



# The Society of Consulting Marine Engineers and Ship Surveyors

An M.C.A. Appointed Certifying Authority

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## A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2009 – At the Society's Headquarters

### *In Attendance*

<b>Chris Jones (Chairman)</b>	<b>John Banister</b>
<b>Charles Bevis</b>	<b>Charles Bliault</b>
<b>Jim Lauder</b>	<b>Paul Owen (Secretary)</b>

### *Apologies*

<b>Mike Eckles</b>	<b>Norman Finlay</b>	<b>Ross Hunter</b>
<b>Paul Johnson</b>	<b>Maurice Perrin</b>	<b>Kjell Nilsen-Nygaard</b>
<b>Dave Spence</b>	<b>Chris Spencer</b>	<b>John Wallace</b>
<b>David Walker (Pres)</b>		

### **Minutes**

#### ***1. Confirmation of Minutes to Last Meeting - 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009***

The minutes to last meeting were agreed as being a true record. Proposed by Jim Lauder seconded by Charles Bliault.

#### ***2. Matters Arising***

Nothing to report that is not covered below

#### ***3. MCA***

The Secretary gave Norman Finlay's apologies and provided a brief report on activities. The Society now codes around 800 vessels. A Small Working Group (MCA) Meeting had recently been held, just prior to the Annual MCA Audit exercise and discussed the following items.

Regarding the Harmonised Code implementation, he reported that a new method was being considered, to implement revised Codes by simply updating the Codes that the existing legislation referred to.

Following a question, the Secretary confirmed the Society's policy being strictly followed that - it neither sets fees, nor becomes involved in any negotiations between client and members regarding fees.

The Inland Waterways code has taken a back seat, however, if any progress is made the Society will be asked if it wants to be involved, the MCA having insufficient surveyors to handle these approximately 10,000 vessels.

The Wind Farm vessels continue to pose a problem with regard to the passenger numbers they can carry (the regulations only allow for only 12), several new vessels having been built capable of carrying 24 persons. Although the MCA have been requested to make a decision one way or the other, up to now they are silent on this subject which is frustrating this new industry.

Five applications to become a Society Codes Examiner were considered by the Working Group, all were approved subject to their being able to confirm their competence with practical demonstrations, the Working Group is in the process of setting up the confirmation process.

The Work Boat business continues to be surprisingly buoyant.

Jim Lauder reported that our usual contact in MCA, David Ralph, had been taken seriously ill, he had been sent our best wishes.

#### ***4. Technical***

Charles Bevis – nothing new to report on this occasion

#### ***5. Membership & 9. Professional Standards***

The Secretary confirmed that the numbers leaving continue to be more than those joining. There was a discussion on the Student member, Lee Gaylor who, Chris Jones reported, was doing very well, he further reported that he expected him to be able to apply for Associate Membership in October.

#### ***6. Budget Manager***

The Secretary distributed the figures for the end of 2009. These showed a significant increase in income over that budgeted – income £129,863 (budget £95,250), expenditure £98,377 (budget 89,520).

John Banister took the meeting through the figures, emphasising that the Society relies heavily on the MCA income, and answered any questions.

The Secretary presented the accounts produced by Target-Winters, and for the Benevolent Fund prepared by him, for signature by John Banister and Chris Jones.

With Peter Hicks now becoming less active the Secretary raised the subject of another signatory for the Society's accounts and suggest staff member Avril Pearce as being suitable. After a short discussion there were no objections to this proposal.

The Secretary next raised the subject of the Societies investments. He pointed out that, for historical reasons, the JP Morgan Investments were in his name only for the Society. It was agreed that he be asked to provide a letter stating that he held these investments on behalf of the Society, to which he agreed. He also requested agreement to transfer these accounts to electronic accounts for easier control/management in the future - this was agreed. Regarding the surplus funds in the current account, it was agreed that, for the moment, these

should be transferred to one of the Society's savings account and a decision would be made at the next Council meeting on any additional investments to be made with our funds held in savings accounts. Chris Jones agreed to explore our options and report back to Council.

### ***7. Marketing***

Chris Jones reported that the Seminar in February, which had been run in conjunction with FEMAS, had been very well received, the venue was excellent and costs minimal. The support/organisation provided by the secretariat, and in particular Avril Pearce, was also excellent. He agreed that FEMAS was a good partner and that we should join with them again. The speaker's slots were too short and could next time benefit being 40 minutes with 20 minutes Q&A.

It was agreed that we should plan another Seminar for next year, provisionally on Wednesday 6th April. Chris Jones agreed to report back to Council with some ideas for the subject.

### ***8. Recruitment***

Other than as mentioned above nothing new to report.

### ***9. See item 5 above***

### ***10. Publications***

There have been recent discussions on reactivating our Newslink newsletter utilising our additional staff members to source articles, the Secretary reported that he had access to the IMO Documents website which would provide relevant material. The P&I Clubs were also considered to be a good source of information for the newsletter, other sources included MAIB, MGNs, the Seafarer, Seaways, etc. The Secretary reported that there were sufficient funds available to support this project (printing, distribution). This was supported as an excellent proposal, the Secretary agreed to implement this proposal with a target of producing a newsletter before the AGM.

One difficulty noted with members writing articles for the newsletter was the concept of giving away information that might be commercially useful to others.

Charles Bevis agreed to provide an article.

### ***11. Future Planning for Society***

The Seminar and Newslink have been mentioned above.

### ***12. Presidential Activities***

The President had been invited to the RINA Dinner on the same evening as this Council meeting, as the President was away working in Gibraltar, Chris Jones, Vice President, had agreed to represent the Society at this event.

The Secretary reported that he had also been invited to attend the recent IIMS Annual Dinner; unfortunately this was received with very short notice that meant that no one was able to attend, apologies had been sent.

### ***13. Proposed Merger with IIMS***

Since the last Council meeting our request for further meetings and inspection of their Certifying Authority records had been declined by IIMS, the exact reason is not known. It had also been noted that their unaudited annual accounts were some £40,000 adrift, while a verbal explanation had been provided we have not had sight of their audited accounts. It was further noted that we would only join with them as equal partners and the question was asked, does their response to our request indicate their attitude towards the Society.

The Secretary reported that the Small Working Group (MCA Matters) had considered this situation at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> April and recommend to Council “that until such time as IIMS allows us access to their books, and to carryout a technical audit of their Certifying Authority records, any merger talks should not proceed.” It was agreed that their views should be respected.

John Banister agreed to speak with David Walker and pass on this meeting’s recommendation to him that he contacts the IIMS President (Allen Brink/Peter Morgan), on a personal basis (face to face?), to explain our reasons for not going forward.

### ***14. Forward Planning for AGM***

The AGM would be held in the afternoon of Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 in the basement conference room on the main building.

### ***15. Any Other Business***

#### ***15.1 NW District funds***

Charles Bliault reported the background to the letter received from Dave Spence, that following the demise of the NW District, a decision had been made to transfer the remaining funds to the Society’s accounts. Difficulties had arisen due to one of the two signatories for the NW District accounts having died. A cheque had been presented to the Society for the balance of NW District funds and this would be paid into our accounts and the result monitored. A decision would be made at the next Council meeting on where to place these funds.

### ***16. Date of Next Meeting***

It was agreed that the next Council meeting would held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 at the Society’s Offices, immediately prior to the AGM

***Post Meeting Note: The venue, HMS President, has been booked for the Annual Dinner on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September.***

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 13:00.