

Research Management Board Meeting – 18 September 2002 at NRS

Present: Dr P Freer-Smith
Mr W Mason
Mr T Cornwell
Mr K Charles

[cc: Head of Internal Audit]

Minutes of Last Meeting

1. Accepted.

Matters Arising

2. Valuation of NRS, a reply from the Area Land Agent (ALA) has been received. Martin Abrahams will write to the ALA querying the basis of the valuation and informing him that we are mindful to seek an independent valuation.
Action: BM
3. Review of Research Worker posts, P&AO to ensure that where there are not multiple applicants for the same post that the regrading procedures are carried out as soon as possible. Where a competition is held to fill a post, the effective date of promotion for the successful candidates to be the same as for the other posts.
Action: KC
4. CEO will participate in the 'Back to Shop Floor' day on 25 October.
Action: PFS
5. Standards Meetings, P&AO to write to Jane Smyth thanking her for chairing one of the standard meetings.
Action: KC
6. Interim PMS marks, P&AO to write to those HoBs who have not sent in interim PMS marks to do so without delay.
Action: KC
7. Business Planning Meeting, HoF to notify HoBs of the time for their Business Planning meeting. NRS on 14 November, Alice Holt on 21 November.
Action: TC
8. P&AO to let CEO know the composition of the Board to select the replacement Principal Statistician.
Action: KC
9. CEO and H. of NRS to discuss future site-survey work with FE at Silvan House on 19 September.
Action: BM/PFS

10. Report on 2001/02 FR targets, all four key performance indicators were met. **Noted**

Reports

11. CEO reported a successful Advisory Committee meeting on Forest Research and North York Moors. Two Visiting Groups were appointed, Silviculture (May 03) and Entomology (Sept. 03). **Noted**
12. CEO to ask the DG to extend his Alice Holt address (23 October @ 13.30) to NRS. **Action: PFS**
13. Electronic Gazette, P&AO to ask Dai Jeffries to make Wayne Blackburn aware of the work he is doing in view of 'Outlook' diary proposal. **Action: KC**
14. AAIS/Tree Advice Trust, P&AO to ask TAT if he and CEO can attend their Board meeting on 22 October to talk through our offer of alternative accommodation for AAIS. **Action: KC/PFS**
15. The RMB agreed that where members of staff booked a place on a training course and did not attend that any charge for the missed training would be met by the Branch concerned. **Action: KC**
16. HoF reported difficulties within the Forestry Act with staff members taking shares in companies or accepting Directorships on an official basis. This is an impediment to current Government thinking and the Secretary to the FC (Frank Strang) is taking forward the possibility of the Forestry Act being amended. **Noted**

Finance

17. £111K of forecast income not yet won. HoF to ask HoBs for confirmation (or not) of income. **Action: TC**
18. HoF to let CEO have a breakdown of 'Other Internal Income – FE'. **Action: TC**
19. HoF to discuss with Entomology the timing of the purchase of the cyclone worm separator and nematode sponge/diet separator system. **Action: TC**

Staffing

20. Request for additional casual for nematode production, concerns that we are staffing a medium term project with casuals and that there are no alternative means of getting the work done. CEO to discuss with Hugh Evans and to take staffing decision following this discussion. **Action: PFS**
21. Part-time Business Development and Marketing Assistant at PB6b. Agreed that this post be made permanent and that as part of the response to the Quinquennial Review, commercialisation, technology transfer and visitor management will be taken forward by the Business Development team. **Action: KC**

22. Part-time Finance Officer at PB6b, appointment agreed that subject to ensuring that there is no suitable PB6b within Alice Holt to take the position. P&AO to let CEO have a list of present AOs. **Action: KC**

Research Promotion Procedures

23. P&AO will be discussing the review of the procedures at the FC Staff Council Personnel Sub-Committee on 19 September and with Jim Anderson (Director Personnel) and Ken Milsom (Personnel Member, Junior Board) on 20 September. The TUS would like further guidance to candidates and Board members and a further explanation of what might constitute 'significant achievements'. Management would like a common standard for HoBs to comment on the candidates general competency to 'operate over a range of jobs in the higher grade' and an improvement in the feedback to unsuccessful candidates. P&AO to take this forward and to arrange for staff to be informed that applications for promotion will be called for in early January, Boards will be held mid to late March. Effective date for promotion for successful candidates, 1 April. It is the intention that Boards will be held annually using this timetable. **Action: KC**

Health & Safety/Industrial Accidents

24. The Board reviewed a report on reportable accidents for 01/02. There are 6 recorded in 01/02 as to be opposed to 5 in 00/01 and 6 in 99/00. **Noted**
25. The above report to be circulated around HoBs with a request that Heads of TSUs forward the report to their Field Station managers. **Action: KC**
26. H. of NRS to consider candidates for the Chair of the H&S Committee, NRS.

Draft FR Quinquennial Review Report

27. The Board considered that the draft Quinquennial Review Report was a good, positive, comprehensive report with many recommendations but with costs associated with those recommendations. **Noted**
28. The Board agreed that it would like to respond to para. 5.15 in 2003. The short research update can be developed from the current 'Research Highlights' Chapter. CEO to provide a written response to HoB meetings, North and South. **Action: PFS**

Date of next meeting – 9 October 2002 at Alice Holt (a.m meeting by video link).