



THE COOL CHAIN ASSOCIATION: leading the way on cool chain logistics

Sebastian Scholte, outgoing Chairman of the Cool Chain Association, speaks to *TIACA Times* about the organization's plans for the year.

Sebastian, you recently announced your retirement from chairmanship of CCA. What have been the highlights of your tenure at the helm of the organization?

Firstly, I want to say all of the accomplishments of our great organization are thanks to the efforts of our whole board as well as our members. During my five years as chairman, I had their full support. Key to our success was finding ways our organization could be more effective, and in doing so we needed to fine-tune our message and know what our limitations were, so that we could have a much clearer vision.

We now have two conferences a year, one focusing on perishables and the other on pharmaceuticals. We partnered with EVA International for the pharma conferences. It is a great collaboration and has been a huge

success, providing excellent networking opportunities and speakers.

Our ability to organize very successful events is certainly what stands out. We have improved upon the quality and professionalism of our events, including our perishables event, and have now partnered with the *STAT Times*, TIACA and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for our next event, which is indicative of our success.

I am similarly proud of how CCA has grown to be considered an authority on cool chain logistics, and many great organizations from across the industry have joined us as a result. We have a voice in the industry, and we make things work. The advantage of the CCA is that we are an organization that is not bound by political correctness. We really push for things, and we are not afraid to discuss and debate

the issues that really matter to our industry. We already have a cool chain quality indicator, as well as our work on Good Distribution Practices (GDP), and cooperating with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to further industry standards and quality.

Lastly, we are in a great position financially. Our aim is not to make a profit, but it is always good to have strong cash reserves and we do. Even though we are not-for-profit, our cash reserves have significantly improved over the last five years.

Stavros Evangelakakis, Head of Global Healthcare, Cargolux, has been announced as your successor to chairmanship of CCA; where would you like to see your successor take the organization?

All our recent successes, in terms of growth, holding conferences that provide networking opportunities and informative discussions, as well as our advocacy towards improving industry standards, are things that we can and should always develop further.



Delegates at the recent pharma conference in Dubai, UAE.



The recent CCA perishables summit in Luxembourg.



The new CCA chairman, Stavros Evangelakakis, Head of Global Healthcare, Cargolux.



The CCA's recent pharma event, in Basel, Switzerland.

It would be great if we could look towards holding more conferences on the cool chain, including airport communities in our efforts going forward. We need to continue to listen to members' concerns as well as act as a strong, unified voice for our industry.

We would like to continue to grow our membership base. We could also help the industry with identifying, developing, and advocating for issues that really matter. It would be great to see more collaboration with universities as well which could assist in research and education. We also have two new Board members – Gerton Hulsman from Dusseldorf Airport and Fabrizio Iacobacci from Bcube.

The Cool Chain Association has been looking to expand its presence globally – what recent initiatives have been enacted to help drive this forward?

One of the key driving forces of CCA is to bring industry together to aid collaboration and cooperation in what is sometimes still a very fragmented industry. There are issues that

affect all of us that we could address much more effectively if we had a unified approach, as well as raise standards and quality of service. All of this would be financially beneficial across the cool chain spectrum.

We are looking strategically and carefully at locations around the globe to hold our events, partnering with local organizations that could benefit from hosting a global membership audience. This is why we chose Ethiopia to host our 2017 Annual General Meeting, and why we have chosen Dallas in the USA for our other event later this year. There is demand in those locations.

At the same time, we should not neglect our current membership, who are still majority-Europe based, but we are looking to expand our horizon with more events in diverse communities where we know there is demand.

You mention that your 2017 Annual General Meeting is taking place in Ethiopia – why have you chosen this location? How important is Africa in the global cool chain industry?

Africa is an extremely diverse, growing market with huge potential, and industry is really beginning to realize this.

In Ethiopia in particular, there is a strong perishables market – and we must remember that perishables is still leading commodity in the cool chain, although pharma has also seen rapid growth.

This is of great importance to our members, and we are proud to be partnering with Ethiopian Airlines for our event next month. Africa is an important continent and a very important player to our members.

How has CCA helped industry improve quality and develop common standards?

We represent all segments of the global cool chain, and we engage all of our members actively seeking their input in terms of how they believe we can improve quality and strengthen cooperation. We encourage collaboration through our events and support initiatives that advocate for standardization throughout the industry, for example GDP and IATA's CEIV program.

We also listen to members throughout the cool chain, consulting with everyone from shippers, who ask for more visibility, to forwarders, carriers, ground handlers, and airports, providing a platform for everyone to come together, and debate and network.

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