

Fibreoptic Industry Association

Minutes of the Seventh Annual General Meeting

held on Thursday, 2nd December, 1999

at The Saracens Head Hotel, Towcester, Northants NN12 7BX

Attendees:

Mike Phillips	Fibre Optic Solutions
Mike Gilmore	The Cabling Partnership
Andrew Watson	3M Telecom Systems
Peter Thompsett	Ensign Communications Ltd.
Adrian Harrison	Lambda Photometrics Ltd.
Paul Bateson	Optical Test and Calibration Ltd.
Laurent Amestoy	Molex Premise Networks
Steve Strange	Anixter
Mike Nixon	CableNet Training Services Ltd.

9 – present voting members

Proxy votes:

Alan Kynaston	on behalf of J. P. Senders of BASEC
Mike Phillips	on behalf of M. G. Rex of Farmelec Data

11 votes in total

Gary Kibblewhite FIA Chief Executive

Jane Morrison FIA Secretariat

Apologies:

G. W. Meldrum	Motherwell College
R. D. Hallows	The Cable & Wireless College
Nigel Rowe	Line Management Group
Brian Tuff	Britelec Telecom
M. Smith	EXCEL IT Ltd.
Paul Crosland	DP Cabling
Colin Bayley	Bayley Security
Nick Andrews	Datwyler (UK) Ltd.
Richard Wenner	Lightdata Ltd.
Helen Long	FIA Secretariat

Mr. Kibblewhite opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

1. To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd December, 1998.

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd December, 1998, had previously been circulated to members.

It was proposed by Mr. Watson, seconded by Mr. Strange and unanimously agreed that the minutes be approved.

- 2. To receive the Chairman's Report, Treasurer's Report, Chief Executive's Report and reports thereon of the Council and the Accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st August, 1999, together with the report from the Auditors**

Chairman's Report:

Mr. Phillips had circulated his Chairman's report to those attending – see attached.

He asked if the meeting had any questions appertaining to the report.

There were no questions.

Treasurer's Report & Year end Accounts:

The Treasurer's Report and draft accounts had been circulated to the meeting attendees – see attached, and Mr. Phillips confirmed that these were a correct view of the finances and that the Council had approved the accounts at their meeting earlier that day.

There were no questions appertaining to the Treasurer's Report or the year end accounts.

Chief Executive's Report:

Mr. Kibblewhite's report was circulated – see attached.

There were no questions appertaining to the Chief Executive's report.

Mr. Thompsett proposed and Mr. Amestoy seconded that the above reports and the audited accounts as circulated be approved. This was carried unanimously.

- 3. To consider the re-appointment of Deloitte & Touche of East Parade, Leeds as Auditors of the Company until the conclusion of the next general meeting of the Company at which accounts are laid before the members and to authorise the Council to determine their remuneration.**

The re-appointment of the Auditors as above was proposed by Mr. Strange, seconded by Mr. Amestoy and unanimously agreed.

4. Special Resolution

To add the following additional clause into the Memorandum & Articles covering attendance at Council meetings

ADD:

DISQUALIFICATION OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

'If he or she fails to attend in person three consecutive meetings of the Company over a period of not less than nine calendar months'

It was proposed by Mr. Bateson and seconded by Mr. Thompsett and carried unanimously that the special resolution above be accepted.

5. To consider elections to Council from the Nominations received

There were 2 places vacant as per the Annual General Meeting calling notice.

2 nominations had been received – **Mike Gilmore – The Cabling Partnership**
Ian Rowe – Electra-Net UK Ltd.

As Mr. Rowe no longer worked for an FIA member company his nomination could not be accepted.

There was therefore only one nomination – Mr. Gilmore, who was willing to stand as a Council member.

It was therefore proposed by Mr. Watson and seconded by Mr. Bateson that Mr. Gilmore be elected as a Council member. This was unanimously agreed

The FIA Council members are now confirmed as:

Messrs. Phillips, Watson, Bateson, Thompsett, Amestoy, Strange and Gilmore – 7 members in total (one place vacant).

6. To transact any other business

There being no other business to conduct the meeting closed at 2.15 p.m.

FIAAGMDEC99

2/12/99
approved GK – 3/12/99

Issued By:

FIA Secretariat
Owles Hall
Buntingford
Herts SG9 9PL

10/12/99

FIBREOPTIC INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1999

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In my report this year I'm going to focus on the strategic issues for the FIA. 1999 has been a year of much activity to the FIA, as you will hear when the Chief Executive gives his report. The FIA has benefited from a strong Council, and substantial contributions from individual Council members. We try to ensure that all these activities are in accordance with and help to achieve the FIA's overall strategic goals. In last year's report I identified these goals as follows:

- To act as a focal point for the assembling and making available to members information which may be vital (the Newsletter, web site and Standards Forum, the Cable Guide);
- To actively participate where appropriate, to both influence the outcome in the interest of the industry, and to make available to members first-hand knowledge (Standards bodies, both UK and International, NVQ generation, ELCIS);
- To generate value-added schemes for the benefit of members only (Approved Installer Scheme, Approved Training Provider);
- To project the benefits of insisting on FIA membership as a precondition to the contract bidding process."

Providing information to the industry is an important strategic role of the FIA. As such we must continually look for ways of improving both the scope and quality of the content, and the way it is presented to our members. This year the FIA has made substantial progress in improving the newsletter and the website. In 1999 more newsletter issues were published than in 1998, but this had the inevitable impact on costs. At the same time it is clear that the FIA website will become more and more the primary vehicle for disseminating information to both members and non-members. Indeed the Council believes that now is the time to recognise that increasing numbers of members have access to and are actively using the Internet. So, next year the newsletter is to be published on the website, enabling significant savings in mailing costs to be achieved. In the future it will become the norm to publish information on the website and consideration has been given as to how members should be given preference in gaining access to this.

The FIA has always been and remains technically very strong, and it is clear that this strength must be maintained as a fundamental strategic component. The strength has been put very good use in the generation of Codes of Practice, design guides, documentation templates and so on. We also, by the direct participation of Mike Gilmore, get very good feedback concerning what's going on in the world of standards. Standards activity can be tracked via the Standards Forum, which is available to all members, initially free of charge. This is complemented by a continual process of maintaining awareness of the trends in technology and the market. Currently the key issue is gigabit transmission and how this is to be implemented in practice, and already a project to produce a LAN Support Guide has been initiated.

In the marketplace a key strategic issue has been the quality of service, at both corporate and individual level, that can be demonstrated and calibrated. The FIA continues to introduce new corporate schemes (Approved Training Provider Scheme), and to refine existing ones (Approved Installer Scheme). They must be adapted to changing conditions, and made more attractive to both our members and their customers. The FIA also continues to be involved in the issues of Training and Qualifications for the individual. In the past we have been strong supporters of the NVQ as the basis for demonstrating individual competence. However this year saw the demise of the ELCIS scheme, and this has thrown into question the whole issue of which qualifications the FIA should be endorsing and promoting to our members. The FIA has nevertheless made substantial progress with our own Recognised Qualifications Database (RQD). This is a pragmatic, practical scheme that we hope will establish a platform for future activity.

Finally, promoting to the industry's customers the added value that should be associated with FIA members continues to be a key strategic activity. This year the FIA has been working with a new PR agency, and has been increasing its profile and credibility. Attracting the attention of the end-user community has been and remains one of the more difficult aims we have to achieve.

I would like to end by thanking, on behalf of all FIA members as well as personally, all my fellow Council members for the commitment they have shown to the FIA during the past year. The effort that has been expended by them in pursuing the benefit of the FIA has been truly remarkable.

I would also like to thank Fleming Gibbons, and Jane Morrison in particular, for their excellent work in ensuring the smooth running of the FIA; and Margaret McFarlane for her work on the FIA's accounts.

Lastly I would like to say a warm personal thankyou to Gary Kibblewhite. As he will be telling you, he has decided, for reasons that I fully understand, to resign from the FIA. The FIA has benefited enormously from the contribution he has made to it over the past five years, since he took up the appointment as Chief Executive in September 1994. He has put an enormous amount of energy and commitment into the FIA and its activities during that time. FIA has benefited greatly from the experience of industry and other Trade Associations in which he has been involved.

I personally have very much enjoyed working with him, and have greatly appreciated the wise council that he has unfailingly provided when we have been struggling to see the way forward. I very much hope that we will stay in touch with us in future. I am sure I am speaking for everyone here when I offer him our best wishes for the success of all his ventures.

CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT FOR THE AGM

1999 has been another strong year for the FIA.

In what has been a difficult year for many Trade Associations the FIA membership has increased from 186 last year to 193 this year. An excellent result!

Under the Chairmanship of Mike Phillips your Council has been involved in many activities:-

Installer Activities

Peter Thompsett from Ensign Communications and Ian Rowe from Electra-Net have been the FIA Directors responsible for Installer activities and are currently in the process of improving the FIA's "Approved Installers Scheme" which is designed to provide end users with a known quality of fibre optic installations.

Training

Until recently Colin Snook from Cablenet was the FIA Director responsible for Training, Colin helped launch an "Approved Training Provider Scheme", which is designed to improve the standards in Fibre Optic Installation Training throughout the industry. There are 2 levels of the scheme, one for Training Providers with fixed premises and a second for Training Providers working on a floating location. The FIA are currently looking for a replacement for Colin on Council.

In addition, on a training related issue, the Fibreoptic Industry Association has been represented by Richard Wenner from Light Data on the Council of the "ELCIS" project. ELCIS is the European Licensed Communications Installer Scheme which is being funded under the "ADAPT" project. The ELCIS project was however, cancelled in September 99.

We held a major seminar at the Cable and Wireless College focused on the Industry's training needs.

Test & Measurement

The FIA Industry Director responsible for Test & Measurement Industry is Paul Bateson from Optical Test & Calibration Ltd. and Paul has an active programme planned that is designed to highlight the visibility of Test & Measurement resources to membership and potential customers.

Passive Components

Laurent Amestoy from MOD TAP is the FIA Director responsible for Passive Components and is currently developing a programme for that industry segment. He has already opened up international links with our counterparts in France and the FIA are now associate members of the French "Club Optique" with whom we share information.

Technical Directorate

Mike Gilmore from the Cabling Partnership is the FIA's Technical Director and has an extremely active programme involving representation on many of the UK and European standards committees. In addition Mike provides information on current standard documents relating to our industry through the "FIA Standards Forum" which is being constantly updated and is accessible through the FIA web site. Mike is also in the process of developing other "expert services" designed to support the industry such as the Recognised Qualifications Database and, with substantial help from members, a new Applications Support Guide.

Commercial Activities

Our commercial activities are headed by Andrew Watson from 3M who is responsible for seminars and events, an area important to the FIA. Andrew is also responsible for ensuring that the FIA Newsletter is produced

approx. once every 6 weeks. It is this Newsletter that is the primary communication source for members. It is our intention to convert the newsletter to an electronic format starting in Jan next year.

FIA Web Site

Our web site which provides members with a whole range of added value services is currently in course of updating through the inclusion of a secure credit card payment facility. This is planned to improve revenue from the FIA from outside sources. This web site is now being visited by around 800 companies a month and achieving around 15,000 "hits" a month, so it is being heavily used by the outside world to find out about FIA members' services.

Golf Days

The FIA held a golf day for members. Unfortunately last minute cancellations resulted in it operating at a loss.

Documentation

The FIA is currently, with the help of a team headed by Steve Strange from Anixter, in the process of re writing the "Cabling Selector Guide" which is designed to help end users best select the right type of fibre optic cables for specific applications.

Arbitration Service

The FIA launched during the year a new Arbitration Service aimed at resolving commercial disputes involving member Companies.

Audit Service

The FIA launched during the year a new technical Audit Service aimed at resolving technical disputes involving member companies.

Insurance Service

The FIA has recently negotiated a special Insurance service for members.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the 5 years that I have had as Chief Executive of the FIA. However, I now wish to spend just a little time on other interests and have therefore tendered my resignation effective end December.

I believe that I am leaving the FIA in a strong position with a great Council, a strong P & L and a high level of membership. I will continue to support the FIA's activities indirectly via my other directorships wherever possible and wish them every success in the new Millennium.



The IT Cabling Consultants www.it-cabling.com

Date: 22nd October 1999
Our Reference: MG/MG/3240
Your Reference:

REPORT FOR AGM

FINANCIAL REPORT

The audited accounts have been submitted to the FIA Council for approval. As Deputy Treasurer I have checked them and they are acceptable. They show a loss that requires some analysis in this report.

In the year 1998-1999 the sales revenue increased to £101.3k but overall costs also rose resulting in a loss of £8.6k.

The reason for the difference is the significant increase in expenditure on administration (communications charges due to an increased average membership and increased workload within the Secretariat) together with a significant increase in advertising and promotional costs. Costs were also incurred at the end of the DTI-funded web-project. Costs were incurred on projects that will eventually provide revenue but which are suffering delays.

This loss was predicted by the Treasurer based upon expenditure in the first half of the year and steps have been taken to reduce the management costs per member by delivering services in the now ubiquitous "e-ways". Other unprofitable activities have been curtailed and the first months of the current financial year have reversed this loss to a great extent with membership is at an all time high.

The promotional activities are being seen to bear fruit in terms of new members and these will be maintained in the coming year.

TECHNICAL REPORT

The Technical Director handles technical queries from members and non-members and harmonizes the Standards and Technical Directorates.

In August 1998, it was agreed to initiate the work on a FIA Application Support Guide and to revise the FIA Cable Selection Guide.

The Cable Selection Guide, under the management of Steve Strange of Anixter, is now complete.

The FIA Application Support Guide is taking longer than expected but now forms part of a new structure of technical documents to be provided by the FIA. A number of events are conspiring to force this re-structure and the proposals are shown below:

FIA TSD-2000-1-1: OPTICAL FIBRE CABLING – LAN SUPPORT GUIDE

LAN Support Guide, will be based upon Annex B of BS 7718 but with significant changes to reflect the developments in bandwidth limited LAN applications. It will also address the whole issue of optical fibre planning for existing and predicted LAN systems including the issues of coarse and dense WDM. It will also provide the basis for other Support Guides for other industry sectors. The TSD-2000-1-x series may be extended with reference to other types optical fibre application.

FIA TSD-2000-2-1: OPTICAL FIBRE CABLING - QUALITY ASSURANCE

The FIA will withdraw the FIA Guidance Notes on Installation Specifications and Quality Plans but provide support for the forthcoming EN 50174 by incorporating the FIA Guidance Notes within this document.

FIA TSD-2000-2-2: OPTICAL FIBRE CABLING - INSTALLATION PRACTICE

This document will be in essence a new version of "BS 7718" but providing support for the forthcoming EN 50174 and adding to the basic information included with regard to the practices involved in the installation of optical fibre.

FIA-TSD-2000-2-3: OPTICAL FIBRE CABLING - ADMINISTRATION

The future of the documentation templates remains unresolved at present but we must provide assistance re- administration of optical fibre cabling in support of EN 50174.

All members are offered the opportunity to become involved in these activities and anyone interested should contact the Technical Director.

STANDARDS REPORT

The standards activity of the FIA comprised two elements: the Standards Forum that allows members to keep track of standards in development and the actual work of monitoring standards development.

Even though the Standards Forum is a free service to FIA members it has been underused in 1998-1999. It is expected to undergo significant change this year; being brought into sharper relief and information needs to be made easier to interpret and access.

The FIA has been represented and kept abreast of some of the more fundamental changes to the standards in terms of network support and bandwidth/configuration management.

The forecast development of multi-Gigabit solutions that may require new specifications for optical fibre is generating considerable interest amongst users, installers and standards-makers alike. This and the use of WDM techniques are factors leading to the re-structuring of technical documentation.

RQD (Recognised Qualifications Database)

The FIA has initiated work on a database of trained/qualified personnel. This is a service to FIA members, a means of generating revenue and a way of increasing awareness of the FIA. As promised, all the basic elements of this program are in place and it went live in the first months of 1999. However, the absence of a "training and competence" director within the FIA has been a significant blow the development of the scheme on a widespread basis.