

# ERMCO NEWS

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Member of:



## Welcome

Welcome to this 5th issue of the newsletter this year. Like many European Associations we hold our annual Representatives' meeting in June, halfway through the year. This is a good time to take stock, and at our recent meeting, much of the discussion concerned the adverse economic climate. Kalervo Matikainen referred to it in his President's message to the meeting, pointing out that the decline in concrete outputs inevitably reflected the general decline in the Gross Domestic Product, GDP, in ERMCO members' countries. One consequence for ERMCO is that the next Congress, planned for Rome next year has been postponed to 2012.

ERMCO has a new website, and the full text of Mr. Matikainen's address to the meeting is available there in the National Associations section of the member area of the site. We hope you agree that the new site is an improvement, and that you will benefit from and make use of it.

ERMCO Secretariat team ■

## ‘ERMCO annual meeting’

This year's meeting of ERMCO Representatives was held on the 19th June 2009, at the Marriott Hotel in Zurich, attended by 49 delegates.

Following last year's pattern, the meeting started with a

number of presentations. Mr Stein Tosterud, the new ESD Chairman, suggested some ways in which ready-mixed concrete companies might evolve in future. Two guests Ms Christine Beunen, Secretary General of CEPMC, and Mr Georges Spicher, a EUPAVE Board Member, described the activities of their organizations, focusing on those themes which could impact the RMC sector.

Mr Andrea Bolondi (Italy) has been appointed as new ERMCO President, and is joined in the new President's Committee by Mr Marc Jonckheere (Belgium) and Mr Stein Tosterud (Norway).



*Mr Andrea Bolondi*

New ERMCO President ■

## The sector is slowing down

After modest 2007 growth, a general economic decline was observed in 2008 – and unfortunately the trend has continued this year, as a further major slowdown is anticipated.

Click [here](#) to read more ■

## New ERMCO website is online.

The URL address remain unchanged: [www.ermco.eu](http://www.ermco.eu).

Please send your comments, suggestions and whatever you want to report to us.

*Enjoy the new ERMCO website!*



## What IS concrete's 'carbon footprint'

Concrete is sometimes considered to account for 5% on our total carbon footprint. But if we look a bit closer, we see that in the long term concrete actually absorbs significant quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> by carbonation, not least when it is crushed after demolition.

Read more [here](#).

## Surface aesthetics

Why do people always think concrete looks flat and grey and boring? Click [here](#) to read an article in *opusC* magazine, which gives a very good general and technical overview of how it can be made to look textured and coloured and interesting. And, from a producer's point of view, it gives an insight into some of the challenges faced by contractors in trying to produce attractive concrete. A seriously useful piece of work.

## Two VERY unusual uses of concrete

We have recently come across two unusual applications for concrete – and we mean VERY unusual! One is in the construction of loudspeakers for hi-fi stereo systems. To read more about this, click [here](#). If you don't like music but do like wine, the second should interest you. This is the use of concrete to mature and store wine. Click [here](#) to read more about this. Both very interesting, if unlikely to increase ready-mixed sales to any great extent!

## Self-healing cement for 'flexible concrete' which resists earthquakes

We are familiar with the idea of 'autogenous healing', when cracks in concrete seal themselves, either by further hydration or by carbonation. Researchers at the University of Michigan now claim to have developed a fibre-reinforced cement composite which is flexible enough to resist seismic forces. The article also makes the questionable statement that steel reinforcement is not necessary. Read more [here](#).

*The research also made it to the pages of National Geographic magazine. Click [here](#) to see the second article.*

