

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE REVIEW: The review took place on 14th February and six members of staff were interviewed. The assessor fed back that SFMTA met the standards and were achieving very well.

LANARKSHIRE & DUNDEE DINNERS DANCE: Both Douglas Scott and Duncan MacKenzie attended these events, he thanked both these associations for inviting them.

FSA STAKEHOLDER FORUM: This was reported in the March Newsletter. FSA reported on how they work in Scotland. It is good to keep in touch with FSA (Scotland) and keep line of communication open.

ESF CLAIMS SEMINAR: We are probably in the second last year of this type of project. The new aspect from that is we now have to do a quarterly profile for expenditure but we do that for Scottish Enterprise anyway.

FINANCE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

SCOTTISH MEAT TRAINING: There is still a projected loss of £6,000. We expect Scottish Enterprise' recovery to be paid back by the end of March. The Finance Committee agreed to spend the projected amounts in both the Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands area. In the Highlands and Islands this will enable us to put specialised training in butchers shops. We would use butchers shops rather than hire a venue and invite people in. Probably Whiteness - Shetland, Kirkwall – Orkney, Thurso, Wick or Castletown, Inverness and the same in Stornoway or Oban. This would be funded by ESF. In Scottish Enterprise area it would be slightly different with specialised workshops with an invited audience of members and their staff.

MEMBER SERVICES: We are currently collecting fees at present and David Lindsay will give more detail. We are projecting a surplus of £4,000 but there is a stop on spending on promotions and advertising until all the income for this financial year can be assessed. The good news is the projected income from the Handbook is now £1,000 over what was budgeted. This is a great reflection on the advertisers' perception of the handbook benefit to them and members.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: Richard Sneddon reported.

SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE AND HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS CONTRACTS: No problems are perceived with the application for contracting 2006/2007. This is being processed at present and we expect a new contract by the end of March.

SKILLSXTRA: Improve, the Sector Skills Council responsible for the SkillsXtra pilot programme have extended the registration period until end of March 2006. As a result we have the opportunity to increase our participation in this very important pilot. We are looking to bring New starts between the ages of 16-18 on to this programme as it is very lucrative financially and increases our status in the Training Provider arena.

TRAINEE NUMBERS: Trainee numbers have fallen slightly in the Scottish Enterprise area since last months report. This is a result of the transfer from our 'old' level 2 onto the new and also due to the increase in work expected from the level 3 portfolio. Some of our trainees have chosen not to continue to level 3. This was expected by the training department and is the main reason for the continued active marketing of our services

HIE funded trainee numbers have slightly increased since last report, ESF trainee numbers have remained static since my last report.

SMT has 34 names on our pending list, 15 are 16 to 18 year olds the rest are 24 year old plus. These will be registered as soon as is possible, and we would remind you all of the importance of encouraging 'new blood' into this industry.

It is becoming ever more evident, whilst out in the field, that there is a shortage of qualified butchers. Businesses are very concerned that when they lose a member of staff it is increasingly difficult to replace them with an equally qualified member of staff. Everyone seems to be looking for the same person and there isn't enough of him/her to go around. This is highlighting the need for new blood within the retail sector as it is becoming evident that unless the craftsmanship is passed on the blood line will cease.

SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE GRAMPIAN CLAIMS: It is anticipated that the next claim period will see payments received and in our bank account.

UPDATE ON NE ENGLAND: SMT awaits a decision from the Learning Skills Council, regarding our application to take up the role of a Training provider in this area. We expect to hear something shortly and it is looking positive at present.

ASSOCIATED CRAFT BUTCHERS IRELAND: SMT are further exploring the possibility of working with our Southern Irish Colleagues in assisting them in setting up their training department. This looks positive at present and I will keep you up to date as it progresses.

SCOTTISH VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION BOARD, SCOTLAND: Meeting held on Tuesday 7th March at APB, Perth. This board was set up to manage the SVQ implementation in Scotland.

New External Verifier for Scotland has been employed by Meat Training Council – Robert Creasy. He is the Internal Verifier for Brown Brothers, Meat Processors in Sanquhar. This person will be auditing SMT on behalf MTC. Robert Creasy works for another training provider and is employing one of our competitors to work on his behalf and will be their external verifier as well. This situation was not viewed as being satisfactory.

HACCP: The first Intermediate HACCP course was held at the Perth office on Monday and Tuesday 6th and 7th March. This was tutored by Ruth Bell of Verner Wheelock Associates. 14 candidates took part and engaged in carrying out exercises and scenarios over the two days. The degree of difficulty felt by the group varied from difficult to stretching.

The next courses are on 13th and 14th March at two venues. St Boswells, Borders and Inverness.

Hamish Deans asked if a date had been firmed up on the marketing in Newcastle. Richard said it was not firmed up but the date is looking like 5th April. We are looking at taking a stand down with it starting at 2pm and finishing at 8pm. They are preparing a list of people attending at present and we are one of them depending on SMT getting a training contract for the NE England. Hamish Deans asked when that is likely to happen. At the moment funds are given out to priority customers and unfortunately the meat side is not a priority. Hamish Deans asked if there was anyone else receiving it. Richard replied a company called Orient Gold are employed by a past training provider who retired this year. He provided training to meat providers in the industry, he retired at the end of last year but is working on a 2 to 3 day basis until Orient put their own assessor in. Hamish Deans asked if we will be able to compete financially. Richard said we would be paid a bit more in England and it would pay us to be down there as we have the contacts in the retail sector and they do not. Hamish Deans said it would be a logical step as we are working right on the border anyway. Richard said the butchers want to be involved with the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders and this partly because George Lees has put vibes across there to such places as Wooler, Morpeth. Hopefully they will want to become members as well as using Scottish Meat Training.

George Lees asked if a trainee completing Level 2 decides not to go onto Level 3 will we lose out on this with funding. If it is a MA progression we will lose out. On the MA most of the funding is at the end of Level 3. SMT try to enrol Skillseekers to do a Level 2 and then re-apply for Level 3 funding as required.

Mark Barnett shares the concerns about the External Verifier and we should go back and try and resolve it. Douglas said we have a slight problem as the more we upset MTC the more difficult they become. Andy McGowan QMS said it was not right to put people in that position. The meeting was happy for QMS to write a letter and Richard agreed to forward Andy McGowan background for the letter.

MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN MTC BILL JEREMY, ALAN STEVENSON AND PRESIDENT MCKENZIE: This was a meeting to explain the representation on the board of Improve, the Sector Skills Council for the food and drink industry. When Alan Stevenson stood down as a board member of MTC and Improve and Bill Jeremy took over he was not automatically put on the Improve board in his capacity as MTC Chairman. He is on the Improve Board because of his past involvement with the Food and Drink Federation and various other meat industry businesses. Douglas was happy he was there as he came over as having a very good understanding of the meat industry, what is wanted by training and the problems with Improve in terms of funding. Improve is spending £5m over three years and this going down very rapidly with very tangible evidence what is happening in the industry.

IAN LAND IMPROVE: Ian is one of two Improve representatives in Scotland. He was asked to draw up an action plan for Scotland at the MTC meeting in December. Ian came to consult on what we felt should be in this action plan. Douglas told him that we were looking for the promotion of the training ethos and also the promotion of careers in the meat industry. He was given the QMS careers leaflet and our leaflets on what SVQ's are about and these can go out to schools, careers offices and employers. It should be Improve's role to see that this material was shaped into a pack for employers, Careers Offices, Schools and potential trainees. He is also going to support projects run through the Red Meat Industry Forum which are currently financed only for England. Funding had been applied for similar projects through the Scottish Executive. That part of the action plan was probably better to be looked after by QMS. The other part was the development for standards for SVQs.

UPDATE ON QMS

Andy McGowan was welcomed to the meeting by Mark Barnett.

Andy started off by saying that in the past he did not think that we had a good a relationship with the Federation as we could have done. QMS now have a new Chief Executive and a report has been submitted to possibly change the structure of QMS. He said we have the opportunity to sort this once and for all; he hoped that we were successful in getting representation on the board. In terms of the service QMS provides that is what he was more interested in discussing. Andy said that his remit is the technical department with a vast amount of time spent on farming, a bit on processing and not very much on independent retailers. He felt this was out of balance. He asked for views on areas they did not do well and on areas we could improve on. He said that the industry was too small for two such bodies not to be working together. There was a real opportunity for us to show by the time the new chief executive comes in that we are working together.

Mark Barnett said going back to the launch of QMS that if QMS accepted industry, they in turn would be accepted. QMS went away on their own tangent and that is what caused problems. Mark agreed that there were many problems that we need to face jointly. Rather than seeing that we were there to help in areas QMS did not have the expertise, QMS saw us as complaining all the

time. If QMS could accept what we are trying to do in terms of our input to improve then we would get along better.

Hamish Deans said that we had spent about £15,000 on our own advertising, which should have been joint we are curtailed in what we can do. We could benefit from a joint activity. We did work in tandem in the first year until Board reconstruction. A giant step forward would be representation on the board then we could take it on from there. We like to promote independent retailer and there is an opportunity to take this forward certainly before the end of our financial year as we are not doing anything at the moment as money is not there. Andy McGowan asked what the gap in funding was. Hamish Deans said somewhere between £10 K and £15K. Andy said that the marketing department had separate funds but would relay the information back to them.

Alan Kennedy said the most successful marketing activity was the ceilidh pie because it involved basic food stuff. He suggested there was a call to promoting basic techniques in mince, stew or not perhaps talking about coconut chops. Promoting it in a nice way where the potatoes and mince would look nice also putting information down in a way without too many extra ingredients. Andy agreed with the viewpoint as some of the leaflets did not depict what people eat. Mark Barnett said the younger generation do not have a clue about quantities, what feeds two, three etc. Something to outline whether they need 1/2lb, 3/4lb or 1lb is useful information for them as well. Alan Kennedy said concentration should be on items people buy but there was nothing wrong with the one offs.

Mark Barnett said we are trying to encourage the younger generation to come into the shop. We need a starter pack for them to study so they know what to ask for when they come in, instead of them being in a queue and too embarrassed to ask. This would be a major barrier to be removed. Basic Lamb cooking instructions like you can grill a gigot chop. Douglas said that feedback from members suggested they would like training on assistance to counter staff to make them better equipped to give cooking advice. We know from past experience that as soon as we try to get people together to progress that they do not turn up and these are usually those who need it most. Douglas felt a DVD might be useful. He said that that June Lomax had taken up the idea and hoped she had progressed it. Andy said this had been discussed and the hope was this could be progressed over the summer.

David Lindsay said that all he asked for was respect for SFMTA we have never had it since QMS was formed. Until we get respect as trade organisation then we can really start working. He suggested that the Adopt a Butcher Scheme should be brought back. In the past he had teamed up with a lady from MLC, prepared some products and the lady would do the cooking. It worked well for years and was dropped. Andy was interested to find out more about what was done previously. They now have a part time lady who works just with the schools and this could help the careers issue and it would not matter which sector. Andy McGowan asked how we could prove to the Federation that we are respecting them. David Lindsay said him coming along today had helped that process off well. Andy was happy to come as often as we wanted. We have three or four months to show that this can move forward and work before the new chief executive comes in. Mark Barnett welcomed this start. To really prove that we are accepted the representation is a real step forward as an equal partner in the meat trade.

Donald Biggar has already made a commitment towards that. Hamish Deans felt it was a good step forward and a good joint project agreed and accomplished by the team the QMS Chief Executive came in would be giant steps forward. Hamish Deans said the Chairman had spoken very well about the export markets opening up and spoke to the industry, not down to it.

The new chief executive for QMS will be Uel Morton; he will take up post from 3rd July. He comes from the background of chief executive of United Farmers.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT: David Lindsay reported.

324 members have paid to date.

Membership information packs were sent to:-

Bob McNicol Quality Meats, Kirkintilloch

Barbreck Farm Shop, Lochgilphead

James Hobson, Larkhall

We have one new member:- Joseph Callaghan, Helensburgh

Park Packaging joined as a corporate member and their contact details appeared in the last newsletter.

REGIONAL MEETINGS: These will be held as follows:-

Monday 13 th March	Inverness	Monday 20 th	St Boswells
Tuesday 14 th March	Oldmeldrum	Tuesday 21 st .	Kinross
Wednesday 15 th	Glasgow		

ESF funding allows these meetings to take the form of a dinner and discussion on a range of subjects affecting butchery trade. Places **must** be booked in advance.

HANDBOOK: Currently £3570 is secured for advertising in the annual handbook. This is an extremely good response. A proof arrived at the office this morning.

MEMBER BENEFITS: We expect an Insurance Package for members to be launched on 1st April through Jardine Lloyd Thompson.

There have been a substantial number of requests for the shopfitters pack that the Federation arranged with Bentley Shopfitters, Dundee.

GOLF: The annual golf outing will be on the 19th April on the Queens course, Gleneagles. Entry forms have been sent out with the newsletter. Eleven entries have so far been received.

BOWLING: A notice was put in the last newsletter looking for teams for a possible competition in June. No response so far.

Douglas said that we wrote to all the Executive members with a list of non members in their area. There has been feedback from the Borders with one possible. George Lees said the previous owner of the shop was previously in the Federation. Another shop just down the road from him is a member of the NFMFT. Jim Preston said that most of the feedback he got was negative, including too much money and what do they do for us? Mark Barnett said he had someone who was a member and tried for five years to get them back in and every time you asked him he said what can you do for me. When it came to the Quid labelling and he was struggling and had joined. Another person further up the road who is not a member spent £500 to get the labelling done, the Federation had saved the new member £500. Douglas view from the start is not to spend too much time with the negative non members but to help the people who do pay as much as we can. Douglas suggested non members could be invited to the barbecue nights as it will be a more sociable event and will still get the message. Stuart Christie said they were having a meeting on Monday in Glasgow and will go through who is on the list. Mark Barnett said that there is some people who will never be members no matter what resources you will throw at them. Ian Faulds felt there was only a couple in Ayrshire that could get their arms twisted. They have been in business along time the benefits he had explained to them on previous occasions. Hamish Deans asked for something to be documented on each one. What really surprised him was the numbers involved. George Lees felt that we may not want to print some of the

comments. Hamish Deans this should be listed as NOT INTERESTED. Jack Meade said a lot of the non members get a spin off of what we do. Mark Barnett said there are freeloaders in every walk of life. Douglas said that very point is in the paper on harmonisation on specific risk controls. This refers to representation made by industry, if we were not here then that representation would not happen.

PROMOTIONS REPORT: Mark Barnett reported.

With there being some money in the Fife and Kinross Association funds they decided to re-run the radio campaign of last year on Kingdom FM. There has been no response back from anyone but there has not been any complaints either.

There is nothing following up the Mangoed Pork Loin promotion. Next up will be the Make it With Meat Awards or whatever name you wish to put to it. There has been suggestion that Make it With Meat has run its course and needs refreshing.

Currently we have three categories beef, lamb and pork but there has been suggestion is to have three alternative categories namely

- Ready to Cook
- Ready to Heat
- Ready to Eat

The species permitted would remain beef, lamb and pork, since QMS are the sponsors.

Timing of this event has come in for criticism in the past. The Awards would be presented at the Scottish Meat Challenge to be held at Lauder College in September. This gives the winners a good ten week period to benefit from the sales of awarded products before Christmas trade takes over.

The biggest source of complaint has been the time of the judging. Previous years we have judged in the third week in August, but many complain that they still have staff on holiday and insufficient time to devote to preparing for this evaluation. Collection of products has been arranged from Stonehaven, Inverness, Lauder, Greenock and Wishaw; this would be repeated.

The judging could take place earlier with results held over until the Scottish Meat Challenge. Perth College is available every week from Monday 12th June until Friday 18th August. The Royal Highland Show runs from 22nd June to 25th June.

This year with there being no Scottish Meat Trade Fair and the competitions scheduled for Beef Sausages and Black Pudding, we need to re-think this as well.

Past experience tells us that it is extremely difficult to judge lots of similar products on the same day because taste buds quickly suffer. The proposal is to judge the five regions locally. Entries would be collected in for judging at a regional central venue. Regional winners would be announced before the Scottish Meat Challenge and regional winners would bring along their entries to be judged on the morning of the Scottish Meat Challenge at Lauder College. Winners to be announced after the lunch.

The meeting was happy with the regional competitions idea. Douglas Scott suggested the week after the Highland Show might be best for evaluating the Ready to products.

Hamish Deans felt the categories had a good feel to it as it was new. Jack Meade said Ready to Eat implies cold and the other two categories are oven ready. Stewart Dempsie is happy for any change as he has been a judge for the last few years. Mark Barnett suggested it gives the Butcher

more scope than it did in the past the competition has gone a bit stale. It was suggested to book Perth College for the last week in June and discuss further with QMS on the competition name.

Neil Cameron asked for an update on the bags, aprons etc with the new logo. David Lindsay said that East of Scotland will not hold large stocks of our bags. If you require an order the 10,000. He said he had two sizes of carrier bags, duplex in total six different types which he would have to order 10,000 of each. Neil Cameron said they would hold them in stock. Douglas said that Park Packaging were happy to stock bags but wanted to know what we wanted. Do we want them full colour with the logo both sides or full colour on one side or logo one colour on one side. Douglas said it worked very well before as the bag with the logo on it cost the same as a blank bag. Mark Barnett felt that it has brought things to a bit of a standstill as we would have been doing counter bags etc if they had been available. David Lindsay felt it was wide open for Park Packaging. Ian Faulds asked if our relationship with Park Packaging was as good as it was as in his opinion he felt the service is not as good. Douglas said that he would get a price and forward it to David Lindsay. Mark added that if it is pointed out that if they produce inferior products they would be left with it. Mark Barnett said we need to see how it goes with Park Packaging first.

LIVESTOCK REPORT: Stuart Christie reported.

Hides £24, Hoggs skins have gone up 15p to 65p. Beef prices are firming which he thinks the weather has not helped with a lot of the cattle not coming down with it being a bit more firm.

Sheep firmer a year last week 97p this week 110p for Hoggs - still a buyers' market at the wholesalers.

More OTM Beef coming on the market some quite good and a good price. He said it can be used for the catering market; hotels will pay for quality but the pubs will not.

The Scottish Farmer reported pig industry faces melt down if imports are not cut back. Pork sales have risen by 3% this past year with Scottish housewives prepared to pay more than England housewives, yet farmers in Scotland getting less than English farmers, we have only one major processor at Broxburn.

Avian Flu will be with us for five years at least according to government scientists because of migrating birds. Although our "knowledgeable" Minister of Agriculture M Beckett is not so sure.

Stuart represented SFMTA at the Auctioneers dinner at Dumfries fortnight ago and had a great night with some very good speakers.

There is another QMS Meat the buyer event on Friday 17 March in Edinburgh. He did suggest to Andy McGowan that a Friday morning was a very busy time to hold such an event. Hamish Deans said that his reservations were that there were very few independent retailers there. All the buyers were there from the local authorities and he thought this helped the big contract butchers more that it helped the SFMTA independent butchers. He did not know what QMS could do about it. Andy McGowan said they could possibly look at aiming it more at the independent sector. He felt there was a conscious decision to aim it at the catering butcher. Stuart Christie felt one or two local authorities had already made up their mind who they would deal with and would not change. Hamish felt the buyers got more out of it than anyone else as the different disciplines were put up in terms of the application form and how you can price it. It was counter productive as far as we are concerned but how QMS can improve it he did not know.

Europe has lifted the UK beef export ban but it is likely to be in 6 weeks away. The Smithfield show had been cancelled this year due to the machinery section pulling out and no funding.

Stuart asked Hamish Deans about Unison strike on 28 March. They are preparing but it will not affect the OVS who are in attendance in every plant. They pull back from the throughput speed to an operable level. What will happen is more will be done the day before and the day after. If it goes on longer then there will be problems.

Stuart did not have time to read the paper on Atypical scrapie. Andy McGowan said that there various studies showing evidence which is not the same as classical scrapie. So all the tests being done to pick up classical scrapie have not picked up this other thing. There is no evidence to suggest either type of scrapie causes any harm to human health. This not going to stop some of the more extreme commentators on the subject. On a factual basis it's not BSE and this has been confirmed it's a different type of scrapie with lamb a far bigger risk than beef as it spreads through all the tissues of lamb. This is not BSE in lamb, no one has ever proved BSE in Lamb. The unknowns of the last few years they are saying are Atypical scrapie but there are an awful lot of unanswered questions. It is very difficult to spot in a live sheep. As part of the national scrapie plan there are tests and monitoring systems. Jack Meade said it is something talked about the theoretical probable in the scientific sector of the community keep on justify their jobs. He took some of their figures which stated in 4 years they have 108 cases of Atypical scrapie. The probable is 56,000 of one kind and 82,000 of another. What they theoretically forecast and they only actually found 108 in 4 years. So we are going to have a battle on our hands. Douglas said it will raise its head tomorrow as it is being discussed for 15 minutes at the FSA board meeting. Hamish Deans said that SEPA paper and this one on scrape. SEPA have such control over what goes into the rivers that farmers were advised or stopped using the dip that contains scrapie. 5 to 8 years ago they banned certain pesticides put into dipping them. Hamish Deans said he it was not surprising it raised its ugly head. At one time it was compulsory to dip and the main thing was to avoid scrapie, so the Government is to blame for scrapie now.

Douglas said the blue paper issued was the SEPA questionnaire on Waste Disposal. Those on e-mail have already received this. Douglas has had quite a big response back. Some of the comments are fantastic. A Fife butcher was quite blunt about it, if everyone fills the forms the same way then SEPA will know what the thinking is. Those people who are not using a collection service at the moment are not going to return it. When SRM is harmonised and SRM is removed from butchers' shops it may be that more people will want to fill the form in to highlight how much they are paying. The main thing is to highlight is that the Meat industry are the ones who are paying, the fishmongers and processors seem to be getting away with it. All the former foodstuffs if collected will bring down the collection costs. Mark Barnett said what we need to ask is why is this only being sent to butchers, when every corner shop which sells sausages bacon also has animal waste bi-products. Hamish Deans said he would not fill the form out. The problem is that it is being instigated by the wrong body. The local authorities are in chaos at the moment and looking for money. If you put your name on that it will come back to haunt you later on. Mark felt that it could be filled in with the contact details not filled in as he wanted to tell them what he thought.

BEEF & LAMB FORUM: Douglas attended this for the first time. Jamie Chapman is our representative and membership now seems to have expanded. An address from Donald Biggar was very positive mentioning moving forward and fresh starts. Donald Biggar was hoping the Radcliffe review would change the representation on the board to a composition of levy payers but this is still to be decided and it will be a QMS decision.

There were questions about the export of store cattle to Europe and how that might impact on the market. We were reassured that it was calves that could only be sent live. Debate included the branding of Scotch and what Scotch meant and the quality of lamb. Those members on e-mail gave him their thoughts on lamb. The message was that if butchers felt it was worthwhile boning out and selling lamb they would, it does not have the returns. There were some positive comments fed back from members. The farmers realise that they are business men taking

business decisions, some are suggesting that if the price did not go up then the breeders might not be there in the future. A demonstration was given of a system used by auctioneers coming from market was Scotch, farm assured or not assured.

Margaret Stewart introduced the Health & Education diet agenda. This is moving forward, the schools sector is being addressed by Meat Matters which is a pilot at the moment. There was a fair amount of comments fearing a negative rather than positive effect. It is being launched at the Highland Show. Jamie Chapman had attended session on what consumers think about assurance.

Andy McGowan said the pig sector that twice as much pork as lamb is produced in Scotland as lamb which some are not aware of. 85% is going through one plant. The pig producers are getting extremely nervous and will be a pretty receptive audience if butchers felt ties with pig farmers would help their own business. Hamish Deans said the big problem was the stopping of auctioneering of pigs there has to be tie in as there is no other way to get pigs. Andy McGowan felt we would get a more receptive ear than even 12 months ago. There are a few around who have some spare capacity.

LEGISLATION REPORTDouglas Scott reported.

There are 3 issues here;- the Meat Hygiene Policy Forum - those points are numbered, tomorrow's FSA board meeting and an extract from the board meeting which introduces the Harmonisation of SRM controls when beef export ban is lifted.

MHPF: This body meets three times per year and takes on the view of industry and the FSA are usually receptive and do what they can to take on board industry views. Hamish Deans said they go into great detail about the very small slaughter houses doing about 20 units. In the Pooley report he suggested that an intermediate slaughterhouse which slaughters up to 300 units because there is a big difference between a small slaughterhouse which is quite a lot in Scotland against a large one that does 5,000 units a week it is a different trade entirely and this issue has not been brought up again. The 300 units is the one which we are all involved in, Wishaw Shotts St Andrews and Gala they are all up in the 300 units which is a different trade from the big ones and small ones. Hamish felt this should be brought up again at the next meeting. Douglas asked about examples within this. Hamish Deans said the last time they spoke about blood. Six months ago everyone was going mad that you could not put blood down the drain. These big five abattoirs there is more spillage on the floor than intermediate abattoirs would do. We could not collect as much as them you get dripping and it goes down the drains. It is an expensive thing to accommodate the blood disposal thing. Douglas felt this was an item to be raised with them we want to discuss so it could be put to them for the July meeting where we feel that there are special measures required. In the papers there is suggestion of a meeting about Scrapie on 16th March which Douglas had not yet been informed about it.

Douglas said they are going to try to legalise smokies at some stage. Another strange one was FSA guidance for eating pink pork is now on their website, so they have decided before FSA board meeting tomorrow that you can eat it pink.

Hamish Deans said Item 14 is very important. There is a problem with vets in some abattoirs because the English is not very good and they can speak Spanish better. If they cannot make their case correctly they apply an action notice which you have no input into and it is out of your control and things get worse and worse. Norman Bagley had said that should not be the case. If the same thing is happening in a large abattoir as a small it is less of a risk. Douglas said that needs to be raised with them for next meeting.

Hamish Deans said that Item 15 the last presentation was 18 months ago. They speak about a possible risk in a medium size abattoir. The risk in any airport would be 1,000 times more. They

spend a lot of time legislating for things that could possible happen. The very important things they seem to gloss over.

In item 16, where charges exist cannot be removed underneath they ask what changes might be required. They are only going to go one way if they cannot remove charges that are there. Hamish Deans said EU countries do not implement it the way we do; we implement it to the last letter of the law. Douglas said that this was noted with no discussion at all. He assumed that this would come up at a later date with a consultation in the summer.

Douglas said some of the recommendations are going to the FSA board meeting tomorrow which Jamie Chapman is attending on our behalf. Atypical Scrapie will be discussed, taking forward possible national measures for UK meat plants on the yellow paper issued. Item 7 tomorrow is Harmonization of specified risk material (SRM) when beef export ban is lifted. This paper was circulated. Item 4 the board is invited to agree that when the beef export ban is lifted the derogation to allow the removal of vertical column for 24 to 30 month animals from local authority enforced butchers can be applied in the UK. According to this recommendation, once butchers have approval from the local authority butchers can take cattle 24 – 30 month but the problem with the harmonisation with EU legislation we have to remove the VC of beef carcasses 24 –30 months then dispose of them as SRM. It is not clear but it looks like they need to be stained and collected by a registered collector. Wm Forrest have told him everything they collect is SRM. Hamish Deans said it is a terrible mess to have staining in a butchers shop. Douglas said this point was made by us in the consultation and it is hard to know how rigorously this is going to be implemented. Hamish Deans thought with the lifting of the export order this becomes less important, it was used as a barrier to us getting export back. Douglas said every EU country removes the VC from animals over 24 months although the EU have only just raised it from 12 months to 24. Douglas felt it was going to create a two tier system, the crazy thing about it that is since 1996, apart from the beef on the bone ban, everything under 30 months could be sold with VC in, so this decision will just be for Europe's sake. Andy McGowan said there did not seem to be a lot of sense in it. Douglas said the good thing about it is there are moves in Europe to increase it to 30 months. Stuart Christie asked when this was going to happen. Douglas said at the FSA meeting tomorrow as the ban was lifted today. So those people currently putting their bones to landfill will have a problem. We did put in a five page consultation which the NFMFT had a copy which they complimented. FSA board meeting allows questions but only after the Board's decisions have been made.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

Alan Kennedy said that the two local authorities have slightly different views on the 2 tonne rule. He asked if we had a definite decision on the ruling. Douglas said we only have a working draft at the moment he thinks the 2 tonne is output sold to other than the final consumer i.e not over the counter. Stuart Christie said he has a meeting to transfer his enforcement to the FSA because he delivers out with his area. Douglas suggested he should ask what he could do to prevent it.

Alan Kennedy suggested if we were looking at training in England could we pick up some new members? Douglas said he thought this was what Richard Sneddon had suggested. Douglas said we might possible give them a complimentary newsletter for six months.

Douglas clarified the point that Alan Kennedy raised at the last meeting regards putting experienced staff straight on to the Level 3 SVQ without doing a Level 2, the answer is yes.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 12 April 2006.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 4.50pm with a vote of thanks to the chair.

