

Minutes of the FIA Council Meeting

held on Thursday 4th December 2008

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

Present: Paul Bateson – Chairman
Peter Lythgoe – Vice Chairman
John Colton
Lee Funnell
John Marson
Phil Whitehead

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: Mike Gilmore – Treasurer

1. Apologies for Absence

As above.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st October 2008

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st October 2008 were taken as read and agreed.

3. Formal approval of FIA year-end accounts 1st September 2007 to 31st August 2008

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 2008 be approved.

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

ACTION: SEC

Mr. Colton did question the amount for credit card charges and the Secretary confirmed the amount included the monthly rent of the pdq machine.

Mutual trading status: Mr. Bateson explained the loophole highlighted by the auditors. It was agreed that at the next AGM a special resolution will be added to the agenda; 'in the event of winding up the company any surplus funds will be distributed to the members (such distribution being taxable)'. It is unlikely that the tax office would challenge the 'mutual trading' status but if the clause is added then the company will be covered.

ACTION: SEC

4. AGM status

The agenda and accompanying documents were sent to all members on 31st October. The Secretary reported that just four members had indicated that they would attend.

There are three new vacancies, and two members of Council are standing down due to the rotation rules (both eligible and willing for re-election), Messrs. Gilmore and Bateson.

Nomination forms have been received for:

Martyn Cook of CTTS nominated by Simon Comben of TCM Communications (UK) Ltd.

Simon Comben of TCM Communications (UK) Ltd. nominated by Martyn Cook of CTTS Ltd.

Ken Jones of EDS (North Wales) Ltd. nominated by John Marson of Twistnet Communications Ltd.

Mike Gilmore of TCP Ltd. nominated by John Marson of Twistnet Communications Ltd.

Paul Bateson of OTC Ltd. nominated by John Marson of Twistnet Communications Ltd.

One proxy voting form has been received: Jonathan Lewis vote to Lee Funnell – this however, cannot be counted as Lee Funnell is attending and has the one vote for The Siemon Company Ltd.

Discussion ensued regarding the manner of nominations to Council. One suggestion is that in future a written summary profile should be submitted with any nomination for a new director and that nominees should indicate their areas of expertise, interest and what benefits they feel they can provide the FIA membership.

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
John Colton
Lee Funnell
John Marson
Phil Whitehead
Martyn Cook
Simon Comben

Secretary: Jane Morrison

Apologies: Mike Gilmore, Ken Jones

5. Welcome new Council members

The two new Council members present were welcomed to the meeting.

Messrs. Cook and Comben were asked to provide photos and biographies for the FIA Council page on the web site. These should be emailed direct to Mr. Gilmore (mike.gilmore@btinternet.com)

ACTION: MC/SC

The Secretary will inform Ken Jones of his successful appointment to Council and ask for his photo and biography.

ACTION: SEC/KJ

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: Due to the resignation of Mr. Lythgoe this position is vacant. Mr. Bateson proposed Mr. Funnell and as there were no other proposals for the office of Vice Chairman Mr. Funnell agreed to take this role.

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

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

FIA Ltd. Directors: The Secretary will arrange for Appointment of Directors forms for Messrs. Cook & Comben. She will confirm with Mr. Jones that he is agreeable to taking Directorship of the FIA. A 'Resignation of Director' form for Peter Lythgoe will be organised and sent to Companies House.

ACTION: SEC

Industry sector portfolios: Messrs. Funnell and Colton will continue in their roles as Qualification & Training Scheme Directors.

Approved Installer Scheme Director to be confirmed. Mr. Jones will be asked to confirm his willingness to take on this portfolio.

ACTION: SEC

Mike Gilmore will continue his role as Technical Director.

John Marson will continue his role as Membership / Commercial Director.

Phil Whitehead will continue his role as Media Expansion Director.

Paul Bateson will continue his role as Test & Measurement Director.

Director portfolios for Passive Components, Test Equipment, OSP & ISP and Membership promotion were briefly discussed.

Messrs. Cook and Comben were asked to think about the roles they could bring to Council and have proposals ready for the next Council meeting. Final agreement can then be made and announced to the membership.

ACTION: MC/SC

Mr. Bateson added that Council needs volunteers with the time and commitment to fulfil work in the above and possibly other areas not yet stated. It must be an area that the Council member is interested in and has the knowledge and strengths to complete. Discussions via email on this matter were encouraged prior to the next Council meeting.

7. Secretariat report – see attached

FIA- AIS: As per the report work needs to be done on the scheme and renewed liaison with the three approved companies. As Mr. Gilmore worked closely with Mr. Lythgoe on the scheme it is assumed he will talk to Mr. Jones and bring him up-to-date with the status.

ACTION: MG

FIA Insurance: There has been no reply to date from Towergate insurance.

FIA members – new password: The Secretary shall now liase with Mr. Gilmore on this matter.

ACTION: SEC

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

CT Exams: Mr. Funnell pointed out that he was in favour of Mr. Gilmore overseeing the CT examinations due to take place the next day at CTTS. He added however, that as Qualification Director it was his role to organise any future examinations.

FIA Seminars: This matter was briefly discussed and Mr. Bateson explained for the purpose of the new Council members that 3M had, earlier in 2008, offered sponsorship for FIA seminars via their Marketing/PR representatives. This had not come to fruition and it is not clear in the current economic climate whether this is still a viable offer for 2009.

He added that Seminar topics were always something that Council was looking for and any suggestions would be investigated.

Mr. Funnell suggested perhaps an email or section in the next FIA Newsletter asking members what they would like to see covered in a Seminar programme for 2009.

ACTION: MG

Mr. Bateson said that irrespective of funding from outside sources the FIA should be looking to organise Seminars in 2009.

9. FIA Qualification & Training (JC &LF)

Mr. Colton has promoted the FIA QS at various events throughout 2008 as well as at the Telecoms show in September.

Mr. Colton will forward the contact details for Pamela Baines to Lee Funnell so that he can remind her that the C&G 3666 series are overdue for update because of the new standards (50173 & 50174).

ACTION: JC/LF

It was noted that the take up of the FIA QS by Learners has been very disappointing. Despite application forms being given to newly qualified people by Lucid and CTTS it appears that although initially interested no-one actually completes the forms and pursues the available FIA qualifications.

Mr. Comben asked about the perceived value and he was pointed to the FIA web site where a list of the qualifications and postnominals could be found.

Promotion had to be the key element and this should be addressed somehow in 2009.

It was explained at this point, for the two new Council members, that the FIA had, at one time, paid for the services of a PR company. This was somewhat expensive and any promotion work was now usually done in house.

Mr. Funnell has recently promoted FIA membership to TDC and Net Design, two Danish companies.

10. Installation – Approved Installer scheme

The present scheme needs to be updated in coming months to reflect the new standards.

It also needs to be made more attractive, perhaps easier to achieve and use. As already discussed it is hoped that Mr. Jones can work with Mr. Gilmore to achieve this.

It was noted that work has now been achieved within the TIA-B to obtain the CMA database that is clearly a vehicle that could be used to promote the scheme.

11. Commercial & Membership (JM)

Mr. Marson reported that despite 30 + people expressing membership interest at the Telecoms show, none to date had actually applied for membership.

It was agreed that at any future shows membership application forms should be completed at point of contact and if payment is not possible with the application then pro-forma invoices can be sent.

The Secretary suggested that Mr. Marson sends her the contact names and full postal addresses and she would in the new-year send out letters and membership packs. This was agreed.

ACTION: JM/SEC

Mr. Marson has been liaising with Mills Ltd. (an FIA member company) who have verbally agreed to allow FIA members a discount on its products. He is however, still awaiting text for promotion from their marketing department. He will again chase this up with a view to include the details in the next FIA Newsletter.

ACTION: JM

12. Media Expansion (PW)

Mr. Whitehead explained that he had only recently taken on this portfolio. His previous portfolio had been Liaison (BICSI, TIA etc.).

He will be working in the new-year on ways to promote both the FIA QS and AIS via BICSI and the CMA.

13. Test & Measurement (PB)

Mr. Bateson said there was nothing new to report regarding this portfolio.

He was very interested with informal discussions at the AGM with J. Bradley of EXFO who was quite keen to assist in FIA promotion. Mr. Bradley expressed interest in having the new FIA stand at his offices on training days.

In addition to this EXFO may be interested in having their white papers on the FIA web site. Many members are unaware that this forum exists and Mr. Gilmore will be asked to once again include these details in the next Newsletter.

ACTION: MG

Mr. Bateson explained that there is a matrix on the web site of OTDR's available but this now requires updating. The current matrix shows what is available and if provided by a FIA member, then links to their web site are included. With non-members it is just a list of products without company links.

14. Any Other Business

Mr. Colton felt that the FIA should organise some kind of an event whereby all FIA members could attend (possibly foc).

He added that as attendance was so poor at AGMs an event should be established, perhaps in the summer months, which members could attend and network. This could also include a few talks.

Mr. Bateson said that some years ago Golf Days were organised but perhaps in the current climate these would be too costly.

Mr. Comben suggested a 'safari type' dinner where members moved around tables and got to know one another.

These suggestions were useful and can be discussed in more details at the next meeting.

15. Meeting dates & venues for 2009

The following dates were agreed:

Thursday 22nd January – Saracens Head, Towcester. Start time 10:30

Monday 16th March – Saracens Head, Towcester. Start time 10:30

Future dates for 2009 can be agreed at the January meeting,

Note: During informal discussions with Mr. Peter Lythgoe prior to the AGM Mr. Bateson offered Mr. Lythgoe Honorary Personal membership of the FIA. Mr. Lythgoe accepted.

This matter shall be formally agreed at the next Council meeting.

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