

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE 2020 AGM FROM THE CHSA'S CHAIRMAN, LORCAN MEKITARIAN**

The Council, the governing body of the Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers Association (CHSA), will be elected at our AGM which this year will take place by Zoom on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.

The effectiveness of the Association is dependent on the participation of its members and we have warmly welcomed your nominations to the Council.

As a member of the CHSA you will know that the purpose of our Association is to drive up standards, give you the information you need to develop your business and add value where possible.

What a baptism of fire it's been for me as your new Chairman. Our members and the industry have faced exceptional challenges this year, but I am proud to report the CHSA has risen to the challenge, supporting members in a number of new ways:

- We lobbied to secure the status of employees of manufacturers and distributors of cleaning and hygiene products as key workers.
- On behalf of our members, all of whom have signed our Code of Practice as a public commitment to maintaining standards and trading ethically, we warned against unscrupulous traders making unverifiable or false product claims.
- Where appropriate, we alerted the Competition and Markets Authority to rogue traders capitalising on the pandemic.
- Our governing Council met regularly on Zoom to share experiences and solutions, which we communicated to members via our newsletter. A big thank you to those who participated and candidly shared their perspective.
- We broadened this into a forum, open to all members, that was addressed by representatives of each of our Accreditation Schemes (for Distributors and Manufacturers of Soft Tissue, Plastic Refuse Sack and Industrial Cotton Mops). Our purpose was to give our members the insights they needed to serve their customers and plan ahead.
- The success of this forum led to a webinar titled 'Cleaning Chemicals in the Coronavirus Pandemic'. Positioning our members as the experts, this webinar was open to the whole industry and attracted 130 delegates.

Thanks to the continued support of our Accreditation Scheme Chairman, Mike Stubbs, we launched the Accreditation Scheme for Manufacturers of Cleaning Chemicals on 1 September. With the launch of this Scheme we have now achieved our strategic aim of accrediting every member, whether as a distributor or a manufacturer / importer of cleaning and hygiene products. This move strengthens our Association and put us on a firm footing for the future. Our respected Accreditation Schemes are increasingly specified as standard in tenders. *Our Standards, Your Guarantee.*

Where possible, we maintained business as usual. As Gold Sponsor of the Kimberly-Clark Professional Golden Service Awards, we celebrated cleaning teams and operatives at the prestigious event that took place just before lockdown. After a bumper number of applications, we awarded three Bursaries this year. Many thanks to Vice President David Garcia for leading this initiative. Despite the forced cancellation of our Gala Ball, we kept our commitment to our charity Grief Encounter and donated £5,000.

And finally, this has been year of reflection. Led by a Council sub-committee, we have examined our purpose and brand, and developed a clear statement of intent. Advancing the cleaning and hygiene section, dedicated to improving the standards of the sector. An engaging, knowledgeable, responsible leader delivering high quality support and recognition to members. Our aim is to formally launch our new brand early in 2021.

In the coming year, we intend to continue evolving our offer to members. We will promote their commitment to maintaining standards and ethical trading and provide the insights and opportunities to network they need to grow their businesses.