



Message from the President

by Julia Forjanic Klapproth

With this President's message I am confidently passing the baton onto our Vice President, Helen Baldwin. This transition is the first to occur under the 4-year system for the Vice President and President terms combined. So I would like to give you my perspective of how it went. After I convinced a rather hesitant Helen that she would be great in the position, she enthusiastically ran for and was elected into the position of Vice President. For the first time a Vice President did not have to hit the ground running. Instead of coming into office and being expected to coordinate a spring conference within the year, she was able to spend the first year acclimatising to her position and her role on the Executive Committee (EC). She could ask lots of questions about how things are done and she had time to watch and observe to figure out the why, when, where, who, and what of running EMWA... without having the full responsibility of it all. After 2 years as Vice President, I can say that she has grown into her role naturally and is ready to spread her wings and fly as President. And I am absolutely sure that I am passing the baton onto someone who EMWA can depend on and who will have excellent ideas to lead us all forward, which was the driving idea behind having a 2-year Vice Presidency. It was intended to ensure an opportunity for knowledge transfer and to bring stability to the leadership of the organisation. In my opinion, this system has delivered everything I had hoped it would. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank Helen for her constant support and great ideas over the last 2 years.

But the Vice Presidency is not the only position that will be changing at the elections during this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM). All of the elected positions (Web Manager and Journal Editor are appointed positions) are up for election, meaning we are still looking for nominations for these posts. To date we have received 2 nominations, 1 for the post of Public Relations Officer and 1 for the post of Vice President (see page 31 for their candidate statements.) However, I welcome more nominations for these and the other posts (Treasurer, Honorary Secretary). First, having a single candidate for a post does not make for a true election, and second, it would be great to have new members on the EC in the other posts to bring new ideas and initiatives to the committee. So if you have been thinking you might like to get involved, then talk to any EC member and find out which position seems best for you.

Another point that will be voted on during the AGM is the recommendation from the EC to move our company registration back to the UK. In fact, the UK company was never closed and so, should we decide to do this, the act would be one of awakening the dormant UK company, EMWA Limited. The reasons for recommending this move are multi-fold and the details will be outlined in the information to be mailed to you with the AGM invitation. But I thought I would briefly summarise the

key points: the administration in Switzerland is very complicated due to various laws (which can differ depending on the canton in which one is located and depending on the mood of the personal bureaucrat to which one is assigned) and the fact that everything is issued in German and must then be translated into English for our membership. While we were originally advised that we could save tax money by being headquartered in Switzerland, in fact, it is possible to run the company in a way that gives us similar advantages in the UK (a point which only became clear to us after receiving the sound financial advice from the financial department of our new head office provider). It is also very expensive to have a Swiss credit card payment facility, which would not be the case if we had a UK account. However, due to restrictions that have been implemented as a result of the global financial situation, we need to be an active UK company to open a UK account. Thus, while it previously seemed to be advantageous for EMWA to move to Switzerland, learning from the experience has shown that it is less expensive, less complex and equally tax friendly to be a UK organisation. Thus, we see no reason to continue our Swiss entity and would recommend to the membership that we reinstate our dormant UK entity to simplify the administration of the organisation.

The theme of this issue of *The Write Stuff* is regulatory writing, which will set the stage nicely for our upcoming conference in Ljubljana with the same theme. With the constant changes, updates and additions to the regulations that encompass drug development there is always something to be learned, which is what makes medical writing so dynamic and why, after so many years, I am still so enthusiastic about this profession. As a regulatory writer my life is full of challenges that keep me on my toes and I cannot imagine ever getting bored. I count myself lucky to have stumbled into a career so satisfying.

With that, I would like to sign off as your President. My goal when I came into office 3 years ago was to help EMWA develop an infrastructure that would give it continuity and stability. When I look at what we have achieved since then, I am content that I have at least contributed to this goal and it has been a pleasure to lead EMWA along this path. Now it is over to all of you to get involved. I became the Membership Officer at my first EMWA conference 11 years ago, at which time I coined the slogan that EMWA is an organisation by its members for its members, and I challenge you to continue to keep that flame burning.

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