

## **Overview of the Hydrogen and Fuel Cells 2003 Conference and Tradeshow Held June 8-11, 2003 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada**

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The Canadian Hydrogen Association (CHA), Fuel Cells Canada (FCC), the National Research Council of Canada and Natural Resources Canada hosted the Hydrogen and Fuel Cells 2003 Conference and Tradeshow, from June 8 to 11, 2003, at the Westin Bayshore Resort & Marina, located in Vancouver, the world-leading city for hydrogen and fuel cell activities.

This event was the first joint conference organized by the CHA and FCC. The conference was a tremendous success with 1,000 registered participants originating from 27 countries who attended over 150 oral presentations and 60 informative open-dialogue presentations. The conference provided the framework for discussions that assisted in the drive towards mass commercialization of fuel cells and hydrogen.

Two open-dialogue sessions and receptions were scheduled on Sunday and Monday evenings whereby 60 posters were displayed. During the banquet evening, three poster excellence awards were presented to:

- Marc-André Richard – Hydrogen Research Institute, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada (1st prize)
- François Laurencelle – Hydrogen Research Institute, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada (2nd prize)
- Allan Walton – University of Birmingham, U.K. (3rd prize)

Special awards were also presented.

- Ronald D. Venter, co-chair of the Technical Program Committee, and

Tapan K. Bose, co-chair of the Organizing Committee, received the CHA Medal of Honour for their outstanding contribution to the organization of CHA.

Support was provided from 22 sponsors, originating from industry, the Government of Canada and the B.C. Government. Over 50 exhibiting companies were present to showcase the latest technology in hydrogen and fuel cell development. Two exhibits were planned: one large indoor exhibit (15,000 sq. ft.) at the Westin Bayshore Hotel and one outdoor at a nearby hotel parking lot (10,000 sq. ft.), as well as on Bayshore Drive and Cardero streets. Cutting edge companies like General Hydrogen, Hydrogenics, Methanex, Ballard, Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Palcan Fuel Cells, DuPont Canada Inc., and Stuart Energy displayed automobiles, portable power plants, hydrogen systems and new micro fuel cell advancements. Ford Motor Company displayed their Ford Focus, Georgetown University their Fuel Cell Bus, Palcan Fuel Cells Ltd. introduced their scooter, BC Hydro/Powertech demonstrated a hydrogen-fueled truck and fueling station. Sponsors, as well as exhibitors, received excellent visibility.

Among these exhibitors was the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) who informed participants of their Hydrogen, Fuel Cells & Infrastructure Technologies Program which focuses on overcoming barriers to hydrogen and fuel cell commercialization.

Both indoor and outdoor exhibits were open to the general public on Sunday for the purpose of creating public awareness of this new form of energy of the future. Media from TV to newspapers, including the conference media sponsor, The Globe and Mail, covered the event and exposed highlights such as the hydrogen-powered Georgetown Fuel Cell Bus, which took participants on a tour through Stanley Park during the conference.

A special introductory course on hydrogen and fuel cells, given by Fuel Cells Canada, Industry Canada, National Research Council Canada, and Natural Resources Canada, was organized on the Sunday afternoon to inform all interested parties on the state of the fuel cell and hydrogen economy and its importance to technology. Registered participants and the general public were welcome to attend this informative session.

The conference attracted many political figures. On Sunday evening, the event was launched with an official Opening Reception and a special address from the Honorable Herb Dhaliwal, Minister of Natural Resources.

The scientific part of the conference began on Monday, June 9, with an opening address on Canadian Strategies & Opportunities from the Honorable Stephen Owen, Secretary of State, Western Economic Diversification and Indian Affairs & Northern Development. A distinguished array of speakers were present throughout the conference, namely Ged McLean, Wal van Lierop, Jarrett J. Carson, Alan C. Lloyd, Timothy E. Vail, John Ritch, Dennis Campbell, Greg Romney, and Amory Lovins.

A special session on International and national trends in hydrogen development and infrastructure was held on the first day. Presentations were given by senior representatives from Canada, Japan, and the United States. All three countries are current PATH members.

The technical program continued with two sets of six concurrent sessions which were held in the afternoons on themes such as: environment, economics, education, fuel cells, hydrogen infrastructure, materials and innovative technologies, storage systems and applications.

On the last day of the conference, we were honored to have the presence of Premier Gordon Campbell who addressed the participants on hydrogen issues in British Columbia.

The conference wrapped up with industrial tours to the following leading Vancouver-based R&D laboratories and facilities: Powertech Laboratory, Palcan Fuel Cells Ltd, National Research Council Canada and Cellex Power Products. Two hundred people took part in these tours.

An interesting component of the conference was the internet café available on site for participants. Six computers were run by a hydrogen-powered unit contributed by Ballard Power Systems.

Several social events were planned to allow participants to network: Official Opening Reception, two poster receptions and the conference banquet. These social events were included in the registration fees for participants registered for the full conference.

The CHA and FCC are organizing the second joint meeting on hydrogen and fuel cells, which will be held at the Sheraton Centre, from September 26 to 28, 2004, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Look for upcoming details on the CHA website at [www.h2.ca](http://www.h2.ca).