

MINUTES OF THE FPS QUARTERLY MEETING

Date: Friday 20th October 2017

Time: 2.00pm

Location: Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London, WC1H 9BD

PRESENT:

Malcolm O’Sullivan	BBGE
Mark Pennington	BBGE
Jon Morris	Cementation Skanska
Steve Hadley	Central Piling
John Chick	Expanded
Niall McGill	FK Lowry
Yvonne Ainsworth	JRL
Mark Snell	Keller
Stuart Norman	Keltbray
Andy Waghorn	Murphy Ground Engineering
Matt Walpole	Westpile
Shaun Davison	Van Elle

In the Chair: Alasdair Henderson BAM Ritchies

In Attendance: Ciaran Jennings FPS Secretariat
Grace Hawkins FPS Secretariat

No	TOPIC	ACTION
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies had been received from Philip Hines (Bachy Soletanche), Mark Sheridan (BAM Ritchies), Martin Blower (Bauer), Alistair MacDonald (Franki Foundations), Craig Macklin (Franki Foundations), Jim De Waele (Keller), Ian Alcorn (Roger Bullivant Ltd).	
2	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th July 2017 were approved.</p> <p>Alasdair Henderson reported since the last meeting it had been proposed to cancel the MSc prize as the candidates were not of good quality.</p> <p>Alasdair also reminded the group to ensure their companies are sending in safety alerts to the FPS Secretariat.</p>	All
3	MATTERS ARISING	
i.	<p>Piling Apprenticeship and NOS Review</p> <p>At the last meeting Ciaran Jennings reported the Trailblazer has been approved, however there are two issues that need to be resolved before the Trailblazer can go live. The FPS has put itself forward as the external quality assurance body for the Trailblazer to ensure that the FPS has direct quality control influence on the people being qualified to work in the industry. The CITB have also offered to deliver an EQA process, CITB have agreed to do so in the capacity of being responsible for data review and national working review of how apprenticeships are being carried out. The FPS wants to work with this approach in partnership. Ciaran advised he is looking to explore how this could work with the CITB and will report back once he has had a meaningful conversation with them.</p> <p>Ciaran highlighted a second issue is how the training will be delivered. Currently on the</p>	

	<p>SAP the FPS members deliver parts of the syllabus, however under Trailblazer rules there needs to be a single training provider. CITB have offered to be a lead training provider, but they will need to subcontract members of the FPS. The details of how this will work and the agreements to facilitate it need to be put in place. Ciaran advised this sits with Alison Lamplough as the person leading the Trailblazer development process, he asked John Chick to liaise with Alison, John agreed to do so.</p> <p>Ciaran also reported that there is an option for Members to become employer providers to deliver the training directly themselves, however this means a member can only train their own people. It was noted there are a few members looking at this as a possible solution; members interested in this option should register with BIES.</p> <p>Malcolm O'Sullivan commented that FPS trainers such as John Proctor will reach retirement and the FPS may be left at a stage where there are not enough trainers. Alasdair Henderson advised that the CITB have a commercial rate for the training of trainers and that it is possible for Members and the FPS to apply for funds to train them.</p>	<p>J Chick</p>
<p>ii.</p>	<p>Build UK PQQ Proposals</p> <p>Previously it was reported that Build UK are trying to create a unified PQQ system, it is split into two sections for high and low risk activities. They are intending it to work as a base set of questions across all trades then specific question sets for specialists. They have approached trade associations for their audit schedules.</p> <p>The issue for FPS is the introduction of the FPS audit process into this PQQ process. Currently the audit is carried out every three years, but this will be changed to every year under the Build UK proposals. It also means every piling company would be audited to FPS standard which may remove one of the key differentiators for FPS Members. It was suggested there is a risk it may decrease the value of being a Member.</p> <p>The FPS rejected the Build UK proposal and they have modified their proposals. Ciaran Jennings advised that Jim de Waele formulated a reply with the FPS objections and questions.</p> <p>It was reported that on the 11th October 2017, Ciaran and Alasdair Henderson had a meeting with Build UK, to discuss the elements which the FPS are not happy with.</p> <p>Alasdair reported a variety of issues which he advised were raised at the meeting on the 11th October. He explained under the revised proposals the intention was that assessor organisations (Achilles, Builders Profile etc) would compete to collect and provide information into a central system that all Tier 1s can use. The intention is that assessor organisations should cease to be the gatekeepers to specific projects and trade associations could act as assessor organisations on behalf of their Members. However, he thought it was naïve to think that this would work given the vested commercial interests of assessor organisations in the existing system.</p>	
<p>iii.</p>	<p>Crossrail 2 & HS2</p> <p>Previously it was reported that HS2 have approached the FPS; they wanted the FPS to provide data on Large Bored Piling Rigs owned by Members. The FPS asked them for a deeper discussion on the delivery plan and the framework capacity. Alasdair Henderson informed the Committee that HS2 cancelled the scheduled meeting and have not responded subsequently.</p>	

	<p>It was reported that the FPS met with Crossrail 2 to discuss procurement routes, however it was noted the response was muted, the project is still at a premature stage. Alasdair recommended that the FPS keep these links and communication open. Crossrail 2 are intending the project to follow HS2 in terms of the geotechnical works.</p> <p>Steve Hadley suggested these larger clients become an associate member of the FPS; they would have value in some of the committees. Yvonne Ainsworth advised as a Member company she would not be comfortable to discuss safety issues in front of clients at the Safety and Training Committee, however she recognised other committees would benefit. Steve advised it could also be an opportunity to ensure the work stays within the FPS Membership. Alasdair commented HS2 do not see any role for involvement with trade association membership, although Crossrail 2 have agreed to stay engaged.</p>	
iv.	<p>Freedom of Movement for Workers</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings advised this item was raised a while ago in relation to Brexit. Currently Geotechnical Engineers are on the shortage of skilled workers list and it has been suggested to add Piling Operatives to ensure FPS member companies can bring over operatives from the EU post-Brexit. There is a government survey due to be issued which the FPS should engage with to feed in its views.</p> <p>In discussion it was determined that Members had experienced difficulties with various specialisms over the past few years – rig operators, mud men, grab operators etc. It was commented that the Government’s Brexit document only really took account of house builders and largely ignored the rest of the construction industry. It was agreed that all should send in their thoughts on the skills shortages being experienced and anticipated to inform an FPS strategy.</p>	All
v.	<p>Schedule of Attendance at FPS Meetings</p> <p>It was reported at the Plant meeting there are consistent attendees and inconsistent attendees; the Plant group want to increase attendance to gain wider discussions and outcomes. It has been agreed to keep a record of who is attending to ensure we have good representation. the FPS Executive can follow up with companies who do not attend enough meetings and encourage them to become more engaged with the work of the Federation.</p> <p>It was agreed these should be part of the meeting papers for every FPS Quarterly Meeting. It was noted as condition of membership, Members need to attend two Quarterly meeting a year.</p>	
4.	FPS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2017	
	<p>Occupational Health</p> <p>It was reported Occupational Health was discussed at the FPS Executive Meeting which took place in the morning prior to the FPS Quarterly Meeting.</p> <p>Steve Hadley advised he had two meetings across 18 months with Build UK on the topic, but it has not progressed, and none of his feedback has been taken on board. He noted that drugs and alcohol testing have been dropped from the CBH medical.</p>	

	<p>Therefore the Executive Committee are proposing that the FPS determine a minimum standard on D&A testing. At the last meeting there was a discussion regarding alcohol limit and it was agreed to send out a survey asking how members feel regarding the frequency of testing and to try to gain a consensus before creating a statement.</p> <p>Steve advised he personally favoured a stringent approach to testing frequency and the permissible levels of blood alcohol. It was suggested using a testing kit for instant results. Yvonne asked what happens if they have failed; the company can end their employment and then they can find employment with another company as there is no legal way of dealing with and sharing the information. The Chair commented that requiring new staff to undergo a medical on joining was the answer to the issue of identifying habitual drug users. Steve advised that they allowed rehabilitated users to return to work under a high frequency testing regime. It was noted that the incidence of the use of Cocaine seemed to be high and possibly it was being abused as a stimulant to stay awake during long working hours.</p> <p>Alasdair Henderson asked the Committee to ensure they respond to the survey when it is circulated.</p> <p>Steve also advised that he, Phil Hines and the Secretary had met with Helen Whately MP, who is Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Mental Health. A wide-ranging discussion was held that touched on issues such as working hours and the issues of mental health in construction. He was keen to gain funding for a helpline for construction workers. Alasdair commented that these could be useful though tend to be a used by people as a last resort. Members will be kept apprised of any developments.</p> <p>Tool and Rod Handling Statement for approval Alasdair advised that this has been circulated following the last meeting, he asked members of the Committee to please respond if they have not yet done so.</p> <p>Manual Handling Injuries campaign It was reported that Debbie darling has been working on proposals for a campaign.</p> <p>Commercial Good Practice: Build UK retention roadmap – Alasdair Henderson reported Build UK have set up a working group to address retentions as they are concerned that the government may legislate on them without properly engaging with the industry. Martin Blower had been inputting into this group on behalf of the FPS and Alasdair had met with Jo Fautley, the Deputy Chief Executive of Build UK, in order to protect the FPS position but also put arguments across that the issue of retention is driven by lack of cash rather than valid concerns over quality assurance. He advised there were also points raised about trying to get customers to be sensible, using Project Bank Accounts and pushing our position on the caps on liability.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
5.	QUARTERLY LOAD BEARING STATISTICS	
	<p>Alasdair Henderson observed that the house building sector seems to be dropping down. Malcolm O’Sullivan asked if Brexit may be affecting the statistics, the Committee noted it may be a factor of uncertainty affecting orders.</p> <p>Alasdair advised there was a meeting with the Associate Members in July and one</p>	

	<p>interesting comment was that they are selling more to non-members.</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings reported the FPS Commercial Committee meeting they stated that the FPS should promote the use of FPS members. Steve Hadley added at the last Ground Forum meeting they observed that it was quiet last year, but this year has been better. Steve advised the FPS remains patient and highlighted a positive that materials prices are dropping; the price of concrete in London has dropped. Alasdair commented that Crossrail 2 and HS2 will improve the market.</p>	
6.	FPS EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS	
	<p>Alasdair Henderson reported it has been suggested to collect employment statistics by sending out a request to FPS Members on a once annual basis. The FPS does not know enough about member employee information such as ethnicity, the gender divide and disability. Once a baseline has been established it should be easier to see where there are issues and formulate a plan on addressing them collectively.</p> <p>Jon Morris questioned whether there was gender pay gaps are being looked at. Alasdair advised that the assumption at work is that there is comparable pay in roles, but the government is looking at the average salaries for men and women. The lack of senior representation of women means that the gap will be accentuated in their analysis.</p> <p>It was suggested the request for employment statistics is sent once a year to capture the statistics; it will be split between on site and off site.</p>	FPS Secretariat
7.	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
i.	<p>Executive Committee The FPS Executive Meeting which took place in the morning prior to the FPS Quarterly Meeting; it was noted there is little to be reported.</p> <p>Alasdair Henderson advised a meeting between the FPS and MP Helen Whatley regarding mental health and how this was dealt with adequately in the tier 1-2 procurement process.</p> <p>The FPS website has been pushed live today in time for the Awards dinner (on 20th October).</p> <p>The FCA contract for the provision of the Secretariat was also discussed. Three years ago this was put out to tender to test the market. The contract is now coming to the end of the term. The Chair proposed that no further market test was repeated and the contract be rolled on for a further year. This was formally proposed by Alasdair Henderson and seconded by Stuart Norman and agreed by the Quarterly Committee.</p> <p>The Executive also discussed finances, it was noted the reserves continue to grow and the Annual Awards Dinner taking place following this meeting is breaking even thanks to sponsorship from Members.</p>	
ii.	<p>Technical Committee It was reported the last FPS Technical Committee Meeting was very well attended. There is ongoing to revisions of codes, but Mark Pennington felt it was not necessary to report too much detail at this stage.</p>	

	<p>Load cases: It was previously reported that Load Cases are being discussed as Members are finding that too much information is being provided for individual elements. A small working group with the help of Associate Members are drafting a position paper which will propose standardised terminology and required information and recommend the FPS E-Pile Schedule.</p> <p>Sonic vs TIP testing: A small working group has been set up to compare sonic testing and thermal integrity profile testing, they will produce an FPS Guidance document to cover the positives and negatives of Sonic and TIP testing. Mark reported they have set out a table of pros and cons of each technique, it also includes when the FPS advises to use each. A draft was produced and presented at the last meeting, however some minor modifications will be made.</p> <p>Mark advised the Technical Committee has requested a 30-minute topic is presented at each meeting which is relevant to ongoing discussions, previous examples include the AGS Data Format and changes to Sperwall.</p> <p>He added a guidance paper is being produced on Helical piling, however aside from RBL the FPS Members do not readily use these piles. Ciaran commented that people contact the FPS for technical advice regularly and tend to view the FPS as the authority. Alasdair Henderson commented the FPS would need input from other Members not just a view from RBL to make it hold water as an FPS piece of guidance. It was agreed this should be considered by the Executive Committee.</p> <p>Yvonne Ainsworth added an ICE paper is being published on the forces for the removal of cases, this will view the FPS guidance as being extremely conservative and may require the FPS to revisit its guidance on the topic; Yvonne agreed to send the ICE Paper to Mark Pennington.</p>	<p>Exec Agenda</p> <p>Y Ainsworth</p>
<p>iii.</p>	<p>Commercial Committee</p> <p>The FPS Commercial Committee is in the process of producing a position paper on Project Bank Accounts which was circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting, it was noted the FPS recognise PBA as a positive thing; it was agreed it should be supported by the FPS. It was requested any comments are sent to the FPS Secretariat.</p> <p>It was reported that the FPS has been approached by FIEC about the issues between contractors and plant manufacturers in relation to BIM. They are interested in stopping technology companies taking over digital construction and want to ensure contractors and the supply-chain are driving development in the industry.</p> <p>The Commercial Committee members are continuing to bring along a junior colleague to the meetings; someone who would not normally get access to the level of commercial discussion that takes place.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>iv.</p>	<p>Safety and Training Forum</p> <p>It was reported following a recent non piling fatality during a Concrete blowing out procedure, the FPS Concrete Pumping Guidance was being reviewed with a view to recommending best practice.</p> <p>John Chick explained that Expanded have invented a new technique of pumping through grout to clear blockages that takes away the need to use compressed air or high-</p>	

	<p>pressure processes. He agreed to share the Expanded process with the Quarterly Committee.</p> <p>It was also agreed by the Forum to include UXO in the Pre-commencement Piling Standard.</p> <p>The Forum are currently reviewing the FPS tool box talks and are keen to use video versions of them as these have more impact with site operatives. However there have been problems getting approvals to use these and getting them produced in a debranded format.</p>	
v.	<p>Plant Safety Group</p> <p>It was reported a small working group convened to put in place a recommended practice for Concrete Pumping blowing out, responses have been integrated and minor tweaks are required (see S&T Forum report above).</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings informed the Committee that Steve Joynson has stepped down as Chair of the Plant Safety Group and Dorian Rixon is taking over, he advised if there any topics members of the Committee would like Plant to look at, please inform the FPS Secretariat to inform Dorian Rixon.</p>	All FPS Secretariat
8.	MEMBERSHIP MATTERS	
i.	<p>Membership Audit</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings reminded the group the FPS Audit is due to start next year, he advised another auditor will need to be recruited, the S&T Forum have suggested a few people. It was noted the Audit Schedule runs alphabetically through the Members, although new members since the last audit cycle will not be audited until they are due.</p> <p>Ciaran advised that the pass mark has been increased by 5%. There are five areas that are audited, and the criteria is set by Members; it was noted that if the FPS wants to introduce new additions or change it, it will need to be changed before January 2018. In terms of promotion of the FPS, a set of standards need to be agreed and looked at how these are promoted.</p> <p>It was reported Dawson Wam are going through the Audit process in November and may be joining the FPS as a Member in 2018.</p> <p>Steve Hadley asked if Martello and Franki Foundations will go through the Audit together, Ciaran replied as Franki Foundations are a subsidiary of Martello, they will go through the Audit together.</p>	
	PR AND DIGITAL MARKETING	
i.	<p>PR Activity Review</p> <p>It was noted the PR activity review was circulated after the last meeting; Debbie Darling has asked if ideas for articles could be sent to her.</p>	
ii.	<p>FPS Website</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings advised the site was due to launch the 20th October 2017, but the web developers need access to the domain which was causing a delay. *Post-Meeting Note: The website launched following the meeting*</p>	
10.	FINANCE	

i.	Budget for 2018 Ciaran Jennings advised the Budget for 2018 will be circulated once completed for approval at the next meeting.	C Jennings
11. REPORTS AS NECESSARY		
i.	Build UK It was noted this item was covered by discussion under previous items. It was added Build UK are looking at how they are currently governed.	
ii.	EFFC It was advised there are three EFFC updates to report on since the last meeting. Ciaran Jennings advised the 2 nd edition of Tremie Guide will be pushed at the DFI conference next year in Rome; it will have empirically derived acceptability criteria for concrete and a modified slump flow test that contractors can use on site. The Support Fluids Bentonite guide is ongoing, Ciaran suspects it will be published at the end of next year. They have a good balance of contractors, consultants and suppliers inputting into the guide to ensure it is a quality piece of work. It was reported that Martin Blower has taken over from Chris Primett as EFFC Officer for the FPS in the short term. Martin will step down from the EFFC Executive and FPS Executive in April 2018 and a replacement for Martin is required. It would be ideal if they are also member of the FPS Executive. Ciaran advised the position includes three trips a year for two days with expenses for travel and accommodation funded by the FPS and asked any interested Members of the Quarterly Committee to contact him.	All
iii.	Ground Forum Steve Hadley advised there was not much to report from the Ground Forum since the last meeting, however he believed the GF was increasingly coming round to supporting Degree Apprenticeships in geotechnics. Yvonne Ainsworth commented that RoGEP are putting technical grades of qualifications into the scheme.	
12. SOCIAL EVENTS		
ii.	Annual Awards Dinner 2017 Alasdair Henderson stated the Annual Dinner for 2017 will be taking place after the FPS Quarterly Meeting; held at the Sheraton Hotel. Alasdair asked members of the Committee to provide their support for the speaker Debra Searle, he added Debra is an interesting person who rowed across the Atlantic alone, she will highlight diversity. Steve Hadley noted the FPS struggled with nominations for the Awards this year, only 8 members of 19 submitted nominations, he asked going forward if the FPS choose to do the Awards format again, the support of the Committee is required.	
13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS		
	Site Investigation Quality Yvonne Ainsworth has observed the quality of site investigations has been dropping off and speculated this might be related to increase in workload and Alasdair Henderson	

	<p>advised she may be seeing a downward trend of competence. The BDA have done exercise on this but not seen much progress. Instead of the BDA Yvonne asked if the BGA could look at this.</p> <p>Ciaran Jennings advised that the AGS and the BDA looked at standards and no real consensus in the industry was forthcoming on improving them. Following the joint survey there was an angry response from the Cable Percussion Drillers. The BDA population are too wide in opinion. Yvonne agreed to bring up with the BGA.</p>	<p>Y Ainsworth</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</p>	
	<p>Next meeting dates are as follows and will be held at Hamilton House:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 1 February 2018 • Thursday 26 April 2018 • Thursday 19 July 2018 • 19 October (Awards Dinner) 2018 	