

# MINUTES OF NW REGIONAL FORUM MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2006

THE TICKLED TROUT, PRESTON

PRESENT:	Mr T Jones	Interserve	<b>(Chair)</b>	(TJ)
	Mr T Featherstone	ECITB		(TF)
	Mr T Lazenby	ECITB		(TL)
	Mr R Ventre	Lakervent Eng Ltd.		(RV)
	Mr S D Waugh	O'Hare Eng Ltd.		(SDW)
	Mr N MacDonald	Fairports		(NM)
	Mr N Harrison	ECITB		(NH)
	Mr. J O'Kane	Boulting		(JOK)
	Mr W Reid	BNGSL		(WR)
	Mr P Brierly	ECIA		(PB)
	Mr S Bleasby	William Hare Ltd		(SB)
	Ms A Lim	Simon Carves		(AL)
	Ms K Mulgner	Simon Carves		(KM)
	Ms R Sewell	ECITB		(RS)
	Mr M Bullock	ECITB		(MB)

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss L Young      Minute Secretary

APOLOGIES:      Mr M Edwards      Edwards Elite  
                         Mr J Toole  
                         Mr J Dodd  
                         Mr J Drake  
                         Mr I Pross  
                         Mr T McDougal      Washington

## 1. WELCOME

TJ welcomed members to the meeting and introduced himself as Regional Chair. TJ had taken over from John Collins who had resigned as he was now working abroad. This was an interim arrangement pending the appointment of a new Regional Chair.

TJ also welcomed and introduced TL who was the Chairman of the ECITB and LY who was employed by ECITB in the NE and acting as Minute Secretary.

## 2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved and passed as a true record.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

### 3.1 Technician Training

SW reported that a pilot programme was going to be run by Chemical and will be operated from two sites. 39 trainees will be “fast-tracked” into an advanced programme within 18 months. The trainees will gain an NVQ L2, also Safety passport. Sponsors are contributing £5,000 to give them a training allowance and covers costs of administration. Chemical will be writing to members to see what demand is needed in the region, and asked if the ECITB can support funding.

TF has agreed to work with Chemical (O’Hare). O’Hare will be supervising this year. Good progress is being made.

### 3.2 TR1 Pay Rates

PB reported that as from 1 September 2006, TR1 costs of employment will be from the training centre. This will be a single or yearly arrangement. The employers are proposing a lodging allowance will be paid. This was accepted by NJC on 6 July and will be effective from September. Apprenticeship rates will be reviewed with a view to linking yearly rate with apprenticeship programme. Members will be informed either by post or e-mail. The basic rate of £6.22/£6.93 – year 2/3 and year 4. Members can now budget from this arrangement.

TF reported that unions are in agreement so there is no problem. ECITB will pick up any trainee who falls out of the system. There is a safety net in place.

### 3.3 ALI Inspection

MB has completed sending out information to all.

TL reported that the ECITB confirmed that the inspection came out with a satisfactory rating compared to 4/5 years ago. The inspectors visited two training centres and a power

station. They were very impressed with what was going on in the NW area. The report will be available soon on the ECITB web site.

***Action:***        ***TF would action any members not receiving copies of Minutes, etc.***

#### 4.     MINUTES

##### 4.1    Performance of Last Quarter

RS reported that

- £40,044 had already been spent.
- The inspection was successfully completed in August.
- A Regional Administrator to be appointed in the near future.
- Discretionary Regional Funding – Project for next year can still be funded for from this year. TJ understands that projects that incur costs in this financial year, if accepted, will be funded out of this financial year’s Discretionary Fund. Any costs incurred in 07 there should be a new application made next year. TJ believes this is to incorporate the likes of funding 3 year degree courses and limiting to only one years funding for example.
- NASEC recruitment now complete. Plans for the next quarter. All medicals are completed. Next week, outward bound. We need to put plans together ready for next year.
- In 3 years we have gone from 3 Training Centres to 14, and increased numbers locally.
- The pipe fitters will definitely go to Lairds this year. The training Centre was not in a position for this year. Driven by local demand.
- We need an action plan for 2007 on TR1s. We have increased numbers by 20-30%. We need to know what NW wants – information required as soon as possible.
- TJ commented that we must monitor and review our targets on a regular basis to enable accurate management decisions to be made.

A discussion took place whereby employers informed the meeting that all this information was completed 18 months ago and nothing has happened since.

***Action:***        ***TL to investigate paperwork at ECITB.***

RV said that he was aiming for 1,000 trainees.

TF to look to increase numbers next year to between 600-800, which is double the numbers from this year. £10,250 per trainee will be paid if TR1 route is taken from day one. The problem with TR1 is that we draw down LSE funding, which is limited to 250 per year. The Government will not fund, we are looking at different ways of paying it. ECITB to assist in running the Scheme. A proposal to be discussed with the ECITB

***Action: TJ said that we need to look at our targets on an annual basis.***

#### 4.2 Apprentices

RS reported on recruitment:-

7 pipe fitters  
2 welders  
2 steel erectors  
2 instrumentation

MB reported

4 pipe fitters  
2 welders  
3 steel erects  
2 electrical instrumentation

8 placements had been successfully placed

2 trainees still in Centres, and will be placed from October. All trainees in the NW are now placed apart from one mechanical fitter.

#### 4.3 Awarding Body

TF reported that we were introducing a new programme in Project Control which will be available from 2007 and is part of the framework. We have taken on 40 Design Technicians this year.

#### 4.4 ACE

The LSC has increased their continuing commitment for contract from 2006/07 from £2.2m to £3m. The contract spend last year was £1.3m.

It was reported that the total for ACE across NW was 380.

Approved Centre completions were:

The Laird Foundation = 78

TTE = 13

GEN 11 = 1

Alliance = 5

WR said that it was a good thing to get people through the system. Any help would be appreciated. We are looking at integrating the safety passport within ACE.

#### 4.5 Careers

TF reported that the ECITB have appointed a new employee to co-ordinate careers activities. We have 500 applicants for 300 apprenticeship posts. ECITB sponsoring through Arkwright for 'A' level students. Offsite contractors asked to pass names to companies to sponsor through University. It was agreed at the main ECITB Board that we would sponsor students before they went to University with a view to appointing them after University.

A discussion took place regarding trainees being 16-17 years old compared to older University students and expected salaries.

MB reported that we can use careers as a tool, where apprentices are going into schools, doing open days, going out as role models.

TF reported that there is an Instrumentation technician available from the NE region that has already completed first year.

#### 4.6 TECSkills

TF reported that TECSkills is a competency scheme. It is effective in matching the trainee to the qualification. The qualification produces competence. The problem with NSDS is that the link between training and competence was not clear. It is now better managed and controlled.

RS had received a complaint from Michael Edwards about the TECSkills - the Laird Foundation was not approved to deliver although this should be resolved by September/October with Laird's approval. The attraction is that the Unions will recognise it.

#### 4.7 Short Courses

NH gave a presentation and overview of SMTD development in 2006. He has recently been appointed for the range of short courses.

It was reported that the SMTD new programme is now under way and that pilot courses for the new programme were now being scheduled. Bookings are now being taken and start in January, 2007. Anyone interested to contact Norman Harrison.

The Silver card is to show an impending knowledge relating to four mandatory units.

- i. Foundation Certificate (3 days) rolling out and starting now.
- ii. An intermediate Supervisory Certificate (as above + 4 days)  
(including task assignments)
- iii. Advanced certificate (as above + 10 days) + IOSH is mandatory.
- iv. = Silver Card

NH also gave an overview of the “Active Cup” competition which will be running in January 2007 at Cranfield University over a week-end. Teams of people primarily aimed at engineers, compete to complete a project which is about 30 weeks projects, in 15-20 minutes.

This costs £20,000 for 40 people. The fees are paid for by ECITB and £260 paid by employer for accommodation. It does not have to be single company teams. May invite clients or employers. Companies can get together to provide one team.

***Action:***        ***NH to send information out. Also available on web site. Outline of the activities to be e-mailed.***

## 5.     ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 5.1    Budgets

TF gave an overview of how budgets have been established within each region of the ECITB. A Strategic Plan for 2007. The ECITB received income from levy from companies in addition to LSC funding. He explained problems that occurred when companies had different sites and the levy was taken from one region. The income would now be divided.

SW was concerned about the high cost of ECITB HQ.

SW was also concerned about costs from the levy in comparison to JTL who were a registered charity.

TL thought that we have something to learn from JTL and would like to put discussions with them to benchmark what they do and what we can do. This is the only way we can learn and improve. When looking at costs, etc. some support costs funded in a different way.

TJ proposed a sub-group be formed to compare with other models on the market. For ECITB to come back with an answer.

***Action:***        ***ALL***

TL reported that the point of having the Regional budgets is so that the region can identify what the costs are for each region. The expenditure is aligned to the pledges and the requirements of TECSkills from the region and has to be in. At some stage there will be winners and losers. It is the Regional Chair's responsibility to get things into place.

RV reported that a group approach was made 12 months ago regarding the levy. Although it was noted that only seven companies were at the table out of a total of 60 companies. We should put something forward as a different proposal regarding the levy.

***Action:***        ***Agreed that RAM's collate any responses and also to try and get members in.***

TF had provisionally booked 25 September lunch time at Room Four – Warrington for feedback

***Action:***        ***TF to send out letter for budget discussions.***

AL said that we did not need 20-30 page report. We prefer to see some analyses within the NW. She also questioned £1m spent in the NW, when the numbers being trained are 10-20's This is not cost effective. Some analysis needs to be done as to how we spend money.

TF reported on NASEC costs. - £40,000 to complete, TR1 £25,000 – TR3 - £10,250. It makes sense to go through TR3.

TF reported that Richard Leahmon has written to all offsite companies within the last week, regarding the budget for 2007.

Some members were concerned that they were not receiving full information.

TJ confirmed that we need to ensure that the right individuals are getting right information, either by e-mail or web-site.

***Action:***        ***RAM's to ensure information is sent to correct named person.***

## 6.        DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 – The Tickled Trout.

TJ thanked everyone for attending.

There being no further business the meeting closed a 12.35 p.m.