



**Minutes of Internet Watch Foundation Board Meeting
Tuesday, 26 April 2005 at 10 a.m.**

At London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE

Present: Roger Darlington (Chair), Christine Atkinson, Michele Elliott, Sonia Livingstone, Hamish MacLeod, Tink Palmer, Nick Truman, Ian Walden

IWF Staff: Peter Robbins (Chief Executive), Brian Wegg

Apologies: Mark Gracey, Jim Reynolds

1. Apologies and introduction

Chair opened the meeting and noted the apologies from Jim Reynolds and Mark Gracey. Jim Reynolds had given his proxy to Sonia Livingstone and Chair said he had allowed Mark to give his proxy to Hamish MacLeod.

2. Minutes of previous Board meeting – 25 January 2005

Approved as a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

Chair noted that actions 1, 3 and 5 were addressed as separate items on the main agenda and action 4 would be covered within the discussions on the all day Board meeting. In response to action 2, Sonia Livingstone gave a brief summary of the first meeting of the working group on the appointment of the new Chair. There were no other matters arising.

4. Chair's report

Board noted Chair's activity report and considered the arrangements proposed for the all day Board meeting on 19 July. Following discussions it was agreed that the formal Board meeting would start at 11 o'clock and the afternoon discussion sessions should be in a less formal setting. There would be two sessions including presentations and discussions: one on the IWF's communications strategy, and the other on technical developments on the Internet. The day would finish with a dinner to which the Deputy Chairman of Ofcom, Richard Hooper would be invited.

**ACTION 1: a) Secretariat to arrange the venue
b) Chair to invite Richard Hooper**

5. Operational Report

Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that this was the first time the Board will have received a report about the work of the hotline in this format and he planned to make this a regular Board item. Chief Executive highlighted some report trends. He explained a particular concern about examples of illegal content where IWF had notified a foreign hotline which had issued a takedown notice and the content had been removed. However, due to a technical issue with regard to another service associated with the hosting company the content had been innocently cached and was still available from this source. Following a discussion, Board expressed concern about this matter and invited Funding Council to consider how this issue may be addressed

ACTION 2: Funding Council to consider the technical implications of caching potentially illegal content

Board considered whether there were any issues for IWF takedown notices with regard to the hosting of content on other ports.

ACTION 3: Issue to be covered in the technical presentation to the next Board meeting



Board gave further consideration to the report statistics and some of the issues raised and asked that their thanks be passed to the hotline for a helpful insight into their work.

ACTION 4: Secretariat to email Board members with a statement covering IWF policy on Usenet newsgroups

6. Statistics for IWF web site

Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that the new web site enabled the gathering of more accurate data on visits to the various pages. He drew attention to the difference between the number of visits to the reporting page and the actual number of reports received by the hotline for the same period. Chief Executive outlined the improvements in the way the hotline processed reports in order to avoid duplication and the significant difference may be due to a number of factors, for example, potential reporters reading information on spams which IWF have already actioned or reference to the FAQs. Board endorsed the Chief Executive's concern about the difference and asked the executive to investigate the matter

ACTION 5: Executive to try and establish the reasons for the difference between the number of report page visits and reports filed

Board noted the helpful report and asked that some of the data be presented in a regular format at each Board so trends can be identified.

ACTION 6: The number of visits and the number of page views for each month up to one year to be presented in bar chart form to Board meetings

7. Chief Executive's Briefing

Chief Executive outlined his understanding of the latest position with regard to the role of SOCA and the proposal to create a National Internet Safety Centre which will deal with UK offenders and victims linked to paedophilia. The Home Office had no plans to compromise the role, remit or funding model of the IWF; on the contrary, the model was seen as an industry, government, police and public example of good practice for other countries to follow. He explained that SOCA would be in place by April 2006 but he was unsure whether the national centre would be fully operational at the same time.

ACTION 7:

- a) **CEO to monitor developments on the National Internet Safety Centre and keep Board appraised;**
- b) **Board notes that IWF's current role continues and we seek clarity on our interface and relationship with the centre;**
- c) **Our newsletter to include what we know about the centre and the date of introduction.**

Board noted the arrangements for out of hours contact and considered how they might support the CEO with specific issues. It was noted that there were a number of changes of staff at the DTI and Home Office.

8. Financial report

i) Members and sponsors list

The list was noted

ii) 11 month income and expenditure summary

Board noted the virement into the communications budget and the notes with regard to variations in planned expenditure.

iii) Provisional balance sheet to 31 March 2005

The position with regard to the reserve was considered and Board asked the Chief Executive to consider investment options.

ACTION 8: CEO to consider investment options for the reserves held.



9. Refined Budget 2005/2006

Board endorsed the refined budget unanimously.

10. Commercialisation of IWF database

Chair recapped on the background to the report and the revised recommendations from the working group. Chief Executive explained that although there had been a number of enquiries about access to the IWF database from companies based in the US and Canada, the liability issues and resulting insurance premiums were proving a difficulty. Board noted that a Due Diligence process for IWF to apply to non-members was under development. Board asked the executive to take into account any vetting recommendations coming from the post-Bichard working groups and consultations. Subject to Board approval of an appropriate Due Diligence process the recommendations were supported unanimously.

ACTION 9: Due Diligence process to be finalised and approved at the next Board meeting

Chair asked that Board's thanks to the working group be recorded.

11. Detailed 100 task work plan 2005/7

Chief Executive introduced the plan and explained that Funding Council had supported the plan subject to the inclusion of priorities, timescales, deliverables and further discussion when necessary on some project details. He explained that this was a dynamic document and invited Board members to continue to comment and contribute to the plan. It was noted that under work with the government, the Interdepartmental and Ministerial group on sexual offending should be added.

Board endorsed the plan unanimously.

12. Political Affairs

Chief Executive introduced the report, explained the background to the document and pointed out that the current contract for political affairs was the last of the IWF contracts that he wanted to test through a wider competitive tender. Board supported the principle of testing the market and expressed views about the most effective way of ensuring value for money. The meeting concluded that the services specified in the tender documents should essentially be requirement driven with the option of asking what additional services we could expect for additional bands of expenditure.

Some Board members expressed concern about definitions and what constituted government affairs rather than political affairs. Board concluded that we should test the market on the basis agreed but the overall communications strategy and government affairs should be re-visited in the discussions at the July Board meeting.

ACTION 10: a) Executive to test the market on the political affairs contract; b) Further discussion on communications strategy at the 19 July Board meeting.

13. IWF membership for subsidiary companies

The executive explained that the recommendations contained within the report did not represent a change of policy on membership but were designed to clarify IWF procedures when a member has or acquires subsidiary companies. The recommended changes in procedure were supported unanimously.



14. Usenet investigation

Chief Executive outlined the background to the report and explained that when newsgroup policies were introduced in 2002 concern was expressed that displacement to other newsgroups may take place. This had not happened in the three years of operating the policies and the report concluded that there was no evidence to suppose that the current increase in postings to previously innocent groups resulted from any form of displacement.

Board noted the detailed and helpful report and concluded that the executive should continue to monitor the position, review the application of newsgroup policies and report to the next Board meeting.

**ACTION 11: a) Position to be monitored;
b) Newsgroup policies to be reviewed and the outcome reported to the next Board meeting**

15. Charitable status - verbal update

The executive outlined the position with the application, explaining that the application had been referred to legal and technical commissioners. A letter had just been received from the Commission which was seeking further clarification on member benefits and our objects. The executive will seek clarification from the Commission and bring matters to Funding Council and Board when a response from the Commission is received.

16. Amendment to IWF constitution for approval

Notice was given on 16th March 2005 of the following amendment to the section of the constitution entitled, Operation of the Board:

Any recommendation from an IWF committee or sub-committee is subject to approval at a full Board meeting

The amendment was carried unanimously.

17. AOB

Board noted comments that the IWF communications strategy should also be targeting child protection professionals. Board members would liaise directly with the Communications Co-ordinator on their proposals and raise any outstanding issues during the communications strategy discussions at the next Board meeting.

There was no further business.

18. Dates for Board meetings for 2005

These were confirmed as 19th July and 1st November (all Tuesdays).

19th July confirmed as an all day meeting.

Meeting closed at 1 p.m.