

ICTA prepares to raise its profile

ICTA's progress has gained pace following the appointment of management company Brabers. Establishment of three committees has laid the foundation for outreach efforts

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This past year has arguably been the most significant for the International Chemical Trade Association (ICTA). The biggest change has been the appointment of Dutch company Brabers to manage the association's activities, with partner Robert Stuyt acting as secretary general supported by Willem van Lanschot as secretary.

ICTA president Edgar Nordmann explains that Brabers, and indeed Stuyt, have been working actively for the Dutch chemical traders association VHCP as well as being involved with Fecc and ICTA for some time.

Based in The Hague, Brabers took over the management of ICTA on 1 September 2017. "One of the drivers for choosing Brabers was to have people dedicated to ICTA, allowing for a clearer structure," notes Nordmann.

Nordmann, Stuyt and van Lanschot have been travelling extensively in recent months, visiting various organisations in an effort to progress cooperation, notably in India, Japan, Sweden and also Dubai. During these visits they have represented the interests of the chemical distribution industry and intensified cooperation with other stakeholders, such as the Indian Chemical Association.

Nordmann says ICTA also remains in contact with the relevant associations in China and he is hopeful of moving towards closer cooperation in the future. Discussions continue with the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCME) but ICTA is also now talking with other industry associations in China.

PROGRESS MADE WITH ICCA

The most progress so far has been with the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), with which ICTA has forged a strong relationship. Stuyt and Nordmann were invited to give a presentation at ICCA's annual meeting in Vienna, Austria, last September. The opportunity, says Nordmann, helped bring a greater understanding of the chemical distribution industry to many producers, which led to increased interest in hav-



EDGAR NORDMANN
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ing regular contact with ICTA.

A stronger profile, particularly among chemical producers, is one of ICTA's key objectives. "The message that we try to get across is that when producers sell down the value chain, if an accident occurs at a distributor, it reflects on the producer, too. We are one and the same to those outside the chemical industry," says Nordmann.

"In order to ensure that chemicals throughout the value chain are managed in a secure and safe way, producers must pay attention to the distributor they work with and require them to work safely in a way they approve of. We are highlighting this at ICCA."

He adds that there is now a combined group of people from Cefic and ACC as well as ICTA, the UK's Chemical Business Association (CBA) and the US's National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD) discussing Responsible Care and Responsible Distribution and trying to make sure that the programmes of the producers and distributors

link together well and continue to mutually reinforce each other.

ICTA is also concentrating its efforts on recruiting new company members. Nordmann says the association has been sending letters to major chemical distributors to explain the added value ICTA may have for their businesses. He notes that Brenntag North America has recently decided to join ICTA as a direct member.

Another major step within ICTA is the enactment of three committees, for transport and security; Responsible Care/Responsible Distribution; and substance, safety, health and environment (SSHE). Stuyt says ICTA has appointed various experts and company members, who are in the process of starting their workflow and setting out their key objectives.

One area of work and a focal point of the SSHE committee is the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) project, a policy framework to promote chemical safety around the world, amongst others at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

Nordmann explains that the SAICM bureau is active in parts of Africa and ICTA is trying to assist by putting the project in touch with those of its members that might be of help in developing safe and secure handling in the region, notably in Kenya on the east coast and Cote d'Ivoire in the west.

SAICM ends in 2019 and Stuyt adds that ICTA, along with ICCA and several other industry associations, is involved with the process to develop a new policy framework for SAICM for 2020 and beyond.

With regard to transport and security, committee chairman Peter Newport, director of CBA, has been contributing to several events relating to chemical weapons, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the G7 global partnership against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction.

ICTA's progress has undoubtedly gathered traction this year as it spearheads industry's work to promote the secure and responsible distribution of chemicals around the world. ■