

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0066/07

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Glyn Ford, Giles Chichester, Graham Watson, Arlene McCarthy, Peter Skinner, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Elizabeth Lynne, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Toine Manders, David Martin, Glenys Kinnock, Claude Moraes, Erika Mann, Alexandra Dobolyi, Ana Maria Gomes, Robert Evans, Christopher Heaton-Harris, Reino Paasilinna, Marianne Mikko, Stephen Hughes, Stavros Lambrinidis, Malcolm Harbour, Bill Newton Dunn, Catherine Stihler, Sérgio Sousa Pinto, Jan Andersson, Linda McAvan, Luisa Morgantini, Jan Marinus Wiersma, Harlem Désir, Jo Leinen, Zita Gurmai, Caroline Lucas, Brian Simpson, Barbara Weiler, Christel Schaldemose, Neena Gill, Benoît Hamon, Michael Cashman, Udo Bullmann, Corina Crețu and Glenis Willmott  
to the Commission

Subject: 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.

Tabled: 12.10.2007

Forwarded: 16.10.2007

Deadline for reply: 23.10.2007