

BDC Notes



Graham Turner
BDC Chairman

Incumbent upon the Chairman of the BDC is that he should report annually to the members with a concise summary of the previous years achievements and set out the objectives for the forthcoming year.

As most members will know, the SIG's have met regularly both socially and for business during the year and notes of their activities have been carried in previous editions of the RGBB News. No need to repeat them here.

The primary objective of course, of the Business Development Committee is to promote UK plc. This has required constant liaison with all the staff in the Commercial section at the Embassy and I thank those present and past for their assistance. Members of the RGBB now get advance notice of Trade Missions & specialist visitors enabling much more active assistance to be given on their subsequent arrival in Kingdom.

Following on from this activity, it has now been agreed that the relevant Embassy Commercial Officer, regardless of nationality, is assigned to an appropriate SIG in order to develop this partnership further. It was good to see the locally engaged staff at our last meeting.

On a practical level, we use the mechanics of the BDC to disseminate information on major projects from oil & gas to road building. Discussions have been had on financial, labour and other matters, some of which, being of a confidential nature, is not minuted. This information has proved to be invaluable to those members actively involved in the SIG – yet another reason for you to join in!

From time to time we receive details of UK companies looking to bring their products and/or services to Saudi Arabia. We can evaluate these opportunities through the BDC or specific SIGs and perhaps steer them towards the right partners. This is an area with considerable scope for expansion and we hope to bring you more about this in the future. Later in the magazine

you will find some specific details of UK companies currently seeking agents or representatives. If you need any help in evaluating these opportunities please give me a call.

Another objective of the current year will also be carried forward, and that is to assist where we can, in opening up the Kingdom to external investment and to create a more user-friendly legal framework in which to do business. Through David Hodgkinson we have opened up discussions with SAGIA and after the public profile of meetings and dinners we are now busy behind the scenes to establish working parties with a number of government agencies.

Both the previous BDC secretary Martin Shaw and the current Steve Wagstaff, have been assisting in bring the minutes of the BDC and the SIGs into a records database so that members can see what is being discussed and follow up on areas of personal interest. Dialogue with colleagues in other groups in Kingdom and around the Gulf has improved over the year and our information network is expanding.

The forward objective of the BDC is very clear in this respect – our role during the coming year will be to increase member participation in the Special Interest Groups and we are working on plans to ensure that the SIGs have some meetings open to the general membership with guest speakers where appropriate.

New SIG's are also being considered where we have sufficient members showing interest and Gareth O'Brien has offered to host the initial exploratory meetings in this respect. Specific details of dates, times etc have been or will be sent out by Louise.

In closing I would like to thank those individuals who have participated in group activity over the year. We are all volunteers, but the efforts put in by the few have benefited the many. Should anyone feel they can contribute to the running of any special interest Group existing or planned - don't be shy - give me a call.

Construction SIG



Eric Edge
SIG Chairman

The Construction SIG met in March at the Zahid Tractor offices in Riyadh and initially reviewed the minutes of the BDC which had been held earlier in the month. Of particular interest were discussions on Saudisation which revealed that that Government Grants were available to cover the costs of the first two years of Saudi employee training.

A healthy discussion followed on various means of increasing group membership. Paul Gent was singled out for his assistance in arranging the excellent Construction Group Curry evening which had been attended by over 80 members and their guests.

It was agreed that future meetings should include a

mixture of social and business and to that end a date of Sunday 5th May has been established for a Construction Group business meeting to be held at Arabian Homes when there will be a guest speaker

Luke Bowen updated the group on the 'think-tank' which has now delivered its report to the board. One area of particular consideration for the group would be to increase the numbers by recruiting more of the technicians in the Kingdom. Further discussions moved on to improving information flow back to the SIG on new members for whom Construction SIG might be an area of interest. Various suggestions from the meeting have been fed back to the Board for consideration.