

News from IEA SHC Task 24

February 2003

During the First Round of Task 24, which ended in the beginning of 2002, intensive work was spent on analysing the market situation in the participating countries, identifying and forming national buyer groups (consisting of municipalities, utilities, housing corporations, construction companies, NGOs and other organisations). Specifications and competition documents were drawn up and national procurement and competitions were launched. The Second Round is now ongoing and several procurement activities are taking place in the countries.

Information about the Task has been widely spread through articles and brochures, papers, posters and presentations at different international and national conferences. The Task 24 website, <http://www.ieatask24.org>, was updated in 2002 and comprehensive additional material, especially for the Task 24 Manual "Book of Tools/Business Tools" is now being uploaded.

Two Task meetings were held in 2002, in Denmark and Belgium, and the last Task meeting will be held in Canada in March.

Having participated as an Observer for part of 2001, **Belgium** joined the Task in 2002. Several activities have been started and are ongoing, and one of them is the "Soltherm" project of the Walloon Regional Government, a broad market development programme towards residential and tertiary sector users. A buyer group is being prepared and preparations are ongoing for a call for tender to be announced in 2003. Much work is spent on having a Quality Charter, collaboration with installers and technical criteria preparing the introduction of the EN-standards. Further information is available at www.soltherm.be. Another project, "VLAZON", is being prepared with the Belgian Solar Industry Association and the Flemish Regional Government and aims at developing a strategic programme up to 2010 for solar thermal and PV market and technology development.

In **Canada**, work is now progressing at full speed again. The installation schedules in the "Peterborough Green-Up and EnerACT" projects were not completely met, and deregulation of the market may have been one of the reasons. The utility partners have now changed their operations to focus more on marketing. A new project "TEAM Advanced Low Flow Solar Water Heaters" plans to have 40 systems contracted for installation in April and commercial production, including manufacturing tender, by August 2003. A market research has been carried out in Canada and a report was published in 2002. A number of issues important for increasing interest in solar systems have been identified. An electronic version of the report will be uploaded at the Task 24 website.

After a new Government came into office in **Denmark** in the autumn of 2001, there was a substantial reduction of the national renewable energy activities, including solar activities. The procurement buyer group project on the Internet, "www.soltilbud.dk", which started in August 2001, had to be discontinued at the year-end 2001 due to no new funding for the project. Although there were few buyers (people were not ready yet to buy from the Internet) but about 6,000 "hits", the website project can be regarded to have been a success since it offered much lower total prices for solar systems including installation, and it improved competition. A new project has now been started, the "Joint Purchasing of Solar Collectors for District Heating Plants". The objectives are to co-ordinate and assist in tendering, installation efforts, supervision and delivery.

In **The Netherlands**, Task 24 has influenced the market to a large extent and has also assisted in introducing European Standards. Six projects for systems in existing dwellings as well as in new

housing development and renovations are currently running. In the “Solar Energy in the Essent Supply Region” project for domestic systems for new dwellings, more than 700 systems have been installed so far and about 530 are planned to be realised in 2003-2004. In the “Call the Sun” project with the ASN Bank, WWF and SOL*id, 200 solar water heaters and more than 2,000 PV panels were installed in 2001, and in 2002 450 solar water heaters and 140 PV panels were installed. Campaigns are ongoing in several Dutch regions and cities. Work for medium-sized systems has been carried out through the “Space for Solar”. It is a framework turnkey delivery contract project. Scans have been conducted for 3,400 m² and conversion into individual contracts is ongoing. Some 20 property developers take part in the “WWF Solar Dwellings” market introduction project. Performance specifications were drawn up for solar thermal, PV and heat pumps and a first tendering round took place in 2002.

Two projects were launched in 2000 in **Sweden** – a procurement for medium sized systems (10,000 m²) and a competition for small systems (5,000 – 10,000 m²). The calls for tenders were published both nationally, and internationally via the EU “Official Journal”. All information about the projects, including competition documents (in Swedish and English), has been available at <http://solupphandling.bfr.se>. The procurement for solar collectors for use in medium-sized systems had to be discontinued since sufficient volumes for signing contracts with successful suppliers were not achieved. In the competition for small systems, the Swedish company Uponor, a subsidiary of a Finnish industry group, was selected winner. Its prototype system was tested and 5 pilot installations were made in 2001. After further development of the material and retesting of the system in Australia and Sweden, deliveries of 1,000 systems were started in 2002 and will be concluded in April 2003. A “Final Report about the Swedish projects” has been published in Swedish and will be translated into English.

In **Switzerland**, the solar projects were somewhat delayed as a consequence of the referendum in 2000, which was not in favour of solar project follow-ups. However, several projects have been started. An information project with the Basel District Government, “Solar Shower”, took place in 2002 and was very successful. Installers were given information and training to become executive partners as “Solarprofis” (solar professionals). Interested buyers received vouchers for a free consultation with one of the trained installers. In the “100 Solar Roofs in Lucerne”, with the City of Lucerne, replacement of heating (fuel switch oil to gas and standard hot water installations) was started in the autumn of 2002. The project will end in the summer of 2003. A “Solar Manual for Buyer Groups” has been produced. It is based on analysis of earlier projects, interviews with actors on the market and literature research. It consists of instructions and checklists for the formation of buyer groups and preparation of projects. It is now being distributed and will be used in future projects. A 2-page leaflet “Solar – ja klar!” has also been produced. It describes with pictures how a solar system can be installed in just one day – beginning at 7 a.m. and ending at 6.30 p.m.

In addition to the national activities mentioned above, eleven European Union countries have started collaborative work in the “**Soltherm Europe Initiative**” for domestic systems for new houses. The strive for more international procurement within the solar field initiated in Task 24 has continued in this project, in which the supplier organisations ASTIG and DFS are also partners. The performance specifications are based on EC Quality Standards. An EU Altener contract was signed in January 2002. National implementation planning is currently ongoing. The goal is to have 15 million m² installed by 2005. Further information is available at www.soltherm.org.

Task 24 will end on 31 March 2003. The Task participants agree that important exchange of information has taken place between the countries and that the Task has inspired to several national and international solar projects. Tools have been set up to facilitate the formation of buyer groups and preparation and implementation of projects. The Task work has contributed to the development of

standards, quality requirements and testing procedures. In some of the countries, prices for solar systems have been reduced. “Lessons learned” from the Task include the importance of international announcement of a project, drawing up of specifications and competition documents in an international language, easy accessibility of the documents (on the Internet, for example) and the necessity of information activities. The “lessons learned” will be included in a “Final Management Report”, which will be produced after the conclusion of the Task.