces the Winner of the 2010 IAEM-Europa Public Awareness Award

**Nov. 12, 2010 (Falls Church, Va.)** – The Europa Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) has announced the winner of the **IAEM-Europa 2010 Public Awareness Award** (Division 1, Local Emergency Management), which recognizes outstanding public awareness programs or public education products related to emergency management, homeland security, and/or disaster preparedness. The 2010 winner is **Freiwillige Feuerwehr Wels** for its fire protection design, an objective method for designing defensive fire protection of the future.

The technical upgrade of fire departments often creates opposition. During the budgeting process, fire chiefs often give reasons to their deciders on an emotional basis or refer to old laws and/or habits due to lack of technical ratios and hard facts. On the other hand, during their decision making process, many politicians refer to their financial database, which is hard to accept by responsible staff in fire departments. The different aims of insurance companies and even public interests are not even taken into consideration during such a decision process. In the future, the methods and tools of fire protection design should provide a clear picture with a lot of technical arguments and hard facts and should contribute as a rational basis for related decisions.

With the introduction of a "standard" fire protection design, the definition of protection aims and attainment levels leads to an objective basis for valuation and decision necessary to design defensive fire protection. With an algorithm tool created as a specific pilot method for the County of Upper Austria to develop a modern, dynamic fire protection design, it is understood as an objective measure for the design of defensive fire protection within the conflict of interests between politics, insurance companies, fire departments, and the expectations of the public.

For implementation, only a small number of staff, is needed because the system works automatically after the definition of the algorithm. Its effect involves more than 200 members of the fire department in Wels in the first step. Humer Franz from Wels Feuerwehr commented, "We intend later to expand the system to the county of Upper Austria (60,000 members), and finally to the territory of Austria, where we have more than 200,000 volunteer fire fighters."

Learn more about the IAEM-Europa Awards Competition at [www.iaem.com/Awards](http://www.iaem.com/Awards), where the 2011 Call for Entries will be posted in Spring 2011.

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), which has more than 5,000 members in 58 countries, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the goals of saving lives and protecting property during emergencies and disasters. IAEM provides: access to the largest network of emergency management experts who can provide advice and assistance; the Certified Emergency Manager® program; annual scholarships; a comprehensive monthly newsletter; and more. Visit [www.iaem.com](http://www.iaem.com) for details.