

Minutes of the FIA Council Meeting

held on Friday 8th December 2006

at The Saracens Head Hotel, Towcester at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Paul Bateson – Chairman
Mike Gilmore – Treasurer
Peter Lythgoe – Vice Chairman
John Colton
Lee Funnell
John Marson
Phil Whitehead
Sydney Hogg

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: None

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 3rd October 2006

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3rd October 2006 were taken as read and agreed.

3. Formal approval of FIA year-end accounts 1st September 2005 to 31st August 2006

The draft accounts, which had previously been emailed to Council, were tabled. They were in line with Mr. Gilmore's projections. There were no questions appertaining to the accounts and Mr. Bateson proposed and it was unanimously agreed that the accounts for the year–end 31st August 2006 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. AGM status

The agenda and accompanying documents were sent to all members on 6th November. The Secretary reported that five members had indicated that they would attend.

Two nominations (for the two vacant places) have been received, John Colton of Lucid Optical Services Ltd. (nominated by Lee Funnell of Astro Communications Ltd.) and David Madsen of DMOptics (nominated John Colton of Lucid Optical Services Ltd.).

One proxy vote has been given to Mr. Gilmore (from Nigel Rowe of Line Management).

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

The meeting re-convened at 13.00

Present: Paul Bateson
Mike Gilmore
Peter Lythgoe
John Colton
John Marson
Phil Whitehead
Sydney Hogg
David Madsen

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: Lee Funnell

5. Welcome new Council members

The Secretary welcomed Mr. Madsen to the Council.

Photo / bio for web site: Mr. Madsen was asked to submit his bio and photograph for the Council page on the web site. Both to be emailed direct to Mr. Gilmore.

ACTION: DM/MG

6. Confirmation of Council officers, Directors + industry sector portfolios

Chairman: There were no other proposals for the office of Chairman and Mr. Bateson agreed to continue in this role.

Vice Chairman: There were no other proposals for the office of Vice Chairman and Mr. Lythgoe agreed to continue in this role.

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

Mr. Gilmore did add that although he agreed to continue as Treasurer another Council member should come forward in coming months to work alongside him as 'Treasurer in waiting'.

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

Directors: The Secretary explained to Mr. Madsen that it was usual practice for all those on Council to be appointed as Directors of FIA Ltd. Mr. Madsen said he would like to look at the responsibilities of the directorship prior to this appointment. The Secretary will send him details of these responsibilities from Companies House and the relevant form for signature if he decides to proceed.

ACTION: SEC

Mr. Gilmore advised Mr. Madsen that the company Memorandum and Articles of Association were available for him to read via the FIA web site. He added that all Council minutes and attachments were also on the web site for him to view - www.fia-online.co.uk/maa.htm.

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

Mr. Lythgoe will continue in his role of Approved Installer Scheme Director assisted by Mr. Gilmore.

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 – Chairman
Sydney Hogg – Passive Components & Commercial issues relating to the PSP
Phil Whitehead – Liaison
David Madsen - Test & Measurement

7. Secretariat report – see attached

Membership report: 189 members.

Concern was aired about the financial position of an FIA member company (CableNet Training) and it was agreed that Mr. Gilmore, in his position of Treasurer, would formally write to the company directors of CableNet to ascertain the position regarding the outstanding membership renewal from July.

ACTION: MG

FIA Newsletter: The next general Newsletter will be published at the end of January and will include details of the newly appointed Council members along with other relevant topics. All Council was encouraged to send input on any topics they may think of interest direct to Mr. Gilmore.

ACTION: MG/ALL

Web site password: It was agreed that this should be changed in January 2007.

ACTION: MG/SEC

8. Financial report / Technical report (MG) – see attached

Accounts: Mr. Gilmore explained to Mr. Madsen 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 £2,045 (Sept & Oct). This is an increase on the figures at the same time last year. Mr. Gilmore was happy with the current figures but warned that Council should be aware of any major spends.

Outstanding actions: It was noted that the action on Messrs. Colton and Funnell to provide the information on University courses and the BTEC award details for the web site were long overdue.

ACTION: JC/LF

Special Newsletter re PSP: This has been slightly delayed. The international standard has now been defined on launch conditions for multi-mode testing and the information for members should be ready for February 2007.

ACTION: MG

AIS promotion: Mr. Gilmore has not yet progressed this and is waiting for a report from Mr. Lythgoe who has recently met with Nigel May (Parkfield PR).

The database for the new scheme has now being finalised.

Articles: Two have been written as per the report with another one due next week.

UKCPO: Mr. Gilmore has now signed a formal agreement with the UKCPO (UK Consortium for Photonics and Optics) regarding the Photonics Knowledge Transfer Network. (KTN) An amount of £5K per year (for three years) has been agreed for the FIA.

An abundant amount of information will become available to FIA members over coming months although not all will be of relevance to them. Mr. Gilmore will be supplying the KTN with selected membership contacts for the dissemination of this information.

Standardisation knowledge will be shared and Mr. Gilmore will attend the KTN meetings and report back to Council.

ACTION: MG

Seminars: Mr. Gilmore has planned two for February and March 2007. He will circulate possible dates in the new-year. All Council was asked to email Mr. Gilmore with suggestions for topics.

ACTION: MG/ALL

Possible opportunities for member companies to sponsor the seminars will be made available. Mr. Marson to discuss further with Mr. Gilmore once the dates, venues and topics are in place.

ACTION: JM/MG

Silverstone (Northampton) and the IET premises (London) are possible venues.

Standards activity: The schedule of meetings was noted.

Buy & sell page on web site: This item was a suggestion from Mr. Marson at the October meeting. After discussion it was agreed that Mr. Gilmore would put up a 'dummy' page on the web site explaining the page and its administration for Council to look at prior to anything being announced to members. A fee of 5 - 10% will be taken by the FIA and the page will include a disclaimer regarding the FIA responsibilities.

ACTION: MG

Mr. Bateson said his company was considering a similar page for their web site but along the lines of a 'buy now only' scheme. Once this is in place FIA will also consider the merits of this sort of page.

FIA & BICSI: There have been various emails in recent weeks regarding the two organisations and their views on standards etc.

Mr. Gilmore explained that to date there is no formal FIA position regarding BICSI or how its qualifications fit in with the FIA Qualification scheme. It was agreed that Mr. Gilmore will now draft an FIA White Paper which will be sent to BICSI with a covering letter allowing BICSI to comment before the document is published on the web site.

The contents of the White Paper will be:

* FIA – Brief Summary

- * BICSI – Brief Summary
- * FIA Position on Personal Qualifications
 - welcoming all forms of personal qualifications and encouraging all forms of continuing educational development
 - not restricting the activities of members in the forms of training offered by their members
- * FIA Qualifications Scheme
- * A review of BICSI Qualifications within the FIA QS
- * Issues required to be addressed in order to include BICSI Qualifications in the FIA QS

The BICSI representatives will be asked to respond within one month and Mr. Gilmore will report back to Council.

ACTION: MG

At this point in the meeting Mr. Whitehead explained that in his role of liaison he has been hoping to build bridges between the FIA and the CITA (formerly the TIA). He added that FIA, CITA and BICSI all exist and should be able to work together for the benefit of the members.

9. FIA Qualification (JC & LF)

As per the Secretariat report there have been five new Learners who have achieved the qualification.

Earlier in the day a Certified Trainer examination had been organised for Mr. M. Davies of Total Communications. It appears that he has not been successful and Messrs. Colton and Funnell will draft an appropriate letter for the Secretary to send out in the next seven days.

ACTION: JC/LF

The action from the October meeting for Messrs. Colton and Funnell to table a proposal on possible changes to the scheme, fee structure, suggestions for more promotion to Learners, aims to get more certified course units on the web site etc. has not been achieved. This action will be carried forward to the next meeting.

ACTION: JC/LF

10. Peter Lythgoe - Installation

Mr. Lythgoe reported that the scheme is now virtually in place. The application form is on the web site and has been sent out to some interested FIA member companies.

Mr. Lythgoe met with Nigel May earlier in the week to discuss promotion of the scheme and is now awaiting a report back from Mr. May regarding his costs for promotion of the scheme, and suggestions on target audience etc. Once received Mr. Lythgoe will forward to Council for consideration.

ACTION: PL

The scheme has been well received by member companies who requested follow up meetings from the September seminars.

A push to get more awareness of the scheme will be made in the new-year. A seminar sponsored by Schneider could be a possibility to introduce the scheme to consultants.

Mr. Lythgoe advised those present that the Secretary had received an email earlier this week from a company who wished to nominate an FIA member company for an industry award. It appears that they are extremely impressed with the work carried out by the installation company.

The Secretary said the company in question was Plexus Networking from Hull and that she had requested a press release which will be carried in the January Newsletter.

Messrs. Lythgoe and Marson will make arrangements to visit the company (Wescot Credit Services Ltd.) in the new-year to investigate the installation further.

ACTION: PL/JM

11. PR & Seminar programme for 2007 - JM

See report attached.

Mr. Marson is continuing his work in trying to achieve new members. He asked that all Council forward to him details of any companies they think may be interested in membership.

ACTION: ALL

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Meeting dates & venues for 2007

The following dates were agreed:

Wednesday 31st January - London

Tuesday 13th March - Leeds

Thursday 17th May - London

Tuesday 17th July - Leeds

Tuesday 2nd October - London

Thursday 6th December - Council & AGM - Towcester.

The Secretary to make provisional bookings as soon as possible.

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