



Short-term trade finance

Cash is king. The deal is not complete until the cash is in the bank. Time is money. Such aphorisms may be trite, but they serve to remind treasurers of what business is all about, and they are particularly relevant to international trade.

As **Sir David Wright** of British Trade International says, foreign trade and investment are the lifeblood of the British economy. The management of trading cashflows is right at the heart of any company's prosperity and this is the treasurer's *raison d'être*.

Much work has gone on in Government to enable the UK to compete in world trade and **Stephen Lyle Smith** of Trade Partners UK explains the structure and the services available to exporters. Encouragingly, much of this is on line, making it easy both for the exporter to find the help he seeks and also for the overseas customer to find the UK supplier to satisfy his needs.

A couple of practical examples of the use of these services are then followed by a wonderfully clear and simple 'how to do it' article from **Martin Smith** of Agco (formerly Massey Ferguson), one of our country's most experienced exporters.

We then move into the world of international banking with articles by **Derek Lunt** of HSBC and

Ken Whitworth of ABN AMRO pointing out the benefits of using banks with a global reach, the developments in electronic document processing and the plethora of research information available to the exporters on the internet.

Finally we look at the management of risk, first through a thought-provoking article from **Terry Bridgman** of NCM on the challenge for credit risk managers. Then an update from **Rachel Davies** of ECGD describing the results of its recent Mission and Status Review – further evidence of the Government's efforts to create a climate in which UK international traders can compete effectively across the world.

Regional Groups in the Association might find some benefit in contact with local Export Clubs, Business Links, Chambers of Commerce, Trade Associations and regional development agencies to review common ground and practice.

Treasurers may like to consider bringing this Spotlight to the attention of those directly concerned with exporting in their organisations, perhaps finance directors or export management in UK subsidiaries. Additional copies may be ordered from Alison Mouncer at the Association, tel 020 7213 0710, amouncer@treasurers.co.uk.■

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