

**Minutes of the FIA Council Meeting**  
**held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005**  
**at The Saracens Head Hotel, Towcester at 10.30 a.m.**

Present: Mike Phillips – Chairman  
Mike Gilmore – Treasurer  
Peter Thompsett – Vice Chairman  
John Colton  
Lee Funnell  
Peter Lythgoe  
Paul Bateson

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: Sydney Hogg

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**1. Apologies for Absence**

As above.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2005 were taken as read and agreed and were signed by the Chairman.

**3. Formal approval of FIA year-end accounts 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005**

The draft accounts were tabled. They were in line with Mr. Gilmore's projections. There were no questions appertaining to the accounts. It was proposed by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Thompsett and unanimously agreed that the accounts for the year–end 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005 be approved.

Once approved by the AGM attendees the Secretary will arrange for the appropriate documents and accounts to be signed and returned to the auditors.

**ACTION: SEC**

**4. Confirmation of Council agreement – new auditors – Critchleys**

As per the discussions at the previous meeting Mr. Gilmore and the Secretary obtained quotations from alternative companies of auditors. Critchleys were recommended by the Secretary as they were used by the other association she worked for and had provided a quotation for the 2005 – 2006 audit of £1150. Mr. Gilmore was in agreement and Critchleys was subsequently proposed on the AGM agenda that was sent to members on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

It was therefore, formally proposed by Mr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Bateson, and unanimously agreed by Council that Critchleys be recommended at the AGM.

**5. AGM status**

The agenda and accompanying documents were sent to all members on 7<sup>th</sup> November. The Secretary reported that five members had indicated that they would attend.

Two nominations have been received, John Marson of Twistnet Communications Ltd (nominated by Lance Jobson of Optical Fibres and Ken Jones of EDS Systems (NW) Ltd.) and Phil Whitehead of Ortronics (Nominated by Wayne Connors of Active Communication Company Ltd.).

Two proxy votes have been given to Mr. Phillips and one to Mr. Gilmore.

## **6. FIA Code of Ethics / Conduct (PT) – see report attached**

Mr. Thompsett tabled his report.

Mr. Phillips felt that this matter was important to the members. The FIA is held in high esteem and this document can form the base of a minimum requirement for companies to work to.

After discussion it was agreed that Mr. Gilmore would take the report and from it produce a document for the FIA web site. The membership application forms should be updated to include a box whereby new members tick that they have read and understood the code that they will attempt to work to. A copy of the document will also be sent to all new members along with the membership acceptance letter. Members will also be encouraged to put a statement on their own web sites confirming that they work by the code and provide a link to the FIA site.

**ACTION: MG/SEC**

***The meeting adjourned at this point for the AGM which was held at 11.30 a.m.***

***The meeting re-convened at 13.30***

Present: Paul Bateson  
Mike Gilmore  
John Colton  
Lee Funnell  
Peter Lythgoe  
John Marson

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: Sydney Hogg  
Phil Whitehead

## **7. Welcome new Council members**

The Secretary welcomed Mr. Marson to the Council.

**Photo / bio for web site:** Both new Council members are asked to submit bios and photographs for the Council page on the web site. Both to be emailed direct to Mr. Gilmore.

**ACTION: JM/PW/MG**

## **8. Confirmation of Council officers, Directors + industry sector portfolios**

**Chairman:** Mr. Gilmore proposed that Mr. Bateson is appointed as Chairman and Mr. Colton seconded this. Mr. Bateson accepted the nomination and his appointment unanimously agreed.

**Vice Chairman:** Mr. Colton proposed that Mr. Lythgoe be appointed as Vice Chairman and Mr. Funnell seconded this. Mr. Lythgoe accepted the nomination and his appointment unanimously agreed.

**Treasurer:** There were no other proposals for the office of Treasurer and Mr. Gilmore agreed to continue in this role.

**Company Secretary:** It was confirmed that Jane Morrison would continue in the role of Company Secretary.

**Directors:** As Messrs. Phillips and Thompsett have now resigned from Council the Secretary will organise the relevant resignation forms and send to Companies House.

**ACTION: SEC**

The Secretary explained to Mr. Marson that it was usual practice for all those on Council to be appointed as Directors of FIA Ltd. Mr. Marson confirmed that he accepted the appointment of Director. The Secretary will organise the relevant form and send to him for signature.

**ACTION: SEC**

Mr. Whitehead will be contacted regarding his appointment as a Director and if he is willing the Secretary will organise the relevant form and send to him for signature.

**ACTION: SEC**

Messrs. Funnell and Colton will continue in their roles as Qualification Scheme Directors.

After discussion the following industry portfolios were agreed:

**Mike Gilmore – Technical**

**John Marson – Membership / Commercial**

**Peter Lythgoe – Installers**

**John Colton – Training**

**Lee Funnell – Qualifications**

**Paul Bateson – Test & Measurement**

**Sydney Hogg – Passive Components & Commercial issues relating to the PSP**

**Phil Whitehead – tbc**

Mr. Gilmore explained to Mr. Marson that the FIA has lost members from the installation community and perhaps promotion of membership should now be widened to other sectors such as plastic fibre and industrial users, test equipment manufacturers etc. All Council was reminded to try to promote membership to any contacts who they think may be interested.

**ACTION: ALL**

He added that PR work had been put on hold for the last year and that Nigel May of Parkfield had been previously used for press releases and articles. Due to costs Mr. Gilmore had undertaken to write articles in recent months. It was noted that the decline in membership could be due to the lack of promotion of the FIA in the media.

Mr. Colton asked about items that Mr. Phillips had previously been responsible for within the FIA. The UKCPO, an umbrella association of photonic companies was one organisation that Mr. Phillips had attended as FIA representative.

The Secretary was asked to contact Mr. Phillips and ask him to advise the UKCPO that he was no longer on the FIA Council and for them to send all information direct to the Secretariat in the future.

**ACTION: SEC**

Mr. Phillips was also known to be involved with the Photonics Cluster and again the Secretary will ask him to advise the Cluster of his resignation and ask that any future information is sent direct to the Secretariat.

**ACTION: SEC**

There was an outstanding item relating to UKCPO, concerning their bid for DTI funded Photonics KTN (Knowledge Transfer Network). This is a three year programme and it appears that £5K has been allocated to the FIA. Further information is currently not to hand and Mr. Gilmore took the action to discuss with Mr. Phillips and make further investigations with UKCPO on this matter.

**ACTION: MG**

**9. Secretariat report – see attached**

**Membership report:** 189 members.

**FIA Newsletter:** This should be published next week and will include details of the newly appointed Council members along with other relevant topics.

**ACTION: MG**

**FIA –updated membership leaflet:** A quotation etc. has been sent to Mr. Gilmore. A re-print will be organised in the New Year.

**ACTION: MG**

**10. Financial report / Technical report (MG) – see attached**

**Accounts:** Mr. Gilmore explained to Mr. Marson that each month he circulates to all Council a zip file containing the monthly management accounts, showing profit and loss, aged debtors and creditors together with a sheet detailing the membership status.

The October accounts show a year to date profit of £474.34 (Sept & Oct).

**Document update:** The work to update the technical support documents remains ongoing. All pdf documents (with the exception of certain TSDs) on the web site have now been updated to include the new web site address.

**Seminars:** Mr. Gilmore will email the details of the 31<sup>st</sup> January seminar to all members in the next few weeks. The first topic of the day will address a matter that responds to a members query. The venue will probably be in London as history has shown (1<sup>st</sup> December seminar) that it is suitable for most delegates.

**ACTION: MG**

The 1<sup>st</sup> December seminar was very well received with nineteen delegates and a net profit of £600.

**Web site:** Outstanding issues will be addressed shortly. A change of password for the members' only area will be put in place in January.

**ACTION: MG**

Messrs. Marson and Whitehead are reminded that all previous Council minutes, actions and attachments can be found on the web site at: [www.fia-online.co.uk/maa.htm](http://www.fia-online.co.uk/maa.htm). This may be useful for them if they wish to read previous discussions etc.

All Council was advised that access to the 'members-only' pages can be accessed without a password at: [www.fia-online.co.uk/default2.htm](http://www.fia-online.co.uk/default2.htm).

The FIA logo has the font 'Rockwell Extra Bold' and Mr. Gilmore agreed to send the font format to Messrs. Marson and Whitehead as it is doubtful that they will already have it. Mr. Funnell also requested the font.

**ACTION: MG**

**Technical matters:** The articles for Networking + magazine have been completed and the Qualification scheme article has also been sent to Mr. May. Mr. Gilmore to organise a new series of topics for the coming months with the Networking + editor.

The support guide on Cords is now a matter of urgency.

Mr. Funnell had to leave the meeting at this point. He reported that he had contacted Panduit and Krone regarding the manufacturer awards for the QS web pages without success.

He had also contacted Electrical Times regarding the article on the QS but had been advised the matter did not relate to their core readership.

He is unable to attend the next meeting of BSI TCT7. He would like to join the BSI TCT7/-/1 committee and Mr. Gilmore advised him that this was not an FIA issue and asked him to formally write a letter requesting membership.

**ACTION: LF**

**Product Sponsorship Scheme:** The product is very nearly ready and as previously discussed Mr. Gilmore will discuss further with Mr. Hogg. The discount to FIA members (for a six-month period) needs to be finalised together with promotion to members and production plan.

**ACTION: MG/SH**

**Approved Installer scheme:** All documents have been prepared.

**Standards activity:** The schedule of meetings was noted.

## **11. FIA Qualification (JC & LF)**

The status report from the Secretary was tabled – see attached.

Mr. Colton again questioned the costs for the Training providers to list their accredited awards on the qualification area of the web site. Without this list it will be difficult to assist Learners who wish to pursue further qualifications.

It was agreed that all Approved Training Providers will be allowed a one-month period from the start of their approval to put forward their courses for promotion on the web site. After this time any courses they wish to list will incur costs (£50 per unit approved).

All existing Approved Training Providers will be contacted via email to explain that they may now provide their courses free of charge for a period of one month (from the date of the email). Mr. Colton to write the text and the Secretary to send the email.

**ACTION: JC/SEC**

Mr. Colton explained that the period of time allowed for Certified Trainers to register under the grand fathering rights has now expired (31<sup>st</sup> October 2005). Total Communications will be allowed to have an extension to this date as it appears that their original applications have been lost in the post.

It was noted that Redcar College will probably not re-new their approval as they no longer provide fibre courses.

Mr. Gilmore will contact OTT and discuss their status.

**ACTION: MG**

Mr. Colton confirmed that he has written the Certified Trainer examination that will be used for future CT applications.

Mr. Gilmore (Learner No. FIA 05001 – Level V – Certified Optical Fibre Expert) reported that he has now completed his thesis and would be submitting it very shortly to the QS Directorate. Mr. Colton will now need to put in place the procedure for this the first and subsequent Level V interviews. He will need to organise an external examiner in addition to the FIA QS Directorate. It

is envisaged that this and any future interviews will be held on the same day as a Council meeting (probably in the afternoon) using the same meeting room facilities. It was noted that the external verifier would expect to be reimbursed for any travel expenses.

**ACTION: JC**

**TSAG – Telecommunications Skills Action Group:** This group focuses on NVQs and therefore neither Messrs. Colton nor Funnell had made efforts to attend meetings. However, Mr. Colton did attend a recent meeting held in the north of the country and reported that there have been discussions within the group concerning training academies which may attract matched government funding.

Mr. Colton does receive the minutes of the TSAG meetings and will keep abreast of any developments in this area.

**ACTION: JC**

## **12. Peter Lythgoe – Installation – see report attached**

Mr. Lythgoe briefly explained the background of the updated scheme to Mr. Marson. The aim is to raise the quality of installations from initial design to 'sign-off'. As previously discussed the problem now is how to raise the profile of the scheme to specifiers and end-users. The aim is to have a scheme that dictates that all tenders specify that the installation companies are members of the FIA AIS.

The scheme will be totally software based and all approved companies provided with handheld devices. There will be a series of templates with tick boxes.

The documentation pack is on the web site and now needs to be taken a step further.

Marketing of the scheme is going to be very costly as shown by the figures on the attached document.

After discussion it was agreed that there are three stages involved.

- a) Put the system in place – all databases and support documents to be written with zero costs to the FIA.
- b) Selling the new scheme to the FIA members. Working out who from the membership is likely to buy into the new scheme. Those members already with the approval are interested. Seminars can be organised for late February or early March to launch the idea of the scheme. Members need to be made aware that they really need to sign up to the scheme to manage their businesses in a cost-effective manner.
- c) Market the scheme to the specifiers and end-users. This is the very difficult and costly stage and obviously as the FIA has only a small amount of reserves this has to be addressed very carefully. Mr. Gilmore in his role as Treasurer will look at the figures in depth, identify the enthusiasm from within existing members and work out an achievable and feasible plan for marketing.

**ACTION: MG**

Mr. Gilmore will work on a pdf flyer introducing the re-vamped scheme that can be emailed to members in the New Year. The flyer will include the booking form for the seminars. The same flyer can also be used to promote the scheme to the end-users.

**ACTION: MG**

Any member of Council with any contacts, i.e. Consultants and end-users should send details to the Secretary.

**ACTION: ALL**

At this point in the meeting Mr. Colton reported that he had been contacted by Communications News magazine that suggested that in return for the FIA members mailing list they would provide their subscribers mailing list.

It was agreed that this kind of reciprocal deal may be beneficial and Mr. Colton agreed to send the magazine contact details to the Secretary.

**ACTION: JC**

### **13. PR & Seminar programme for 2006**

**Seminars:** Planning for the 31<sup>st</sup> January seminar is underway as previously discussed. The AIS series of seminars for late February or early March have been discussed. Mr. Gilmore said that the plan would be to have a seminar at least every two months throughout 2006.

The format used on 1<sup>st</sup> December with a series of one and a half-hour presentations was very successful.

**Qualification Promotion:** Mr. May has been sent the Qualification scheme article and he now needs to be given instruction for promotion.

Mr. Marson was advised that PR work had been halted for the most part in 2005 due to costs and the realisation that most new members indicated that their applications were not a result of PR work. However, as there has been a drop in new member applications perhaps this is a direct result of the PR reduction?

The Secretary was asked to contact Mr. May and introduce him via email to Mr. Marson who was now taking over as Commercial Director and who will be the main contact for future FIA PR work.

**ACTION: SEC**

Pending any suggestions from Mr. Marson regarding more general PR work, Mr. Gilmore will speak to Mr. May concerning a possible press release for the Qualification scheme. As the article already sent to Mr. May is of 800 words it may be too big for a press release and Mr. May will be asked:

- a) which magazines will take it as it is
- b) which magazines would take it as advertorial
- c) by how much it needs to be reduced in order to get it out widely as a press release.

Mr. Gilmore will take the action to cut the words for the press release on advice from Mr. May.

A quotation of costs from Mr. May will be required before any actions are agreed.

It was agreed that promotion is essential now to get the information out to people who can get enrolled on the scheme.

**ACTION: MG**

Mr. Marson was also asked to come up with any ideas he may have for future promotion of the FIA.

**ACTION: JM**

Mr. Gilmore will organise a photo of the first Learner to reach Specialist category (Mr. G. Sauls from South Africa) which can accompany any future press release or article.

**ACTION: MG**

#### 14. Any Other Business

- a) **Honorary memberships:** After discussion it was agreed to award Honorary Personal memberships to Messrs. Phillips and Thompsett. The Secretary to write and advise them and Mr. Gilmore to add this category to the database.

**ACTION: SEC/MG**

- b) **8<sup>th</sup> December – meeting timings:** Mr. Lythgoe asked why the first meeting of Council had been set at 10.30 and the Secretary replied that this was because of the AGM lunch which was organised to entice more members to attend (albeit unsuccessfully).

- c) **Venues for future meetings:** After discussion Mr. Gilmore agreed to formulate a series of venues for future Council meetings that could be better suited to all Council.

**ACTION: MG**

#### 15. Meeting dates for 2006

These were set as:

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January – venue tbc**

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March – venue tbc**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May – venue tbc**

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8<sup>th</sup> December 2005  
emailed MG: 09/12/05  
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