



The British Lubricants Federation

A short history

The formation of The British Lubricants Federation (BLF) may be traced back to the closing stages of the First World War when the submarine menace was at its height, with the consequent restriction on imports.

In May 1918 a meeting was convened by the Ministry of Munitions, a Department of State of the UK Government, to discuss the allocation of freight space of the principal lubrication oil firms in the country. The results of that meeting were very satisfactory and it showed what could be achieved if the industry was organised effectively.

At the time there were four Lubrication Oil Associations – in Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle, and while preliminary discussions continued to take place it was not until the 18th November 1919 that on the instigation of Manchester a meeting was arranged with all of the associations. It was then agreed to form a National Federation of Associations with a view to tackling collectively the post-war problems of the industry.

Rules of the new Federation were drafted but delays ensued, it being considered premature to form a Federation without the co-operation of the London firms. No such Lubrication Oil Association existed in London and negotiations were opened with the London Oil and Tallow Trades Association, which included many of the Lubrication firms.

Discussions and negotiations continued and on the 8th November 1921, at a meeting at the Great Eastern Hotel, the National Lubricating Oil & Grease Federation was formed, coming into existence formally on the 1st October 1921 with Mr W. Bruce Dick its first President.

Satisfactory progress as made in the early years but it was recognised that the Federation was not fully representative of the Trade and in 1923 Associations were formed and centred in Birmingham for the Midlands, and Leeds for Yorkshire. In 1924 the Lubrication Oil Members of the London Oil and Tallow Trades association formed a Lubrication Oil Association and so came into line with other sections of the Federation.

The Federation became a limited company in 1928. The Federation continued to prosper and was engaged in representing the Trade in numerous negotiations with Government Departments and in dealing with specific problems such as trademarks, codes of practice and research into Cancer.

In early 1939 the Federation nominated representatives to sit on the Distributors' Committee to function in the event of hostilities and one Federation representative from each area was appointed to that Committee. The Federation and its members were also fully represented on the main Oil Distributors' Emergency Council, which formed subsequently and came to be known as 'The Pool'.

As time advanced it was necessary to restructure and streamline the Federation to represent the whole industry and to be an Organisation with which any Government of the day could deal. Thus on the 7th August 1968 The British Lubricants Federation Limited was incorporated to take over the activities of the National Lubricating Oil & Grease Federation.

Constitution

The British Lubricants Federation was governed by a Council with representatives elected from company members.

The Council

The Council had responsibility for the policy, mission, control, complaints, quality, succession, financial controls, priorities and resources of the Federation.

The Council was supported by six working groups, each led by a co-ordinator from Council;

Member Services Working Group

Responsible for Membership, IT development, Annual Dinner, Conferences, Technical Visits, Branches, Lube magazine, Membership Directory and Internal Relations.

Marketing/External Communications Working Group

Responsible for Code of Ethics, Federation External Relations/Promotion, Image/Perceived Value, Statistics/Industry Trends, Government and Industry Lobbying and Promoting Competitiveness.

Education & Training Working Group

Responsible for Training programmes Co-ordination & Development, Internal best Practices, Training Seminars, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Sector Targets e.g. 'Investors in People'.

Finance & Long-Term Planning Working Group

Responsible for Income streams, Budget, Subscriptions and Long term Plan.

Technical Working Group

Responsible for Base Oil Technology (including White Oils), Automotive Lubricants Technology, Metal Working Fluids technology, Technical & Health Advisory Group (including Health, Safety and Environmental).

Operations & Logistics Working Group

Responsible for Production, Distribution, Workplace Health & Safety, Quality Systems and Training Implementation.

Members of The British Lubricants Federation Limited (BLF) were drawn from all sections of the lubricants industry, e.g. refining, importing, blending, manufacturing, marketing and distributing. There were, however, certain companies who did not readily fit into the aforementioned categories and membership of the Federation was open to these companies as Associate or Social Members.

There were four regional branches that enabled direct contact by Members to Council through the relevant Branch. The branches represented the following areas; London, North-West, Midlands and Yorkshire & North-East. All were autonomous and met from time to time both socially and to consider topical industry concerns and problems.

Over time many of the original Members from the early days had merged or amalgamated to become larger units. This meant that by comparison with The National Lubricating Oil & Grease Federation, The BLF's membership had become smaller in terms of numbers but a much more dynamic and indeed forceful organisation to represent industry in negotiations with Government.

The Federation was always consulted where matters concerning its members' interests were concerned and Council was confident of continuing the steady progress that had been achieved and looked forward to the future for the Federation.

The Mission, Long Term Goals and Aims of the Federation were

Mission:

To strive to achieve and sustain a progressive and viable UK Lubricants Industry.

Long-Term Goals

A British Lubricants Industry that is the most innovative, quality focused and internationally competitive in the world.

A British Lubricants Federation that is recognised as representing its members, comprising all the industry, both by UK and European governmental bodies and by the public.

A British Lubricants Federation that builds links with other trade associations and industry bodies.

Aims:

- To be the centre of excellence for the UK Lubricants Industry.
- To be the focal point for lubrication expertise in the UK.
- To ensure its work is relevant to all member companies and their employees
- To establish and maintain contact with Government Departments and to provide timely advice and information to the membership on current and pending UK (Government) and EC Legislation.
- To disseminate information to members through publications, News Flashes, Seminars and Lube magazine. To work directly with Government and other bodies dealing with matters of importance to the lubricants industry.
- To be perceived as the lead body for the Lubricants Industry, by Government and by associated industry bodies and particularly the membership.

The last decade of the twentieth century saw the increasing strategic importance of Europe which became a key driver behind the decision to merge The British Lubricants Federation and the United Kingdom Delegation to the UEIL - the European Lubricants Association, led by Hugh Dowding. The newly merged organisations came together in 2005 to form the United Kingdom Lubricants Association.

Past Presidents

The National Lubricating Oil and Grease Federation

W.BRUCE DICK	1921-22	F. WEATHERILL	1947-48
A.J.DODD	1922-23	J. RUSSELL KNOWLES	1948-50
R.HENZELL J.P.	1923-24	T.G BARR ADAMS	1950-51
A.DUCKHAM F.C.S.	1924-25	W.F.LIST	1951-52
V.F.EBERLE	1925-26	WE.DOUGLAS MILLER M.B.E	1952-53
H.BELL THOMPSON	1926-27	C.H. HUDSON	1953-54
JAMES TODD	1927-28	J.GRANT DEAS J.P. M.A.	1954-55
W.H.HOWE	1928-29	F.W.BRISTOW F.C.A.	1955-56
R.R.BIRD	1929-30	R.I.L BENTLEY M.A.	1956-57
W.H.HUXLEY	1930-31	H.C.WESTALL	1957-58
W.H.HOWE	1931-32	K.G.PRATT	1958-59
H.F.O'BRIEN	1932-33	N.K.WORTERS	1959-60
E.R.REDGROVE PH.D	1933-34	E.ATTWOOD	1960-61
W.BLACKWELL	1934-35	W.E.HICKLING	1961-62
E.R.IRWIN	1935-38	J.G.HUNTER B.Sc	1962
W.BLACKWELL	1938-42	J.A.C.THWAITES	1963-64
SYDNEY H.BEAN	1942-43	W.E.J.CROSS	1964-65
V.H.STOTT	1943-44	H.M.HOLT	1965-66
SYDNEY H.BEAN	1944-45	K.O'BRIEN	1966-67
T.W.RANSON	1945-47	W.B.BROADBENT, E.R.D	1967-68

British Lubricants Federation

W.B.BROADBENT	1968	J.T.CHAPMAN	1981-83
P.D.GEORGE	1968-69	T.G.SMALLMAN	1983-85
H.W.T BATES .D.F.C. B.Sc	1969-70	S.F.JONES	1985-87
W.A.PATRICK	1970-71	C.J.KETTEL	1987-89
P.C.MASTERS	1971-73	A.R.BRETT	1989-91
E.M.BRETT	1973-75	D.S.SEEK	1991-93
JOHN F.VICKERS, M.A.	1975-77	R.I.S.MEADOWS O.B.E.	1993-95
F.G.MOORE	1977-79	J.F.BARNES	1995-97
W.C.BURROWS	1979-81	A.PARSONS	1997-98