



IAM RAISES THE BAR AT ADF CONFERENCE

If you missed it, you missed out. ADF chief executive **Brian Spratt** recalls the highlights of the ADF's annual conference



BRIAN SPRATT is chief executive of the Automotive Distribution Federation
 comment @ haymarket.com

Reviving the 'workout' element of the ADF Conference was part of the technique employed by our president, Quintin Cornforth, at the 2008 event in December. Using a mixture of direct questioning of speakers and teasing opinion from the audience, he allowed a theme of 'standards in the aftermarket' to develop.

The four main sections of the

presentations covered education and training; standards for components; industry data requirements; and independent garage owners' need for partnership with factors.

First up was Sarah Sillars, chief executive of the IMI, who gave a very complete breakdown of the Institute's role for the industry, guiding delegates through the maze of acronyms, projects and training providers.

Sillars evoked a warm reaction from the audience when she offered the services of the IMI in sourcing funding for parts companies wanting to train their staff.

REMAN HOSTILITY

Parts standards, especially in the field of remanufacturing, formed the core of TRW's Michael Von Linden's presentation. His declaration that the IAM needed standards for the parts it sells in order to

organisation - an industry non-profit body - is seeking to improve the quality of data supplied through its electronic cataloguing system. This will increase the effectiveness of TecDoc data and the individual motor factor.

Krampe said that car makers were making it more difficult for the IAM to identify parts. TecDoc is working with the international association for parts distributors, FIGIEFA, to obtain data from Vehicle Assemblers. He said that the access to technical parts data allowed in the Block Exemption Regulation is not enough; application information is just as important.

GARAGE PLEA

Ending the day on a note of controversy, Independent Garage Association chairman Jonas Zambakides found himself entering the lion's den when he

"CAR COMPANIES CONTINUE TO MAKE IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE IAM TO IDENTIFY COMPONENTS"

counter the hostile publicity of the car companies, was picked up by Conference chairman Quintin Cornforth, who asked why the industry needs to adhere to 'standards'?

Von Linden said: "The world is changing and regulation imposes need. It also helps define quality manufacturers. It can affect the future existence of the aftermarket and, if we don't impose these standards on ourselves, then regulators will impose something of their own design upon us."

He declared: "TRW takes standards very seriously. Other companies don't. And they are destroying the industry!"

DATA QUALITY

Taking the post-lunch 'graveyard slot, TecDoc's Michael Krampe managed to capture the audience's attention by explaining how his

addressed delegates.

His opening declaration that he bought most of his parts from Porsche (his company, JZMachtech, is an independent Porsche specialist), prompted grumbles from the audience but he explained that independent parts factors don't offer the breadth of OE parts for such specialised vehicles as does Porsche. This coupled with technical and cataloguing links to the sports car manufacturer, means that he is not a typical independent garage.

"But," he explained, "I'm here to represent my members, those typical independent garages. And I have to tell you that we need your help!"

He explained how parts distributors could add value to their customer relationships: "Quality parts to enhance quality service - one without the other devalues both."



Cornforth and Russell

The ADF Awards of Excellence, presented at the Federation's annual dinner following the Conference in December continue to set the benchmark for aftermarket achievement. Cups, plaques and Champagne were handed to the following worthy winners:

CV Supplier of the Year

Wabco Automotive.
 Chris Chapman collected the CV award for the third year running!

CV Distributor of Excellence

HGV Truck and Trailer Parts

Supplier of the Year

NGK Spark Plugs (UK) Ltd

Distributor of Excellence

Camberley Auto Factors
 David Russell, pictured right with Quintin Cornforth, was delighted to collect the award.

ATA PARTS PEOPLE

As reported in the previous issue of CAT, the ADF Conference provided the platform for the launch of a parts worker accreditation within the Automotive Technician Accreditation scheme. Two levels have been introduced: Parts Advisor and Senior Parts Advisor.

Accreditation involves practical assessments in areas including communication; sales and marketing; vehicle identification, parts picking and dealing with returns. Technicians can take a self-assessment by visiting the website **automotivetechician.org.uk**



Jerry Bart and Tony Sackett

The aftermarket really pulled out the stops for charity at the ADF's annual dinner in December. BEN's interim chief executive, Christopher Macgowan, was a VIP guest and Tony Sackett made the appeal on behalf of BEN. Not only is Sackett vice president of the ADF, he is also a trustee of BEN and has recently been appointed a vice president for the charity. Donations totalled more than £35,000 - an all-time record at the ADF - and included a cheque from Jerry Bart of Opal Telecom and the traditional cash collection from generous guests, which raised almost £9000.