



HFMA UPDATE

by Martin Last,
Director General

Election year

We are all hearing the initial sabre-rattlings of an election campaign here in the UK between the major parties, with election promises on both sides starting to emerge. Whilst it looks like the autumn may be the key time for the UK, 2024 is set to be a major election period around the world – some call it a super-election year – and a key determinant of what we may come to expect in the subsequent years, maybe even for the future of democracy as we know it, as we enter an era of democratic backsliding.

It is anticipated that over two billion voters, more than half the world's population, will be voting in 2024 elections, covering more than 80 countries from the East to the West, including areas such as South America, India, Asia, Russia, Africa, Europe, and the United States.

Despite constant speculation, it is most likely that we will see an autumn election here in the UK, maybe after the political party conferences in November. It is unlikely to be before this, as the Conservatives continue to lag around 20 points behind in the polls and pushing for a spring election would be considered political suicide for the Tories at this time. There is talk of a major Labour landslide, but many MPs are advising caution of such a result as the polls always narrow during election time and it could also be that the election may be more closely fought than might be initially expected.

Other noticeable elections will be in Europe. The European Parliamentary elections are to be held from June 6-9 and will be the first since Brexit. It is being considered as possibly an extremely contentious election given the rise in the far-right parties in many EU member states and their increasing popularity in the polls. Such a move to the right would play into the hands for several countries to move forward on 'Exit'

manifestos for potential withdrawal from the European Union. Whatever the outcome, the political landscape in Europe is likely to change, and this may influence subsequent elections of the next European Commission that follows the Parliamentary process. We are already seeing political manoeuvring in the EU and preparations for the post-election landscape, with the extreme measures being proposed by the current administration on maximum levels pre-election as just one example.

In the United States, the Presidential elections are to be held on November 5. Despite all the news stories, there is currently only one candidate who has formally announced they will run, although it is expected that this will result in a contest between him, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden for the White House. There is much speculation again on possible outcomes, with concerns should Trump gain a second office as to what social and political impact this could have on the rest of the world.

HFMA appoint Cavendish

I am pleased to announce that in February, the HFMA appointed Cavendish to manage their UK public affairs engagement. Based in London, Cavendish are one of the leading public affairs companies in the UK, with over 150 experts nationwide in eight UK offices. They were voted as the number one agency for Public Affairs and Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) by PR Week this year.

Following a robust recruitment

process, Cavendish now has regular contact with the HFMA's established Political Engagement Committee with a tactical approach, insights and preparation that has identified our key political needs. We are currently establishing a planned schedule to obtain the maximum political context before commencing an active engagement of that plan.

Cavendish bring expertise to our engagement process with genuine insight and regular monitoring, designed to raise the profile of the HFMA and ensuring we have a seat at the table on policy decisions. They have considerable expertise in managing the needs and requirements of trade associations and will add to our existing ongoing contact with Government officials and authorities, as well as directly with MPs.

One of the core messages of our political campaign will be the standing of our industry and the need for supplementation and the benefits this brings to the UK population. This will focus not just on the social and economic benefits that comes from

keeping the UK population healthy but also the long-term benefit this has on taking pressure off the NHS. Too often, our industry is seen as an easy target for those who want to diminish our impact on the UK population whereas there is a real need for supplementation and a key role for it to play in the overall healthcare system. Our specific political campaigns on key issues will have as a basis this key core message throughout.

All these efforts will enable us to keep our industry and the HFMA at the forefront of the regulatory and political agenda. The HFMA will be keeping our members updated on this progress with regular meetings, ongoing bulletins, education and advice with our various *Insider* publications, webinars and CLEAR CHECK Chats, and training.

If you would like to know more about the benefits of membership to your company, simply visit our website, www.hfma.co.uk to learn more, or contact me directly at martin@hfma.co.uk



HFMA membership is vital to ensure that your company keeps abreast of the fast-changing regulatory environment. The HFMA is the UK's best source of information and most effective defender of our industry's interests. To help the HFMA defend your business at this most critical time, contact hfma@hfma.co.uk or call 020 8481 7100.

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