

PRESS RELEASE JUNE 2008

The ESA EUROPEAN SUNGLASS CONFERENCE in Treviso

From 4th to 6th June 2008, invited by its President Mr. Rod Lane, the European Sunglass Association (ESA) held its EUROPEAN SUNGLASS CONFERENCE in Treviso (Venice), Italy. ESA members and non-members of the sunglass industry from all over Europe came to this special event to report and discuss facts and information concerning the wide variety of sunglass related themes.

In his welcome speech **ESA President Rod Lane** explained that ESA's next major project was to increase consumer awareness of the need to wear sunglasses to protect our eyes from sun related diseases. ESA had commissioned a study on "the effects of ultraviolet radiation on the human eye" and this will be presented at ESA's Annual Meeting at SILMO in October 2008. The intention is to take this research study to Brussels to ask the European Union for additional funds for further research for example into the amount of money European nations are spending on treatments of sun related diseases. Then the objective is to convince European nations to spend money on promoting the use of sunglasses to prolong the health of our eyes. Rod Lane's welcome speech was followed by **ANFAO Vice-President Mr. Paolo Cannicci** who welcomed ESA to Italy and expressed his intention to intensify the communication and cooperation between ANFAO and ESA.

The first presentation took the audience into the future: current developments constitute a tremendous upheaval that, over the next ten years, will exert lasting influences on people's everyday lives, their desires, values and their behaviour as consumers. **Dr. Kerstin Ullrich** (GIM) showed with her revealing presentation how social changes are making their mark and how producers have to adapt their strategies in order to keep close to consumers' requirements.

Mr. Max Cheung (Swank Optical) gave a detailed and general overview and analysis on the growing Chinese market. He also showed the opportunities for foreign investors and gave useful information about how to enter the Chinese market and in particular the sunglass market. **Mrs. Jackie Mc Kenzie** (Essilor) gave a lecture on the Australia market and its reputation as having the world's "strongest sun protection culture". In this context, she showed several projects and campaigns that have been realised in the past decades in order to inform the public about the right exposure to sun and it was clear that Europe can learn a lot from this culture. **Mr. Mark Mackenzie** and **Mr. Tony Kendall-Tobias** (SWV) compared how Italian opticians performed with opticians in other countries. For example, the audience was told what percentage of Italian opticians sales are made with sunglasses and how profitable their business is compared to opticians in other countries. In addition the audience was given a short update on the "worldwide Plano Sunglasses market study" that was presented at the Annual Meeting last October.

Bruno Palmegiani (De Rigo) explained his way of developing new trends and ideas and he also informed the audience about the latest fashion forecasts for sunglasses. **Mr. Alain Mayer** gave a lecture on EU regulations in which he pointed out that the right communication and good information at point-of-sale increases the consumer's ability to make an informed choice at purchase and minimises the risk of incorrect or inappropriate selection. Also, suppliers are able to enhance their commercial reputation and save time and money by reducing enquiries and complaints. **Mr. John Bowis** (MEP) told the audience about his work within the European Union and the scope for action and help on ESA's objectives. He also spoke about the importance of lobbying and shared some important information about the right way to lobby effectively within the community. In his closing statement he said that it was important to realise that the sunglass industry is "dealing with peoples' eyes and not just with fashion! Get in there and win!"

The last presentation of the conference dealt with "high performance Teams". **Prof. Peter Pawlowsky** (FOCUS) talked about the differences in productivity and efficiency of human performance in organisations. He showed that some teams and work systems are much more effective and more efficient due to specific conditions of the performance setting or the conductive ability of organisational variables.

ESA's European Sunglass Conference gave very interesting and useful information to everyone who attended it. The next ESA event is the Annual Meeting which will take place on the Wednesday evening before SILMO. Among other topics, ESA members will see a presentation of the new study on "**the effects of ultraviolet radiation on the human eye**"

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