



ARMA(UK) Annual General Meeting 2009
Winslow Room, 1st Floor, De Vere Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton
12:30pm – 1:00pm, Tuesday 2nd June 2009

Minutes

Chair: Ian Carter

Minutes: Simon Kerridge

Present:

Sheena Bateman, Heloise Bertram, Nigel Bilsbrough, Jonathan Cant, Phil Clare, Stephen Conway, Kathryn Dally, Jan Davies, Louise Duffett, Andrew Fairweather-Tall, Beverley Goring, John Green, Anna Harding, Sally Hewlett, Emma James, Gareth MacDonald, Oisin MacNamara, Sarah Manning-Press, Rose Mathews, Catherine Moore, Pauline Muya, Alicen Nickson, Denise Ogden, Hitesh Patel, Donna Pierz-Fennell, Scott Rutherford, Bal Sandhu, Clare Skinner, Zoë Stockdale, Maggy Taylor, Alun Tlusty-Sheen, Tony Weir, Mark Wight, Jane Williams, Rachel Winzer

The Chair welcomed members to the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (UK) Limited.

1. Apologies for absence

Jan Adkinson, Lita Denny, Catherine Ferrell, Steff Hazlehurst, Kathy Ludlow, Sonia Mason, Glen Swafford (three of whom voted by proxy)

2. Minutes of the last meeting (17th June 2008)

The minutes of the previous AGM held at the Arena and Convention Centre, Liverpool on 17th June 2008 were, with minor changes, agreed to be a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Resolution 1 was passed by a show of hands, unopposed.

3. Matters arising and not covered elsewhere

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere.

4. Annual Report including financial report

The Chair outlined the activities of the past year. The membership has grown once again, now standing at about 1200. The annual conference last year in Liverpool also hosted the INORMS international congress and was very well received, having impact outside the fields of research management and administration.

Over the past year ARMA has run 13 events, with 999 delegates attending. The standard of the events was as usual, excellent with average ratings in the high 3s and 4s (out of five) from delegate feedback.

In terms of profile, ARMA Directors have been invited to a number of working groups (mainly RCUK / Research Council) which shows the growing reputation of ARMA, perceived as being good for the membership.

Specific member services activities

Study tours are one of the most popular membership services, (thanks to Sheena Bateman). Places are booked up very quickly (normally in a matter of hours) and we will continue to develop this area.

The mentoring scheme has recently been re-launched and a number of mentor-mentee pairs are expected to be confirmed in the near future.

There were no questions from AGM attendees on the annual report.

Financial Report

The Treasurer, John Green, introduced the financial position of ARMA.

The 08/09 year showed a surplus of approximately £21K. The accounts are now on a proper company footing and as such cannot be compared with the previous [14 month] period as the accounting system has been changed to show debtors and creditors at year end. About £10K of bad debt (mainly related to overseas aspects of hosting INORMS) has been written off.

New software and invoicing procedures have improved cash flow. The board now receives reports on the profitability of individual events. Overall there have been some painful internal changes to processes this year in getting to this point, but the Association's accounts are now completely robust. The balance sheet now shows a reserve of £75K as compared to £51K last year.

Questions

Are there lessons to be learned re the bad debts? Yes, they were all small debts of around £100 from overseas delegates, and now no longer worth chasing, however the original level was £30K. Our processes were not robust enough, but they are now. It was also noted that we can now take online/telephone credit card payments

The staffing costs are lower, is that right? No, some costs listed as staffing last year were miscoded.

Is the knowledge of events margin likely to affect events in the future? It is probably too early to say at this stage

Is it true that membership levels had dropped last year, due to some difficulties in renewing? In actuality the membership levels had stayed more or less the same and have now grown again.

What are the website costs? These are the costs related to integrating back office systems with the website.

Resolution 2 was passed by a show of hands, with one opposing vote.

5. Election results and Directorship appointments

The results of the recent election (conducted by using the single transferrable vote method) had previously been circulated. Each director elect was agreed by the AGM as follows:

Tony Weir, Heriot-Watt University, from 1st August 2009 until 31st July 2012.

Resolution 3 was passed by a show of hands, unopposed.

Simon Kerridge, University of Sunderland, as Secretary, from the 1st August 2009 until 31st July 2012.

Resolution 4 was passed by a show of hands, unopposed.

It was noted that both Tony and Simon were existing Directors and hence would continue to serve their current terms until 31st July 2009 and continue their new terms as above.

It was reported that David Langley, University of Bristol was standing down as Director of Member Services and Deputy Chair from the date of this meeting. The Chair thanked David for all the work he had done for ARMA and indicated that the board would be looking for an interim replacement to serve until the next election round next year.

6. Future plans

It was noted that there had been much interest in the results of the HEFCE funded project (run by two ARMA Directors, John Green and David Langley) *Professionalising Research Management* and that this might feed into future directions for ARMA. ARMA is also talking to Praxis about more joint courses and potentially AURIL too. Reflecting on the talk by Bill Wakeham that the sector needs to ready itself, ARMA intends to continue to take the lead in research management and administration issues.

Given the current economic climate, the plan is for the coming year to be another of consolidation rather than any specific high profile activities.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked all the various board, committee and active members without whom ARMA would not be what it is. Particular thanks were also given those who stood for election and of course to Rosemary and Jenny from the ARMA office.

There was no other business raised, so the Chair thanked the members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 13:00

Simon Kerridge
ARMA Secretary
8th July 2009