

UK WEIGHING FEDERATION
PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of a meeting of the Regional Meeting, held on Thursday, 26th April at the DW Stadium in Wigan, 11:30.

Present:	Jim Harper	JH	Avery Weigh-Tronix	President (Chair)
	John Swinburne	JAS	Precia-Molen UK Ltd	Vice President
	Derek Christie	DC	D Brash & Sons	Treasurer
	Peter Cook		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	John Cox		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	Takashi Hayaska		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	Derek Higgins		A&D Instruments Ltd	
	Peter Williams		Avery Berkel	
	John Coughlan		Avery Weigh-Tronix	
	Brian Spink		AWM Ltd	
	David Fereday		H Fereday & Sons Ltd	
	Richard Herbert		Herbert Group	
	Julian Hope		Herbert Group	
	Chris Buck		J A Lorrimar & Co	
	John Anthony		Legal Metrology Consultancy Services	
	Keith Williamson		Marsden Weighing Machine Group Ltd	
	Brian Johnson		Mettler Toledo Ltd	
	John Wealsby		Nesco Weighing	
	Matthew Capstick		Sartorius Mechatronics UK Ltd	
	Ian McVicar		Scotweigh	
	Linda McVicar		Scotweigh	
	George Christie		Seca Ltd	
	Paul Moody		Solent Scale Services Ltd	
	David Ayling		Straightpoint (UK) Ltd	
	Jeremy Sage		Stringer & Co (Scales) Ltd	
	Brian Heath		Vandome & Hart Ltd	
	Roy Taylor		Vandome & Hart Ltd	
	Alan Disbery		Variohm Eurosensor Ltd	
	Neil Duhig		Vishay Measurements	
In attendance:	Ian Turner	IT	UKWF	Technical Officer
	Martina Farragher	MF	BHETA	Secretariat
	Paul Dixon	PD	NMO	

President's comments

JH welcomed everyone to the 1st Regional Meeting for 2012, went through the general housekeeping points and introduced the speakers for the meeting.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from 56 people. The following companies sent their apologies:

A B & Sons Ltd	Inspiron Labelling Solutions Ltd
Accurate Weight Co Ltd	Jagger & Jagger
Accuweigh	John White & Son (Weighing Machines) Ltd
ADF Scale Co Ltd	Ken Hodgson Scales Ltd
Autoweigh Scales (UK) Ltd	Kent Scale Co
Avon Scale Company	Maynewood Systems
Axle Weight Technology Ltd (AXTEC)	Measurement Systems Consultancy Ltd
Berry Weighing Ltd	Mersey Weigh
Bizerba (UK) Ltd	Norfolk Calibration Service
Bristol Scale Service Co (BSS Weighing) Ltd	Positive Weighing Solutions Ltd
Central Weighing Ltd	Precision Instruments
County Scales Ltd	Precision Weighing Systems Ltd
Coventry Scales	Proweight Ltd
Dataweigh Systems Ltd	Reuben Heaton Ltd
Delta Scales	Scales Spares & Services Ltd
Design Initiative Ltd	Scaleways (Leicester) Ltd
E H Oakley & Co Ltd	Select Scales
Fisher Scales	Sensor Techniques Ltd
Flinetc UK Ltd	Shering Weighing Group Ltd
Globeweigh UK Ltd	Tanita Europe BV
Hawkley Group Ltd	UK Inspection Systems Ltd
Health Weigh Services Ltd	G A Wedderburn & Co Ltd
Hereford Scale Co	Weightron Bilanciai Ltd
HK Process Measurement	Wessex Scales & Food Machinery
Ian Fellows Ltd	Westco Bilanciai Ltd
Inspection Machine Services Ltd	WR Simpson & Son Ltd

2. **President's Update**

"At the AGM in Birmingham last October I spoke about the difficult times both federation members and the weighing industry in general were experiencing and we all hoped for a brighter future.

Fully 6 months on and unfortunately, it looks like 'more of the same' I don't need to tell anyone here that 2012 looks like being another tough year for those of us plying our trade in the weighing industry .

The economic outlook is still pretty flat and is not helped by the general lack of confidence business has with a government that lacks strong leadership and direction

The consequent results are that capital expenditure is difficult to get as large companies are sitting tight on the money and despite low interest rates it is difficult for business to get loans or funding.

Also, with the EU, our biggest export partner, continuing to suffer will their slowdown allow China to become even more aggressive in their export markets that include the EU with the knock on affect on us in the UK?

The ongoing political trends that affect our industry specifically are:

- Continued reduction in public spending
- Ongoing general desire to reduce regulation, the danger being that weighing loses visibility in the eyes of the consumer and users alike.
- Continued lack of support and funding for UK manufacturing industries, who are traditionally big users of weighing solutions.

- The ongoing lobbying and influence for de-regulation from strong groups like the supermarkets.

The resultant affect on our industry can be seen in the current trends that prevail in the market place.

- Buyers are splitting into the non sophisticated – “Price will do” or the automated “Only the best will do”. Ultimately leads to fewer large orders and more systems driven.
- The popularity of the Internet and buying on price. Less requirement for service support and reliability of less importance
- Increase in low cost imports, prices decreasing, quality improving but possible compliancy issues

However, we can't turn back the tide and they'll be no return to the factories of old who utilised 100's of traditional standalone scales to help produce the products they manufactured.

The positive direction for the future of our industry leans strongly towards the growing trends and thirst for technology.

The order of the day is for connectivity, data capture and tractability related systems Weight is still the key element for most business operations we deal with on a daily basis and the successful companies in the future will probably be the ones who adjusted best to the demands of the market, upskilled, and moved with the demands of the times.

Finally, the current federation membership of 84 companies is both healthy and robust with a number of potentials under consideration

I believe the federation is as relevant today as it ever has been and we shall continue to focus and prioritise on the main issues that are important to our industry as a whole allowing the member companies to focus on the day to day running of their business's during these trying times.

On that note, and on behalf of the board, I'd like to thank all members for their continued support during these interesting times and wish you good fortune for the future.

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
 - 10v/m
 - National Legislative Framework
 - RoHS
 - “Manufacturer”
 - Food Information Regulations
 - Software changes
- National Matters
- UKWF Updates

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

EN45501

IT went through the slides and explained that this was the position we were in. The UKWF are fighting strongly that the transition period will only occur in certain manners or situations. The timescale shown on the slide (01/01/2014) is merely as a signpost and is not a definitive date.

There is a lot more fighting and a lot more work to do, but members need to be aware of the possibility that 10v/m will happen.

David Fereday asked that if a patent is re-approved, could you have it approved at 3v/m which would last 10 years.

IT explained that you could possibly get it approved at 3v/m, depending on who you get to approve it. Paul Dixon confirmed that if the NMO tested it today, they would still test and renew at 3 v/m.

IT explained that information contained within the slides was simply the UKWF position on the matter.

JH commented that he strongly suspects that the big manufacturers will have resigned to the fact that everything should now meet 10v/m.

Brian Spink asked what had happened to get to this point. IT explained that there was a reported case in Germany and the harmonised standard did not give sufficient immunity.

Jeremy Sage also explained that the OIML changed their legislations from 3v/m to 10v/m in 2006, so it is not surprising that this would follow.

Brian also asked if everyone just gives in to this, what's next. IT thinks this discussion is very important. We have agreed the UKWF position and will be fighting very hard on it so everyone is happy with it. At this stage, we just want to make everyone aware of the situation.

Jeremy believes that we should pick our battles. He believes that the 10v/m is going to happen, so we should be lobbying on the transition period. We should be lobbying for the point shown on the slide; that all existing type approvals must be allowed to expire without change.

DC commented that in practice we have been aware of this situation and John Anthony had raised it when he was our Technical Officer. Also, DC thought that the transition period is likely to be between 12-36 months.

John Anthony explained that the transition period is normally 18months, so both standards will run parallel during this period.

DC reiterated to members that the detail provided today is our position, and is not what the rest of Europe thinks.

RoHS

David Fereday asked what RoHS stood for. IT confirmed it was the 'Removal of Hazardous Substances'.

Julian Hope asked how you ensure when you buy something it is RoHS compliant. IT explained that previously, you could take people at face value. You now have to be in

contact with the manufacturer to ensure it is compliant.

JAS asked whether you could obtain a statement from the manufacturer to confirm it approves to the standard. IT confirmed that you should obtain a statement from the manufacturer should be a basic minimum requirement.

Julian explained that he had tried to speak to BIS on the situation. Paul Dixon advised that the NMO is the enforcement body and you should contact them. The best person to contact would be Chris Smith at the NMO.

IT advised that the guidance notes have not been completed yet so we have some time – it is just another issue that the members should be aware of.

“Manufacturer”

IT advised that we have spent a lot of time pushing this at CECIP and WELMEC Meetings.

David Fereday asked what WELMEC was. IT explained it is a group made up of the NMO and their equivalent bodies in Europe.

Other issues

JAS raised the issue of the change of qualifications required for a Trading Standards Officer (TSO). From a technical industry, it will diminish the skills if inspectors and is just another step to de-regulation. JAS thought that we should be lobbying against this and asked whether the NMO had a view.

Paul Dixon explained that they would have a view, although it is not his area of expertise. PD recommenced that JAS speaks to Richard Saunders on the area.

Code of Practice

IT confirmed that a copy of the revised version of the Code of Practice will be issued to members in the next few days.

Any other business

JH commented that IT has been in the role now for 12 months and asked whether he was getting much contact from the members. IT said that people do contact him, but he would invited more members to make contact.

JH explained that IT was essentially a member benefit and urged people to make use of him and contact him if they have any issues or queries.

IT informed the members that they could contact him on any issues they had. He recently had one member contact him to see if he knew the Turkish phrase to ‘does not comply’. Brian Spink asked whether it was worth having a set of words in different languages, which would be really useful for those who import equipment.

Julian Hope thought that the technical information on the website was really useful, but thought it could be more user friendly. It shows a list of everything posted, but thought it could be more beneficial to just show the important/recent issues and have everything else in an achieve folder.

4. **National Measurement Office**

Paul Dixon gave a presentation to the members and thanked the UKWF for the opportunity.

PD explained that he is the Director of Certification Services for the NMO and he has worked for the NMO for the last 15 years.

PD's presentation is available on the UKWF website.

EN45501

PD explained that there has been a lot of debate over the issue of EN45501 and 10v/m. The EN45501 harmonised standard will be identical to OIML R76. The reason we are in this situation is because there has been a revision of the standard. PS explained that the field strength was almost going to be revised to 30v/m but most countries rejected that, so as a compromise it was increased to 10 volts.

The OIML recommended that the standard is aligned to the R76 and the delays have occurred as there have been concerns raised. Although there is no evidence other than the incident in Germany, there is a problem with testing at 3 volts.

The NMO were going to issue a note to indicate that NAWI should satisfy 10v/m for radiated immunity and that all new NAWI approvals must satisfy this requirement from the date of the publication of the note.

The NMO voted no against the draft publication and suggested is following the MID Directive.

PD explained that we can't pretend it is not going to happen. If we can't get the majority to say that we should have 3v/m, what is in the R76 will get carried over. However, if we do get the majority, we can change the R76 back to 3v/m.

From the NMO perspective, they question whether there really is a problem with 3v/m. Other directives don't say 10 volts, so they are questioning why is the NAWI so special. The NMO is trying to support the industry.

Peter Williams asked whether there is anything we can do to promote that? It was discussed that UK should go to the BSi and their other countries should go to their equivalent.

Paul Moody asked, other than the UK, which other countries are backing 3v/m. The NMO have been recommending that manufacturers comply with 10v/m as we knew it was coming. Currently, if the machine did not comply at 10 volts, but it did at 3 volts, they would verify it.

Julian Hope asked if the original piece of equipment was previously verified against 3v/m but they were changing a load cell or motherboard, would it need to be re-verified against 10volts.

PD confirmed that it is not retrospective, so it would not need to be verified against 10volts.

Julian then asked about refurbished equipment – what are the obligations to them, get that to comply against 10volts? PD advised that would depend whether they were being placed on the market as new. It all comes down to the definition and whether they are refurbished or amended.

“Manufacturer”

PD explained than in some cases, a parallel TAC may be required (see presentation) although this is not ideal and they will fight this issue at WELMEC.

There will also be cost implications of having this for the company placing the equipment on the market who is not the manufacturer.

It was questioned whether the same body who issued the original TAC would have to

issue the parallel TAC. PD confirmed that it could be a different body.

International Development

PD explained that if any members would like to be part of the WELMEC Working Groups to contact PD.

PD finished by advising that the NMO does take any issues and concerns seriously. If there is anything a member would like to raise, to pass on any questions to him via IT.

JH thanked PD for him coming along today and thought that it certainly provided some clarity of the main issues we have to deal with.

5. **“UKWF Buyers Group”**

Dave Hawthorn of Independent Buyers gave a presentation on the possibility of setting up a Buying Group for UKWF Members, which is also available on the website.

DH explained that as a collective, you have a lot more negotiating power. Independent Buyers work with a number of associations and organisations.

He went through the various steps to show members what is involved to achieve potential savings.

DH asked of the members present at the meeting, for 5 to sign up to a pilot scheme, of mixed sizes and a mix of manufacturers and service etc.

Richard Herbert asked whether they get any problems with existing buyers. DH explained that they do in some cases, but people need to see it as an extra tool for them.

David Fereday asked how many companies would need to join up to the scheme to get a worthwhile saving. DH thought approximately 10 companies would make the group see more of a benefit.

6. **Open Forum**

JH asked whether members had any other queries, that hadn't been answered during the day.

Chris Buck said, although not connected to today's topics, he would like to make a point about the Federation's Memorandum & Articles of Association. He believes the current voting system is inappropriate and feels it should be 1 company equals 1 vote. Chris feels the small companies are just as important. He would like a referendum at the AGM to change the constitution.

John Coughlan advised that the only way you could have 1 vote per company would be to change the membership subscriptions so that all companies pay the same amount.

Richard Herbert thought that it as naive of Chris to think that someone paying £2,000 should have the same rights as someone paying £500.

Chris responded that your vote is your opinion; it was nothing to do with annual turnover.

Peter Williams explained that the vote represents all of the employees within each company. John Coughlan agreed and said that the larger companies represent a larger number of opinions so should be given more votes.

There was no other business.

JH thanked all of the speakers today, MF for organising, and all the members for attending. The next meeting has been organised for 11th October and JH hopes to see everyone there, where there will also be a handover of Presidency.

JH reminded everyone to complete and return the feedback forms.

7. **Future Meetings**

A combined AGM and Regional Meetings has been organised for the 11th October 2012. Further information will be provided to the members closer to the event.

Signed _____
Date _____