

BDC NOTES



Chris Maybury
BDC Chairman

Since the last RGBB Newsletter, things have been relatively quiet with the SIG activities and a few changes have come about.

Simon Blackledge, who was instrumental in re-launching the Financial Services SIG had to step down and Paul Raddon has come forward to take over the Chair. Thanks to Simon for his persistence in keeping the Group together.

In conjunction with the Embassy, the Financial Services SIG will be holding a networking/social evening at our favourite venue as soon as possible.

Just as we were getting the revival of the Healthcare SIG off the ground, we lost the services of Philipa Kirkpatrick who escaped to Qatar with William. By the time you are reading this, we should have a replacement Chair for the HC SIG but I think that I have forgotten to tell the member.

Jim Mann is handling the Security and Safety SIG with SIGnificant enthusiasm and an effective and proven networking system is in place to the benefit of the members of the SIG. As I predicted in the Spring Edition of this hallowed journal this SIG has become the leading one at this time when we must all avoid becoming complacent about security matters.

Our External Relations representative, Nigel Astbury, is continuing with the excellent Special Briefings and

these have been projected well into 2007. Watch out for the notices to be sure of not missing any.

As I mentioned before, the Special Briefings are one of the best ways for members to locate and make themselves known to the respective SIG heads, so please come forward and get to know a few more like-minded members and maximize your membership benefits.

Please take the trouble to read and note the Events Calendar published by the UKTI, noting in particular the Inward and Outward Trade Missions. As the foremost British Business Group in this region, we all have a responsibility to encourage the individuals participating in the various missions and to do what we can to steer people through the maze of doing business in Saudi Arabia by passing on our front line experience and advice. With the UK pound still relatively strong, we need to give as much help as possible.

On the Aviation front, we all look forward to Bill Hedges Special Briefing early next year on the new Typhoon Eurofighter Project. With careful planning, there could be a long term spin-off for British industry in general.

For those that are interested, there will be a forthcoming Airports, Ports and Transport Security (APTS) Conference and Exhibition in London, 5 / 6 December.

Special Briefing

Beam me up, Saad!

On Monday, June 12, 2006, Saad bin Dhafer, General Manager for Corporate Communications and Marketing at Saudi Telecom captivated an audience of over 120 at the RGBB Special Briefing hosted by HE Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, the British Ambassador.

Saad's sparkling presentation took his audience from the recent history of telecommunication in Saudi Arabia to apparently futuristic concepts that time-wise are probably only just around the corner. From youngsters surfing the net via Wi-Max from laptops in Tahalia Street's coffee shops to more mature citizens being seamlessly switched between land-lines and mobile networks, the range of

developments being implemented by the industry as a whole is breathtaking. And of course, Saudi Arabia has both the wealth and the desire to grasp new technology that will make all this work. Try video-on-demand on your cell phone screen or - when it bounces



back - become a mobile day-trader on the Saudi Stock Market. While you are waiting, try any other exchange in the world - all from your mobile.

Saad's presentation was especially welcome as he kindly substituted for Khalid Al Molhem, who was unable to extract himself from his new responsibilities as President of Saudia Airlines. Not only did Saad prepare his presentation within 48 hours but, much to his credit, delivered it superbly notwithstanding a recent bout of laryngitis. The core theme to Saad's fascinating and wide-ranging tour de force was the great news that telecoms choice is set to expand while prices are set to fall. Hence, for all you Trekkies, not so much Beam me up, Scottie as Beam me up, Saad!

