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Temporary venues must innovate to meet demand, say IOC and UEFA

Submitted by Ben Avison on 9th March 2015 - 10:50

Speaking at the first conference of the Association of Global Event Suppliers (AGES), Martin Kallen of UEFA and Xavier Becker of the IOC said suppliers of temporary infrastructure must be innovative to keep pace with growing demand at major events



The London 2012 beach volleyball arena, by Populous and Arena Group, was highly innovative (Photo: Arena Group)

With growth in demand for temporary infrastructure set to continue to grow from one event to the next, innovation will be crucial to keep pace with this demand, according to senior officials at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) speaking at the first conference of the Association of Global Event Suppliers (AGES).

“Temporary infrastructure is crucial for the operation of large events. The demand for such venue infrastructure for media, security, logistics, hospitality and fan zones is increasing from event to event,” said Martin Kallen, director of UEFA operations division and CEO of EURO 2016 SAS – the organisation responsible for all operational aspects of Europe’s biggest football tournament.

There are major business opportunities for suppliers of temporary infrastructure at the upcoming UEFA EURO 2016 in France, Kallen said.

The recently adopted Olympic Agenda 2020 will drive demand for temporary infrastructure, said Xavier Becker, Head of Venues, Infrastructure & Services at the IOC.

“The IOC wants to actively promote the use of existing and temporary infrastructure to contribute to more sustainable and cost effective solutions,” he said.

“Furthermore the IOC wishes to develop the awareness regarding temporary infrastructure and to promote an earlier engagement with the suppliers market.

“I would also encourage the industry to develop innovative solutions, and to think about **new reusable large facilities** to provide more flexibility for organizers.”

The need for innovation was also stressed by Kallen, who said “Suppliers need to fulfil high selection criteria. Quality, reliability and the capacity to innovate are key.”

The conference, which took place in Derbyshire, UK on 2 and 3 March, was the first gathering of members and associate members of AGES who, along with other industry experts, discussed the challenges and opportunities for temporary infrastructures and demountable venues for large events.

The event was organized by AGES and hosted by Eve Trakway.

“We want AGES to become the platform for the industry and establish a framework and forums to become an integrated part of the delivery solution for all key stake holders,” said Daniel Cordey, chairman of AGES.

“AGES will approach governmental bodies and organisers, who face the challenge of finding appropriate solutions, to explain the huge possibilities of the industry and to help develop true legacy plans for their events.”

Since being founded by 18 members in June 2014, AGES has almost doubled in size.

“Looking down the growing list of members it is very encouraging to see the incredible level of event expertise assembled around one table,” said Guy Lodge, an honorary member of AGES who has been involved in three major events in Russia, Scotland and Brazil.

“It drives home the challenges that the industry faces, around budget pressures, varying procurement practices and regulatory compliance”.

AGES is a not-for-profit-making organisation based in Switzerland formed to become the label for quality and reliability for temporary infrastructure works for major events.

Its members are market leaders in the international event suppliers industry and front runners in the development of new products and services. Together they annually deliver services and works for close to 1.5 Billion EUR.

AGES seeks to present the capabilities of the industry to governmental bodies, key stakeholders and organisers of large sports events, to develop standards and procedures, to facilitate interaction and to obtain cost-effective infrastructure solutions for future events.

*For more information, please visit **www.ages.international** or contact Daniel Cordey, Chairman of AGES at info@ages.international or by telephone +41 79 407 06 06*