

# Updates to FSA's KnowledgeBase

Visit for free sealing content.

By **Jason Ferris**  
Flowserve Corporation

The online FSA KnowledgeBase was officially launched in May 2017 as part of the FSA's mission to be "... the primary source of technical information" for the fluid sealing industry's products and their applications. This marked the transition from a print-based handbook focus to an online focus for training and education resources. At launch, the KnowledgeBase contained approximately 35 pieces of content and videos across seven categories of mechanical seal subject matter. Since that time, the FSA has expanded and improved the site content, which now has more than 230 files on mechanical seals, expansion joints, and an archive of "Sealing Sense" articles spanning the full range of FSA topics. There are more than 750 registered users, and the site has tracked nearly 5,000 online sessions from that user base.

## What's New

The content on the KnowledgeBase has expanded significantly in the last year. The largest portion of new content comes from the archive of FSA "Sealing Sense" articles, which have been indexed and keyworded to make the content searchable within the overall content of the KnowledgeBase. These articles add a wide variety of interesting topics from 15 years of monthly articles, such as "The Advantages of API Piping Plan 03," "How Do I Choose the Right Gasket for Chemical Pump Service?," "Emissions Valve Packing Technology Evolves to

Reduce Methane Leaks," and "What You Need to Know About FSA's 5 New Styles of Rubber Expansion Joints."

The mechanical seals division also has added Spanish language translations of 17 different training topics to the database. This full conversion of graphics and content expands the accessibility of the KnowledgeBase.

Earlier this year, the FSA's expansion joints division launched its own repository of all-new content with more than 30 training topics. This repository includes topics on both nonmetallic ducting and piping.

## Your Feedback

In August 2019, a user survey was conducted to gain insight into how the KnowledgeBase can further improve as an industry resource. While the number of responses was small, they provided valuable insight. More than half of the respondents indicated they have made use of the KnowledgeBase two or more times in the past six months. While the content was rated as providing sufficient information in 70 percent of the responses, 39 percent were looking for a broader range of topics. Users generally found the information they were looking for and would recommend the KnowledgeBase to others, but only 58 percent found it easy to navigate.

## Results

Suggestions from members covered a wide variety of topics including compression packings, review of mechanical seals versus sealless solutions, details on industries, industry standards, technological developments and sealing plans. Some requested improvements to the overall look and feel of the website and to simplify navigation.

## What's Next?

The FSA continues to develop and enhance the KnowledgeBase to keep the content fresh, including plans to add repositories for the compression packing

and gaskets divisions within the next several months. The association will also review and consider user feedback captured in the survey for future enhancements and improvements to the usability of the site.

Work is in progress to add short narrated video versions of the content files, making the content more impactful. New industry calculation tools, including a mechanical seals life cycle costing tool, are being finalized as well.

The FSA is committed to serving as an education source for people interested in the sealing industry. We appreciate feedback from users and invite you to visit the KnowledgeBase at [fsaknowledgebase.org](http://fsaknowledgebase.org).

The KnowledgeBase only requires signing up for a free member profile. Note that the FSA respects your privacy and will not share user contact information outside of the association. The user survey remains live on the website. We welcome your comments and suggestions. ■

## References

1. Phillips, Rob, "FSA Introduces the KnowledgeBase Technical Reference," "Sealing Sense" article, *Pumps & Systems*, May 2017, [pumpsandsystems.com](http://pumpsandsystems.com)
2. Fluid Sealing Association KnowledgeBase, "Secondary Sealing Elastomers," [fsaknowledgebase.org](http://fsaknowledgebase.org)



*FSA invites your suggestions for article topics as well as questions on sealing issues so we can better respond to the needs of the industry. Please direct your suggestions and questions to [sealingsensequestions@fluidsealing.com](mailto:sealingsensequestions@fluidsealing.com).*

**Jason Ferris** is Flowserve Corporation director of global mechanical seals engineering. He has 22 years of experience in mechanical seals. He has a B.S. in mechanical engineering from Western Michigan University.

