

Graham Spink President Report – AGM 2024

As many of you will know, Charles Pullen had to curtail his term as President of the Federation in February this year. Charles has decided to take on a new and exciting role outside of the weighing industry, and in those circumstances, he was unfortunately unable to continue leading our organisation. I'd like to express my personal thanks, and those of the Board, to Charles for his dedicated service to the Federation and to our sector over the years.

And so I am back again to deliver the President's Report on the past year's activities in my role as Vice-President. And what a year it has been. When my term as President ended this time last year, my report reflected on a significant progress that the Federation had made over the three preceding years. This year, I feel, has surpassed our expectations, and continued our new tradition of delivering bold and exciting new initiatives for our industry.

This past year, with the invaluable support of our Technical Officer, Ian Turner, we have continued to support members to understand the continuing impact of the UK's exit from the EU. This is often a difficult and complicated task, particularly given the lack of consistency from the UK Government on post-Brexit requirements. We believe we finally understand the implications of decision-making around the UKCA and CE marking requirements – but of course we're still waiting for the legislation to be published.

While we're talking about legislation, I was also very pleased to see the Government decide not to change back to a system of Imperial units in the UK. In our submission to that consultation and subsequent representations directly to the Department for Business and Trade, we were very clear in our rejection of a return to imperial measures. While it's been incredibly frustrating and disappointing to see Government resources focused on this issue, we're pleased that the right outcome was reached.

On a more positive note, this past year has seen the delivery of some of the UKWF's flagship initiatives. We launched our training partnership for trading standards officers with the CTSI, which has seen numerous member companies deliver training open days in recent months. The feedback we've received from trainees for these days has been resoundingly positive. We're very keen to continue them for the coming year and urge all members to consider offering their premises for an open day.

We've also moved full steam ahead with our own legal metrology training initiative. Two Legal Metrology Training Certificate courses have been run so far, with two more planned for this year. I won't spoil Kevin's presentation at the Regional Meeting, which will give all the detail on the courses, but suffice to say it's been very rewarding to see the years of thought and planning that have gone into this initiative pay off. We've delivered a valuable training and skills asset for our industry, and I'm glad so many of our member companies have taken up this opportunity. At the Regional Meeting, we'll also be getting your input into how we

finalise our plans for the apprenticeship scheme – which will provide yet another excellent skills offer for those starting their careers within our member companies.

Another exciting development this year has been the extension of the Federation's international reach. We've been approached by counterparts in a number of countries who are interested in working more closely with us, and The Weighing Industry Association of Australia have joined us as affiliate members. We're excited to see what this kind of partnership can bring. This new kind of international approach compliments perfectly our continuing relationship with CECIP. CECIP is an important source of networking, information and support for the UKWF, and we have spent a lot of time recently building a strong working relationship with their new staff.

I'd like to finish by saying some thank you's. First, to our fantastic staff team at the UKWF. Chris, Katie and Ian work very hard to support our members and our Federation, and I hope you'll agree that the impact of their work continues to grow, seeing the Federation deliver more in every year. I'd also like to thank you all, our members. None of what we do at the UKWF would be possible without a strong and committed membership, and we are very grateful for your continued support.