

CLIMMAR Conference notes for Presidents report; BAGMA UK.

BAGMA Activities and Events for 2015;

In 2015 BAGMA have been working on restructuring its Council and committees recognising that peoples time is precious and those who are involved in committees need to get something from them for their businesses. WE have a new AGR-TEC Group made up from experts from dealers and some younger people from industry to focus on training and education and technical changes. WE are creating a committee for Outdoor Power Equipment and Ground care and have been changing things within our own Council to reflect the changes in the industry and the demise of some of our Regional Groups.

We are promoting mini regional conferences with the idea of having at least two a year covering industry topics as well as exhibiting at some of the UK's machinery shows.

We are involved in developing new apprenticeship schemes in line with government changes to training and will have the only schemes for apprentices in our industry from next year with a Trailblazer programme.

Our programme to change the rules for tractor and trailer combination speeds and weights has passed its first phase and we are in discussions about the second phase introduction for 2016.

We are now working hard on the issues relating to the introduction of RMI in 2018 with our CLIMMAR colleagues.

As a trade association we are having to deal with a host of new legislation being introduced around Consumer Rights, Consumer Credit Licences, National Living wage changes, employment law amongst some of the things we have to deal with.

New initiatives;

These are to do with our committee structures and training and the need to recognise the way the industry is changing. We are also, slowly, trying to address the need to encourage younger people to take part in trade associations activities and get away from the impression that we are just an 'Old boys' club.

We have worked with the manufacturers association, the AEA, this year on a number of projects to do with training and bringing together the supply chain with the dealer network in some areas. We have created, with the AEA, a new Outdoor Power Equipment Price Guide App to replace the previous paper copy versions that covered all of the new machine prices in the OPE sector.

Within in our own organisation, bira, we are looking at our membership charges, service provision and membership bands to better reflect the changes in industry.

BAGMA have moved into the Social Media Age and have joined Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn with the idea of improving our communication to our members.

We have also just launched a new BAGMA E Bulletin to go out by email to our membership and potentials. We link this into our BAGMA Bulletin magazine.

DSI Survey;

The response to our DSI survey this year has been disappointing as we have only received 140 replies across 15 brands. Last year we sent out 700 survey forms to head offices and branches of tractor franchised dealers. This year that number has dropped to 600. We believe this is due to consolidation and mergers within the dealer network. We are looking to put our survey results on the web site and promote its benefits electronically through all types of media.

Membership Recruitment and Retention;

Our efforts for the rest of 2015 and going into 2016 will be on membership recruitment and retention in the OPE sector. We will be looking for new services to offer members and ways of attracting new members into BAGMA. We have a lot to offer but it is difficult to get these messages over to potential members.

Our membership for the first half of 2015 is up by 2% overall but only represents about 25% of the potential available market across both agricultural and OPE dealers.

Dealer Business in 2015 and 2016;

With like for like tractor sales compared to 2014 and before we see this market reducing even further in 2015 for new machine sales. The strong pound has effected the sale of used equipment into mainland Europe and we see dealers holding high values of second hand equipment in their yards. Dealers and manufacturers who have hired out tractors on short term contracts are having problems moving on this equipment because of the deflated market in the UK. Sales of new equipment are slowing generally and we believe we are in for at least three years of difficult times for dealers in the agricultural machinery sector.

We are already hearing of dealers planning to close by the end of 2015.

Ends;
Howard Pullen,BAGMA