

12 October 2007

Hotel fire safety

On 18 August 2007, a fire in the Penhallow Hotel in Newquay in SW England led to three deaths.

While there was concern afterwards about the lack of resources in terms of the number of available firefighters and turntables, no fire sprinklers had been fitted.

This particular tragedy confirms what appears to be a European trend. In the last three years alone, there have been at least 60 deaths in hotel fires, all of which have occurred in hotels with no fire sprinklers, while no deaths are recorded from sprinklered hotels. Does the Commission think that the collection of EU-wide statistics would be helpful in order to have a real picture of the deaths and injuries toll in hotel fires?

Currently consumers using hotel accommodation have a variable risk across Europe due to a lack of common standards, with Hungary best protected with regard to sprinklers, no mandatory sprinkler protection in France, and other Member States in between.

Does the Commission think that fire sprinklers could be an efficient way to improve fire safety in hotels when fitted on new-build hotels or on escape routes of existing hotels? Does the Commission believe that citizens would benefit from a common EU fire-safety standard for hotels?

The Commission has been discussing the issue of hotel fire safety from 1986 onwards and no final decision has been made.

You can find the answer here:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20071210&secondRef=ITEM-020&language=EN>