



Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane
Italian Exhibition & Trade Fair Association

Press

**THE AUTUMN MEETING OF THE AEFI TECHNICAL COMMISSION AT BOLOGNA
FOCUS ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN COMPLEX SITUATIONS**

Bologna, 15 October 2020 - The AEFI Technical Commission met at the BolognaFiere Conference Centre, with the participation of numerous Operations Directors of associate exhibition centres. The meeting reviewed the work done by AEFI during the challenging months prior to re-opening, with a special focus on emergency response in complex situations and natural disasters.

The meeting was opened by General Secretary Loredana Sarti, who reviewed the work done by the Association, especially its important work in educating users about digital systems and the technical and legal implications of the recently issued decrees, to support associates with tools for managing the ongoing public health emergency and the resumption of operations.

AEFI's lobbying work has also been of fundamental importance, with the inclusion in the various decrees of measures to promote the exhibitions industry and its re-opening. The General Secretary also highlighted the critically important work of the Technical Commission in defining methodologies and procedures to enable associate centres to resume their operations in complete safety.

Nazario Pedini, Coordinator of the Technical Commission, summarised the work done so far and the process leading to the validation of AEFI's safety protocol by the Scientific Technical Committee. Pedini updated participants on the implementation of the protocol in exhibition centres after the re-opening of business in September, and its adaptation to the needs of the various types of exhibition.

AEFI's numerous initiatives include the proposal - enacted in Prime Ministerial Decree 7 September 2020 - of regulations for the creation of priority corridors in airports for foreign buyers, visitors and exhibitors participating in Italian exhibitions.

The meeting continued with a focus on "*Emergency response in complex situations and natural disasters*".

Rudolf Pollinger, Director of the Alto Adige Provincial Civil Protection Agency, and Giorgio Gaier, ex-Technical Director of Fiera Bolzano and President of the National Alpine and Speleology Emergency Service (CNSAS), Bolzano, discussed the need for effective emergency response to be properly structured and programmed.

The speakers discussed the fundamental role of preventive preparation for emergency response and the potential for applying such principles to the management of exhibition centres, which can in many ways be considered small cities.

Exhibition centres are strategic resources, not only for the economy, but also as temporary shelters during the organisation and management of emergency response. Not only do they have ample space and all necessary facilities, exhibition halls are also compliant with regulations for the hosting of high risk events.

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One example is that of the Bergamo Exhibition Centre which, during the COVID-19 emergency, was equipped as a hospital in just 11 days, as well as Fiera Milano City at Portello.

Giovanni Giuliani, CEO of BF Servizi, presented the construction and technology expansion project at Bologna Exhibition Centre, with a special focus on Hall 37, which is currently under construction. This is a space of 15,000 sq.m., located at the centre of the exhibition district, and features an openable roof which enables the hall to act as a covered exhibition area, a carpark, a logistics area for exhibition fittings and even the option to host outdoors events.

The meeting concluded with a visit to the "new" halls and the SAIE event, currently hosted at BolognaFiere.

[AEFI - Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane](#), a private non-profit Association, was established in 1983 with the goal of generating synergies between the most important Italian exhibition districts. It currently includes 40 members, which organise over 1000 events a year across an overall exhibition area of 4.2 million square metres. Nearly all international and national trade fairs which take place each year in Italy are held in AEFI-member exhibition districts.

AEFI is a privileged partner for operators and institutions alike, and its role is to support members through the development of activities and programmes in the sphere of training, marketing, promotion and research, as well as to provide services for trade fairs through the activities of its Committees: Exhibition Hub Technical Committee, Legal-Administrative Committee, Internationalisation Committee and Trade Fairs Network Committee. On the internationalisation front, AEFI supports members thanks to agreements with strategic markets. To date, partnerships have been agreed with Iran, Taiwan, Lebanon, India, Thailand, South Africa and Poland, with AmCham, the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy, with CENTREX, the International Exhibition Statistics Union and with EUPIC-EU Project Innovation Center. A memorandum of understanding has been signed with SACE and SIMEST.

AEFI has promoted the foundation of ISFCert, the Certification Institute for Exhibition Industry Statistics which, through rigorous methodologies, enables Italian organisers to present and recognise standardised data, in the name of transparency and reliability. AEFI represents Italian trade fairs in UFI - Union of International Fairs.

<https://www.aefi.it/en/>

For further information

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