

Radstock museum



# Forward

**Newsletter of  
Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced  
Motorists**

[www.swam-iam.org.uk](http://www.swam-iam.org.uk)

Registered Charity No 1050592

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**Vice Presidents – Judith Pepler, David Gallagher**

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**Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced Motorists**  
(Registered Charity No. 1050592)

NOVEMBER 2020—  
JANUARY 2021

***Forward***

Issue 7

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**CHRISTMAS PARTY—16 DECEMBER**

**Beckington Memorial Hall @ 19.30, doors open from 19.00**

We very much hope that circumstances will allow us to hold a Christmas meeting at Beckington Memorial Hall this year. It will take the form of a Quiz with refreshments. Unlike in previous years at BADAM, when members each brought contributions of food to the meeting, we feel that it is safer to have pre-wrapped food which the committee will provide. The address of the Hall is Beckington Memorial Hall, Bath Road, Beckington, Frome, BA11 6SH (just off the A36). We hope very much that you will be able to attend.

If circumstances change and we are not able to have a meeting in person, then the Christmas meeting will be a Quiz on Zoom, and perhaps members would like to provide their own refreshments to enjoy during the Quiz.



## EDITORIAL

In this edition of *Forward* we have news of two important events which have recently taken place. First, in September we had our first meeting in person since the formation of SWAM at Beckington Memorial Hall. This meeting was very well attended with over fifty members and guests present and its success shows that members are happy to get together in person. Andy Poulton gave a very well received talk about his experiences examining over many years and you can read a report of the meeting on page 7.

Secondly, we attended our first public event since March 2020 at the Frome Cheese Show. We were able to use our new gazebo for the first time, and those present were all wearing smart SWAM shirts so we looked professional on the stand. Because of limited numbers at the Show compared with previous years the response was not as good as we had hoped, but it was a worthwhile day and we learnt a lot from it. Please read John Morley's report on the day on page 9.

You will see on page 3 that we are hoping to hold a Christmas meeting

on 16 December at Beckington which will take the form of a Quiz with refreshments. If we are unable to hold a meeting in person in December, then the Quiz will be online as a Zoom quiz.

We have held several 2-in-a-car meetings this year and will resume these in the spring. Some of these meetings have been on a Sunday morning and the June meeting also took that form.

You will see on pages 12-13 that we are welcoming several new Associates and also congratulating a large number of Associates on passing their test. Our Observers and Associates have been working very hard in difficult circumstances to obtain these results and we congratulate them all. A special mention goes to Ryan Rothwell whose name appears in both the Welcome and Congratulations lists, a reflection of how quickly he reached test standard.

*Clare Hogg*

*John Morley*

*Sue Phillips*

**The next edition of *Forward* will be published in February 2022. Please submit motoring-related articles and / or digital photographs to the Editors (*who reserve the right to edit them*) by Friday 7 January at the latest. Names of authors and their home addresses should be disclosed to the Editors who will withhold them from publication on request.**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to another edition of *Forward*, your quarterly newsletter.

Our group continues to grow and develop, thanks to its proactive committee, and despite the restrictions placed upon us as a result of the Covid virus.

Since the last issue of the newsletter our Observers have mentored eleven Associates who gained a pass, including four who gained a F1RST.

The group was represented at the Frome Cheese Show on 11 September, where we had a pitch to promote our cause. As a result, we have so far had five members of the public who have applied for a taster session, hopefully leading to course applications and membership of our group. Please see the article on page 9 in this edition of the newsletter for further details.

On 16 September we had our first group social evening at the Beckington Memorial Hall. The evening was opened by our president Helen Schofield and was well attended by over 50 Members, Associates, and guests. This was an opportunity for the committee members to identify themselves, and for Andy Poulton, one of our IAMRS examiners, to give a very amusing talk on his examining experiences. Andy was also asked to present test certificates to successful candidates, but unfortunately none of them was present. There was a raffle at the end with plenty of car care products on offer. The success of the evening will hopefully be repeated during the coming year, but currently it is planned to hold group meetings via Zoom in the winter months, with meetings at Beckington and in the open during the summer. I have to admit that meeting people in the flesh appears to be more effective than on Zoom, but not all members are suitably located to attend Beckington.

Following discussions with MOD Lyneham's Major Andy Furnidge-Owen, a small number of SWAM Observers attended a road safety promotion event on 27 September, which was held at the establishment's airfield. Between 800 and 1000 young troops attended in rather blustery conditions. It was an impressive sight to see them all marching onto the runway. They were split up into manageable groups, and were then provided with talks on road safety by headquarters staff from IAM RoadSmart and RoSPA. The Observers from SWAM, and Wiltshire and Bath Advanced Motorcyclists (WaBAM), were then on hand to merge within the groups to answer any queries on advanced driving and biking. Many Taster Session flyers were handed out to interested individuals, and it is hoped that we shall see some response, although we couldn't manage 800 – 1000 applicants! As the army is quartered within the area of SN15, any advanced motoring recruits will come to SWAM. Andy thanked everyone for their assistance and suggested that the event be repeated over the next 12 months, when I hope we will get more support from our Observers.

We have submitted a bid for a grant from Melksham Town Council to help us recruit new Associates from the Melksham area. The bid will be against strong competition from other organisations, but if we don't ask, we won't get!

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Forward*. If you have any ideas for future editions, please let our editor, Clare Hogg, know.

John Morley  
Chairman, SWAM

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## GROUP NEWS

**Our planned July meeting** at Beckington Memorial Hall had unfortunately to be postponed until September because Covid restrictions were not lifted until later in the month. The July meeting was therefore held on Zoom instead and 15 members signed on for the evening's entertainment.

John Morley, SWAM Chair, opened the proceedings by welcoming everyone. He explained that there would be a Quiz, courtesy of AHA Slides, which had been organised by Peter Huntington, with John setting the questions.

Peter explained how to open the Chat function on the Zoom screen, key in the code – and after a few tries, everyone had access to the Quiz.

The AHA Quiz worked seamlessly, exhibiting the questions, giving the answers and doing the scoring as well.

At the end of the Quiz, it displayed the list of scores. On this occasion, the winner was Val Bearne, who was presented digitally with two bottles of wine, followed by Paul Pywell and Robin Clark.

One of the questions had concerned overall stopping distances (OSD). An easy way of calculating these in feet is to multiply the speed (in mph) by the first digit of the speed:

20mph multiplied by 2: OSD 40 feet

40mph multiplied by 4: OSD 160 feet  
60mph multiplied by 6: OSD 360 feet  
However, with odd numbers you must add 0.5 to the multiplier!

25mph multiplied by 2.5: OSD 62.5 ft  
45mph multiplied by 4.5: OSD 202.5 ft  
and so on. We were reminded that the two second rule cannot be used at 70mph – more room is needed at higher speeds.

A question was asked – how many people were content to drive at slower speeds on the motorway to conserve fuel, even if that meant driving behind a lorry in the inside lane? Not many people said they would do that, perhaps preferring to make progress rather than conserve fuel.

As there were no other questions, John thanked Peter for arranging the Quiz and he thanked people for taking part.

**There was no August group meeting** but there was another successful 2-in-a-car meeting at Lansdown Park & Ride. Thanks to Peter Huntington for organising it.



**On Thursday, 16 September,** Somerset and Wiltshire Advanced Motorists held its very first face-to-face meeting since its formation in March 2020.

Over 50 Members, Associates and guests assembled at Beckington Memorial Hall to hear our President, Helen Schofield, open proceedings at 19.30. Helen welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially guests from the Bristol branch of IAM RoadSmart, our Vice President, Judith Pepler, and Callum MacLeod who had travelled all the way from Scotland. She thanked the SWAM Committee for their wonderful work to keep the Group operating throughout the dreadful pandemic, working together as a team. She asked Members and Associates to continue to support the Committee and the Group as we try to return to normal activities.

John Morley, Committee Chair, reiterated Helen's welcome and asked everyone to complete the questionnaire about future meetings which had been placed on the chairs. He then invited the Committee members to introduce themselves to the audience, and began by introducing himself. He is the Chair of SWAM, which is run according to IAM RoadSmart regulations. SWAM is fortunate to have over 200 members. John said that he had been a keen cyclist until age decreed that he could no longer enjoy long runs, when he turned to Advanced Driving. He is currently preparing for his Masters award.

Lindsay Flower introduced herself as Deputy Chair as well as an Observer.

Rosemary Tandy said she is Group Secretary and available to answer any questions people might have.

Clare Hogg has two roles, firstly, that of Treasurer. She remarked that no charge would be made for refreshments at meetings for the time being as the committee do not want to handle cash – and our present reserves are enough to cover the costs. Clare's second role is that of Newsletter Editor. She produces *Forward* on a quarterly basis and is grateful for any articles.

Peter Huntington is Membership Secretary as well as a National Observer. He said he will be chasing Members for their annual payment in January.

David Major also has two roles, those of Associates Coordinator and Chief Observer. He said he is a National Observer, has a Masters award and is a Masters' mentor. He would be introducing the Group Observers to the meeting shortly.

Robin Clark said he has been involved with IAM RoadSmart for two years, passed his test a year ago and is now on the Committee. As the Group's Public Relations Officer he is keen to move SWAM forward and to find opportunities to advertise us on TV and radio. He said that during the summer the Committee had decided on strategic aims and objectives which had been put into place.

Sue Phillips is the Minutes Secretary and said she could usually be found head down, scribbling away as she has been doing for some 11 years.

David Major then asked all the Observers present to stand up and

introduce themselves. He said there are 23 Observers on the go at present and 31 Associates.

Observers present were Nick Elton, John Blakely, Lindsay Flower, Jeff Vincent (who comes from Salisbury and joined SWAM when his local group folded), Andy Lee, David Moreman, Roland Hindmarsh, Alistair Andrews, Peter Huntington, Thomas Flynn and John Morley.

John thanked all the Observers for their sterling efforts and said that congratulations were in order as a number of recent passes were F1RSTs.

John then welcomed the evening's guest, Andy Poulton, who went on to introduce himself as a former Police driver and current Examiner.



Andy said his talk would be about Testing Moments but before he began he would like to have a question and answer session. His first question was:

1. How many Organisations can use blue lights? A number of suggestions were called out, but not all the organisations were included. (See the end for the answers!) Andy decided we needed easier questions so the next question was:

2. How long did the Hundred Years War last? This was answered

correctly and was followed by:

3. Which animal is used to make cat-gut? Again a correct answer was given followed by:

4. In which month do the Russians celebrate the October Revolution? Another correct answer, and:

5. What fur is used to make Badger Hair Brushes? Then:

6. Why are the Canary Islands so named? Then:

7. What was King George VI's first name? Next:

8. Where do Chinese Gooseberries come from? And finally, and especially for pedestrians:

9. What is the first word of the Green Cross Code?

Andy then proceeded to entertain us with his talk about Classic Failures! These included human failures such as extreme nervousness, poor eyesight, lack of documentation and 'Mirror, Signal, Armpit' as the candidate seeks to find out what gear he is in! Then there are vehicle defects, such as the car which had different number plates on the front and the back! Then vehicles not fit for purpose, such as the passenger door not able to open or when he was unable to enter the car because there were so many personal items on the seat and in the footwell. There were drivers who attempted to give Andy a briefing before setting off or who asked Andy to give the commentary as they drove. It was a most amusing talk and there was an air of disappointment when Andy drew to a conclusion!

He then explained how to park for



free in any car park:

Drive into the car park and park across two bays. Open all the windows and put the steering wheel on full lock. Ensure the wipers are pointing upwards. Finally, put Police tape all around it!

John asked Andy to give out the certificates, but unfortunately none of the successful Associates was present.

Andy then introduced the Raffle, explaining that all the prizes were products from his garage which he was unable to sell! The final, and best, prize was won by one of our Vice Presidents!

John thanked Andy for his presentation and closed the meeting, thanking all who came and wishing them a safe onward journey.

**Answers:**

1. Vehicles used for emergencies by:

- Police, Fire, Ambulance,
  - Bomb disposal,
  - Nuclear Accidents,
  - Mountain Rescue,
  - RAF
  - National Blood Service and Organ Transplants,
  - HM Coastguard,
  - Mine Rescue,
  - RNLI for launching lifeboats,
  - HM Revenue and Customs,
  - Military Special Services,
  - River Police,
  - Forestry Commission
2. 116 years
  3. Squirrels
  4. November
  5. Squirrels
  6. They are named after dogs.
  7. Albert
  8. New Zealand
  9. First (find a safe place to cross)

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## FROME CHEESE SHOW — 11 SEPTEMBER

At the April 2021 committee meeting it was decided that our group would be represented at this year's Frome Cheese Show. Following this decision, a separate subcommittee was set up to plan for the event.

The main reasons for attending the show were:

To provide the public with an awareness of the Institute of Advanced Motorists RoadSmart (IAMRS), its aims and objectives.

To encourage members of the public to join IAMRS and take the advanced driving course.

Dave Edwards, our events organiser, was given the task of contacting the show organisers to arrange our attendance. This involved a great deal of work and he had to liaise with a not too impressive organisation.

The subcommittee decided that we would put our gazebo to good use, and we would have an advanced driving video playing on a continuous loop, with free handouts available to all members of the public who showed an interest. This included IAMRS publicity leaflets, pencils and pens etc. Rosemary Tandy, our

secretary, took on the task of acquiring the handouts, with great success. Dave Edwards provided the TV and video equipment and David Major provided the furniture etc. Paul Pywell also agreed to represent the group at the show.

Robin Clark agreed to bring along his Ford Mustang which would be placed next to the gazebo, so we had to hire a double pitch. This was to prove quite an eye catcher to members of the public, giving us a chance to engage with them. All of the team wore their SWAM shirts and name badges, which looked very smart and professional.



Our new gazebo with Robin's Ford Mustang

IAMRS provided a payment machine, so that we could enrol new members on the day. This was to be operated by Dave Edwards and Peter Huntington (our membership secretary). A discount of 10% was to be offered to those who joined on the day.

The plan was that available committee members would be present at the show for two two-hour slots separated by two hours. Dave Edwards and Robin Clark had to attend early in the morning to set up

the pitch.

On the day of the event the tailback of traffic extended to three miles during the mid to late morning, before easing off. Our pitch was on a wide thoroughfare running parallel to the main route, and the gazebo was very distinctive. However, the location did not expose our stand to the majority of attendees along the main thoroughfare. Also, some distance down from our pitch there were a number of car manufacturers' displays. A location closer to them might have paid dividends.

During the day the pitch was well manned and each of us made an effort to capture members of the public in the hope that we could persuade them to either join on the day, or after they had given the issue more thought. It must be said that Peter Huntington was spectacular in his efforts to stop and talk to members of the public and hand them a leaflet on free taster sessions. These leaflets proved to be the most useful tool in engaging the public.

As the day progressed we nearly persuaded some members of the public to sign on, but didn't quite achieve our objective. That was until we started to clear our equipment at the end of the day, when suddenly Peter dashed into the gazebo with a member of the public, who was



prepared to sign on. Unfortunately the card machine was no longer available, so we hope that he followed up after the event.

### **Conclusions on the Day:**

Firstly, organising the event involved a great deal of work by the subcommittee, in particular Dave Edwards. It was a long day for those who attended, and for most of the time the pitch was overmanned, so perhaps we could have reduced the manning.

Did we, or did we not, achieve our objectives? We possibly made a few hundred members of the public aware of IAMRS. We currently do not know how many people we persuaded to join at a later date. We should monitor the numbers by asking all new Associates if they joined as a result of the show.

The overall costs for the day were high, so did we achieve value for money? This is subjective, but the committee will have to decide if we should repeat the exercise next year. Perhaps we should have been present at the Somerset Festival of Transport planned for the same month (September)? However, this was to be run over two days, which would be very demanding on manpower resources. If we do decide to repeat the exercise, we should look for a motoring-based event of one day, and we should ensure that we have a site location that provides maximum exposure.

A huge thank you to all members who provided their services on the day!

John Morley

Chairman, SWAM

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## **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION INFORMATION FOR SWAM MEMBERS GDPR CONTRACT STATEMENT**

SWAM is required, under GDPR regulations, to notify members each year of our contract with you regarding the data we hold about you and the way in which it may be used. Please read the following statement carefully.

Somerset and Wiltshire Advanced Motorists (SWAM) would like to thank you for being a member of the group. As part of your membership contract with us, we may contact you with information on training, committee matters, social events or group drives together with newsletters/magazines

relating to the group and road safety. Photographs, videos and written updates of SWAM events such as training, committee matters, social events or group drives, at which you may be in attendance or referred to, may also be published on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., in the group newsletter (*Forward*), on group related websites or in the press.

SWAM may also share your information with IAM RoadSmart in order to administer membership activities.

**Option to withdraw from the above.**

You have a right to withdraw from receiving or participating in any of the above by contacting SWAM.

If you do not wish to receive information on training, committee, and social events, together with newsletters/magazines relating to the group and road safety, or if you do not wish to appear in or be

referred to in or on any group social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter etc, in the group newsletter, on group related websites or in the press, please contact the membership secretary, Peter Huntington, either by email (membership@swam-iam.org.uk) or by post to:

17 Regents Field, Trossachs Drive, Bath, BA2 6RP. In addition to your full name, please give your IAMRS membership number.

## **We Congratulate**

### ***IAMRS Test Pass***

|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Lynda Cross</b>        | observed by Mark Ellis       |
| <b>Robin Eaton</b>        | observed by Martyn Buckland  |
| <b>Sandra England</b>     | observed by John Morley      |
| <b>Zoe Garcia-Breton*</b> | observed by Peter Huntington |
| <b>Jerry Hann*</b>        | observed by Thomas Flynn     |
| <b>Martin Jacques*</b>    | observed by John Morley      |
| <b>Adam Pamment*</b>      | observed by Ray Robbetts     |
| <b>Brian Pyper</b>        | observed by David Major      |
| <b>Patricia Pitt</b>      | observed by Lindsay Flower   |
| <b>Ryan Rothwell</b>      | observed by Ray Robbetts     |
| <b>Frank Sweeting</b>     | observed by John Morley      |

\*FIRST pass

## *We Welcome New Associates*

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Victoria Green</b>  | [Observer: John Morley]      |
| <b>Robert Kelly</b>    | [Observer: Thomas Flynn]     |
| <b>Gabriel Nitecki</b> | [Observer: Val Czerny]       |
| <b>Ryan Rothwell</b>   | [Observer: Ray Robbetts]     |
| <b>Lesley Ruskin</b>   | [Observer: Alistair Andrews] |

## **SKILL AT THE WHEEL — 7 by Andy Poulton**

### **LOCAL IAMRS EXAMINER CAUGHT OUT BY SPEED LIMITS**

*Okay yes, I did, I was, BIG TIME, [wait for it]:-*

I (once) spent the weekend driving around Hampshire and West Sussex. [Goodwood Festival of Speed week – not recently!!]

I should know better. It was my fault I was not paying as much attention as I should.

Shocking I know. [Tut tut]

Here is what happened. All excuses I know.

All around Bath, Keynsham, Bristol and South Glos we have 15 mph 20 mph and 40 mph speed limits. Nightmare to adhere to, terrible holding everyone up. Camera vans out two or three times a week, and on Sundays. Often prosecuting little old ladies [friends] for 24 and 26 mph. [Yes, they rang me all upset.]

That weekend it was all 40s, 50s, 60s and even on a parallel road to the A27 in Portsmouth, *a 70-mph dual carriageway*, in an urban area. Never even saw a 20 and few 30s in urban and town-like areas.

Okay then. What did I do wrong? SIMPLE!

*I kept going too slow!!*

Yes, but true. I found myself, very often, travelling less than the posted limit. Fortunately, not holding anyone up and once we got to the 'normal' nationals made progress. Even found myself down to 15 to 20 mph self imposed speed limits through some very quiet narrow villages on the rat runs (little known back roads into the car parks).

PS My sis-in-law has been caught speeding.

I gave her the usual advice GO TO THE SPEED AWARENESS COURSE. You'll enjoy it. I did. She rang her insurance company to inform them. They said not interested, will not affect the premium. So, she paid the fine and didn't go. (I wonder what the Insurance companies say now.)

So, I signed her up for the FREE IAM RoadSmart assessment with a National Observer. That went so well and she had so much praise and encouragement [eh!]. She did not bother to take it any further, thinking and feeling she was already good enough.

WORSE was to follow. Every time her car broke the speed limit a gong sounded in the car. Her Observer asked what the noise was. She jokingly said 'it tells me when I am driving well and sticking to the rules of the road and speed limits'.

The Observer accepted this and complimented her?

SIGH! SIGH!

PS not local then? Cannot believe that would EVER happen locally. Mmmm.

**Safe Driving**

**Cheers**

**Andy Poulton**

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## EXAMINER'S QUOTES — Andy Poulton

Engineers are trying to design a car that will not smoke. We would like them to design one that will not drink.

A person is getting old when they are told to slow down by the doctor instead of the police.

When driving along everything is taxed, the car, the road, the fuel, the licence – and our patience.

Drivers who weave in traffic end up in stitches.

If motorists learn from their mistakes whilst driving, many are getting a fantastic education.

The first thing you notice in the glove box of your new car is a booklet telling you how to lie about the fuel consumption.

Men cause a lot of problems on the roads today!! Half of them are trying to go fast enough to thrill their girlfriends, and the other half are trying to go slow enough to placate their wives.

Nowadays when you go looking for a place to park in Bath/Bristol it's better to take someone along to share the driving.

There are lots of nuts rattling around inside cars, but the manufacturers did not put them there.

A dream car is so called because it cost twice as much as you dreamed it would.

Many people have trouble with their new cars. The engine will not start and the payments will not stop.

If you aspire to ripe old age, never drive your car while in a rage.

A reckless driver is one who overtakes you on the road in spite of all you can do.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

As John Morley says in his Chairman's message, we plan to have meetings in the winter, November to February with the exception of Christmas, as Zoom meetings. The AGM will be in person at Beckington Memorial Hall, and, after that, it is expected that meetings will be either at the Hall or an outdoor meeting will be arranged. This is likely to be along the lines of a 3-in-a-car meeting where members and Associates have the opportunity to drive, and observe others driving, with one of our Observers. In the next issue of *Forward* we will be giving more details about our plans for 2022.

## FUTURE EVENTS

Meetings will be held either on Zoom or at Beckington Memorial Hall, depending on circumstances. Invitations to Zoom meetings are sent out by email during the week prior to the event. The address of the Hall is Beckington Memorial Hall, Bath Road, Beckington, Frome, BA11 6SH (just off the A36).

**Thursday, 18 November.** Our speaker will be Tony Greenidge, CEO of IAM RoadSmart. He will be talking to us about the organisation and this meeting will be on Zoom which will allow members who are unable to attend physical meetings to join us. Unfortunately, it does mean that those members who are not on the internet will not be able to attend but they will be able to read about it in a future issue of *Forward*.

**Thursday, 16 December.** Christmas Party with Quiz at Beckington Memorial Hall, if circumstances allow. There will be food and fun and we hope you will be able to attend. If we are limited to a Zoom meeting, then there will be the Quiz only.

**Thursday, 20 January 2022.** This will be a Zoom meeting and the speaker will be John Gregory. John produces YouTube videos, under the name of Reg Local, about driving and this is sure to be an interesting and enlightening evening.

## PLEASE NOTE

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Committee of Somerset & Wiltshire Advanced Motorists, nor by IAM RoadSmart.

Due acknowledgement is made whenever material is taken from other sources.

SWAM keeps names and addresses of members on computer to assist in Group administration. This information will not be passed outside IAM RoadSmart.

SWAM may from time to time publish photographs taken at group events in *Forward* and on the website, or display them at publicity events.

If you have any concerns or wish to opt out of having your photograph taken or published by SWAM, please email or ring the Secretary (details on page 2) and request an acknowledgement in writing.