



## Annual Report 2017

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### **Member Associations:**

Austria, Belgium, BIGGA, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Rep. of Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland.

### **Affiliate Member Associations:**

South Africa, GCSAA

### **Patrons:**

Aquatrols, Barenbrug, Baroness, Campey Turf Care, Clubcar, Dennis-Sisis, EIGCA, EGCOA, Elmwood College, ICL, Frank Newberry, Global Turf Company, GTC, Harradine Golf, Headland Amenity, Herbatech, Hunter, Indigrow, John Deere, Kainuu College, Le Golf National, Melspring International, Rain Bird Europe, Ransomes-Jacobsen, RE (GOLF), Spectrum Technologies, Steiner & Partner, Syngenta, Toro, Verschoor.

## **Overview:**

During 2017 FEGGA worked in the following key areas.

- Provided support to all our Member Associations.
- Launched the “Responsible Golf Course Management Document” Now translated into 6 languages.
- Through its strong developing partnership with the R&A, FEGGA engaged with many new and developing golf countries. This work is set to continue with the objective of making the greenkeeping profession stronger within Europe and beyond.
- Engaged in a Sterf research project through the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) “SUSPHOS” Sustainable phosphorus (P) fertilization on golf courses (2017-20)
- Attended and presented at many National Member Association events which has made its work clearer and more visible to many greenkeepers and underlined the benefits of FEGGA work.
- Produced articles for publication by Member Associations in their own magazines which have helped greenkeeper members learn more of FEGGA work in their own languages.
- Continued to develop a suite of Experience programmes for individual greenkeepers to continue their personal career development.

## **FEGGA Conference 2017:**

Quinta da Marinha was the venue for 21 Greenkeeper Associations to gather for what was two days of energised seminars and discussions which focused on many pertinent industry issues and challenges. It also challenged the representatives with Meeting Expectations in terms of golf today. The Conference was also attended by many of the leading industry and golf organisations, who equally played a significant role in ensuring that Golf and the supporting industries were well represented.

The subjects included Sustainable Focus, Responsible Golf Course Management, Education and Greenkeeper Experience Programmes, and Managing your Association. It certainly reflected well on our delegates, in how they presented on these subjects, and the knowledge demonstrated to achieve successful outcomes. The survey that took place immediately following the Conference supported this, as well as suggesting themes for 2018.

The industry engaged in a series of workshop sessions that focussed on the further development of the FEGGA “Responsible Golf Course Management” document. This document has already received global recognition, but can only continue if its content remains relevant, and in a format, that provides benefits to those using it. FEGGA intends that the document continues to be revised at each Conference, and grown in a way that gives benefits to all who seek to use it.

FEGGA continues to do more in bringing people and organisations together. Its Greenkeeper Experience programmes have provided valuable experiences for greenkeepers in many different Countries. It was very inspiring to hear of some of these experiences from participating greenkeepers at the Conference, and how it has helped them with the development of their careers.

FEGGA’s role is all about working with its Members Associations, assisting new associations, providing support, sharing information and resources, to enable Associations to provide improved services for their own members. The FEGGA Session “Managing Your Association” focused on a selection of topics, all relevant to today’s needs as expressed by associations. These featured Stress at Work, and what associations are doing to support this ever-increasing problem. It also focused on Continuous Personal Development, and how associations are using this as a valuable tool to engage with members. This session also allowed The Turf Managers Association of South Africa to share what they are doing as an association; their challenges, and their goals, in developing the role of Greenkeepers/Course Managers in South Africa. Again, as proven, we might be separated by thousands of miles, but we all have similar challenges, and all share the same passion and desire to make our profession stronger in supporting the game of Golf.

## **Development Roadshows in Partnership with the R&A:**

The Development Roadshow in Bulgaria, brought to an end a very positive and beneficial initiative in partnership with the R&A. This has allowed us during the past four years to make substantial progress and also to provide valuable support to many Countries throughout Europe and beyond.

### **Estonia:**

We have now completed three Roadshows in Estonia, the last of which was held in March 2017. Two of these included secondary training events before or after the Roadshow.

As a result:

- Estonia's Membership continues to grow, and they are also running other events to benefit their Membership.
- They now have a very good relationship with the Golf Association, and two representatives attended our last Roadshow.
- We introduced the R&A Scholarship Programme to many greenkeepers and made clear the opportunities.
- We have introduced GEO and the On-Course programme, and now feel that at the next Roadshow event we would like to consider a more practical approach taking clubs through a sign-up process of the On-Course programme using their own computers.
- In conjunction with the Estonian Greenkeepers Association FEGGA continue to try to engage with greenkeepers in Latvia, and Lithuania, and it was a positive sign that more attended this last Roadshow from these respective Countries.

*This has been a very successful initiative, and to see the progress they are making is very special. We are delivering good education, and we certainly feel that we would like to continue this work as well as attracting the other nearby Countries as discussed, which given their respective sizes could have greater benefits for them.*

### **Slovenia/Hungary:**

- As reported last year, Hungary gained considerably from our first Roadshow held in 2015, and we are certainly committed to assisting them further with their future development.
- Slovenia is a well-established and organised association. They are very motivated as an association to make further advances within the industry, and also build on the services offered to their members.

*A second Roadshow was held in Slovenia on the 14 – 15 November 2017, with some 55 attendees. We were able to attract greenkeepers from a number of Countries, along with having representation from all the clubs in Slovenia.*

*Our focus was to present a series of presentations that really met their current challenges, and the available tools to work with. This included Personal Development, which integrated some really good group work. We also introduced them to the benefits of using Measuring Tools to achieve best performance in partnership with the STRI.*

*It was also a great opportunity to present the R&A Scholarship programme, and its benefits, which given their desire for education, I am sure will create further interest and applications.*

### **Bulgaria:**

The Bulgarian Greenkeepers Association have existed as an association for some 10 years now, and currently have approximately 40 members. FEGGA have during that time given support to them in many ways, including taking a FEGGA Roadshow there in 2014, an event that was supported by some 50 greenkeepers.

- Bulgarian Greenkeepers Association have benefited greatly from our Development Roadshow held in 2016. Education is a very important part of their association mission, and I know the R&A Scholarship programme, and the Greenkeeper Experience Programme have benefited them greatly.

- As a follow-up to this work we ran a summer Study Tour for the Groundsman part of their membership.

*A second Development Roadshow was held in Sofia on the 17th November 2018, attended by 45 greenkeepers. Along with presentations by Wendy Cole, and Paul Miller of Elmwood College, promoting all aspects of the R&A Scholarship, we also presented an introduction and best use of IPM.*

*I think the work we have done through the Roadshows, and on other occasions, has really benefitted them through education and has given them the confidence to run their own association to meet the needs of their members who are taking a very sustainable approach in their course management.*

*Like Estonia, they have gained considerably through this development programme, and in recognising this we will be taking our annual Conference to Sofia in February 2018.*

*We are very committed to continuing development support to Bulgaria, as we feel that there is a great level of commitment from them to keep developing and to help provide them with the right tools can only be beneficial to the industry and the game of golf.*

### **Turkey:**

FEGGA completed its first Roadshow in 2015. This was a great start and was the first time in many years that all greenkeepers had come together.

- There is a high skill-level of Turf Maintenance, and a very professional attitude to the profession.
- They have indicated that they are very close to forming their first-ever Greenkeeper Association, but nothing has developed in this direction. There is full support from the Turkish Golf Federation, but it is the Greenkeepers who need to move this forward.
- Unfortunately, one of our main contacts, Ben Lovett, has now left Turkey and moved to the Czech Republic; however, we do have another contact making regular visits and maintaining our relationship.
- *The focus is to continue to build further communication with Fatih Sen and Fatih Sonus, with the objective of providing support and assistance when we feel it appropriate. However, we can only provide further investment once the commitment to make the move is demonstrated.*

### **South Africa:**

South Africa approached FEGGA in 2007 for help with their development. FEGGA held events at three different venues and introduced Elmwood College which led to a partnership providing educational support over subsequent years.

This led to South Africa becoming an Associate Member of FEGGA, and therefore able to take advantage of the Pan European Standards.

They have also from a distance played a part in the development of the “Responsible Golf Course Management” document.

During the last two years, we have held meetings with John Peach, current President of the Turfgrass Manager Association of Southern Africa (TGMASA) to identify current education and challenges in order to work out what they want to achieve. I have been pleasantly surprised by their progress, especially given the challenges that they face. This gave John Peach the opportunity to present at the Lisbon Conference and meet Wendy Cole during the event.

The TGSAMA have produced a document for us to better understand education in South Africa, and although pleasing there is still work to do in bringing all the right partners together for us to provide future structured support. FEGGA has encouraged the TGSAMA to work more closely with Silver Lakes to the benefit of both organisations and to greenkeepers.

## **SUSPHOS A Research project focusing on Sustainable phosphorus (P) fertilization on golf courses (2017-20):**

This is a project that FEGGA has engaged in at the beginning of 2017.

Main objective:

- Economic and environmental savings by reduced and more targeted fertilization with phosphorus (P) according to soil analyses.

Sub goals:

1. Determine the need for extra P fertilizer for Turfgrass reestablishment on sand-based golf greens at various soil temperatures in spring.
2. Determine the effect on turf quality/ spring green-up of foliar or granular applications of increasing amounts of P to established turf at various soil temperatures in spring.
3. Document by cases from golf courses the implications for turf quality and fertilizer costs by switching to the MLSN guideline for P.

A progress report will be delivered at the FEGGA Conference.

### **Responsible Golf Course Management Document:**

At the 2017 Conference, we all came together in a pledge for responsible and sustainable golf course management. All of FEGGA's 22 European national greenkeeping organisations agreed to promote and endorse a clear, detailed and ambitious strategic vision that embraces golfs potential to produce multiple benefits for nature and man. Included within this collaboration were representatives of the R&A and the GEO Foundation, and the result is that FEGGA were able to launch the document; "Responsible Golf Course Management"

"To put this Statement into context, it will serve as an ongoing set of tools to provide guidance to the greenkeeper in communicating Environmental Best Practice in golf to his members, directors and Owner.

The FEGGA board aims is to translate the document into all the member Associations native languages, and to date have translated into 6 languages. This will certainly allow the document to be far more affective and for golf to see the commitment FEGGA is making once again to Sustainable Golf Course Management.

At this coming Conference (2018), we are going to focus on another build on to the document and to make it electronically interactive, providing links to simple but important information and guidance for greenkeepers and golf clubs to help them with their own journey of sustainable management. It will then become a real resource within the FEGGA toolbox.

We plan to continually build on this initial statement and include case studies from successful projects and working practices. We will not pull any punches here. As well as inspiring our own greenkeeper members to improve environmental performance, the package needs to be a sensible, useful, practical working guide as to how to make improvements, and how to answer questions and scrutiny from those who pay for the maintenance of our courses. In short, we need to be credible and convincing and the document needs to be exactly that.

### **Greenkeeper Training Europe (GT-E):**

A decision was made earlier in the year to take this under the umbrella of FEGGA. The Board are considering a credible course of action to develop the very real potential of GT-E in furthering the formal education of European Greenkeepers.

This will include linkage into the Greenkeeper Experience Programmes, and how we can provide more recognition to the greenkeepers participating on the programmes in the future.

Updating the current website is a priority for the first part of 2018.

## **GEO:**

FEGGA' has again worked closely with GEO during 2017. We have provided platforms at many of our events for GEO during the year, which in turn has increased the awareness of their work and the benefits of the OnCourse programme.

The introduction of regionalisation within GEO will help provide more ownership to the Countries involved, particularly where the programme is being translated as this will provide easier progress within the OnCourse programme.

It is very important that National Associations engage with GEO and promote OnCourse with their own memberships.

## **Board meetings:**

During 2017, the board held two face to face meetings and came together on a regular basis via Conference Calls, and regular email discussions.

Due to career changes Kamil Pečenka (Czech Republic) will be stepping down as Chairman following one year of his term of two years. This has only recently been a decision made by Kamil and follows his decision to accept a new job which will start in March 2018. Although the Constitution would allow him to continue, it was agreed and decided by the board that this could result in a conflict of interest as the year progressed.

As a result of this decision, Paul Worster (United Kingdom), current Vice Chairman has agreed to take on the position of Chairman for the term of two years, this being proposed and fully support by the board. Paul also has the full support of his golf club.

As this is a very recent development regarding Kamil, the board have not had any time to discuss the election of a new Vice Chairman. The board will be discussing this situation at the forthcoming board meeting that will be held just prior the FEGGA Conference, and obviously ask for your support and patience in providing the time to ensure that the right decision is reached.

Joel Nunes (Portugal) will finish his first term of two years and is seeking re-election for a second term of two years. The board ask the membership to support this proposal.

Emmi Pietarila (Finland) will finish her first term of one year and is seeking re-election for a second term of two years. The board ask the membership to support this proposal.

As Kamil Pečenka (Czech Republic) will be stepping down, this leaves a vacant board position. Martin Nilsson (Denmark) has been proposed by the Danish Greenkeepers Association to serve for an initial term of one year.

## **Electronic Newsletter:**

The Newsletter, has become a regular feature and continues to receive positive feedback. Its reach continues to grow, and more associations feed it onto their own memberships, and/or share within their own National Golf Industry.

I would like to remind all associations to send me their association news, Conference dates, and any educational articles that you feel our subscribers would like to read, and please share the newsletter as widely as possible.

## **Patron Membership**

Our Patron Members are a major part of FEGGA, and their commitment in supporting us is vital to the success of FEGGA and we truly value the very close relationship that we have with all Patrons.

FEGGA currently has 33 Parton Members, and we are delighted to welcome during 2017 Biotechnica, Alan Lindsay, Capillary Concrete as new Patron members.

## **Greenkeeper Experience Programmes:**

Following on from the pilot projects run during 2016, The board used 2017 to further develop the suite of Greenkeeper Experience programmes. These are now complete and ready to be rolled out and will be launched during 2018.

These will form part of a Greenkeeper Experience Library comprising of:

- 4-week Greenkeeper Experience at a Golf Club
- Greenkeeper Experience Week
- Greenkeeper/Groundsman Study Tour
- Ryder Cup Greenkeeper Experience Programme

The programmes are aimed at Assistant and Deputy Greenkeepers who are seeking to increase their experiences within greenkeeping as a first step on the career ladder. The programmes aim to offer greenkeepers an opportunity to increase their greenkeeping skills, experiences and life skills and to give the participating clubs the benefits of new ideas and initiatives coming in from established greenkeepers.

The Greenkeeper experience programmes will deliver the following Aims and Objectives

- *To increase the skill-sets, experience, motivation and employability of aspirant Greenkeepers, Deputy Head Greenkeepers/Course Managers by ensuring a range of experiences are made available at different types of golf courses e.g. not only heathland & parkland etc but also those with different budget and operational levels.*
- *To increase the skill-levels within participating golf clubs by providing new key staff bringing different skills, opinions and motivations for short periods of time.*
- *To provide trained greenstaff with career-building opportunities.*
- *To maximise the skills, present within the industry practitioners for the good of the game.*

## **Business and Marketing Plan:**

### **A Focus on the next five years:**

This is a summary of the Business and marketing plan that the FEGGA board have engaged in during the last 12 months. It looked at all area of the current business, including a swot analysis, primary objectives, and future strategies.

A main priority for FEGGA over the next five years is to continue with assisting with the development of the new emerging golfing nations, the benefits of which are becoming very apparent.

The FEGGA Board estimates that some 5 Countries could join during the next five years. It is very important that through this process the larger associations give their support to this work and recognise the collective responsibility to grow the profession.

Finance is obviously a big consideration for FEGGA, just like any other growing organisation.

Currently, FEGGA operates with two people contracted to work a combined 30 hours per week and this is a limiting factor in the amount of work that can be done. Further steps will be taken to allow more initiatives to be developed for the benefit of FEGGA's growth, being mindful of the security of the people that work for FEGGA.

**Summary:** The FEGGA Board do not consider it appropriate to increase Membership or Patron fees more than the agreed rate of inflation, therefore the focus on income will remain in other areas to enable us to continue with the services we offer and want to expand on.

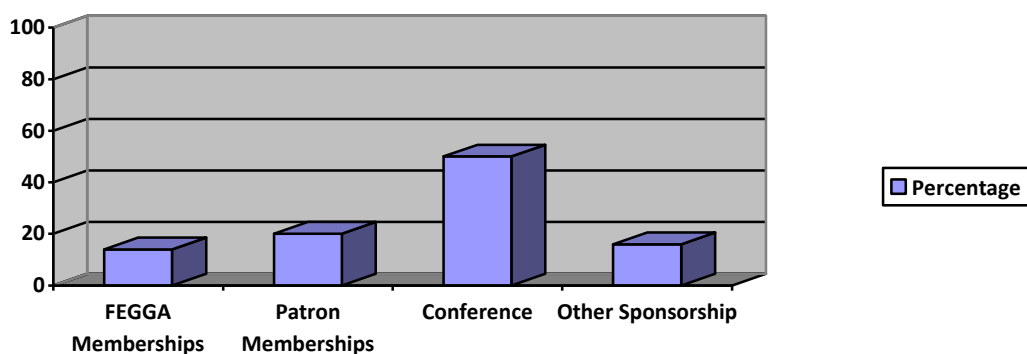
The FEGGA Board will maintain and look to expand the services offered through GT-E and ensure this vehicle remains fit for purpose.

A greater emphasis will be given to media and marketing, but care will be taken to ensure adequate resources remain to enable FEGGA to adequately support associations and their own development.

### **Financial Update.**

The annual turnover of FEGGA has held steady over the last five years and for the last two years has been at a level of €135,000 per annum. The FEGGA Board regards this as an adequate figure, but one that needs to grow by 10% to ensure all activities are feasible and affordable.

Currently FEGGA income is made up of:



### **Financial Commentary:**

- Membership fees represent a low percentage of annual income, and the FEGGA Board recognises that future membership growth will be restricted to smaller and developing golf countries which will not vastly increase revenue
- The FEGGA Board hugely appreciates the contribution of all its Patrons and works to ensure value for them. The number of Patrons is currently at a level which is commensurate with FEGGA resources in terms of regular communication and engagement.
- The FEGGA Board recognises that other forms of income and sponsorship need to be developed and is exploring the potential for improved Educational and Development events to achieve this.
- **Expenditure.** The main costs are the administration of the Federation which equate to approximately 46% which fits with current Planning. The FEGGA Board recognises the need for Succession Planning and is in close touch with its Executive Officer.

You will find a financial set of accounts attached with this report. The year was in keeping with current trends over the last number of years, and like all associations, the challenge of maintaining a good level of funding for us to invest in the many other significant projects and operations that we initiate, and support exists.

As ever we work hard at trying to keep our costs to a minimum, and also being careful to maximise on the events we support and attend.

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Finally, the board would like to acknowledge the support of its Associations, Patron Members and Industry Partners during the last year and look forward to working with them during the next twelve months.

*Dean Cleaver*  
*Executive Officer - On behalf of the FEGGA Board*