

UK WEIGHING FEDERATION
PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of a meeting of the Regional Meeting, held on Thursday, 11th April at the Lotus F1 Conference Centre in Enstone, 11:30.

Present:	John Swinburne	JAS	Precia-Molen UK Ltd	President (Chair)
	Derek Christie	DC	D Brash & Sons	Treasurer
	John Cox		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	Phil Hopper		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	Mike Scott		Avery Weigh-Tronix Ltd	
	Graham Spink		AWM Ltd	
	Adrian Thorpe		County Scales Ltd	
	Adrian Bone		E H Oakley & Co Ltd	
	Les Rowe		E H Oakley & Co Ltd	
	Gareth Roberts		Flintec UK Ltd	
	David Weekes		Flintec UK Ltd	
	Amanda Lund-Yates		Hawkley Group Ltd	
	Marj Fairley		Hawkley Group Ltd	
	Richard Herbert		Herbert Group Ltd	
	Julian Hope		Herbert Group Ltd	
	Steve Hart		Ian Fellows Ltd	
	Chris Buck		Lorrimar Weighing Ltd	
	Phil Webb		Mettler Toledo Ltd	
	Andrew Race		Reuben Heaton Ltd	
	Mike Neal		Sartorius UK Ltd	
	Paul Moody		Solent Scale Services Ltd	
	Peter Beswick		Solent Scale Services Ltd	
	Toby Hawkins		Stevens Group Ltd	
	Darren Fisher		Stevens Group Ltd	
	David Ayling		Straightpoint (UK) Ltd	
	Jeremy Sage		Stringer & Co (Scales) Ltd	
	Neil Duhig		Vishay Measurements Group	
In attendance:	Ian Turner	IT	UKWF	Technical Officer
	Martina Farragher	MF	BHETA	Secretariat
	Barbara Morales	BM	CECIP	Speaker

President's comments

JAS welcomed everyone to the meeting, and went through the general housekeeping points.

JAS introduced Barbara Morales, the General Secretary of CECIP who will be presenting today and also reminded everyone of the programme for the day.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from 21 people. The following companies sent their apologies:

Avery Berkel Ltd	Legal Metrology Consultancy Services
Axle Weight Technology Ltd (AXTEC)	Norfolk Calibration Service
Berry Weighing Ltd	Positive Weighing Solutions Ltd
Dataweigh Systems Ltd	Scotweigh
H Fereday & Sons Ltd	Seca Ltd
HK Process Measurement	Select Scales
Inspiron Labelling Solutions Ltd	Sensor Techniques Limited
John White & Son (Weighing Machines) Ltd	Vandome & Hart Ltd
Kent Scale Company	Weightron Bilanciai Ltd

2. **President's Update**

"Ladies & Gentlemen; good morning and welcome our first regional meeting of 2013, here at the Home of Lotus F1.

Lotus have got off to a flying start with a victory in Australia and solid performance in Malaysia, and will be looking to maintain their good performance this weekend at the Chinese Grand Prix.

On the subject of speed, time has flown since our AGM in October of last year and your Board have continued to work on a variety of topics, some old favourites such as EN45501 and definition of manufacturer, and new issues such as software controls. I must thank the Board for all their hard work and support working on these and a number of other topics that our Technical Officer, Ian Turner, will update us on during his report.

Europe continues to dominate legislation within our industry and our support from CECIP is of vital importance. I am delighted to welcome Barbara Morales, then new Permanent Secretary of CECIP to our meeting today.

Market Surveillance and our concern over imported goods remain a priority. We have held a meeting with Malcolm Harbour, MEP for West Midlands and Chair of the EU Commission on Market Surveillance. Malcolm was appreciative of the Federations concerns and although he could not offer any quick fixes, agreed to further discussions. Although that further meeting had to be postponed, we are now meeting on 12th July.

The Federation has also agreed to host the WELMEC Working Group 5 Meeting in September. WG5 deals with market surveillance and this will provide us with an opportunity to reinforce our concerns to this policy making group.

Within the UK, the economy continues to raise concerns. The latest statistics issues by the Office of National Statistics shows:

- Manufacturing and production output continues to fall year on year by 1.4% to 2.2% respectively.
- GDP continues at a fragile but slow positive recovery - but today it is still -2.5% below the start of 2008.
- Inflation is holding steady at 2.8%
- Unemployment is 7.8% (2.52 million), down by 136,000 from this time last year.
- Finally, business investment continues on a slow recovery at +£260M year on year, however, it would suggest that the main thrust of investment is in non-manufacturing. Broken down, +£360M is non-manufacturing and -£100M is manufacturing, which supports the decline in manufacturing and productivity output I mentioned earlier.

However, while some of those statistics are depressing, I believe that historically our industry has performed well in different economic times as weighing is often an integral part of improvement in production control and processes.”

An open forum was then held when a representative from each table gave an overview of how their companies were finding business. The general consensus was that product sales within the UK are stable but service revenues were good, however, exports had increased. JAS thanked everyone for their feedback.

“The workshop sessions held at the AGM provided good feedback and we will act on them accordingly. One comment is that the Board should meet more of the membership - so I have set out to visit the majority of members during my time in office. To date, I have visited nine members and the comments raised has been interesting - so keep the kettle to hand, I may be knocking on your door soon!

Finally, thank you to all the companies that have responded to the Industry Survey, we or at least Martina, is currently collating all the returned information and we will issue the findings to all that took part shortly.

We will also be reporting to the CECIP General Assembly which will take place from 2nd-4th May in Rotterdam. It provides an excellent opportunity to learn first hand how our counterparts throughout Europe are performing as well as offering good networking opportunities. It is not too late to register and you would be most welcome to join the UKWF delegation.

Thank you for your attention.”

3. **Technical Officer's Update**

IT gave a presentation to the members on a number of topics, which can be found on the website.

The following topics were discussed:

- European Updates
 - EN45501
 - Software
 - Other WELMEC issues
 - Blue Guide review
 - “Manufacturer”
 - Market Surveillance
 - Government Review of EU Powers
- National Matters
 - UK Changes
 - Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) Reviews
- UKWF Updates

In addition to the presentation, IT made these additional points, and the following questions were asked are:

Software

IT explained that one key issue is that an iPad (or notebook) can become a terminal and the application can be stored in ‘the cloud’ somewhere.

Toby Hawkins thought that devices could become capable of manipulation. IT explained that this is a question that needs to be raised. We need to address what is practically possible so we can control the market place.

Jeremy Sage thought that there was a danger in discussing changes when people don't yet understand the issues. The worry is that there will be knock on effects - there are already issues when you connect a machine to a printer.

IT explained that he wants to raise the issue now so people are aware of it, so we don't get caught out later on.

IT wanted members to feedback their views on the matter and said that he himself was against the idea. IT also reminded people that there will be a sub-group meeting to discuss the issue on software, which will be held at Federation House on 17th June. An email will be sent out to members on this and anyone who is interested in attending would be welcome.

UK Changes

Chris Buck asked whether a draft Code of Practice on competence had yet been issued. IT explained that the Trading Standards Institute (TSi) hasn't started that yet.

JAS asked when will they remove the inspectors' exam and introduce a Code of Practice. IT confirmed that the draft is on the consumer review bill and it is one of the clauses which has been included.

JAS felt it is an important issue for our industry. The TSi has to have quality in metrology. If the exam is replaced by a Code of Practice it will 'water down' the qualification. JAS thought that because of the new ability of the inspector, if a machine does not comply, the likelihood of prosecutions is reduced.

JAS added that he is surprised that the Code of Practice is even being introduced. He has discussed the matter with a number of Trading Standards Officers (TSOs) and they are unanimous in their belief that this is the wrong step. It is simply being driven by Government to remove 'red tape'. JAS was unsure what else we could do about it, other than ensure the Code of Practice insists on competence and make it rigid.

Julian Hope added that if inspectors didn't understand re-verification, they applied the wrong sticker and the machine was knocked out of service.

IT urged members to put something in writing. He feels that if the end user shouts loud enough, someone will have to listen.

Chris Buck asked what the TSOs were doing. IT advised that they are doing the same as us and they are in agreement with our position.

JAS advised that he will be meeting with Malcolm Harbour who is the VP of the Trading Standards Institute, along with other members of the Board. They will be putting these points across to him at the next meeting.

Any other questions

David Weekes asked what was happening to the R60 guide. IT confirmed that the first draft had been completed and we were waiting for the responses to this.

Paul Moody questioned why re-verifications shall be reduced from 28-days to 10-days. IT explained that it was a good bargaining position. JAS added that the Code of Practice is supported by the National Measurement Office (NMO). It has been agreed in principal and they have suggested that if we reduce it they will support it fully. The same timescales will be written in the WM1003 and all of the TSi will abide by it.

4. **UKWF OnLine**

Jeremy Sage (JS) gave a presentation about the UKWF Website and Social Media sites. The subject came up at the last meeting so he was asked to give and update. A copy of the presentation can be found on the website.

JS explained the various sections of the website:

- Federation News - articles including notice of meetings and meeting minutes.
- Industry News - the issues that IT is dealing with.
- Technical Articles - formally known as the Member Handbook, which is in a secure area for members only. Mailshots sent out from the Federation now includes username and passwords so all members should be able to access the member only sections without any issues.
- Member Search - this is an alphabetical search function of all members. We have been asked in the past if this can be shown by industry or location, but we found that a number of members cover 'all of the UK' or deal in all/a number of industries.
- Site Search - where you can search for keywords. JS suggested that all members should take time to check the overview of their company listing as this text will be shown in the search results if they correspond to the text. Profiles can be updated by providing the information to the Secretariat.

JS then confirmed the different social media sites that have been set up - Twitter (@UKWF) LinkedIn members group (UK Weighing Federation Members page) and the UKWF blog (ukwf.wordpress.com).

Although the content is similar between the various sites, it is worth being a member of at least one of the sites.

JS explained that we have considered a forum and felt that it was a good means of exchanging technical issues. This will be trialled and shall be announced once it is live.

JS urged members to get in touch if they have any views with any of the sites.

5. **CECIP**

Barbara Morales, Secretary General of CECIP, presented on why CECIP is important to our members. Again, a copy of the presentation can be found on the UKWF website.

6. **Workshops**

JAS explained that at the AGM last year, we had introduced workshop sessions for members to discuss key topics with their group and report back. The feedback we received was very positive so we will continue them. Everyone had been split into three groups and one person from each group was chosen as facilitator.

After the allotted time, each team gave their feedback to their question:

Red Team:

"UKWF Code of Practice (NAWI and Cementitious Products)

How relevant are these codes to the industry and to UKWF members? Are there any other codes which would be of interest to UKWF members?"

Neil Duhig provided his teams' feedback:

There was a good debate on the relevance of the codes. It was agreed that they were general terms of reference, which provided a series of guidelines for companies and suppliers.

If there were any disputes, they were useful to use as a point of reference - so show customers that is the policy in which they follow. It was felt that it is also useful for training and getting new people in the industry to understand the guidelines.

The codes also differentiate members from other companies in the market place and it can also justify the difference in costs between them.

It gives members credibility and integrity, and is a great value to UKWF membership.

In terms of additional codes and what is missing, the group suggested the following:

- MID equivalent to NAWI standards
- Software, the basic concepts
- Standards for importation of products outside the EU (expect low voltage directive and the EMC directive)

Green Team:

“UK Weighing Federation

How can the UKWF help your business?”

Darren Fisher provided his teams’ feedback:

Darren explained that they discussed different points of view, including what’s happened with UKWF and its perception.

The team talked about the information that was given today in the presentations. There has been an increase in market surveillance and the figure quoted today was that 35 out of 36 machines failed. It was felt that it would be a valuable tool to see evidence of this.

The technical bulletins are useful but it would be better if the topic was added to the subject line. Also, it would be helpful to have an expansion of terminology and abbreviations.

It was agreed by the group that the Federation should be increasing its public profile via the website.

The Calibration Code of Practice should be a mandatory verification for those without ISO accreditation. Companies don’t realise what it means to have products calibrated. The UKWF should force this through mandatory verifications. This means there is an additional benefit to members and it will push manufacturers to conform.

Blue Team:

“Training

Are there any other training courses you would like the UKWF to provide to its members? Would you be interested in the UKWF organising any other courses, which may not be related to weighing, to reduce the cost to members (e.g. health & safety training)?”

Toby Hawkins provided his teams’ feedback:

In general, it was felt that location is a key factor and thought that the Federation could consider distance learning or e-learning.

It was felt that there were two specific courses that would be beneficial - ‘Uncertainty of Measurement’ and ‘Average Weight Legislation’. A lot of people struggle with what average weight legislation means and what we have to provide for it.

If it is available close by, geographically, the Federation could offer Health & Safety training which is relevant to the industry.

The other area that was discussed was export and linguistic issues. It could be useful to produce a glossary in multiple languages specific to the industry, for example the word 'load cells'. It could be made available on the website for members.

JAS explained that he has talked about average weight legislation before with his company, Precia-Molen, and it was felt that users of equipment don't know what it is about and it would be useful to have familiarisation courses which would include the type of legislation users should be complying with.

Neil Duhig added that we could also offer training to customers, in a 'road show' format visiting different locations. This would then educate end users who would also get a benefit of dealing with member companies themselves.

JAS said that he would consider the 'road show' option and will publicise to members if agreed. JAS added that we have a great resource in IT. He is very knowledgeable and even edits workbooks for weights and measures.

JAS thanked everyone for their feedback and for taking part. The views of the members are appreciated and will be taken on board for consideration.

7. **Any Other Business**

JAS asked whether there was any other business or queries from the membership.

Mike Scott explained that he was aware that the Federation were trying to produce accurate market data. Mike said he joined Avery Weigh Tronix from outside the weighing industry and the last federation he was involved with collected the data anonymously by using a code rather than a company name.

This allowed additional companies to provide the information which then became more precise, which subsequently meant more people could use the results. You can then look at the trends rather than the specific data, which would be a resource that a lot of members would find beneficial.

JAS explained to Mike that the returns are only seen by the Secretariat - no Board Member is permitted to see the actual responses, not even the President. The only information anyone else sees is the aggregated figures. In the past we used Survey Monkey, but we had little returns. We then moved to a paper version but is aware that some are still reluctant to providing information, however, if it is felt that the membership would buy in to these changes, then that would be great, as it would give us more meaningful data.

Meeting Ends

JAS thanked everyone for attending and for their input, and said he looks forward to seeing everyone at the AGM in York on Thursday 10th October 2013.