

Brazil defends its title of “International Fire Department of the Year”: Rio de Janeiro FD wins this year’s 2015 Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize

2015 Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize in Ulm sponsored by “White Helmets” / Syrian rescue workers give top three trophies to winning fire department teams from Isfahan (Iran) and Istanbul (Turkey) / Winners visit the world’s largest fire department in New York City

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For the second time in a row, a Brazilian fire department team secured the International Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize. Accompanied by the cheers from 700 invited guests, the Rio de Janeiro Fire Department (Brazil) was crowned the “2015 International Fire Department Team of the Year” on 22 January 2016 in the Congress Centre in Ulm. During the world famous carnival, the city’s forces had successfully battled a large fire in one of Rio’s largest suburban shopping malls. The top three winners also included the Isfahan (Iran) and Istanbul (Turkey) fire departments. Together with other online finalists, they were invited to the festive gala in Germany and honoured in front of an international audience of experts.

The winners of the coveted “Oscar of the fire-fighting sector” were handed their trophies this year by the “White Helmets”, a Syrian disaster relief organisation that sponsored the 2015 Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize. “Every fire department’s job is to save human lives under extreme conditions. What the ‘White Helmets’ do every day, however, is far beyond what we can imagine. To work under the hazardous conditions that currently prevail in Syria, often without suitable equipment, deserves our greatest respect. We are thus very happy to have won the ‘White Helmets’ as a sponsor for the 2015 Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize,” said Andreas Klauser, interim CEO of Magirus. The fact that the Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize unites people throughout the world was impressively demonstrated by the presentation of the international prize. In a moving moment, the Syrian rescue workers handed their colleagues from Iran, Turkey and Brazil their trophies, proving that the prize and the common voluntary commitment of all involved overcomes political borders.

In addition to Andreas Klauser, interim CEO of Magirus, the prominent guests at the celebration included many from the fire-fighting sector as well as Antonio Benedetti, former CEO of Magirus, Hartmut Ziebs, President of the German Fire Department Association, Albert Kern, President of the Austrian National Fire Department Association and Ivo Gönner, Mayor of the city of Ulm. “Most people have some knowledge of what the fire department does. But they often do not really know what this entails: a commitment to saving others every day, around the clock at the risk of their own



PRESS RELEASE

lives. This is precisely why the Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize brings this commitment to the centre of public attention,” said Andreas Klauser, interim CEO of Magirus.

Maximum performance throughout the world

From major conflagrations to rescues at death-defying heights, the missions entered in the contest impressively show the pressure that comrades are under and the breadth of tasks and dangers they are confronted with daily. During the city’s world famous carnival, which attracts millions of visitors to Brazil’s capital yearly, a major fire broke out in one of Rio’s largest suburban shopping malls. Even some walls collapsed. 100 crew members from ten stations rushed to the scene with 30 vehicles and two helicopters. Together, they managed to save 80 percent of the building from the flames. Thanks to the experienced crew members and their courageous action, there were no deaths or serious injuries. The shopping mall was able to open its doors again three days later. The Rio de Janeiro Fire Department prevailed over teams throughout the world with this operation. Numerous cities and municipalities had applied for the international prize. A jury of specialists selected the best from all of these applications and put them online for public voting at www.world-of-firefighters.com.

The “White Helmets” – outstanding disaster relief in Syria

They owe their name to their white protective headgear. The “White Helmets” is the name of the Syria Civil Defence (SCD), a voluntary organization of almost 3000 Syrians who respond to the aftermath of terror in a total of 110 centres throughout the country in such places as Aleppo, Idlib, Latakia, Hama and Damascus. Their commitment extends from electronic early warning systems and planning evacuations, to fire-fighting missions and rescuing injured persons, all the way to setting up emergency supplies, including medical support. Since their foundation in 2013, the “White Helmets” have rescued over 40,000 lives – an achievement that has gained international respect. This is why they are sponsoring both the international as well as the national Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize. “In conflict zones, fire departments and rescue organizations take on very special importance. This valuable project shows the extent to which volunteers commit themselves in all essential areas. We are thus overjoyed that we could win the ‘White Helmets’ as a sponsor for the 2015 Conrad Dietrich Magirus Prize,” said Andreas Klauser.

Trip to New York

The international “Oscar of the fire-fighting sector” will also take the winners from Rio to New York. Ten crew members will travel to the most well-known fire department in the world: the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) – flight, accommodations and exciting programme included. In addition to tours of various fire stations and the Training Academy “The Rock”, they will also visit the most modern fireboats in the world.

National awards

The winners of the “2015 National Fire Department Team” were also honoured on the same evening. The winners’ podium was so full that there was scarcely any more room on it. Thanks to outstanding cooperation among the volunteer fire departments in Lauf an der Pegnitz, Neunkirchen am Sand, Ottensoos, Reichenschwand, Rüblanden and Speikern during the rescue of a seriously injured man, these six teams from Bavaria came out on top. The team “Disaster Response Rauschenhammermühle” also won the title “2015 National Fire Department Team”. Together with Reutlingen Fire Department, it was among the top three. The Disaster Response Rauschenmühle unites over 60 Bavarian fire departments under this name. For the first time, a special prize in the category “Social Commitment” was given in 2015. The Wennigloh fire-fighting team of the Arnsberg Fire Department won this prize; its members received the award for their joint fire-fighting exercise with mentally disabled men.

About Magirus

Passion and precision, high-tech and craftsmanship. Since 1864, Magirus has stood for the combination between innovation and tradition – to assist fire-fighters throughout the world. With a comprehensive range of the most modern and reliable fire engines, turntable ladders, rescue and equipment vehicles, special solutions, pumps and portable pumps, Magirus is known throughout the world as one of the largest and technologically leading providers of fire-fighting and disaster control technology.

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