



Minutes

of the annual ordinary General Meeting.
Saturday, June 6, 2009, 9-11 a.m.
at the Four Corners Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK.

1. Welcome by the president.

ISO president *Carsten Schemberg* welcomes the assembly to the annual ISO Congress and meeting. The welcome was well received; there was no request to speak, and no objections to the agenda.

2. Absence apologies.

Cesare Bergamini, of the Italian Shopfitting Association, *Klein Merriman*, of A.R.E, USA and *Ronald Cohen*, SDEA, UK, excused that their respective National Associations were not present. No proxy received.

All other members with voting right were present in person. With 5 member associations represented, and the formal calling issued with 60 days notice, the general meeting is competent to pass resolutions.

Herman Jurrius sent the best regards from *Kees Benschop*, his company sold to Shopex, ISO member, but Decoproject is now out of business, so the Dutch member number is shrinking. Participation list of the Congress enclosed.

3. Minutes of the General Meeting 2008.

There were no questions or comments to the minutes of the General Meeting 10th May 2008 in Barcelona Spain. The minutes were approved and the original document signed by the president and secretary.

4. Treasurer's report and budget.

Treasurer *Herman Jurrius* presented the 2008 accounts, the updated 2009 budget and the 2010 budget.

The 2008 accounts show a profit of €9.753, compared to an original budget of €1900.

This is mainly due to a profit from the ISO Meeting Point at the Euroshop, thanks to help and sponsorship from a large number of members, and 14 participating co-exhibitors. The event was a huge success, and meant a lot of goodwill and new members to ISO.

The accounts are audited and signed by the elected auditors *John Nielsen*, DDI and *Frode Waaler* of NBF.

The audited assets per 31.12.08 were €40.846, of which the majority is deposited in ABM Amro Bank in Holland.

ISO is a non-profit organisation, but a healthy economy needs a positive balance. A number of non-paying members in 2009, as well as the reduced Congress participation, owing to the present crisis, have reduced the expectations in the updated budget to €1.400. Non paying members will during the second half year be excluded with a remark in the members' list on the web-site.

To accommodate the wishes following the present market situation, the membership fees for 2010 are suggested unchanged. With high expectations to the attraction of next year's Congress in China however, and unchanged Secretariat expenses, the 2010 budget estimates a profit of €4000.

The treasurer concluded with pleasure that the ISO finances are still in good order, even if we should only obtain a small surplus in 2009. There were no further questions or comments. The General Meeting approved the 2008 accounts, the 2009 budget update, the 2010 membership fees and budget, and the continuation of the secretariat agreement.

5. Confirmation of MC proposal for the election of office holders.

The MC proposed to the General Meeting to confirm the following office holders:

President, *Francois Mathéron*, CFA, France, to replace *Carsten Schemberg*, DLV, Germany, after 3 good years.

Vice president, *Anders Jensen*, DDI, Denmark, to be proposed for president after 3 years as per standard procedure.

Treasurer, *Herman Jurrius* for another two years.

The auditors, *Frode Waaler*, NBF Norway and *John Nielsen*, DDI Denmark, both want to resign, and the Management Committee and Secretariat, on behalf of all members, want to thank them both sincerely for their 5 years of faithful work for the association. There were no replacements ready, but the MC had assigned the task of finding new candidates to *Anders Jensen*, Denmark and *Morten Gron-Hansen*, Norway, as it is convenient with auditors who are knowledgeable of the Scandinavian language, legal system and tax regulations.

No other candidates were mentioned, and the proposal of the MC was unanimously confirmed by the audience.

The new president thanked for the applause, thanked the immediate past president for his 3 years of dedicated service (with a bottle of Bushmills), and took over the chair of the meeting. *Carsten Schemberg* in return offered his assistance, should *Francois Matheron* ever need it, one challenge being to get more members again.

6. Next Annual General Meeting 2010, China, in connection with the World Expo Shanghai, and 2011?

The audience was informed about the possibilities of an extraordinary attractive ISO Congress next year in Shanghai, and brochures of the World Expo, the largest ever, were distributed.

The MC suggests a fixed one-week programme beginning with Shanghai (individual travels, meeting point at the selected Hotel in Shanghai), including guided tour at the World Expo, a “normal” AGM in Ningbo, where the facilities and price level is optimal, and a minimum of 5 factory visits during the period. A “Meet-The-Suppliers” meeting will also be considered. Optional extended stays (before and/or after).

The Hotels that are being negotiated are Sheraton in Shanghai Pudong and in Ningbo City, and the necessary facilities for the AGM are available for free in the Nordic Industrial Park in Ningbo, where Anna and Preben have their daily work. The Management Committee recommended to the General Meeting, that the ISO Secretariat continues the planning of next years extended Congress event in China according to the following time schedule:

- September 2009: Preliminary program release with price and invitation to pre-book.
- October 2009: Payment of deposit to guarantee hotel rooms.
- Nov/Dec. 2009: MC approval of updated program and budget. Updated programme and reminder to everybody with an incentive to pre-book by end of year.
- January-May: Follow-up and detail planning.
- May 30 – June 6: The ISO Annual Congress and World Expo Shanghai 2010.

The MC estimated a possible participation of approximately 30 members, but in case of early commitments a larger group can easily be handled. The audience approved the preliminary plan.

A proposal to try and combine the event with a Chinese Trade Show was well received, and will be taken into consideration.

All members present, were asked to promote the event, and to make sure their respective National Associations all do their best to inform their members and local trade press about the outstanding opportunity of combining an ISO study tour, Annual Meeting and the World Expo in fantastic Shanghai.

Note the dates, and don't miss the ISO Congress 2010!

The ISO Congress 2011 was discussed, and Prague in Czech Republic was most favoured, and will be further evaluated by the MC at their next meeting in Paris, December 4, 2009, to be decided at next year's congress in China. Otherwise USA, Holland, France and Germany (in that order) are next in line for coming congresses.

7. Any other business.

The ISO and A.R.E Study Tour to India has been cancelled due to failing financial membership obligations of our Indian shopfitting members, and not to waste time and money on a difficult task, with little chance of success at present. ISO members with a special interest in India however, are welcome to join the recommendable India Retail Forum 15th -17th September in Mumbai. Please contact “Images” via the link on the ISO associated members' list on the web-site.

To keep informed, ISO recommends all members to subscribe on Stores + Shops, our official media, and RLI magazine, associated ISO member and supporter. Both quality magazines of our industry offers special terms to ISO members.

The Management Committee propose two new, individual direct members for the approval of the audience:

The Deluxe Group, Portadown, Northern Ireland, UK, and

The Shopfit Group, Port Elisabeth, South Africa (with Pan-African activities).

Both are already on the ISO web-site members' list, and both were welcomed with acclamation.

New member Techno-Consult International in Czech Republic suggested that all members could have a link from the ISO web-site to their company website, if necessary against a modest payment. The MC recommends the proposal, and it will be implemented to members, that want this extra contact facility, at first convenience.

Nobody else from the audience wanted to speak.

President *Francois Matheron* thanked everybody present for their participation, with a “see you next year in China!”

General Meeting adjourned.

The minutes above are approved and signed at the General Meeting in Ningbo, China2010

Francois Matheron
president

Preben Bailey
secretary general

**ISO Congress Northern Ireland,
Participation list, incl. part participation.**

ISO Congress June 4 – 6, Four Corners Hotel, Belfast.

A total of 17 persons from 9 shopfitting companies in 9 countries took part in the event, on and off, plus the welcome host group at Pattons headquarters in Ballymena and Joinery in Broughshane.

Carsten Schemberg, ISO president, Germany
Francois Matheron, incoming ISO president, France
Herman Jurrius, ISO Treasurer, Holland
Morten Gron-Hansen, ISO immediate past president, MC for Norway, and Bente Gron-Hansen
Anders Jensen, president of DDI, Danish Retail Interior Contractors, MC for Denmark
Preben Bailey, ISO Secretary General, China and Anna Bailey

Dieter Pollak, Dr, Techno-Consult International, Czech Republic
Icvan Zabojnik, Dr., Techno-Consult International, Czech Republic
Herman van den Berg, Technoplanning, Holland

Brendan Turtle, Manufacturing Director, Patton Joinery, N.I. – UK, and spouse.
Alan Stewart, Marketing Manager, Patton Group, N.I. – UK, and spouse.
Richard Carron, Business Development Manager, The Deluxe Group, N.I. – UK.
Colm Conolly, The Deluxe Group, N.I. – UK.

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**After the General Meeting:
ISO Business Morning 06.06.09, 11-13,**
Hotel Four Corners, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK.

Short review of the economic conditions in the member countries.

The present national member representatives gave a personal and interesting view upon the Shopfitting Industry of their markets and geographical spheres of interest. The crisis is felt, but apparently not hitting the participating members too bad. The general impression was as stated by immediate past president *Carsten Schemberg*:

After a period of *extremely* good years, we are *back to normal!*

In Germany Karstadt and Kaufhof have problems, but otherwise it's not too bad. DLV member Umdasch have been on short-time-work since February, Dula since last year, and maybe half of the other shopfitters are now doing the same. Metro asked the suppliers for "Crisis Discount"!

The National reports of Germany, Holland, UK, France, Denmark, Norway and USA were handed out and commented at the meeting. They will also be available on the ISO web-site.

In France Prices are pressed, margins go down. Everybody had orders to the end of 2008, but it came to a sudden brutal stop in 2009. Some retailers still invest, some have stopped completely, it is white or black, where few are in between.

A comment from Denmark is typical, but is it positive?: Short delivery times result in the *suppliers* setting the price!

Dr. Dieter Pollack of Techno-Consult International in the Czech and Slovak Republics, Slovenia, Poland, Hungary, Moscow, also extending operations to Bulgaria and Romania, gave some very interesting information about his area. In general business is OK. There is growth in most of the countries, but the difficulties are very different. In Bulgaria for example the tax is only 10%, they've got oil, but there are great infrastructure problems. Romania with a 6-7% inflation and big growth last year fights against devaluation. They saw lots of German business men a year ago, but right now the Germans are pulling out again. In those countries, like in Belorussia and Ukraine, it only takes *one good man* to create a profitable business, so the opportunities are great.

Morten Gron-Hansen seconded, and informed that business in Poland, Hungary, Czechia was also Ok in his experience, Latvia and Russia however difficult (even dangerous), while the "richer" and more developed countries in Europe had "stopped making decisions". This apply particularly to Sweden and in less degree to Finland. An obvious way to reduce the crisis is "No more Newspapers! - They only serve the bad news!" So while everybody are watching and waiting, Morten's advice to all ISO members and their staff and relatives was: Go out and spend money, buy stuff and enjoy yourself! That's the way out of this crisis!

Richard Carron of The Deluxe Group said Northern Ireland reminded of Norway, with not oil, but Government money injections in the system after the years of trouble ended. Victoria Square is a good example, and customers from Eiroe are "power-shopping" in the Tesco supermarkets and a huge WallMart just across the border in Northern Ireland. It's like a boom!

Preben Bailey shared recent experience from a short half year in East China, "The World's Factory". China were used to growth rates of 12-15% or more, and still has a 7-8% growth, where the falling export sales are compensated by *retail* and *car sales* figures increasing about 16% on a yearly basis! This is where a lot of the fixtures of our industry (and the building industry and many more) are made today, and this is what we offer all ISO members to come and see for themselves next year!

Open members' meeting, discussion.

The member discussion concluded that the lack of participation is of course a sign of the present business situation with recession on most markets, but we can also help by increasing the quality of the congresses. Good speakers, fruitful discussions (like the present) and interesting factory- and *new* interior environments- visits are important.

The development of the Western shopfitting industry from being fixture manufacturers only, into "retail environments contractors" is significant, and reflected in name changes like NASFM into ARE, Butiksindretning (shopfitting) into Detailindretning (Retail interiors, and soon expected to be retail Forum) etc. New member the Deluxe Group is very much into the "Hospitality" industry, which again reminds of our cooperation with Retail & Leisure International Magazine. We are connected via our common interests.

Study Tours like the 2005 ISO Tour to China was much recommended by the participants, who owe big results to the successful event. China still has a 7-8% growth rate, with falling export sales compensated by *retail* and *car sales* figures increasing 16%! This is where a lot of the fixtures of our industry (and the building industry and many more) are made today, and this is what we offer all ISO members to come and see for themselves next year!

Because *our* ISO abbreviation is the same as the International Standardization Organisation's, a new name was suggested, but a Google surf will show, that almost all short abbreviations are already taken, so in that case, we should probably accept a longer name, including the I, S and O, or something else, similar and recognisable.

Other ISO Services

The secretariat is here for the members. Please call for general information, specific answers, match making, or anything else the ISO secretariat may be able to help you with. Subscription discounts on Stores + Shops or RLI Magazine (use the links on the ISO Web-site), attractive terms on exhibitions when available, such as maybe Shop Project Milano Oct. 23-27? Or what about 5-10-15% discounts on easyFairs shopfitting exhibitions in all of Europe, e.g. Commercial Interior & Design Utrecht Oct. 14-15 or same dates Oslo, Norway? Invitation to the coming India Retail Forum, or pre-booking of extra hotel nights next year in Shanghai, travel recommendations, etc.

And do you want an updated link from your company presentation on the frequently visited ISO web-site members' list, to your own company web-site?

In that case, please mail the secretariat below.

Welcome to contact:

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