



MINUTES

Participants

Johan Stevens (Portugal)
Beatrix Ostermann (Austria)
Sven Machielsen (Belgium)
Michal Jakubowski (Poland)
Tomasz Boruc (Poland)
Esther Estévez (Spain)
David Juan (Spain)
Rachel Chermain (France)
Magnus Siren (Finland)
Hans Henning (Germany)
Achim Laubenthal (Germany)
Jose Matos (Portugal)
Terje Røising (Norway)
Ron Kompeer (Netherlands)

Staff

Sue Knight (FEST Director General)
Hassan Abou Jawhar (FEST Manager)

1. Welcome and Introduction

i. Welcome note by FEST Director General and a reminder of Compliance statement

Sue Knight (SK) welcomed everyone and reminded all participants of the Compliance Guidelines governing all FEST gatherings.

ii. Approval of previous minutes, 14 March 2019

Due to the current circumstances surrounding the global Covid-19 crisis, all action points from the last GA will be reviewed during the next face-to-face meeting. All attendants approved the minutes of the last meeting of March 14, 2019.

iii. Approval of the agenda

All attendants approved the agenda of the meeting.

2. Rotation of the FEST Presidency

❖ Welcome note by FEST President

Beatrix Ostermann (BO) expressed gratitude for the recognition she had received from the members for her hard work and tremendous contribution to FEST over the last couple of years. She briefly summarized her period as FEST President, a highlight of which was the successful 2018 Congress in Vienna where the focus had been on how to stay competitive in a digital world.

During her term as President, a great deal of effort was put into to the development of the European Master Data Guideline (EMDG), a European Standard for product classification. In 2019, FEST



established an expert group, comprised of wholesalers and suppliers, to work on its formulation. Sadly, the initial launch of the Guideline has been delayed due to the cancellation of the latest EMDG workshop this April as a result to the global lockdown.

Finally, BO thanked all members, in particular the support provided by SK and Kellen in helping to accomplish FESST's objectives. She wished Johan Stevens, as incoming FESST President and his future Vice-president, the best of luck for the future.

❖ Handover to Johan Stevens from Sanitop (Portugal) with immediate affect

Johan Stevens (JS) said he was grateful to all members for entrusting him to take FESST to the next level in becoming a more professional trade body. He promised to show drive and commitment in moving FESST forward, especially during the global crisis affecting all sectors of the industry. JS reiterated that he would adopt the current FESST strategy as a basis upon which to build and improve. When circumstances allow for future face-to-face meetings, strategic discussions will recommence with the FESST members.

3. Appointment of future FESST president

A request for nominations for the role of Vice President was issued at the 2019 General Assembly, following which Ron Kompeer introduced Mr Edgar Aker (Vice President of Solar Nederland BV and newly elected President of TGF in The Netherlands) to the FESST Board. The FESST Presidency held several teleconferences with Mr Aker before meeting up with him at the January Workshop in Brussels, where he was introduced to other members. He demonstrated great interest and motivation in joining FESST.

Edgar Aker's nomination as FESST Vice-president was formally approved by all members present. Countries unable to attend the call and for which no proxy had been received were Denmark, Luxembourg, Sweden and The Czech Republic.

4. Approval of the accounts

❖ Approval of the 2018 Audited and Filed Accounts

An external team of accountants was appointed in order to finalize the accounts for 2018. However, the accounts were not formally audited by Dr Henning until after the 2019 General Assembly. There being no queries from the members, the 2018 accounts were formally approved.

❖ Approval of the 2019 Audited Accounts

The 2019 FESST accounts were prepared and finalized by Kellen accountants and audited in January 2020 by Dr Henning and Mr Feyereisen in Brussels. They show a positive result of €15,212.05, however SK explained that Kellen's costs had only been included from July to December 2019. There being no queries from the members, the accounts for 2019 were formally approved.

5. Annual subscription fees 2020

Hassan Abou Jawhar (HAJ) shared a slide showing the annual subscription fees decided in Brussels in 2016. The rates charged are traditionally based on the turnover figures submitted by each member country for the Almanac which is printed prior to each bi-annual FESST Congress. A further Almanac will be issued prior to the next FESST Congress in Lisbon.

In light of the extreme crisis affecting all European countries, JS proposed a one-off reduction of 20% for the Regular and Associate members' fees in 2020. In addition, SK had negotiated a 20% reduction to



Kellen's annual costs and had offered to take a 30 % cut to her own fee. All members present voted to approve the proposal by the Presidency as a one-off reduction for 2020.

Action: Kellen to invoice members at the reduced rate of -20%

6. FEST Bi-annual Congress

Due to the current crisis, JS proposed to postpone the FEST Congress, originally due to be held on 1-3 October 2020 in Lisbon, and reschedule it to 16-18 September 2021, after successfully renegotiating with the hotel. Several supplier sponsors had also contacted JS and stated that they were looking to make cost reductions for 2020.

JS explained that his company, Sanitop, had incurred around €75,000 of costs for accommodation, conference speakers, etc. Whilst he had tried to recuperate some of the money, this had not been possible. As liquidity is one of the major challenges encountered by companies at this time, JS requested a loan from FEST funds as a deposit for the Congress. All members present agreed that FEST should cover the full amount of €75,000.

Action: JS to invoice Kellen for the loan of 75,000 Euros

7. FEST General Assembly meeting 2020

Mostra Convegno is rescheduled to take place between 8 – 11 September 2020. As such, the plan is to move the FEST General Assembly to Thursday 10 September, with a dinner on Wednesday 9 September.

8. FEST 2020 Budget

The proposed budget for 2020 was shared with the members (see Slide presentation). The proposal revealed a 20% Membership subscription fee reduction and included other cost saving measures like:

- ✓ a 20% reduction for Kellen;
- ✓ a 30% reduction for the Director General;
- ✓ reduced travel and meeting expenses;
- ✓ no Congress costs;
- ✓ cancellation of the Squadra maintenance charge;
- ✓ postponement of the Young Merchants' initiative.

SK explained in detail the anticipated income and expenditure variances within the proposed 2020 budget. This resulted in a potential profit of around €26,060 for 2020. The budget was approved at this point but would be revised later in the year if the current lockdown continued for a prolonged period.

9. Any Other Business

SK reminded the members about the FEST Newsletter circulated in collaboration with Krammer Redaktion and hoped that all the national FEST Wholesaler Associations had received it and circulated it to their members. There was some doubt as to the effectiveness of the distribution and Hassan agreed to investigate further. **(Action HAJ)**

On another note, Magnus Siren informed the participants that ETIM International would like to finalize the Smart Etim Classifier and have it released as soon as possible. This topic will be discussed at future FEST meetings.