

Technal debuts its conference series



Robinson ... Technal is capable of undertaking complex façade projects.

TECHNAL Middle East (TME) held the first edition of its technical and architectural educational conference series, 'World of Technal', at its home base in Bahrain where global experts shed light on the latest trends and solutions for aluminium façades, with a focus on building safety and architecture in Bahrain and the Middle East.

The 'World of Technal', an exclusive conference series from Technal, focuses on four themes: Digitisation and Technology, Building Safety, Sustainability, and User-Centric Design, and will be held in key GCC cities during the year, writes ABDULAZIZ KHATTAK of *Gulf Construction*.

The debut 'Building Safety' edition, held at the Four Season Bahrain Bay, was titled 'Architecture and Building Safety – Façade Perspective' and was hosted in association with the UK-based SideRise Group and supported by The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Middle East and Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Gulf.

It was attended by leading architects, consultants, contractors, real estate developers and aluminium fabricators from Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, as well as rep-

resentatives from relevant Bahrain ministries and the civil defence.

In his opening remarks, Sam Robinson, general manager of TME, the regional office of Technal, said the French aluminium systems provider had been serving the Gulf's buildings and construction industry for over 40 years, and today is capable of undertaking any complex and custom-designed façade projects, as evidenced by the numerous landmarks it had completed locally and across the region.

He said TME has shown its commitment to the region by offering façade solutions, which are innovative, sustainable, user-centric and make buildings safer. "These, in fact, make the four pillars of the World of Technal conferences."

A keynote speaker, Adrian Brown, a specialist consultant on fire safety from the UK, in his presentation cited ample examples of fierce fires in buildings from around the world, stressing that highly flammable cladding systems had been the root cause for the rapid fire spread, causing the loss of life and property.

He said other reasons included leap-frogging, failure of fire-prevention systems,

delayed fire calls, and absence of internal compartmentalisation (*see Page 79*).

In his presentation, TME's technical manager Sami Zgheib introduced the company's latest thermal insulation systems for exterior cladding, saying all Technal products have been tested in international laboratories, certified and approved. These include the Technal Goéde MX52 FP fireproof façade, and Thermo 74 EI fireproof doors and partitions.

Among other products, the Geode MX-FP is classified as EI 120 for external fire resistance at temperatures of up to 690 deg C, while it has an EI 60 fire rating at temperatures as high as 1,000 deg C.

He also spoke about the collaboration between Technal and SideRise on a curtain-wall façade that successfully passed a three-hour fire test at a third-party laboratory in Europe. This solution utilises any standard non-fire-rated curtain-wall assembly from the Technal Goéde range, which incorporates SideRise's perimeter fire protection, making it an economical option.

Zgheib stressed the use of such products and techniques will prevent loss of life and property in the event of a major fire.

The third keynote speaker was Eva Juszczyk, a senior associate director at Benoy Global, who focused on high-rise buildings, their design and technical aspects, and also spoke about the architectural design aspects of the upcoming Bahrain Marina landmark project.

In his closing remarks, Hesham Kameshki, marketing and business development manager of TME, said: "It is important to note that Technal has not only diversified and grown in terms of its product range, innovative solutions, and distinguished services and support, but it has also focused on offering platforms for knowledge sharing and spreading awareness through educational events, such as the 'World of Technal!'"

TME has been making concerted efforts to boost fire safety awareness and promote products that ensure fire protection in buildings, he added.

Technal is a brand of Hydro, one of the world's largest and fully-integrated aluminium companies, and a world leader in the building systems sector, dedicated to the creation of innovative and sustainable aluminium façade systems that inspire contemporary architecture. ■