

Annual General Meeting Minutes 5th February 2010, 9.30am – 1pm at Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey



Attendees

Guests

Wayne Wright – HES Fire Protection

UKFA Members

Ian Emmonds – Firecrest UK Ltd
Jim Creak – Jalite Ltd
Pete Edwards – 1st Defense Fire & Rescue Services
Tom Sheridan – 1st Defense Fire & Rescue Services
Neil Perring – Fire Safety Services
Patrick McCaffrey – Fire Safety Services
Paul Creasey – Morgan Fire Protection
John Strabrawa - Morgan Fire Protection
Dave Gough – Herts Fire Protection
Phil Wright – Safety Co UK
Chris Pickens – Prestige Fire Protection Ltd
Les Rose – Venture Fire
Nigel Williams – Venture Fire
Ken Towner – FireCad
Gillian Palmer – F.I.R.E Ltd
Keith Holmes
Adrian Englebright – FireLine
Paul McClusker – FireLine
Girvan Buick – ABC Guardian
Wesley Vance – ABC Guardian
Tom Daly – Priority Fire
Marcelle Bolle – Priority Fire
Terry Egan – Telegan Protection
Asha Chandaran – Telegan Protection

UKFA Directors

Alan Price – Chairman
Alan Palmer – Secretary
Tom Law - Treasurer

Speakers

Stephen Adams– General & Marketing Manager for BAFE
Jim Creak – Jalite Ltd
Richard Gordon - Safety Co UK

Apologies

Fred Temple
Ian Parkin – Marsden Extinguishers
Andy Leather – Fire Risk Pro – Leather Consultancy
Keith Ellis – Eurofire & Safety Ltd
Richard Scott – Surefire Protection
Richard Gleeson – Phoenix Fire
Perry Leaver – Wessex Fire & Safety
Peter Forster – Cherry Parts Ltd
Steve Middleton – M&G Fire Protection (Essex) Ltd
Dave Hollingworth – Premium Fire
Tristan Murless – Tristan Murless Ltd
Vince Davis – Protect Fire Equipment
Tom Campbell – Emerald Fire
Richard Baker – Firecheck-UK

Here to help

Annual General Meeting

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Everyone present signed the Attendance Book and introduced themselves and the organisation they represent. UKFA ties and vehicle logo's were available for collection by members in attendance.

2. Chairman's Address



"Ladies and Gentlemen: thank you for attending our 1st AGM we do appreciate the commitment in taking time out of your business to come to this AGM.

I have been completely blown away with the support we have had within the trade. To think Alan, Tom and I introduced the UKFA to the fire industry in January last year. The response has been fantastic and it's clear that what the fire industry needs is an organisation like this one.

Over the past twelve months the UKFA have built up good relationships with the FIA, BAFE, BSI and most of all our members.

The fire industry is changing and you need an association that is willing to change with it.

The fire industry is generally composed of fragmented groups of independent businesses that work alone rarely talking to one another. We are bridging this gap by helping our members and keeping them informed via the internet and meetings.

I would advise all our members to come to meetings; you will get to know different people and will have the opportunity to network. I personally have made more money over the years though attending these types of meetings; you will pick up information not necessarily from the speakers but through communicating with each other.

The UKFA is here to help you grow your company learn new ideas and to keep up to date with changes in the trade. Just last week the Welsh Assembly voted to make fire sprinkler systems mandatory for every new house being built in Wales. The sprinkler industry has been fighting to install sprinklers in new homes and schools for years and our efforts are now starting to be shared by some MP's too, and this in turn is bringing change.

We must be striking a chord within the trade with membership continuing to grow we are by far the fastest growing Fire Association in the country.

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Pat Pearl and Fred Temple both very well known people within the fire trade have both given their support and wish us every success for the future too.

I would like to say a big thank you to Alan as secretary, Tom as treasurer, both working like myself on a voluntary basis for the good of the Association.

I would also like to thank you our members for all your support without you we would not be here.

Don't forget to network between the breaks.

We are here to help, so please speak up and tell us what you want from the UKFA have a great day and thank you."

3. Exhibitors Introductions

Exhibitors and their products/services were introduced.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Matters arising were covered later in the meeting. The minutes were proposed for acceptance by Girvan Buick - ABC Guardian and seconded by Ian Emmonds – Firecrest as a true and accurate record of the meeting held in Wakefield on the 9th July 2009.

5. Treasurers Report

5.1 Membership

Membership stands at 69.

5.2 Accounts

A financial summary as at 5 February was provided as follows:

Current Bank Account balance	£8,241.69
Debtors (money owed to us)	£863.99
Creditors (money we owe others)	<u>£2,157.75</u>
	£6,848.00

Less Estimated Accountants fees	£700.00
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Balance	£6,148.00
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5.3 Subscriptions

The Treasurer proposed that membership fees should remain unchanged for the coming year at £200. He also proposed the introduction of the joining fee that has been left pending suggesting that this should be £35 for all new members applying for membership after 1st May 2010.

It is becoming difficult to manage subscriptions spread throughout the year and the Treasurer proposed bringing subscriptions together into one month - MARCH.

All Members will be invoiced even if not due yet with an allowance of £16.66 for each month they have already paid for.

These motions were accepted by the floor.

6. Secretaries Report

6.1 Introduction

The Secretary opened his report by showing images of how the UKFA logo is being used on member's vehicles and paperwork. He then showed pictures sent in by members of two extinguishers; the first a heavily corroded unit that unbelievably had still been in service and the other a foam extinguisher that was actually discharging dry powder during extended servicing!

6.2 Correspondence

No correspondence had been received that needed to be reported upon.

6.3 Our First Year

The Secretary gave a brief overview of what was involved in establishing the UKFA during 2009 along with the notable achievements (and one minor setback) along the way. This was based largely on Tom Law's article previously posted on the UKFA website.

6.4 Strap Line

A Working Group that included the Directors along with Dave Hollingworth (Premium Fire) and Andy Leather (Fire Risk Pro - Leather Consultancy) had been set up to come up with a strap line. After many considerations the vote fell in favour of "**Here to help**" which everyone felt was appropriate to best represent what the UKFA offers members as well as end users.

6.5 Membership Contact

During January the Directors divided up the membership and telephoned each member to establish that they are satisfied with the service the UKFA is providing them and to find out if there is anything else they would like us to provide. Although we could not speak to all of the members the overriding feedback from those we reached indicate a high level of satisfaction – most seemed to find it a pleasant surprise that we were that interested in them! We are not going to become complacent on the back of this.

The ideas we received will help us develop the Association – we realise that there is still a lot to be achieved!



6.6 Marketing Mail shot

In December we sent out a letter to around 700 fire trade companies inviting them to join the UKFA. The response was dismal due to two reasons; the time of year and not being able to follow the letters up with a phone call. The lesson has been learnt and on the positive side there are 700 fire trade companies that now know of our existence.

6.7 Web Based Information and Communications

Our leading approach of exclusively using electronic communications has proven popular and successful. We always need articles and news items from members and the Secretary welcomes non copyrighted material for consideration - if you are timid about submitting your work just ask for the Secretary to edit it for you.

6.8 Member Inter-trading

We have a wealth of experience in our midst and encourage members to trade between themselves as the bond this develops encourages honesty and reliability. Many relationships have already begun and if you are not sure who to approach for training, fire risk assessments, riser/sprinkler testing, customer data basing, extinguisher servicing, etc. contact the Secretary for guidance.

6.9 BS5306 part 3:2009

The Secretary advised everyone where they can obtain copies of this document at the most reasonable price. We are not the cheapest as the Directors decided to not tie up UKFA funds in buying hundreds of copies to get a keener price from BSi – experience has proved that these would still be sitting on the shelf gathering dust! The Secretary has produced a Portable Fire Extinguisher Maintenance Procedures guide based on BS5306 part 3:2009 that can be downloaded for free from the UKFA website.

6.10 BAFE Refresher Exam

Concern was raised at our last meeting about the proposed introduction of a formal and expensive BAFE examination at the end of three year refresher courses. As this was never taken up by BSi in BS5306 part 3:2009 the issue has been naturally resolved.

6.11 BSi Standards

Members were reminded that BSi Standards are available at discounted rates through the UKFA. If you need a Standard check out the cost on the BSi website and we can typically obtain them for about 20% less. Place your order and send your remittance to Tom Law.

6.12 Members Audits

The Directors do not want the UKFA to become a 'standards' organisation or one that dictates to members what they can and cannot do. The proposal was put forward to firstly create a Code of Conduct to measure members against and this is to be prepared by the Secretary for consideration by the Members before the end of March 2010. A show of hands at our last meeting indicated a majority interest in an informal membership

auditing scheme. Based on this it was proposed that applications for auditing should be able to be made on the UKFA website and the applicant will then be put in touch with an independent auditor in their area. The audit rates will be pre agreed (but may vary area by area) and the audit structure will be to a UKFA prescribed format. Upon successful completion of the audit the member will be issued with a UKFA certificate and be able to display an 'audited UKFA member' logo on their stationery and vehicles. The audit will be valid for three years unless otherwise withdrawn by the UKFA.

6.13 Technician Registration

The UKFA is not trying to replicate the BAFE Technicians Scheme but with this initiative to provide those members that want them a laminated ID card is available for their technicians. This would typically have the technicians' photo, name, company contact details, UKFA contact number, a UKFA registration number and the date that their refresher falls due. A majority show of hands indicated that this would be well received – subject to cost. The Secretary will make enquiries of providers who can provide the badges and manage the register.

6.14 F&RS Freedoms & Flexibilities Outcome

The Secretary in the Autumn encouraged members to respond in writing to this seeming threat from Fire & Rescue Services being allowed to offer services that compete directly with fire protection companies. The response from the fire trade was poor with only six respondents, so naturally the proposal was accepted. The Secretary suggested that although it spoken about a lot in some circles, this poor response perhaps shows that the fire trade does not really fear competition from the Fire & Rescue Services.

6.15 Website Improvements

The website has been growing slowly as we have relied on voluntary help. We are investing in developing the resources available and have a web development strategy in place for 2010 where shortly much of the information will become restricted to members only.

6.16 Training Report

Technician training was not top of the list for the fire trade during 2009 with the pressures of recession bearing down on them. Several refresher courses were run nationwide providing members with wherever possible a local course to reduce the cost to them of travel and overnight accommodation. In the last quarter of 2009 many advised that they were putting off refreshing technicians to 2010 and so far this has proven true with a marked increase in demand since the beginning of the year.

6.17 Open Debate – Where Do We Go from Here?

Members were given the opportunity to open their minds and put forward ideas about what the UKFA should be providing members. It was generally felt that this topic had been covered in the previous sections.

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7. Any Other Business

There being no other business from the floor the General Meeting was concluded at 11.00am for refreshments.

Next Meeting

No meeting dates have been fixed but will most likely be in July. The UKFA policy is to keep meetings to a minimum and to move them around the Country so the next is most likely to be in the North, possibly Newcastle upon Tyne. Date and venue to be announced.

The meeting continued at 11.30am with presentations from the Speakers.



Jim Creak – Jalite Ltd presented his Self Preservation Society

Jim gave a lively discussion that continued on from his presentation at the last meeting that opened our minds to the heavy responsibilities of being designated a 'Responsible Person' and our duty to provide what is sometimes bad news to this person.



Richard Gordon – SafetyCo UK presented the Dangers from Asbestos

Richards presentation made us all face up to the dangers posed by asbestos, how it is more widespread than many previously realised and our responsibilities when working in areas where it may be present.



Stephen Evans – General & Marketing Manager for BAFE

Stephen explained the changes that have occurred at BAFE over the last year and his plans for the coming year ahead.

Brooklands Museum visit

After lunch, those members remaining had the opportunity to explore the Brooklands Museum exhibits which include classic cars, planes, cycles and motorbikes. A short walk then took them to the Mercedes Benz World bringing them right up to date with those fabulous cars.

AGM Dinner & Dance

In the evening the AGM Dinner and Dance was held at the nearby Shepperton Holiday Inn with 25 members enjoying each others company over dinner and a few drinks. The function officially concluded at 1.00am when the disco wound down, with many people then keeping the party going in the bar until past 4.00am!

On Saturday morning those people staying over for the weekend either visited Kingston upon Thames to do some shopping or the majority went together on a sightseeing trip to Windsor.

Acknowledgements

To Brooklands Museum staff for hosting the event and providing timely refreshments and the buffet lunch.

To Shepperton Holiday Inn for providing a well organised, value for money venue where everything ran smoothly.

To Angela Melling from Weybridge who as our official photographer kindly and at no cost to the association caught the mood of the actual AGM in the photos above and available to be seen on the UKFA website. The photos of the dinner and dance were snap shots taken by people on the night.

To Paul and his brother at BackTrack disco for providing a great range of music to suit all tastes. Paul is also a London Fireman so instantly bonded with several of our members who have links with the Fire Service.



The Fire Trade Association here to support small and medium sized professional fire companies.

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To you if you were able to make it to the pre-meeting dinner and subsequent gathering the evening before the meeting – so much useful information shared amongst so many friends.

To everyone who was able to attend the Dinner Dance and/or meeting - many travelled long distances to join us.

Alan Palmer
Secretary