

826 EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION AGM 12TH APRIL 2019

CHAIR'S REPORT

First, thank you all for attending at this busy time of the year. We do appreciate your support and hope that you find it useful in return.

There is any old Chinese proverb that says 'May you live in interesting times. Well, our first full year of operation has certainly seen us all experience that. What with the continuing saga of Brexit – and the lack of clarity about what our status will be as PIOs of a Third Country and how that affects our planning – plus the confusion about the Zootechnics regulations, the seemingly never ending series of MOPS revisions we receive, some still outstanding questions relating to the Central Equine Database and the growing biosecurity threats we all have to face, I think most of us are amazed at how we have all, as PIOs, got through it all and survived relatively unharmed and still very active. Congratulations to you all on that, from both the 826 ESA Committee and on our behalf your own members and all those who register their foals with you.

The issues raised by Brexit, Zootechnics, MOPS, the CED and Biosecurity will all be discussed more fully in later parts of the Agenda so my task here is just to outline how we have grown in the last 12 months and what we have done to try to represent your interests both at DEFRA level and worldwide.

At this meeting last year we had a wide expression of interest in the formal creation of the 826 Equine Studbooks Association (or 826 ESA as it is known in brief) and from that we now have 35 studbook members, the list of which has been tabled for distribution should you wish to have a copy. We also have 4 Observer member organisations (British Breeding, the BHS, the Central Prefix Register and the National Stallion Association) and 3 individual observer members (Lady Vestey, Jane Nixon and John Shenfield who attend committee meetings in an advisory capacity because of their individual expertise in matters that affect us). As far as the committee itself is concerned we are delighted that Simon Cooper of Weatherbys has now joined and the make up of the committee itself has remained unchanged although a couple of roles have had to be reallocated and your confirmatory votes on this will be requested later in the meeting.

Of the 16 studbook PIOs who are not members, 6 are based in either Scotland or Wales and prefer to deal directly with their own devolved governments, 4 are effectively duplicate organisations to existing 826 ESA members, 4 are daughter organisations of other studbooks based elsewhere and one (Breeders Elite Studbook) is run by someone who never joins anything in the UK anyway. That leaves just the Suffolk Horse Society as possible recruits (if anyone has any contact with them please help!) which is not too bad a result for the first 12 months I think we would all agree.

As far as representing you all is concerned, the 826 ESA now has its own secured seat at the British Horse Council which is the official organisation representing the Horse Industry to DEFRA, and as we are the official organisation representing studbook PIOs on that Council we are also the official organisation representing studbook PIOs to DEFRA. While that is a good position to be in we still have a long way to go before DEFRA finally realises that PIOs are not really that important in the scale of the horse industry itself (which again is only really of minor interest to them anyway) but we did actually get a (first ever) thank you message from them for the help we gave in preparing the application document replies for EU studbook approval post-Brexit.

Sandra Lawrence also attended a round table on horse identification for us and several committee members attended The National Equine Forum on our behalf as well as representing their own organisations. We hope to have our own presence there next year now that our funds are a little healthier so thank you to all you membership fee payers for that.

On an international scale three of us (myself, John Shenfield Eva-Maria Broomer) and attended the WHIRDEC meeting in Budapest last December (along side the WBSFH General Assembly which two UK member studbooks also attended) and we are looking forward to hearing news of the forthcoming WHIRDEC meeting planned for June (probably in Paris) but I think that has probably been delayed by other things! The October WHIRDEC meeting looks a bit more problematical as it is scheduled to take place in the USA (again alongside the WBSFH General Assembly) but hopefully Eva will be going as I certainly can't make it). Finally, in their positions at, respectively Weatherbys and the Arab Horse Society, we have an indirect presence at many international Thoroughbred and Arab (WAHO) meetings and so are kept well informed of the wider international horse scene.

In short it has been a very interesting and busy year and we cannot imagine what lies ahead now.