



National Trainers Federation

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



NTF TO SUPPORT

Association of Air Ambulances

As many of you are aware, trainers and their staff have benefited over the years from the Air Ambulance service, which is funded entirely by donations.

In 2014 the NTF raised over £1500 for the Air Ambulance Services across the country, principally from lost badge charges. We are continuing to support the Air Ambulance throughout 2015.

Mr Clive Dickin, National Director of the AAA acknowledged the support from NTF members with a letter of appreciation:-

"On behalf of the Association of Air Ambulances I would like to thank you for the organisation of the kind donations we have received. It is donations such as these which enable Air Ambulances across the UK to keep on providing the best possible pre-hospital care. Today alone they will be involved in over 70 serious trauma or medical incidents, saving lives or improving the prognosis for patients".

Clive Dickin
National Director
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All photographs courtesy of Matthew Webb

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ANNUAL REPORT

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NTF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

These were the elected Regional Representatives during 2014.

Presidential Triumvirate

Jim Boyle (President)
Seamus Mullins
Ann Duffield

Region

Scotland
North
West Midlands and Wales
East
South West
Central South
South East
Past Presidents
Co-opted

2014

Nick Alexander
Tom Tate, Ann Duffield, David Nicholls
Charlie Longsdon Matthew Sheppard, Tim Vaughan
Rae Guest, Roger Varian, Amy Weaver
Philip Hobbs, Seamus Mullins, Emma Lavelle
Ralph Beckett, Eve Johnson Houghton, Charlie Mann
Jim Boyle, John Best
John Gosden, Chris Wall
Charles Egerton

Executive Committee

Jim Boyle (Chairman), Ralph Beckett, Ann Duffield, John Gosden, Seamus Mullins, Tom Tate, Chris Wall

Flat Committee

Chris Wall (Chairman), John Gosden, John Best, Eve Johnson Houghton, Ralph Beckett, Jim Boyle, Ann Duffield, Rae Guest, David Nicholls, Tom Tate, Roger Varian, Amy Weaver

NH Committee

Seamus Mullins (Chairman), Charlie Mann, Charles Egerton, Philip Hobbs, Emma Lavelle, Charlie Longsdon, Jim Moffatt (co-opted), Matt Sheppard, Jamie Snowden (co-opted), Tim Vaughan

NATIONAL TRAINERS FEDERATION EXECUTIVES AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

National Trainers Federation

9 High Street, Lambourn, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 8XN

President
Chief Executive
Legal Executive
Membership & Publications Executive
Executive Assistant
Financial Adviser
Legal Adviser
Veterinary Adviser
Rates and Planning Adviser

Jim Boyle
Rupert Arnold
Dawn Bacchus
Jill Crook
Judy Crossfield
Peter Treadgold
Helen Niebuhr
Clive Hamblin
Bill Simpson

ACCOUNTANTS

Smith and Williamson

Old Library Chambers,
Chipper Lane, Salisbury,
Wiltshire SP1 1BG

SOLICITORS

Darbys Solicitors LLP

Midland House, West Way,
Botley, Oxford OX2 0PH

Insurance Advisers

Lycetts

1 Stables Court, The Parade,
Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1NP

NTF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The NTF's objectives are:

"To represent and protect trainers' interests and to be a reliable and respected source of information, advice and support."

We aim to achieve this by:

- Liaising and negotiating with other industry bodies
- Providing up to date information relevant to members' activities
- Offering access to a wide range of services and professional advice
- Carrying out on behalf of trainers and the racing industry a number of support services

MEMBERS' BENEFITS

As a member of the NTF, you receive the following benefits:

SERVICES

- Unlimited help and advice from the NTF office. We provide a personal, direct service with an executive team who understand your working life.
- Immediate advice on legal problems including employment law from the NTF's in-house Chartered Legal Executive.
- Legal Assistance Scheme for members including Legal Expenses Insurance and helplines operated by Legal Assistance Direct.
- Legal Representation for appropriate cases at BHA Disciplinary Panel enquiries and Appeal Board. When provided by the NTF's Legal Executive, this service is free. Alternative representation is subject to terms of the legal expenses insurance.
- Access to financial and tax advice with Smith and Williamson, insurance with Lycetts, veterinary by Clive Hamblin, racehorse nutrition assessment from Connolly's Red Mills, foreign recruitment with IEP Management and rural business advice from the CLA.
- The unique services of Bill Simpson to provide advice on business rates and conduct appeals with the valuation tribunal.
- Twice yearly Regional Meetings open to all members.
- Non-transferable metal badges to admit each member and their spouse/partner to every racecourse in the country. Up to four badges for Assistant Trainers if eligible
- A Car Park Label for entry into the trainers' car park at each racecourse in Britain.
- Group discount schemes for private health care with Chase Templeton, a half-price second subscription to Racing UK, preferential rates for debt collection and Direct Debit services from Express Group and a 10% discount with Clearwater Hampers via a link on the NTF website.
- Free administration of the NTF Stakeholder Pension Scheme, Racing Industry Accident Benefit Scheme and Death in Service Benefit

NTF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

continued

INFORMATION

- The NTF Racing Diary – the indispensable working manual for the industry. Includes complimentary live computer feed for worldwide fixtures and sales dates and free subscription to European Trainer Magazine
- Bi-monthly printed Newsletter and NTF Weekly e-mail news update. Breaking news available on Twitter, @NTFnews. An archive of news articles on the NTF blog, ntfmuse, with members' comments
- Access to the dedicated Members Area of the NTF website for up to date forms, advice sheets and publications. Your contact details listed in the UK Trainers contact area, with a direct link to your website
- The NTF Employment Guide: the bespoke manual for all employment matters
- Free Medication Record Book
- Code of Practice for Infectious Diseases and Biosecurity guidelines
- A range of free publications and advice sheets

REPRESENTATION

The NTF represents trainers' interests on the following racing industry committees and working groups:

- The Horsemen's Group
- BHA Members Committee
- BHA Executive Committee
- BHA Flat Racing Committee
- BHA Jump Racing Committee
- BHA Fixture List Consultation Group
- Horsemen's Group Taxation Group
- BHA Industry Recruitment Training and Education Committee
- BHA Racecourse Committee
- BHA Veterinary Committee
- BHA Welfare Group
- RCA Technical Group
- National Joint Council for Stable Staff
- Animal Health Trust Equine Industry Committee
- Tattersalls and Doncaster Bloodstock Sales Liaison Groups
- European Trainers Federation

**Notice is hereby given that the
FORTY SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of the
NATIONAL TRAINERS FEDERATION
will be held at the
THE TURF CLUB,
5 Carlton Terrace, London SW1Y 5AQ**

at 12.00 noon on Thursday 26th February 2015

AGENDA

1. To approve the minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting
2. To approve the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2014
3. To receive the President's Report
4. To confirm election of the President and Triumvirate
5. To confirm election of regional representatives to the Council
6. To approve changes to the Rules
7. Any other business

Dated this 19th day of January 2015

By order of the Council



J R ARNOLD
Chief Executive

PRESIDENT'S report



JIM BOYLE

2014 has been a year of much change behind the scenes, much of it welcome. However, what we must not lose sight of is that the single most important factor for most trainers, prize-money, is still well below where it ought to be, and for many of us, still well below where we need it to be in order to be able to run viable businesses. To this end the onset of government-led levy reform may prove one of the most vital factors in recent times in securing proper funding avenues for the sport that we provide. I hope that this time next year we are able to report positively on this, and see a clear direction ahead for the future funding of British Racing.

We have seen fundamental change at the heart of the BHA, and this has signaled a shift in direction with Steve Harman ensuring a more collaborative approach with Horsemen, as well as much more parliamentary backing for Racing. The appointment of Nick Rust as Chief Executive also bodes well and I sincerely hope that this new collaborative approach can see Racing guided to a more prosperous future. It is great that our own Chief Executive will be sitting on the board of the BHA for the next 12 months as the Horsemen-nominated director, so we will well and truly have a voice within the BHA.

The anabolic steroids saga rumbles on, but perhaps a sign that the BHA are more prepared to listen to the sports participants was shown when the new legislation that was supposed to be implemented at the start of the year has been delayed whilst the legitimate concerns of Horsemen are revisited. This is important legislation, and it is right that the UK should lead the way on stamping out the use of anabolic steroids, but it has to be implemented correctly if it is to be enforced robustly.

This year has for the first time seen the introduction of a Legal Assistance scheme for trainers, with the cost initially being borne by the NTF, but now by trainers at a subsidised (and to my mind very good value) rate of £5/month. This is something I very much wish had been in place 5 years ago when I had my own battles with the authorities, but I am delighted that we have finally got a scheme like this up and running. We will, however, need to monitor it closely over the next 12 months to ensure that as a scheme it works properly for trainers.

As trainers, it is beholden upon us to ensure that we do the best by our horses, not just whilst they are in training, but also once they leave racing. It is not just the right thing to do, it is also imperative for the image and future popularity of racing. The RoR is there to help in this goal and a root and branch review of its activities has highlighted many ways this can be improved. Trainers and the RoR must work more closely and effectively to make sure that this important aspect of our duties is carried out properly.

It is slightly frustrating that the NTF does not always get the support or attendances at meetings that it needs in order for it to effectively act on the wishes of the trainers for whom it is there to serve. The most useful way of trying to help effect change in our sport is to get involved. I know it often seems like we are banging our heads against a brick wall, but occasionally if you bang your head hard enough and often enough the wall will fall down, so please do try to find time in your already over full schedules to support the NTF. I'm afraid I've been asked to serve another year as President, so you'll be stuck with me for another 12 months, but I really hope that when I write my final report next year we can be looking back on a year of significant progress for the sport we love.

Jim Boyle
President

OBITUARY

This Annual Report would be incomplete without reference to two trainers who contributed greatly to the Federation.

Toby Balding

Toby Balding was the "father" of the NTF. When he died in September the eulogies across racing spoke volumes for his contribution to the sport and especially its people. Nowhere was this appreciated more than within the NTF, which Toby and his colleagues founded by welding together the separate National Hunt and the Flat Trainers organisations. Toby often said jumping was where his heart lay but in truth his interest and expertise knew no bounds and he was respected and listened to in any forum. As a guide and benign authority Toby was unsurpassed and he will be hugely missed in the Federation and amongst his peers.

John Hills

Not only was John Hills a long-standing Council member, but he also served a term as President in 2009/10. John was a passionate advocate for racing. His inventive and creative mind found many outlets and the NTF was one fortunate beneficiary. The phone would ring in the NTF office and John would be on the line suggesting some new way of looking at an old problem or raising an idea that no one else had thought of. Balancing the passion was a large dose of good humour; no matter how things turned out John saw the funny side. In negotiations he was thoughtful and sympathetic to the other side, achieving a settlement without resentment and inspiring respect.

THE EXECUTIVE

From year to year it is hard to find new ways of expressing appreciation of the unchanging executive team in Lambourn. This year however, change has arrived with the departure of Judy Crossfield. After nearly fourteen years with the NTF, her supporting role had become a victim of changing working practices but in that time she was an immensely helpful part of the team and built a great rapport with the members.

A new role of Racing Industry Executive has been created and George Noad, an alumnus of the BHA Graduate Development Programme and Bath Racecourse, was recruited to join Jill Crook and Dawn Bacchus in 2015.

MEMBERSHIP

At 31 December	2013	2014	Change
Licensed trainers	563	559	-4
Relinquished in year	30	17	-13
Granted in year	34	19	-15
NTF Members	516	512	-4
Non-members	49	47	-2
Percentage of all trainers	91.7	91.6%	-0.1%

ELECTIONS AND THE REGIONS

Although some vacancies opened up in the regions for new representatives to become Council members, elections were postponed pending a review.

The Council structure has served us well over fourteen years but the NTF needs to become more flexible so the organization reflects the working lives of our members. This is the only way to ensure we have the essential input of licensed trainers to our policy and decisions.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

2013/14 NH Championship – **Paul Nicholls**

Highest number of winners – Donald McCain, 142

2013/14 Flat championship – **Richard Hannon**

Highest number of winners – Mark Johnston, 215

Special mention should be made of **Lucinda Russell**, whose record number of winners (66) for a Scottish trainer put her on the same year-ending record breaker page in the Racing Post as Coolmore, Aiden O'Brien, Richard Hannon, AP McCoy and JP McManus – a great achievement.

Flat	Prize Money Won	National Hunt	Prize Money Won
Richard Hannon	£4,695,017	Paul Nicholls	£2,469,892
John Gosden	£4,238,801	Nicky Henderson	£2,019,935
Mark Johnston	£3,063,906	Philip Hobbs	£1,583,307
Richard Fahey	£2,890,274	Jonjo O'Neill	£1,572,505
Aiden O'Brien	£2,882,212	David Pipe	£1,433,118

Debate about the format of the championships continued in 2014. It looks likely that the jockeys and owners flat championships may take on a new look in 2015 but trainers told us they wanted to retain the current date range for the flat championship so the new 12-month table began again on 10th November.

Internationally it was another fabulous year for British-based trainers. Last year we coined the phrase Great British Trainers and it was business as usual thanks to the wonderful performances of Red Cadeaux, Toast of New York, Sheikhzayedroad, Trade Storm and Peace And War and others.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S report



RUPERT ARNOLD

SUPPORTING TRAINERS

Making the training business pay certainly doesn't get any easier. At the NTF we are only too well aware of the continual struggle most trainers face getting the books to balance. That is why we have increased our focus on supporting NTF members on the business side. Despite prize money increasing again in the last twelve months from £114.3m to £123.2m, trainers still lament the inadequate rewards from win and place money and the difficulty of attracting investment from racehorse owners. This is partly a reaction to the increased operating costs of a training business so it is no coincidence that several have moved to France this year.

How is progress to be made? In last year's Annual Report I noted "For many trainers, the business model is not working. There is work for us to do on this in 2014."

STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

Looking to the top level in the sport, BHA Chairman Steve Harman built on his initial experiences in 2013 to set out in 2014 his vision for a growth strategy for British racing. This is about increasing inward investment in the sport, reforming the funding model and consolidating the underpinning elements of integrity and welfare (of horses and people.) Through consultation on several of the "pillars", the NTF has hopefully influenced the outcomes. Some novel ideas have emerged but lack of coordinated communication from the centre has prevented most in the industry from sensing any forward momentum.

The BHA has scored a notable success in Government relations. With assistance from Bell Pottinger, newly recruited public affairs advisers, there are very positive signs that Ministers have accepted racing's calls for replacement of the levy with a funding mechanism that reflects the modern betting environment. On behalf of its members, the NTF supported the industry's campaign to persuade the Government to act; we wrote to MPs with the largest numbers of trainers in their constituencies as well as to Helen Grant, the Minister for Sport, Tourism and Equalities. When Chancellor George Osborne specifically referred to the Government's intention to begin consultation on the introduction of a "racing right" in his autumn statement (following up his spring budget speech,) there was a real sense of reaching a genuine landmark.

BHA SHAREHOLDER STRUCTURE

Helen Grant's statement to the Racing Post in the aftermath of the Chancellor's announcement shouldn't be passed over lightly. She pointed to the changes taking place in the BHA's governance structure as a positive step. This validated Steve Harman's belief that a more corporate style Board will position racing as a sport to be taken seriously by Government and other major institutions. After attending the NTF Council meeting in April to explain his vision, Steve met President Jim Boyle and me regularly through the year to establish a new relationship between the BHA and its shareholders – the "Members" (NTF on behalf of Licenced Personnel, RCA, ROA and TBA.) By the end of the year, a new Members Agreement was nearly complete, clarifying decision making and giving the shareholders a constitutional role in strategy development. I will sit on a new Members Committee to meet regularly with the BHA Chairman and Chief Executive.

Unexpectedly, I will also become a BHA Board Director until the end of December 2015. Although they bring a range of invaluable skills to the BHA Board, the six new Non-Executive Directors appointed in early December have limited experience of racing at the grass roots. The BHA Members thought it advisable to retain two directors, one each nominated by the racecourses and horsemen, to provide that expertise for an interim period.

HARMAN REACHES OUT

Since becoming BHA Chairman, Steve Harman has reached out to trainers. After speaking personally to trainers, he came to the NTF with some ideas for supporting their business. At the forefront is a procurement initiative. Steve observed that unlike many other industry sectors, there is no facility for trainers to purchase collectively, using their power as a group to reduce prices of key products and services. Over the years the NTF has attempted to offer these opportunities on a piecemeal basis but there has been little take-up. Steve has persuaded procurement professionals to work with the NTF at a greatly reduced fee and to cover the costs the NTF applied successfully to the BHA Grant Scheme so we are taking advantage of some of the funding available from the Tote sale proceeds.

PROGRESS ON PRIZE MONEY

As mentioned above, there has been some progress on improving returns to horsemen through prize money. Total prize money in Britain increased by £9m (7.8%) with the Levy Board contribution for the full levy year at £52m compared to £50.2m in 2013.

Sources of prize money

	RACECOURSE £m	BHA £m	HBLB £m	OWNER £m	DIVIDED £m	TOTAL £m
2008	30.4	1.8	56.1	16.9	0.8	106.0
2009	27.6	1.4	63.1	17.3	1.0	110.4
2010	30.3	0.9	51.0	15.6	1.2	99.0
2011	45.2	0	32.4	15.4	0.9	93.9
2012	46.1	0	34.3	16.0	1.4	97.8
2013	48.6	0	46.4	17.9	1.4	114.3
		AVC				
2014	54.6	0.2	48.3	19.8		123.2

As a director of the Horsemen's Group (HG) I have been involved in several initiatives for improving prize money. The HG has kept up the pressure on racecourses to commit a fair share of media rights revenue via Prize Money Agreements (PMA) and in August Arena Racing Company (ARC) finally agreed to sign up to the standard tier. Hexham signed a PMA in October. This leaves only Catterick, Redcar and Plumpton without PMAs. In November the Sandersons came to the Northern Region meeting to report on progress with their planning for an AWT at Catterick. Trainers took the opportunity to express their urgent need for racecourses under Sanderson management to up their game on prize money.

Pointing out that Minimum Values have lagged behind increases in funding for prize money, the HG instigated talks with the RCA and BHA early in the summer. Richard Wayman and I were continually frustrated by the racecourses' efforts to delay agreement; even when the BHA illustrated the spuriousness of their arguments, racecourses would not accept significant increases and exploited the political agenda at a higher level to get their way.

The 2013 levy deal promised a major boost to prize money from the Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) worth £4.5m from the top four bookmakers. This was another case of “wading through treacle”. The additional funds should have begun flowing in April but the Bookmakers Committee would not accept racing’s collective proposals on how it should be distributed. There was some suggestion that delaying tactics were being employed in reaction to the Government’s hike in tax on gaming machines. After another false dawn in September, support for prize money down to sixth place (eighth place in Class 2 races) started in December for a twelve month period.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

In recent years members’ demands for legal support have escalated. This takes the form of an increasing flow of calls to our Legal Executive, Dawn Bacchus and requests for legal representation at employment disputes and BHA Disciplinary Enquiries.

Having received the approval of members at the AGM, we transferred our legal contract on 1st May to Darbys and with Lycetts help we launched a comprehensive Legal Assistance Scheme to supplement the existing in-house offering. As well as providing low cost insurance cover for legal expenses including BHA disciplinary cases and employment tribunals, it established helplines for employment and general legal enquiries. The cost of the scheme was absorbed by the NTF.

Calls to the helplines far outstripped expectations and though the number of claims for legal expenses has been low in the first eight months, other initiatives to help trainers have grown out of the new arrangements. A good example is the new guidance for trainers on credit management and debt recovery.

Changes in employment legislation and development of case law make it important for trainers to keep on top of procedures and processes. Dawn attended meetings at various yards to advise and assist trainers and their secretaries with employment and HR issues.

RACE PLANNING – WHO IS RUNNING THE SHOW ?

Philip Davies MP, our guest at the AGM, gave a candid view from someone close to bookmakers about the prospects for racing receiving more money from offshore betting operators. However, he struck a chord with trainers when advising racing to stick to the race programme that meets the needs of the sport rather than complying with the beck and call of the betting industry. In some ways this was brought into sharp focus with the outcome of the BHA consultation on the 2015 fixture list. Small field races were the target for policy makers. While horsemen see no harm in a race with fewer than eight runners, there was consensus that in general they do nothing for the attractiveness of the sport for racegoers and punters. With racing’s share of the betting market in long term decline, a policy of reducing the number of small field races is understandable. Less palatable was the BHA’s decision to axe at short notice races with fewer than five declared runners from 1st January 2015.

We were less successful than in 2013 on improving the fixture list for northern jumping. Our meeting with trainers at Kelso in April concluded that eliminating double header days in the north was the priority. Initially we had BHA and racecourse support for this but having resolved some examples in the first round, later racecourse moves undid the good work. In the end we could only point to a small increase in fixtures for our efforts. Longer term reasons to be hopeful can be found in Jockey Club Racecourses’ working group led by Lord Daresbury and Steve Harman’s commitment to me that northern jumping would be an item on BHA Board agendas.

After several years of new initiatives, field sizes in novice chases, particularly weight for age, continue to cause concern. The NTF put together a meeting of trainers with the BHA race planners in June. It concluded that further changes should be avoided to allow trainers to get used to the latest arrangements and analyse their effect over the longer term.

RACECOURSES – ALL ABOUT THE ALL-WEATHER

At the turn of the year Wolverhampton Racecourse's deteriorating all weather surface was the key bone of contention. The NTF communicated trainers' anxiety about the injury risk to their horses to the BHA, who responded with statistics that weren't corroborative. There was no doubt the track had become a conglomerate of different materials that didn't bind together to make a sound racing surface and field sizes fell as trainers became ever more selective about the horses that could cope. ARC agreed to replace the track and came to the NTF for guidance on the trainers' preference. In March we conducted an online survey indicating equal support for Polytrack and Tapeta. Bravely, ARC chose Tapeta and when racing resumed in August field sizes were up and the feedback from trainers was wholly positive.

Meanwhile, storm clouds had gathered in the north. We closed last year's report on the emerging controversy about ARC's plans for an all-weather track at Newcastle. In May the NTF surveyed trainers, who opposed the conversion of the Newcastle flat turf course to All-Weather by a majority of two thirds to one third. Crucially the majority was diminished when the survey suggested there was no alternative in the foreseeable future. Alarmingly the BHA seemed powerless to prevent ARC applying for all weather fixtures at Newcastle for 2015. Members and others in racing asked us if anything could be done so in August the NTF launched an online petition putting the simple request to ARC "Don't destroy the flat turf course at Newcastle Racecourse." It was an immediate success drawing hundreds of signatures from within the sport and racing fans. Momentum was gained in September when Catterick revealed it was well advanced with its own plans for an All Weather Track, confirming the NTF Northern Region position that Catterick was the trainers' preference. Ultimately it was ARC's inability to comply with the BHA rule requiring two races of over one mile at each fixture that brought the plan to a halt. The Horsemen's Group refused to support an exemption, which the BHA Board therefore denied.

As much as anything that happened in 2014, these episodes showed that when members give us demonstrable support, the NTF has real influence on major industry issues.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES MAKE HEADLINES

The NTF has fully supported the BHA's proactive lead to set uncompromising international standards prohibiting the use of anabolic steroids. It's pretty annoying to be encouraged to collaborate and then be given only ten minutes warning before a new policy on such an important issue is briefed to the media, as happened with the BHA's launch of its anabolic steroid policy in June. Key stakeholders should be trusted and we could have ensured the BHA avoided some of the banana skins. Even so it was another two months before the BHA got round to discussing the practical aspects of implementation. Not surprising then that draft rules made available in November contained some completely unacceptable proposals on identifying the person responsible for the horse at different points in its training.

Rather than be railroaded, the NTF refused to succumb and played hard ball. When the BHA decided it couldn't press the button for a 1st January 2015 implementation and put it back several months, we could at last give credit. The NTF would much rather be part of a system where parties show each other some respect rather than be forced to get tough when ignored.

Although it was a serious issue, the contamination of feed with morphine became a major news story only because the Queen's Estimate was a sufferer. Behind the scenes there was plenty for the NTF to deal with. Concerned at the fractured communications between those involved, we suggested regular conference calls so everyone was updated on developments and external communications were agreed. It has been agreed that this was useful and should be the model in future. Disciplinary aspects were straightforward but liability and compensation is more complex. Two positive developments are a closer working relationship with the British Equine Trade Association (BETA) and the creation of some best practice guidance on preventing positive samples from Naturally Occurring Prohibited Substances.

STABLE STAFF SHORTAGE LOOMING

When I started at the NTF in 2000 a senior Newmarket trainer said to me "What are you going to do about the shortage of stable staff?" I made it a particular focus of NTF work and by teaming up with IEPUK we agreed criteria with the Home Office for recruiting migrant workers from outside the European Union. This was an incredibly successful programme but with immigration becoming such a hot political topic, the current Government's (misguided) policy has swept away a scheme that underpinned the strength of British racing. A shortage of skilled staff is building up again and the NTF has made this known within the review of vocational training and careers marketing that the BHA undertook in 2014.

Our Memorandum of Agreement with the National Association of Stable Staff over pay and conditions of employment took another significant step forward in 2014. We revamped the pay grades, converting Grade A, which didn't recognise the range of skills and responsibilities amongst experienced members of staff, into three new Scales, each with specified skills and seniority. In addition we have for the first time differentiated the senior scales by introducing escalated minimum pay rates. By continually modernising the agreement, we can be confident that racing offers the most attractive and well regulated terms of employment in the equine sector.

As a director of the British Horseracing Education and Standards Trust (BHEST) I was sorry to witness BHA's dismantling of its historic functions. Inevitably the BHEST Board felt racing was best served by a bespoke awarding organisation for its vocational qualifications. The BHEST executive's key relationship is with the training providers and the British Racing School and Northern Racing College clearly advocated a change. Their arguments and the apparent cost savings persuaded the BHA to reallocate BHEST's qualification and funding distribution roles, leaving it with only the Racing to School education programme. BHEST was the guardian of the trainers' contribution to funding for stable staff training. The NTF will maintain its ability to influence the way this is spent through the Industry Recruitment, Training and Education Committee.

AUTO ENROLMENT ADDING TO BUREAUCRACY

Nearly every newsletter and many other communications to members have contained information about the new workplace pensions, known generically as Auto Enrolment. This legal requirement for all employers began to affect the larger employers in July and will extend to smaller employers through the next two years. To help trainers to comply, we created a special guide, which explained the choice of schemes and which was updated regularly as Pension Regulator advice, Government legislation and the evolving market dictated.

Having borne the burden of pension legislation for many years at great cost, the NTF's strategy is to withdraw from involvement in pensions. We are moving slowly towards winding up the old occupational arrangements and once Auto Enrolment covers all trainers, we will terminate the current industry pension scheme, which does not meet the Government's criteria for auto enrolment schemes.

HELPING OUR OWN

The winter of 2013/14 will be remembered for the dreadful flooding that affected so many parts of the country. Catastrophe befell Carroll and Christine Gray in Somerset as their stables and gallops were submerged and destroyed. The NTF was able to provide moral and practical support but it brought home to us the lack of relief funding for members facing financial hardship. In response the NTF adapted the Council's suggestion that foreign trainers should make a contribution to the NTF when winning races in this country.

We put a proposal to the BHA that foreign trainers' should make a contribution from their British prize money to a benevolent fund for British trainers. Our proposal received a positive reception and we hope the BHA will confirm its introduction in 2015.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Communication is the life blood of a membership organization. Our range of news platforms includes the printed newsletter, weekly email update, ntfmuse blog and Twitter account. In 2014 we extended our scope by conducting several influential online member surveys.

The first gave trainers a central role in choosing the new All Weather surface for Wolverhampton. Support was split equally between Polytrack and Tapeta but crucially gave ARC the confidence to opt for the latter – an innovative choice.

The second survey established evidence of trainers' opposition to the conversion of the Newcastle flat turf track to All Weather and preference for an alternative location for an AWT in the north. This was vital evidence to influence the BHA Board.

Finally, the BHA asked us to survey trainers on their experience of stable staff recruitment as part of its Career Marketing strategy. Interestingly this didn't pick up at the time the impending shortage.

CONCLUSION

My report picks out the highlights of 2014 but it's important to remember that the executive team is a daily source of information, advice and support to members. Behind the more high profile and serious issues is a permanent support service with the phone ringing constantly with all sorts of enquiries. Sometimes these are routine and come into the FAQ category but some are completely new and unpredictable. I am grateful to all the team for their reliability and good humour.



J R Arnold
Chief Executive

ACCOUNTS

Summary of financial position as at 31st December 2014

The information below is extracted from the Federations' full accounts for the period, which are audited by Nexia Smith & Williamson and are to be presented to members for formal approval at the AGM.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

	2014 £	2013 £
TURNOVER	407,622	391,468
Personnel and officials	(266,990)	(260,853)
Administrative expenses	(81,060)	(123,156)
OPERATING SURPLUS	59,572	7,459
Interest receivable and similar income	4,546	8,518
Interest payable and similar charges	(736)	(469)
SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION	63,382	15,508
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	(1,062)	(1,790)
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	62,320	13,718

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2014

	2014 £	2013 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	68,710	78,401
Investments	-	242,606
	68,710	321,007
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	22,803	21,147
Cash at bank and in hand	435,387	126,370
	458,190	147,517
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	(112,407)	(116,351)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	345,783	31,166
NET ASSETS	414,493	352,173
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Accumulated fund	414,493	352,173
	414,493	352,173

**PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014**

	2014 £	2013 £
TURNOVER		
Subscriptions	378,411	365,961
Sundry income	8,794	9,814
Insurance commissions	12,529	8,751
Management fees	7,888	6,942
	<u>407,622</u>	<u>391,468</u>
PERSONNEL AND OFFICIALS EXPENSES		
Salaries and wages, including pension contributions	239,163	232,017
Committee meeting expenses and room hire	6,836	10,597
Motor, travel and subsistence	12,142	10,909
Motor vehicle depreciation	8,849	7,330
	<u>266,990</u>	<u>260,853</u>
ESTABLISHMENT EXPENSES		
Printing, postage and other office expenses	24,127	19,687
Repairs and maintenance	8,968	10,042
Telephone and fax	7,043	4,272
Badges	4,370	4,225
Gifts and donations	1,751	1,732
Bad debts	–	345
Insurance	3,547	3,442
Business rates	(1,539)	2,230
Light and heat	1,591	1,611
Depreciation	3,126	3,398
Loss on disposal of tangible assets	10	860
Horsemen's Group loan provision	(27,268)	–
	<u>25,726</u>	<u>51,844</u>
FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL		
Stable Employees Pension Plan expenses	2,755	33,052
Weatherbys management fees	5,652	5,662
Industrial advisory service	2,614	3,294
Other professional fees	11,692	14,050
Legal fees	4,205	10,004
Audit fees	5,825	5,250
Legal assistance scheme	22,591	–
	<u>55,334</u>	<u>71,312</u>
INTEREST RECEIVABLE		
Bank interest	<u>4,546</u>	<u>8,518</u>
INTEREST PAYABLE		
Hire purchase interest	<u>736</u>	<u>469</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).



Photos by Matthew Webb

**THE NATIONAL TRAINERS FEDERATION AGM AT THE TURF CLUB LONDON
27TH FEBRUARY 2014**



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