



**INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEEING**

**HELD AT EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HQ, EASTBOURNE
WEDNESDAY 12TH JULY 2006, 1900 hrs**

Item 1: OPENING

The meeting was opened at 1900 hrs with words of welcome from the branch President, Mr Chris Large.

PRESENT:	C Large	R Fowler
	J Fowler	D Sherman
	N Robinson	S Andrews
	B Kearnes	J Hohenkerk
	R Moon	D Prichard
	D Yates	M Rist
	M O'Brien	S Whitelsey
	J Logue	P Thompson
	R Baksi	J Mahoney

Item 2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

D Ashley, A Porter, M Rogers, L Richards, A Green, A Brown, C Thomson, J Wildish, R Timpson, D Dowling, P Higgins

Item 3: MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (AGM)

The minutes of the last meeting on 29th September 2005 were circulated and agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Item 4: MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

Item 5: ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

The following Branch Official posts were nominated and elected to serve for the coming year:

- President: Mark O'Brien
- Vice President: Chris Large
- Secretary: Richard Fowler
- Assistant Secretary: Mark Rist
- Treasurer: Jo Fowler

Richard Fowler then explained to the Branch the role of the General Assembly and the importance of the Branch being represented in this forum by an elected General Assembly Representative (often referred to as the GA Rep). Richard also explained the need to elect an "Alternate" (or "Deputy") GA Rep to ensure that the Branch is always represented at meetings of the General Assembly. Approximately six months ago the Branch Council

agreed that Richard Fowler would represent the Branch in this forum until a permanent GA Rep (and Alternate Rep) could be elected by the Branch membership.

Having outlined the roles of the Branch representatives to the General Assembly, the Branch received nominations for both roles, and duly elected the following representatives:

- General Assembly Representative: Richard Fowler
- Alternate General Assembly Representative: Jo Fowler

According to the rules of the constitution, these officials will serve for a fixed term of three years before re-election, unless they choose to stand-down prior to this.

Item 6: SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary provided a brief report on the following matters:

1. Branch membership and event activity over the past year. There are presently 763 members residing in the South Eastern Branch area. The Surrey and West Sussex Groups remain dormant, but a number of events have taken place in East Sussex and Kent. Kent has been particularly pro-active, running a well structured series of fire safety related seminars. In March 06 Ray Hammond provided input on sprinklers. In Jun 06 Kevin Moore spoke about smoke control systems. Forth-coming events include:
 - 28th Sep 06 Fire Detection (Colin Todd), Wye College, Wye, nr Ashford.
 - 29th Nov 06 Structural Fire Protection, a workshop run in conjunction with Kent Fire & Rescue Service.
 - Jan 07 Fire Safety in Historic Buildings. It is hoped that this event will take place at the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) in London, and will be followed by a tour of the Palace. This will be organised by the Kent Group.
 - TBC Visit to the new Wembley Stadium in London, as guests of the London Branch. This will be a South Eastern Branch event.
 - TBC Visit to Terminal 5, Heathrow, as guests of the Thames Valley Branch. This will be a South Eastern Branch event.

The Branch wished to pass on particular congratulations to Russ Timpson for organising such a good programme of events for the Kent Group.

2. The two special resolutions tabled for this year's AGM in Cardiff next week were discussed. Richard Fowler urged every member to make their views known by using their votes, either in person or by proxy. Richard explained how to use the proxy vote, should it be required.
3. Plans for the coming year are to organise a number of activities based on core fire engineering skills development.

Item 7: GENERAL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Richard Fowler explained his new role as the Branch GA Rep. He attends as many meeting of the full General Assembly and the UK forum as possible each year. This currently excludes meetings abroad as the Branch is not currently able to fund such trips.

Richard also explained that the vote of the South Eastern Branch in the GA carries significant weight as the membership numbers are high.

Richard outlined some of the issues that he is currently involved in with the GA and some of the work in progress. He stressed that this position provides the opportunity for the voice of the branch to be heard in the international arena.

Item 8: TREASURERS REPORT

The Treasurer provided a report to the Branch on the state of the Branch finances. There has been very little change during the past year.

The current balance of the South Eastern Branch account is £4,238.

The committee decided to run this event at no cost to members and to open it to non-members so as to raise awareness of the Institution and its objectives. It is hoped that membership will increase as a result.

Item 9: GROUP FUNDING

A request has been received from the Kent Group for some supplementary funding to assist with the activities on the Group. Russ Timpson is currently having to under-write the cost of each event. After a brief discussion the Branch approved a one-off grant to the Kent Group of £500 to support the work of the Group.

Item 10: FUTURE BRANCH STRUCTURE

A discussion took place regarding the current structure of the Branch and whether this structure was well suited to meet the needs of the needs of the Branch in 2006. It was agreed that the Committee will review the structure and the constitution of the Branch over the coming months, with a view to developing a possible alternative Branch Structure to meet the future needs of the Branch.

Item 11: OPEN FORUM

One member raised the issue of

Item 12: CLOSE OF MEETING

Mark O'Brien closed the meeting at approximately 2000 hrs, and introduced the guest speaker:

Keith Ring from the Operational Practices Section of the Fire Service Inspectorate "Responding to Disaster"

Post Meeting Note: Keith provided an interesting and informative talk about his experiences with the UK Fire & Rescue Service's Search and Rescue Team. Keith has travelled to many parts of the world with the team in response to various disasters. In particular, Keith led the team that travelled to the Pakistani controlled region of Kashmir following the devastating earthquake in October 2005. A letter of thanks has been sent to Keith on behalf of the Branch.