All aboard for railway standards

A new ISO technical committee, ISO/TC 269 on railway applications, held its first meeting in Berlin, Germany, in October 2012 – exactly 177 years after the first German steam train ran between Nuremberg and Fürth.

Fifty delegates came together for the meeting, which was opened by Rüdiger Marquardt, Deputy Director of DIN, the ISO member for Germany, and Dr. Alois Weschta, Chairman of the DIN/FSF Advisory Board. Franco Cavalliére, Chairman of IEC/TC 9 on electrical equipment and systems for railways, and Keith Rose, Chairman of CEN/TC 256 on railway applications, as well as representatives of the International Union of Railways, were also present.

The meeting focused on organizational issues. A presentation on ISO rules was given, and the Strategic Business Plan proposal, which was handed out before the meeting, was discussed. Jan Anders from Germany was appointed Liaison Officer for ISO/TC 269 and IEC/TC 9. The committee also created a Chairman Advisory Group as well as three Survey Groups that will work specifically on devising generic standards and projects on the areas of HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems and calculations for braking systems.

A welcome drink on the roof garden of the DIN building and a boat trip through the city of Berlin added a social note to this dynamic event. ISO/TC 269 will hold its next plenary meeting in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2013.

Austrian Standards Meeting Centre inaugurated

The then ISO President, Boris Aleshin, and ISO President-elect, Terry Hill, attended the official opening of the new Meeting Centre of Austrian Standards (AS) in October 2012. Austria’s President, Heinz Fischer, and Austrian Standards’ President, Walter Barfuss, and Managing Director, Gerhard Hartmann, as well as a hundred high-profile guests from the fields of business, administration and science from 10 countries were also present at the inauguration. In his address, President Heinz Fischer expressed the popular belief that “At first glance, standards are tedious and restrictive, but in fact, they are invaluable tools that make everyone’s life easier.”

ISO President-elect Terry Hill highlighted the Austrian member’s innovative spirit, while ISO Vice-President (technical management) and AS Vice-Director Elisabeth Stampfl-Blaha, who also attended the ceremony, stressed the international orientation of Austrian Standards. With around 1,000 meetings each year, the new centre will welcome around 50,000 guests from Austria and abroad who contribute to the development of national, European and international standards.