

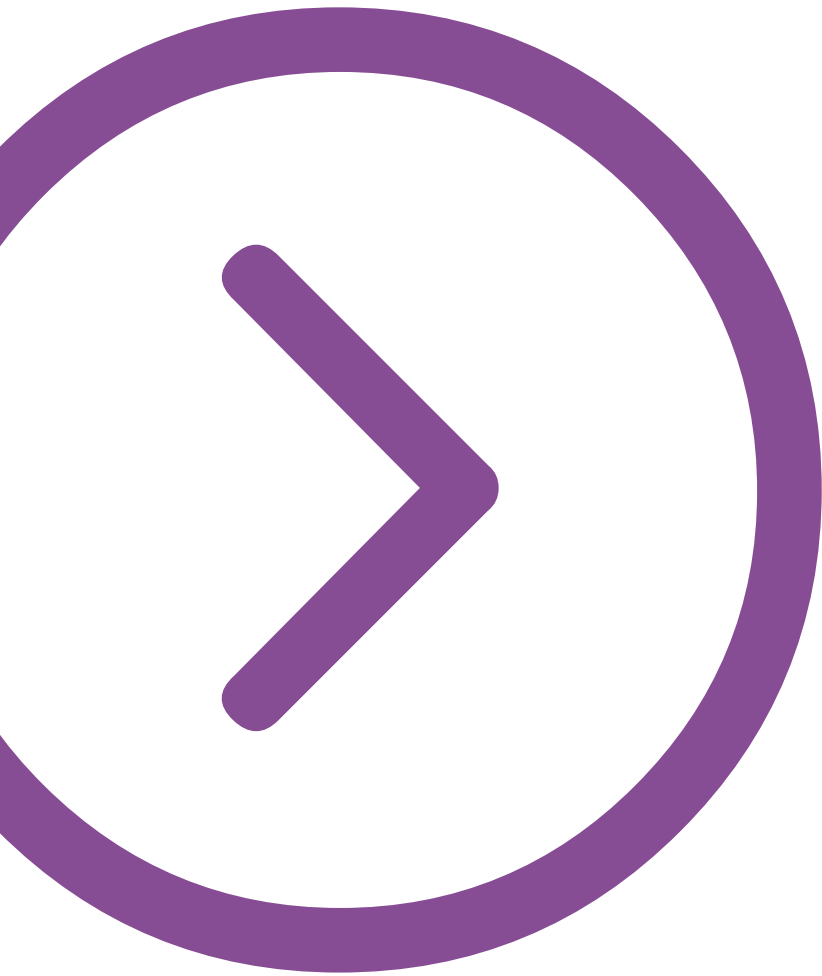
TOURISM NOW



TOURISM RECOVERY

FULL SPEED AHEAD.
HAND IN HAND TOURISM
& SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

 **SKÅL**
INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally



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#TOURISMNOW286 CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

MESSAGE FROM THE SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT & THE #TOURISMNOW EDITOR.

⤷ Page 4.

MEET SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

2022 COMMITTEES WORK UPDATES.
INDIA, GOOD PRACTICES FOR THE
GROWTH OF MEMBERSHIP.
STEVE RICHER: EXEMPLARY SKÅLLEAGUE.

⤷ Page 8

TOURISM RECOVERY

#TOURISMNOW286 TOPIC

INTERVIEW WITH:
CARINA BAUER, CEO OF THE IMEX GROUP.
ION VILCU, DIRECTOR OF THE UNWTO
AFFILIATE MEMBERS DEPARTMENT.

⤷ Page 21.

MEET TRAVEL LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY

PEDRO HEILBRON, CEO OF COPA HOLDINGS S.A.
& COPA AIRLINES.

⤷ Page 26.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
AWARDS 2022 & BIOSPHERE TOURISM
SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE PLATFORM.

⤷ Page 30.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD
CONGRESS 2022 AND LATEST NEWS
ABOUT TRADE SHOWS.

⤷ Page 35.





BURCIN TURKKAN
Skål International President

EDI TOR IAL

MID YEAR MESSAGE

June is an exciting month where I will be meeting with many Skålleagues in Europe in person and many more virtually continuing our commitment to open communication and transparency.

The Governance and Statutes/By-laws Committees have completed their mandate in putting forward a governance plan proposal for membership.

On behalf of the Executive Committee I would like to thank each of them for completing this very comprehensive plan. Hats off to all of you.

Governance Committee:

Hülya Aslantas (Interim Vice President), Holly Powers, (U.S.A., Co-Chairman), Jean-François Cote (Canada, Co-Chairman), Franz Heffeter (Europe, Co-Chairman), Fiona Angelico (Africa), Heike Garcon-Suiheran (Asia), Tito Livio Mongelli (Europe), Johannes Jungwirth (Europe), Sanjay Datta (India), Fernando Azcona (Mexico), Bernard Whewell (Oceania), Mario Costa (South/Central Americas), Mustafa Yalcin (Turkey), Tim Hemphill (U.S.A.).

Statutes/By-laws Committee:

Juan Steta (Vice President), Mok Singh (U.S.A., Co-Chairman), Salih Cene (Turkey, Co-Chairman), Tony Clegg-Butt (Africa), Michelle Sandhu (Asia), Serge Doyon (Canada), Jan Sunde (Europe), Francisco Rivero (Europe), Pietro Bembo (Europe), Burjis Mehta (India), Shekhar Divadkar (India), Isidro Martinez (Mexico), Federico Gil (Mexico), Fernanda Soler (Mexico), Leighton Cameron (Oceania), Laura Velarde (South/Central Americas), Raul Cuenca (South/Central Americas), Art Allis (U.S.A.), Karen Trevino (U.S.A.), John Ruzich (U.S.A.).

Also, I recently had the opportunity to speak to the annual North America Skål Congress in Orlando and I would like to share with you the words I put together for the moment:



BURCIN TURKKAN
Skål International President

PRESIDENT BURCIN TURKKAN SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF NORTH AMERICA SKÅL CONGRESS (NASC) IN ORLANDO

May 2022

It is an incredible pleasure and honor to be addressing you all at the start of a successful congress.

The focus of my talk today is one that affects you and our global membership.

LEADERSHIP - CHANGE AND THE ADAPTABILITY OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL TO EFFECT CHANGE

Inspirational leaders are incredibly passionate people that move beyond the reality of limited thinking. They acknowledge the importance of creating a culture where their members are inspired to create good ideas and embrace game changing skills. A culture that has learnt to stand on top of their challenges and not falter. They continue with the momentum of innovation, resilience, adaptability, and people management.

They show such passion for their work and instill a positive environment where the feeling is so contagious that they make members believe that they can achieve anything and everything.

These leaders adopt the balcony mentality where you have the platform to see the light, look above and beyond and over the clutter and not the basement mentality where all you see is clutter and negativity.

According to Champlain College, the definition of **effective leader** is a person who:

- Creates an inspiring vision of the future.
- Motivates and inspires people to engage with that vision.
- Manages the delivery of this vision.
- Coaches and builds a team to be effective at actioning this vision.

They also know that change is mandatory for success and especially if our organization wants to remain relevant and exciting.

We have to learn to adapt and pivot constantly and regularly to the innumerable changes our industry faces daily.

I know that I am sharing this room with many inspirational leaders. You are an integral part of our organization and a guiding light for our future as we adapt to a new world. I thank you for your leadership and I am very excited to be part of the future with you.

HOW IS SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE?

One of the 8 Committees initiated this year to assist our transformation is the 'Training and Educational Committee' established in February.

This year they will be introducing training sessions to guide our club presidents and leaders with skills, guidance, mentoring and education with specific session. These courses will be available to our leaders, potential leaders as well as members who will be interested in fulfilling these roles in the future.

We are very excited about this project and members will be receiving more information in the next few weeks.

Change is not a force to be feared but rather an opportunity to be seized.

Change is an event, but transition through this change is an intentional process.

One is normally most creative through a transition period. So, this post pandemic time is the ideal time to reassess every aspect of our personal and business life.

The success of the travel and tourism industry is based on social, economic, political and technological changes and events.

Natural disasters, terror attacks, act of war, the safety of transportation and of course the pandemic.

But there are two more very important challenges that the world and our organization have to face as they will be changing the way we look at membership gain and retain.

THE NEW GENERATION Z AND INDUSTRY 4.0

Aging membership is a reality in our organization and many of the roles in the travel and tourism industry have been changed to suit Industry 4.0 and the new generations.

Expectations and careers will change completely and Skål International must be ready to welcome these changes.

Who are the new generation and what are their expectations? How can we embrace their leadership qualities for future leadership of Skål International?

GEN Z

- They are natives of the digital age.
- 80% of this group aspire to work with cutting edge technology.
- 52% of this group have technological skills employers require.
- They have Social and Environmental awareness.
- They are Pragmatic and realistic, the perfect mix between millennium attitudes and generation X rationality.
- Adaptable and resilient.
- Creative and self taught.
- Work on what they are passionate about.

What is Industry 4.0 or the Fourth Industrial revolution?

It is an emerging power of computers to think, with no human intervention and where the workplace is fully automated

What drives Industry 4.0? Lowers costs and allows a global and expansive reach for their products.

Unemployment is the biggest challenge with the introduction of this era but humans will always create and live a meaningful life irrespective of technological advances.

This era will introduce new workplaces in the primary economy that will be mostly directly related to IT.

Good news for hospitality is that this sector will fall into the functional enablers portion as technology cannot replace certain careers/jobs in the world of hospitality and travel industry as we all still need a personal human touch.

The other good news is that there will be an exponential rise in entrepreneurship/self employment which will directly impact the travel and tourism sector.

This industry has been 'in the wings' for many years and has been slowed down because it would create even more unemployment but the burst is waiting and we have to be ready.

HOW IS SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ADDRESSING THIS?

After the turmoil of this pandemic, people have realized that life is all about relationships. Skål International's core is relationships, but these relationships must be encouraged, revived and amended on a regular basis.

Club Presidents and their team has to encourage young professionals into their clubs so as to assist with membership demographics, social media and events that appeal to the younger generation.

Within the 'Training and Education Committee' and with the collaboration of the Membership portfolio, **mentoring of these young professionals by experienced Skål International members** will be introduced.

The 'Advocacy & Global Partnerships Committee' that has been established again in February will also be a big help in attracting the next generations as they work on projects on social and environmental awareness such as

sustainability, sexual exploitation of children in tourism, and preservation of historical sites.

Membership categories will have to be reviewed not only to relate to the new generations expectations and roles but also according to Industry 4.0 expectations and requirements.

This should follow with reviewing and enhancing our membership benefits to meet the new generations expectations.

We have to find that perfect balance within the 'change' cycle of not forgetting our past and core values but to rather enhance them to fit into our new world.

Understanding this and steering members into a positive direction is vital.

Acceptance precedes change and our first step in this cycle of change is acceptance that moving from the past is necessary!

The first step to align with my presidential vision was to incorporate the incredible talents and minds of our members into different work committees.

This would not only add value to our offerings but also create excitement and encourage team work among our members while allowing them to be part of our organization's decision making process.

When people's talents are recognized, it immediately ignites the creative mind and spreads positivity to all, which naturally encourages many new projects.

Our partnership with PRNewswire and eTurboNews has meant that Skål International is in the global news daily, all social media platforms have been showcasing our achievements, our collaboration with other organizations and our travel expert views on relevant subjects.

Of course, the consistent visibility of Skål International on these channels not only allows universal exposure but also sparks a sense of fascination among travel colleagues as to why they are not members of Skål International yet.

CONCLUSION

Let us all have a solution mindset!

Many of us get stuck in the past because of our need for certainty. Certainty is one of the six basic human needs and is fundamentally about survival. Moving on from the past also means stepping into the unknown future. It means having the courage to let go of what is familiar – even if it's negative – and being vulnerable enough to embrace and learn from what's ahead.

The tagline that I referred to in my World Skål International Day message of reminisce – renew – reunite is so apt for us now as we acknowledge what was, have the opportunity to renew our mindset and work together for a better future.

Be grateful for every goodbye that has moved us to every hello (change) to move us into the future.

Please remember:

'Together We Are Stronger As One'.

I am excited for the future of Skål International and I hope you are to.



BURCIN TURKKAN
Skål International President



ANNETTE CARDENAS
Skål International Director

EDITORIAL

FULL SPEED AHEAD

Time flies when you are working hard and having fun. And we are now half way thru the year and so many things have been done and many more still left to accomplish.

From my responsibility in the communications portfolio, I receive so much information on all the actions and success stories from the different clubs and regions and, I must say, it makes me so proud to be part of this wonderful organization.

In this issue of our magazine Tourism Now we are sharing the mid-year reports from the committees that president Burcin Turkkan organized at the beginning of the year where many fellow Skålleagues are working together to generate ideas, proposals and changes to make Skål International a bigger

and better organization. **To all these Skålleagues, a standing ovation for their dedication and hard work.**

Our industry, as well as the world, is undergoing changes adapting to a new way of doing business and, to the changing expectations of customers and partners.

I have no doubt that Skål International will emerge a more robust organization with the work and contribution of all of us. I am a proud Skålleague and I know so are all of you!

Skål!



ANNETTE CARDENAS
Skål International Director



MEET o SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

GOVERNANCE

COMMITTEE

The Governance Committee has had the time sensitive assignment to **develop a more effective and efficient model of governing Skål International**, to guarantee outstanding representation, enhanced engagement, an improved process for selecting international leaders, and bring our structure more in line with other current dynamic international organizations.

The Committee, who met at least once a week since February, is co-chaired by Franz Heffeter, Austria; JF Cote, Canada; and Holly Powers, USA. Other members are Bernard Whewell, Australia; Jo Jungwirth, Germany; Sanjay Datta, India; Tito Livio Mongelli Italy; Fernando Azcona, Mexico; Fiona Angelico, South Africa; Mario Costa, South America; Heike Garcon-Suiheran, Thailand; Mustafa Yalcin, Turkey; and Tim Hemphill, USA. The Skål International Council liaison is Interim Vice President, Hulya Aslantas.

To get a professional assessment of Skål International and the organizations management the consulting firm of Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, with 135 worldwide offices was engaged. The firm did in depth interviews, reviewed current structure by surveying Skål International leadership and conducting an independent analysis, and did a comparative analysis with other international organizations, including ones which had just completed a similar reorganization process.

The output from the firm, which served as a guideline for the committee, accelerated the process to develop an improved Skål International's governance structure and accompanying procedures.

The primary recommendation is to create a **new Skål governing Council**, comprised of elected representatives who will be known as Directors from thirteen districts of common constituencies, similar size, and equal

authority. It was important for the committee to have a 'bottom up' approach to governance.

The entire proposal has been forwarded to the Skål International Executive Committee for review and approval and then to the By-Laws Committee, led by Skål International Past Presidents Mok Singh, USA, and Salih Cene, Turkey, who, with their committee, will prepare the necessary Statutes and by-law changes to implement the recommendations.

The Governance Committee completed/finalized its mandate on May 13, 2022.

STATUTES AND BY-LAWS

COMMITTEE

The Statutes and By-Laws Committee was set up by the Executive Committee of Skål International to **advise and put into legal framework the changes** that would be needed to be made in light of the experiences of the December 2021 AGM, including the anticipated recommendations for change coming from the Governance Committee.

The Governance Committee was also tasked with **viewing Skål International Structures objectively and then suggesting changes** to the Executive Committee.

The Committee consists of Skålleagues from all over the world. It is Co-Chaired by Salih Cene (Past-President Skål International), Turkey; and Mok Singh (Past-President Skål International), U.S.A. Its members are: Tony Clegg-Butt (Past-President Skål International), Africa; Michelle Sandhu, Asia; Shekhar Divadkar, Asia; Serge Doyon, Canada; Jan Sunde (Past-President Skål International), Europe; Francisco Rivera, Europe; Pietro Bembo, Europe; Burjis Mehta, India; Isidro Martinez, Mexico; Federico Gil, Mexico; Fernando Soler, Mexico; Leighton Cameron, Oceania; Laura Velarde, South/Central America; Art Allis, USA; Karen Trevino, U.S.A.; and John Ruzich, U.S.A. Juan Steta (Vice President Skål International) acts as liaison with the Skål International Executive Committee. This allows us to have a global perspective on the work we are doing.

The Committee first met at a kickoff meeting, on 15th February, conducted on zoom

with the President of Skål International, Burcin Turkkan.

We had subsequent meetings on 28th March, 25th April and 23rd and 31st May, and 3rd June to try to wrap up the changes resulting from the recently received Governance Committee report as modified and approved by the Executive Committee. We are currently working on **placing all these changes into our Statutes and By-Laws structure**. This is important since these are the legal guidelines under which Skål International operates.

The Executive Committee, amongst others, had given us the following list of tasks:

1. Governance Model: To be analyzed and discussed when presented by the corresponding Committee.
2. Retired Members: Evaluation of the 55 years of age required to become a Retired Member.
3. Inconsistencies within the Skål International Statutes and By-Laws with those of the International Skål Council Operations Manual.
4. Evaluation of the new Categories and Classification of Members once presented by the International Skål Council.
5. Elections: Amendments required, if any, to our By-Laws regarding the election of President if there is only one Vice President.
6. Amendments to Skål International By-Laws regarding the data protection law and limiting the mass emailing habit...

We have debated and moved forward on several of these items, including:

1. Decisions were made in 2021 without the involvement and vote of the Executive Committee. How to prevent this from happening.
2. We had only one candidate for the office of President. How do we move forward on this kind of an issue.
3. The President made an appointment of a former Past-President to serve in an interim position due to a vacancy on the Executive Committee. How this adheres to our By-Laws.
4. There were some questions on how to call an Extraordinary General Assembly. To provide guidance going forward.
5. Clubs and Area Committee Statutes review and amendment.

We have now received the Governance Committee's report and have been debating on the provisions in the report and working on incorporating them into our Statutes and By-Laws.

ADVOCACY AND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

Advocacy and Global Partnerships Committee seeks meaningful role for all levels of Skål International in the tourism industry.

The twenty three Skålleagues who have been serving on the 2022 Advocacy and Global Partnerships Committee are focused to develop programs, relationships, and tool kits to enhance the ability of Skål International to offer meaningful activities for our members, their businesses, our clubs, and the industry itself.

This Committee, which is co-chaired by Kemi Soetan, Vice President of Skål International Nigeria, and Steve Richer, a member of Skål International New Orleans in the USA, has four subcommittees--Pandemic and Global Crises, Sustainability, Trafficking, and Tourism.

The Pandemic and Global Crises Subcommittee, co-chaired by Maureen Ogola of Kenya and Hari Kishan Valmiki of India, is offering sources for pandemic protocols, recommendations on how to survive the pandemic and thrive afterward, and reviews of other world crises, including the Ukrainian refugee challenge and how Skål International clubs can be helpful. With the pandemic far from over, the work of this subcommittee will be critical to engage Skålleagues with business enhancing strategies. The subcommittee has developed a survey on how national governments have assisted travel industry businesses.

The Sustainability Subcommittee, co-chaired by Mayumi Hu of Taiwan and Kit Wong

of Mexico, has been very active preparing materials to address the preservation and restoration of cultural, historic, natural, and animal resources, as well as best practices for conservation of supplies, food, and water at tourism businesses, while being friends to our global climate. In its work, the subcommittee has developed a powerpoint presentation for Skål International clubs on sustainability, another one on how to appoint a 'sustainability champion', and will assist larger Skål International meetings with offering sustainability seminars to our members. One such seminar was already held at the North America Skål Congress in Orlando, Florida, USA, in May.

The Trafficking Subcommittee, co-chaired by Skål International Mexico President Jane Garcia and Skål International India President Carl Vaz, is developing programming to teach Skålleagues how to recognize minors who are being engaged inappropriately by adults who are travelling with them for illicit sexual purposes. The subcommittee is working with Skål International strategic partners, ECPAT and the CODE, who primary focus has been in this area to provide training seminars and other means of engaging Skålleagues as part of a global network to curtail or eliminate this onerous stain on our industry.

The Tourism Subcommittee, co-chaired by Stella Appenteng of Ghana and Andres Hayes of the USA, has identified fourteen organizations with whom Skål

International should establish or strengthen its strategic industry partnerships. The subcommittee will help Skål International manage these relationships, continue with and strengthen previously existing strategic partnerships, and work with key organizations led by Skålleagues. The subcommittee has developed a powerpoint presentation to assist Skål International clubs on understanding our benefits, as well as use the presentation for introducing Skål International to prospective strategic partners.

Since its formation in February, the full Advocacy and Global Partnerships Committee and each of its subcommittees has met a minimum of once monthly with many hours of work and communications between meetings. In addition to the ten Skålleagues already cited, the other committee members are Skål International National President Carlos Acensio and Miguel Bonorowsky of Argentina, Alfred Merse of Australia, Susan Webb of Canada, Ville Riihimaki of Finland, Mark Mendes of India, Rosemary Mugambi of Kenya, Paco Cuevas of Mexico, Constantine Panoussi of Monaco, Handan Boyce of Turkey, Adri Kruger of South Africa, Eric Etienne of the United Kingdom, and Iris Salazar and Joost DeMeyer of the United States.

Director Marja Eela-Kaskinen of Finland is Executive Committee liaison to the committee.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

COMMITTEE

Training and development involve the effectiveness of organizations and the individuals and teams within them and can be viewed as related to immediate changes in organizational effect. Other significant advantages of training in an organization is that it encourages continuous improvement, instills confidence while embracing individual values and hones our soft skills. It also cements members knowledge of the organizations culture which encourages membership engagement and clarifies expectations of membership. When members know that they have a supportive organization, they will be more engaged and enthusiastic about their membership which in turn will encourage membership gain.

Regularly providing impactful training and development opportunities improves member motivation and satisfaction while enhancing our organizations reputation.

This was the base from where our focused and passionate team of 18 has strategized and set **4 goals** since our committees formation in February:

1. Create educational, knowledgeable and inspiring training sessions for our members.
2. Implement and share these training sessions in different and accessible formats.
3. To combine our expertise and special skills with strong conviction.
4. Our immediate focus is on effective Leadership skills, strong succession plan for clubs and an informative induction course to formally introduce new members.

Our committee's aim is not one of change but rather a committee for enhancement of skills for our members, new training modules for our organization which in turn will lead to informative members, effective leadership and a workable succession plan.

Succession planning is a process and strategy for replacement planning or passing on leadership roles. It is used to identify and develop new, potential leaders who can move into leadership roles when they become vacant. Succession planning is used to ensure continuity and prevention of a power struggle. In business, succession planning entails developing internal people with managing or leadership potential to fill key hierarchical positions in the organization. It is a process of identifying critical roles in an organization and the core skills associated with these roles, and then identifying possible candidates to assume these roles when these roles become vacant. It is the process used to transition the leadership of a club to the next generation. We know that training and empowering will create an appetite to lead.

The tagline for our committee is: **ATTEND.LEARN.ENGAGE.GROW.** We thought it would be apt to use this tagline to explain our goals in short power sentences:

ATTEND - Regular training sessions.

LEARN - Be knowledgeable about all aspects of Skål International (knowledge, networking, amicale, mentorship).

ENGAGE - Sessions will be immersive, interactive and exciting.

GROW - Earn 'frequent learning points, rewards and certificates to enable members to achieve.

Our Mission would be: 'Where inspiration meets knowledge.'

Training should not be just hard work but rather a platform to be inspired and to share your inspiration with your fellow members.

Our **immediate action** point will be the first training session in the next few weeks that will be communicated to our global membership via our social media platforms. This project is a long term one and will be the first of many sessions with diverse subjects.

Our **medium term** wish list is to have podcasts and 'role play' videos on relevant subjects that will assist club Presidents and members posted on our dedicated Training and Education section on the Skål International website, which will mean easy access to all, allowing them to watch/listen at their convenience. Zoom meetings on training topics can also be hosted if clubs, National and Area Committees request this format. Presenting workshops during our World Congress as well as identifying a dynamic speaker at the congress who will address a pertinent topic related to all sectors of the travel and tourism industry.

And last but not least to have these sessions, podcasts and videos on a mobile app. This format was also proposed by the Digital Transformation Committee and will be seen as a **long-term** goal.

We are looking forward to reminding members of the tangible and valuable benefits we enjoy belonging to Skål International and affirming that membership to Skål International would be a mandatory decision to enjoy success in the travel and tourism industry.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Stimulating Membership Growth

There is no doubt the membership is the lifeblood of Skål International, after all we are an organisation that 'does business with friends' and we can only do business if we have friends!

The first meeting of the Committee was in early February and meetings have been held monthly – six-weekly since then. The timing of meetings is a challenge for any global organisation, and we are no exception. Meeting times have varied to try and enable as many as possible to join within reasonable hours.

The Committee recognised that Skålleagues before us have committed time and energy to the area of membership development, noting the Membership Development Fund as an important tool in the 'tool kit' of membership growth.

So, a key focus was to identify and capture some of the great ideas; both past and current, and complete them into one document – a repository of good ideas. Some of these ideas are as follows:

Global Video Production

The Committee recognised an excellent [video produced by Skål International Hobart](#). It advocated the importance of networks and connections in growing their own businesses. With support from Denise Scrafton and the Executive Committee we have approval to proceed with similarly styled video but with a global content.



Membership Development Fund

This is not a new idea, but it became apparent that some members hadn't utilized it or indeed didn't know too much about the fund. Committee members very graciously shared details on how they've used the funds in their own club and/or regions. So there is an opportunity to communicate these more widely throughout Skål International.

Media and Publicity

Again, this is not a new idea, but it is well worth traversing as a tool to help with membership growth. Media and publicity, including social media, is a strategy for both retaining members and for attracting new members.

The **retention** piece is around highlighting Skål International successes and positive stories within the Skål International network. Contributions to magazines, club and regional newsletters, social media sharing are all part of keeping up communication within the membership.

Attraction new members require communications to go outside of the Skål International eco-system. Media outlets in the business and local communities are the targets here. An example from Skål International Queenstown was [this publicity](#) in the local Mountain Scene publication generated by two members who had taken the initiative to help with severe staff shortages in tourism and hospitality businesses.



The discussions centred on researching if there is a 'Media 101' kit or similar to assist clubs with generating their own publicity aimed at helping with membership growth. If not, to develop one.

Other Great Ideas

There have been some very fruitful discussions with examples of very insightful activities undertaken by clubs including:

- Clubs associating with a charity which engenders good will within the wider community.
- A sponsor club supporting a new club for the long-term, not just for the initial set-up phase.
- Introducing an additional club meeting – 'Coffee Connection'. It is less costly than a fee for a usual meeting. At Skål International Queenstown, New Zealand, the coffee meetings are supported by Te Hau Toka – Southern Lakes Wellbeing Trust which supports mental health initiatives. In the aftermath of the pandemic these coffee meetings were as much about support as 'doing business'. These free coffee events are now a benefit for members.

As a committee we will continue with our meetings and developing these ideas further.

We look forward to implementation of some of the initiatives, as outlined above.

TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEE

The Technology Committee was established to review the status of the rollout of the consolidated websites for all National Committees and clubs.

One of the most important elements of this new platform is consistent **world-wide branding of the entire Skål International network** of Area, National and club levels.

We established **three priorities** that included assessing the current status of the rollout, exploring successes and challenges for clubs adopting the new platform and recommending changes to streamline the use of the platform and make it a more effective global network for members.

Our **first recommendation** was that all websites be launched so that the worldwide network was fully established. This task would involve finalizing all National Committee websites and then replicating all the associated club websites so the core elements were fully integrated.

This **integration of the three levels of Skål International is one of the most powerful resources** of this system. Key information flows from international pages through National and club websites. In addition, National pages also flow through to clubs. This includes key elements such as one common database for all and a wide range of tools and resources to help clubs manage membership data, communication with members and sharing information.

Our **second priority** was to establish a **network of volunteers** around the world that could assist

clubs to personalize their own websites. While national websites would be fully developed, clubs would receive a club level website integrated with the National website with the addition of club specific pages initially populated with generic information.

The volunteers could assist clubs in personalizing images and content on these pages. If clubs wanted to go further and add more customization such as adding pages, adding photo albums, loading their events, etc., a wide range of training videos are available or authorized service providers would be referred that clubs could retained.

Remember, these new websites are being hosted, fully supported and delivered to you for free! This allows your club to save your own individual annual hosting costs for existing websites! Further, you can have your current service provider simply redirect your existing URL (website address) to your new address at no charge so the transition is seamless!

We observed that some national committees and clubs had strong IT support and were able to easily maintain their websites. However, in many instances knowledgeable volunteers were not readily available. We are addressing this in three ways. First, as mentioned above, a network of volunteers was recruited around the world to help clubs with the initial personalization of their websites. Second, we have recommended that the training/orientation videos be elevated and easily accessible at the international level so they flow through to the

National and Club websites so they are 'at your fingertips at all times'! Finally, we have recommended modifications to make your user experience even friendlier. This includes new dashboards for web administrators and officers to do basic operations, adding additional access to the administration areas for Communications PR and Membership Development Officers, adding an 'add to calendar' tool that can be used in conjunction with any events posted on your websites or even to communicate with your officers to pre-block meeting dates for the year.

The **long-term vision** is to evolve the entire system so you can access everything about Skål International through mobile devices, new apps and ultimately a 'content driven' platform that will drive a higher-level presence and awareness of Skål International worldwide!

MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Objectives

The Committee held a brainstorm meeting on March 7th, 2022. We listed 7 actions/objectives for the year (we didn't work on a strategy to reach our objectives yet):

1. Share
2. Educate
3. Being a voice in the travel industry
4. Communication Target
5. Social Media
6. Sustainability
7. Events/Activation

Logos

Received the new logos for each club. We shared our feedback:

- The logos submitted (and shared with the clubs) are not designed for most of the social media channels.

- The logos cannot be customized by each club. While Skål International is an international organization, local chapters are the backbone of our organization (support members, business together...). Each club logo should emphasize the international and local strengths of our organization).

Social Media/Branding

Working on the social media presence of all Skål International clubs on LinkedIn:

1. We have already checked the LinkedIn profiles of the PR officers/members who answered our survey.
2. These days we are auditing all the existing Skål International LinkedIn profiles/pages.

As soon as we finish our work, we will share our recommendations with the committee and organize.

Events

- Organization of webinars.
- Interviews for the Skål Now newsletter and the #TourismNow magazine.

Press Release/Communications

Thanks to our partnership agreement with ETurboNews, press releases have been actively shared in this network. ETurboNews gave the opportunity to all our clubs to share their news and stories in its live shows.

AID COMMITTEE

We all belong to an organisation working among other things, also for peace and understanding in the world. That is what we want and need for our travel and tourism industry. Wars, pandemics, nature catastrophe, etc., are the worst that can happen for our industry. We have seen the consequences from Covid-19 pandemic.

When we thought that the world should come back to 'normal', a war broke out in Europe. We could not believe it, experts did not believe it, but it happened. Russia attacked Ukraine. We have seen millions flee from the war zones and flee to neighboring countries and on to other countries. One thing was for sure, **help was needed**.

President Burcin asked Former International Presidents Matanyah

Hecht and Jan H. Sunde to administer a **fund for helping refugees from Ukraine**. A Fund was set up and Skål International members were asked to contribute. Matanyah and Jan had experience from the Tsunami Fund from 2004/2005.

It was early clear that children need especially help, and Skål International Bucharest had started a help regime and plan and it was natural to ask President Florin Tancu to be involved and see if the Aid Committee could help Skål International Bucharest with funds. Florin Tancu and his team had a plan and they have done a lot.

During the weekend 3-5th June, 44 Ukrainian kids and their teachers spend their time in one of Black Sea coast hotels, Majestic Jupiter.

All the kids are students at National College Mihai Viteazul from Bucharest. Their entire stay was paid by Skål International Bucharest. They have a lot of nice words from their teachers. They also have the intentions to donate another 9 electronic boards, beside the first 3 of them, which are already installed.

It was natural that the **Skål International Aid Fund** decided to fund some of the boards, the trip to the Black Sea and the Skål International T-shirts.

The Aid Committee will also **donate money to Red Cross and UNICEF**, earmarked for help to Ukrainian children.

Thank you to all who have donated money and to Skål International Bucharest for their fantastic job they have done to help.

HELP FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

How to help? [click here](#)
#SkalForUkrainians

INDIA, EXEMPLARY COUNTRY GROWING MEMBERSHIP



IVOR VAZ

Travel and tourism journalist

“THERE IS NO CHANCE NOR DESTINY NOR FATE THAT CAN CIRCUMVENT OR HINDER OR CONTROL THE FIRM RESOLVE OF A DETERMINED SOUL”, ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, THE FAMOUS AMERICAN AUTHOR AND POET ONCE FAMOUSLY SAID. TRUER WORDS WERE SELDOM SPOKEN. IT IS NOT UP TO THE STARS TO CREATE OUR DESTINY BUT TO OURSELVES. AND IT IS IN THESE MOMENTS OF OUR DECISIONS THAT OUR DESTINY IS SHAPED.

The writing is on the wall for the world to see. **By the end of May 2022, India officially became Skål International's largest base of members worldwide with over 1,575 members on roll.** Just over a month ago, the formal launch of the world's largest Young Skål chapter ensconced the Kolkata club in glitter and glory on the Skål International map as over 180 young recruits from the travel and hospitality industry registered themselves as Young Skålleagues. Last but not the least, two historic new club launches – Skål International Chandigarh (May 21) and Skål International Lucknow (May 23), to go with another late last year (Skål International Bhubaneswar), capped a memorable first term in office (2020-2022) for a dynamic team that came together during the onset of Covid-19 to fulfil a vision aimed at growth, instituting processes, and **establishing Skål International as India's premier travel and tourism organisation.**

The simple fact that Skål International India scaled unprecedented highs in 2020-2022 despite the many challenges – the most notable being the deadly second wave of Covid-19 in April 2021 where in India crossed 26 million cases – second only to the

US, and became the new epicentre of the global pandemic, crossing 2.5 million active cases, and reporting an average of 400,000 new cases and 3,500 deaths daily (which most analysts believed was an undercount) tells a **story of true grit and determination** displayed by a few good men.

Even so, in order to understand the achievements of Team India, let's rewind to October 28, 2020, when 1,200 members of Skål International India elected their new National Board for 2020-2022. Spearheaded by **Sk. Carl Vaz**, a well-known travel professional and destination marketer, who was sworn in as National President, here was a team boasting industry heavyweights with a wealth of experience that set itself ambitious goals right from the starting blocks.

Less than 40 days from their foray into office, the new team of Skål International India held its 1st National Committee Meeting on December 5, 2020. The Presidents of 14 Skål International clubs across 13 Indian cities along with the Skål International India National Board members congregated in Kolkata. Their objective was to examine the road ahead for the beleaguered

sector and to launch a master plan to **Regroup, Recover, Regrow, and Rejoice to Revitalize** Skål International India and its members' businesses. This 'hybrid' event was held both physically and virtually – on Zoom and Facebook. Notwithstanding a raging pandemic, 35 members attended the NCM in person while several Skålleagues marked their presence online. Many club Presidents and their representatives were also present, as was Sk. Sanjay Datta, President of Skål International Asia at the time.

Says Jeff Bezos, founder, executive chairman, and former president and CEO of Amazon: “A brand for an organisation is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well”. The fact of the matter is that **'Brand Identity' matters.** From a Skål International India viewpoint, it was critical to get its branding right. Now a country as diverse as India is replete with different traditional handlooms. Some are colourful while some have a deep historical significance. Maharashtra has its Paithani, Goa has its Kunbi, Tamil Nadu has its Kanjeevaram, and so on. Understanding the story behind these fabrics offers an insight into the various regions

of India. Therein lies the genesis of fabric flags wherein each Skål International club chose a fabric indigenous to its region.

Around the same time, the National Board decided to bring in an additional marketing channel for Skål International India in form of a magazine-cum-newsletter, and christened it 'KOTIN' (abbreviation for Keeping Ourselves Together – INdia). The idea was to reach out to the end consumer and bring to life the stories of Skålleagues and Skål International India. Here's where 'Yours Truly' stepped in as Editor of the magazine. The inaugural issue of KOTIN (December 2020) was launched amid much excitement at the inaugural AGM in Kolkata. Nine issues have been brought out thus far, the latest being in April-May 2022. KOTIN today serves as a tangible product of Skål International India, providing strong brand recall and also a potential revenue source from advertising and promotion.

Corona times were tough times and the National Board was quick to realise this. Many entrepreneurs from the industry were struggling to stay afloat. Consequently, the leadership of Skål International India decided to completely waive the Membership Fees for 2021 and 2022. The net waiver amounted to a whopping INR 12,50,000.00.

Two more significant objectives were achieved by the National Board during their first year in office. In terms of administration, finance, and marketing, **Skål International India became a completely process-driven organisation.** Second, registration was done and dusted. Long-time members may recall that Skål International India struggled continuously with securing the reinstatement of its registration. This canyon too was finally bridged, and Skål International India became once again fully compliant with its registration process.

The new official website of Skål International India also went live. It follows the new brand identity of Skål International India, recognising the beauty, history, and diversity of India's fabrics and prints. True to Skål International's philosophy, it presents opportunities to do business among

friends. With a marked focus on the end consumer, the aim is to connect customers with members and vice versa. The fresh look on the home page, accompanied by a vibrant video banner, allows for excitement every time one logs on, with a slightly different experience on each visit. Now every Skålleague in the country, can log on to skalindia.org and get up-close and personal with the Skål International India leadership, read Skål International-related news, and learn about events organised at national and club levels.

Corporate Social Responsibility

is part of the ethos of any Skål International organisation, be it at any level. Following the lockdowns enforced by the pandemic, all educational institutions were shut down across the country, forcing millions of children to adapt to e-learning. In India, not all were able to transition to online learning, mainly due to affordability issues. Therefore, Skål International India chose to play a part in this process of transition. It built **Project E-volution**, its signature initiative, in 2021. Its aim was to align with the Government of India's Digital India programme by creating a platform to donate laptops, smartphones, and other electronic products, either used or new, to assist children in need secure an online education.

The success of any association in today's world depends on how well it performs in collaboration with its partners in the business, especially during a time when the world is trying to lift itself back up after the worst phase of travel disruption due to the two-year-long pandemic. Since its inception, the National Board of Skål International India had the foresight to forge **MoUs with strategically important organisations.** An MoU was signed between Informa Markets India (known for its successful worldwide exhibitions, with its flagship event being SATTE) with the intention of working together towards the promotion of tourism. A second MoU was signed with Interglobe Aviation Ltd. (Indigo), enabling discounts on bookings for official travel of Skål International India members and special point-to-point fares for a period of two years. As young

industry professionals form the supply lines for organisations like Skål International, an MoU with the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) proved to be instrumental in the recruitment of several Young Skål members across clubs in India. A fourth MoU was signed with Travel World Online TV (TWO), a B2B digital media platform to create awareness of the Skål International activities for a period of two years in exchange for its recognition as a media partner of Skål International India. Finally, on May 20, 2022, at the India Expo Centre & Mart in Greater Noida, Saudi Tourism Authority and Skål International India signed an exclusive MoU to promote Tourism from India.

As the fresh financial year, 2022-2023 begins, the tourism outlook is looking bright, and the skies even brighter, now that they are open for business. India has come through the storm stronger than ever, a fact acknowledged by Sk. Burcin Turkkan, President, Skål International Executive Board 2022. *"I commend you and your Board for the extraordinary success you have brought to Skål International India, moving forward with strategic growth in line with Skål International's goals for 2022. On behalf of Skål International Executive Board, I want to extend you and your team our appreciation for your dedication and hard work"*, she wrote in a letter to Sk. Carl Vaz.

From an Indian perspective though, the best is yet to come. With **three new clubs** (Jaipur, Pondicherry, and Ahmedabad) green-lighted for later this year, Skål International India is expected to surge ahead past the 1,700 member mark very shortly. Club launches at two more locations before the year-end, most likely in Central and Eastern India, have been earmarked in the plan. If that comes to pass, **Skål International India will have 21 clubs by end of 2022.**

The one thing on everyone's wishlist, for now, is ensuring success at **Skål International Kolkata's global bid for the Skål International World Congress 2024/2025.** That would be the perfect icing on the cake.

EXEMPLARY SKÅLLEAGUE



STEVE RICHER

Skål International New Orleans

STEPHEN B. RICHER, 75, HAS BEEN A SKÅLLEAGUE FOR APPROXIMATELY THIRTY SEVEN YEARS AND A MEMBER OF FIVE DIFFERENT SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CLUBS, STARTING IN RENO, NEVADA; PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA; ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY (WHICH HE INITIATED); NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA; AND WASHINGTON, DC.

These memberships followed his career as Nevada Director of Tourism and member of the Nevada Governor's Cabinet; President of the Greater Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Bureau; Executive Director of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau; United States federal lobbyist and consultant to the National Tour Association, American Bus Association, American Society of Travel Agents, and International Inbound Travel Association; and international tourism marketing consultant focused on Africa, Asia, and the Americas with specific work in Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kenya, India, China, Japan, and Mexico.

Steve Richer recently returned to his home in Gulfport, Mississippi; rejoined Skål International New Orleans, which was just named as the Skål Club of the Year in the United States; and is working on a tourism development project in Mississippi as a consultant.

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Interestingly, Steve Richer has not held many offices in Skål International over those years, despite leading the formation of the former Skål International Atlantic City, serving as a director for Skål International Washington DC, and three years as a director for Skål International USA.

Nevertheless, Steve Richer's volunteer activities for Skål International have not gone without notice. In 2017, his role in bringing Skål International back to Ethiopia, a joint effort of Skål International Washington DC and Skål International Nairobi (Kenya), and his leadership in twinning every Skål International club in India with one or more Skål International clubs in the United States, resulted in being selected by Past Skål International President David Fisher as **2017 Skålleague of the Year**. This recognition was given that year at the Skål International World Congress in Hyderabad, India.

In 2021, an ad hoc group of Skålleagues, including Steve Richer, developed recommendations on both governance and relevance which were submitted to Skål International. The global group achieved a major goal of getting Skål International to focus on matters which will strengthen our organization in the coming years with better governance and more programs which will assist our members, their businesses, our clubs, and the travel industry in general.

As a result of his involvement with these efforts and other prior activities, Skål International World President Burcin Turkkan named Steve Richer to be **co-chair of the 2022 Skål International Advocacy and Global Partnerships Committee**. Kemi Soetan, Skål International Nigeria Vice President, is the other co-chair.

As outlined elsewhere in this magazine, the committee is addressing the pandemic and restoring business, other world crises, juvenile sexual trafficking in tourism, sustainable tourism practices, and building relationships with other international tourism organizations. The committee and its four subcommittees are extremely active providing programming, promotional materials, and tool kits in each of these areas.

OTHER BACKGROUND

Steve Richer is a graduate of Princeton University, where he serves on both his class board of governors and its charitable foundation.

He is a former mayor of Randolph Township, New Jersey, and has served in various political and governmental roles his entire life, including being a college, local, and state political official.

His favorite experiences include serving as National Chairman of Students for Robert F. Kennedy for President in 1968 and hosting two separate events he organized and officiated at which he introduced the speakers. One was newly elected United States Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware. The other was Atlantic City hotelier and casino owner Donald Trump.

Steve Richer has also served as New Jersey Director of Tourism, a member of the New Jersey Israel Commission, a speaker at the Africa Travel Association, committee chair for the bi-national Gulf of Mexico Tourism Accord, opened the first US state tourism office in Japan, and organized state trade missions to China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Japan.

He is past chairman of both Visit USA West and Southcoast USA, two multi-state marketing organizations.

Steve Richer is listed in both Who's Who in America and Who's Who in the World and was recently named an Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award winner by Marquis Who's Who.

He is the father of two sons, Sean and Jack, and a grandfather.



**SKÅL
INTERNATIONAL
WORLD PRESIDENT
BURCIN TURKKAN
NAMED STEVE
RICHER TO BE
CO-CHAIR OF
THE 2022 SKÅL
INTERNATIONAL
ADVOCACY
AND GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIPS
COMMITTEE**

EXEMPLARY
SKÅLLEAGUE

TOURISM RECOVERY



INTERVIEW WITH CARINA BAUER

Skål International interviewed Carina Bauer to find out how she feels about the recovery of tourism at a time when the tourism industry seems to be coming back to its former self, as a Skålleague and as a leader in the MICE industry.



ABOUT CARINA BAUER

Carina Bauer is the CEO of the IMEX Group and member of Skål International. Passionate about the business events industry and its impact on the world, she has a particular interest in issues related to sustainability, diversity and inclusion and mentoring tomorrow's leaders. Throughout her career, Carina

has been an active member of the meetings industry. She is currently Chair of the AEO and EIA Council, a member of the UFI Board and former Chair of the SITE Foundation (2020). She has previously served on the Board of the MPI UK Section and on the MPI and PCMA global committees.

CARINA, WE HAVE GONE THROUGH COMPLICATED TIMES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN WHICH MANY COMPANIES AND LEADERS HAVE HAD TO CHANGE, EVOLVE AND REINVENT THEIR BUSINESS MODEL. HOW HAS IT BEEN IN THE CASE OF THE MICE SECTOR AND IN THE SPECIFIC CASE OF IMEX GROUP? HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES? WHAT IS YOUR PROSPECT FOR THE MICE SECTOR GOING FORWARD?

The business events industry – like travel – was shut down by the COVID pandemic and businesses were forced to evaluate their offerings and business models. However, the pent up demand that the travel industry is now seeing, is also being felt across the events sector – with demand certainly outstripping supply and we see this as the biggest initial challenge that we face.

For IMEX we endured an enforced break with 3 cancelled shows and experiments into the world of virtual events. What I can say is that we learnt a lot through this experience, **we gained confidence in delivering value in new ways to our clients and we had time to truly re-think the in-person experience.**

Having just returned from our first IMEX in Frankfurt since 2019, I can attest to the fact that this re-design of the experience has truly been impactful and led us to improve many elements of the show. This type of design-led experience and continuous innovation will continue to be important as the world goes back to IRL experiences.

AS A MEMBER OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL AND AN EXPERT IN DEVELOPING NEW TALENT AND LEADERS IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY, WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG MEMBERS WHO ARE JUST STARTING THEIR CAREERS TO MANAGE THEIR FUTURE IN THE WORLD OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM? IS IT POSSIBLE TO PREPARE FOR SITUATIONS SUCH AS THOSE EXPERIENCED RECENTLY AROUND THE WORLD?

The best preparation is to **remain agile and adaptable.** Change is constant and the best that any individual can do is to keep an open mind, continue to seek lifelong learning opportunities and to develop both soft and hard skills that will make you valuable to any company you wish to work for.

The other thing I'd say to young people is that companies can teach skills, but mindset is something that is unique to you and increasingly businesses are seeking those with can-do attitude, people who wish to experiment, innovate and grow and those with outstanding communication and EQ skills. Make sure you focus on these – **stay true to yourself and build your self-awareness.**

SPEAKING OF ADAPTING TO CHANGE, DO YOU THINK INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR BUSINESSES ARE PREPARED FOR NEW TRENDS AND DEMANDS BASED ON SUSTAINABILITY AND TECHNOLOGY? WHAT CAN WE IMPROVE?

As above, we need to constantly be open to change and adaptation.

But, more than that, we should be leading from the front – showing other sectors how seriously we take the challenge of climate change, proving the transformational benefits that travel brings whilst reducing harmful impacts in how we develop our products and services. From a technology perspective, we should be aiming to **enhance and improve the travel experience** by removing barriers and smoothing the customer journey.

THIS YEAR IS PROMISING TO BE THE YEAR OF RECOVERY. TRAVEL IS RECOVERING AND WITH IT BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY. AS A LEADING EXPERT, WHAT 3 MILESTONES WOULD YOU TELL OUR READERS, INDUSTRY LEADERS AS WELL, THAT THEY SHOULD STRIVE TO ACHIEVE IN THEIR BUSINESSES IN THIS 2022?

I would encourage readers to consider both some conservative and stretch goals for their organisation to strive towards as we come into a high demand, but still uncertain marketplace.

I'd also encourage people to consider their company culture as we come out of this crisis and face a massive squeeze in the employment market. If there is one milestone I would like us all to work towards by the end of the year, it would be for each business to **have in place a net zero strategy that is workable and serious.** If we can all come together to do that, we will both strengthen our industry for the future and show that we can be part of the solution and not the problem. That will be increasingly important going forward.

INTERVIEW WITH UNWTO ION VILCU, DIRECTOR OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS DEPARTMENT



ABOUT UNWTO

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

Skål International is Affiliate Member of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) since 1984.

Bringing together more than 500 companies, educational and research institutions, destinations and NGOs, UNWTO Affiliate Members provide

a space for members to dialogue, share information and take further action. Its main mission is to foster synergies between Affiliate Members and Member States and to promote knowledge sharing among key stakeholders with the aim of contributing to the promotion of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In this scenario, after more than two years of pandemic with such a direct impact on the tourism industry and in which the UNWTO has been actively working for the recovery and return of global travel and tourism activity, we asked **Mr. Ion Vilcu, Director of the Affiliate Members Department** about the tourism recovery and the imminent future of international tourism.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES THAT THE UNWTO HAS HAD TO FACE DURING THESE LAST TWO DIFFICULT YEARS AND HOW HAS IT DEALT WITH THEM? WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

The biggest challenge the UNWTO has faced in recent years is the coordination between the Governments, the private sector and International Organizations in order to address the global tourism slowdown.

Tourism is an extremely important sector and guarantees millions of jobs around the world. For this reason, the **UNWTO has focused its efforts on collaborating with the Governments and the private sector in order to restart tourism in a safe way** by coordinating the implementation of policies and ensuring technical assistance to countries, organisations and private entities in need.

All this has been done in the framework of the **UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee**, which brings together all major stakeholders in the sector and in which UNWTO has coordinated the efforts of all to maintain jobs and restart tourism.

UNWTO has also offered the **COVID-19 Technical Assistance Package for Tourism Recovery**. The package is structured around three main pillars: economic recovery, marketing and promotion and institutional strengthening and resilience building and its purpose is to provide support to members in tourism recovery.

The tourism industry has once again shown its resilience and its ability to survive the crisis, and above all, that today alliances and cooperation are still very important in the tourism industry, as well as public-private collaboration and government support.

CAN WE SPEAK OF A RECOVERY OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY TODAY? WHAT ARE THE FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE TOURISM OUTLOOK IN THE COMING MONTHS AND WHAT ACTIONS DOES THE UNWTO FORESEE TO CONSOLIDATE THE RECOVERY OF THE INDUSTRY?

As is well known, any crisis is an impetus to growth and the development of new ways of working as well as new ideas and initiatives.

In this context, **we can speak of the beginning of a recovery in the tourism sector, but not yet of a full recovery**.

In the coming months, the important thing will be to continue to support the efforts of governments and the private sector around the world, focusing on developing new business models and new projects, as well as promoting safer, more accessible, resilient and sustainable tourism.

As mentioned above, UNWTO is coordinating government and private sector efforts for tourism recovery through the daily relations with its Member States and Affiliate Members.

WHAT DOES UNWTO EXPECT FROM ITS MEMBER STATES AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS IN RELATION TO TOURISM RECOVERY, HOW CAN WE HELP AND WHAT WOULD BE THE GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE TOGETHER A HEALTHY, RECOVERED, SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE AND FAIR INDUSTRY?

UNWTO expects a **more active involvement of the Governments** in the recovery of the tourism sector as well as **dynamism and new initiatives from the private sector**. Affiliate Members should be more active, seek partnerships and effectively address the challenges that the tourism sector is currently facing.

Regarding the guidelines, UNWTO at its last general assembly in Madrid in November 2021, together with the Plenary meeting of the affiliate members has established the **work programme for 2022-2023** which includes the following objectives.

First, an effective policy orientation to further strengthen public-private coordination as well as to implement new models of tourism development.

Second, to diversify the services and resources offered to members for better capacity building and support as well as to expand the number of members.

And, third, to strengthen strategic planning and modernise the Organisation to improve its effectiveness and the services provided to Members.



MEET TRAVEL LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY

INTERVIEW

PEDRO HEILBRON

Pedro Heilbron is the CEO of Copa Holdings S.A. and Copa Airlines. A Panamanian carrier currently serving over 70 destinations in 30 countries throughout the continent.



OUR MEMBERSHIP AND READERS EXPAND THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE – COULD YOU TELL US WHO IS COPA AIRLINES?

Copa Airlines is a Panamanian airline founded by PanAm and local investors in 1947, 75 years ago. Copa and its sister airline, the ULCC Wingo in Colombia, are owned by Copa Holdings, S.A. a publicly traded company (NYSE: CPA). The name Copa comes from 'Compañía Panameña de Aviación, S.A.', our legal name.

Copa operates the first and most complete intra America hub, The Hub of the Americas®, from Tocumen International Airport in Panama City, Panama. Prior to the pandemic, Copa Airlines had a fleet of 98 narrow body aircraft, mostly B737-800 and MAX9, and service to 80 destinations in 33 countries of the Americas.

Copa is well recognized for its extensive route network, efficient connections, low costs for a full-service airline, and consistently the best on time performance throughout the Americas.

HOW DO YOU FORESEE THE RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC TRAVELER NUMBERS IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS? CAN YOU SEE ANY SPECIFIC TRENDS THAT INDICATE FULL RECOVERY OR INCREASES IN DEMAND IN EACH OF THE REGIONS YOU COVER?

During the pandemic, Copa was completely grounded for nearly 6 months. However, Latin America has led the industry in terms of passenger demand, and our own recovery has evolved at a faster pace than initially projected. We now expect to be at pre pandemic seat capacity levels in the second half of 2022 and reach 2019 passenger numbers by the end of the year.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE RESUMING OPERATIONS?

Coming from a nearly complete shutdown, we have faced multiple challenges in the last 18 months. First, reactivating our entire aircraft fleet has been a monumental and very expensive task, since more than half of our aircraft had its major maintenance checks expire while grounded. In fact, we have still not been able to reactivate all of our aircraft.

But the biggest challenge, throughout the pandemic and now that we are fast ramping up to pre pandemic levels, has been the human side of the Company. We have dedicated much time and attention to taking care of our employees while grounded, rehiring,

and retraining a very large number of our team members and, most importantly, protecting our company values and strong culture.

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US WHAT CHANGES YOU HAD TO MAKE IN YOUR ORGANIZATION TO ADJUST TO THE 'NEW NORMAL'?

From the beginning of the pandemic, we understood the need to become more cost efficient to succeed in the post pandemic world. So, we have and still are dedicating a great deal of time and effort to streamlining our operations, renegotiating contracts, reducing overhead

and several other initiatives to become more competitive in a more challenging industry.

We are also responding to the evolving needs and requirements of our passenger and are investing in improving our digital tools, to make the travel experience frictionless.

“
I DON'T THINK THERE HAS EVER BEEN A PERIOD IN THE HISTORY OF AVIATION WITH A STRONGER SET OF AIRLINE LEADERS WORLDWIDE

AS CEO OF THIS IMPORTANT AIRLINE OPERATION, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER LEADERS TO ADDRESS THE CHANGES IN OUR INDUSTRY?

I don't think there has ever been a period in the history of aviation with a stronger set of airline leaders worldwide. The fact that very few airlines succumbed to the worst crisis in its history shows how resilient airlines are today, and is also a testament to the strong leadership in our industry. So, I don't think anyone needs my advice!

ABOUT PEDRO HEILBRON

Pedro Heilbron is the CEO of Copa Holdings S.A. and Copa Airlines. A Panamanian carrier currently serving over 70 destinations in 30 countries throughout the continent.

Heilbron joined Copa Airlines in 1988 as CEO (job he has held for over 34 years now). Under his leadership, Copa Airlines established the Hub de las Americas® in Panama, the first and most successful international connections center in Latin-America. During his tenure, the airline has expanded and transformed from a small regional player into one of the three large air groups in Latin America, increasing the fleet from two (1988) to 98 aircraft (2019). The airline joined Star Alliance in 2012.

Copa has received prestigious international awards such 'Most Punctual Airline in the World in 2018', according to OAG. Also, in 2021 was recognized as the 'Most punctual airline in Latin-American' for 8 consecutive years, according to CIRIUM.

Pedro Heilbron received an MBA from George Washington University and an undergraduate degree from College of the Holy Cross (Massachusetts).

Affiliations

2017-2019: Chairman of the Star Alliance Chief Executive Board.

2017-present: IATA board of governors.

2019-2021: President of ALTA.

Awards and recognition

2006: Received the Bravo Award as CEO of the Year by Latin Trade Magazine.

2009: Awarded the Airline Business Lifetime Achievement Award by Airline Business.

2014: Received the Tony Jannus award by the Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society.

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY





SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS



Skål International presents the Sustainable Tourism Awards 2022 prioritising sustainability as a key long-term global commitment.



The [World Tourism Organisation](#) (UNWTO) will be involved in Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards from this year onwards.

Skål International is also continuing its collaboration with [Biosphere](#)[®] and the Responsible Tourism Institute to award the 'Skål Biosphere Sustainable Special Award'.

[Skål International's Sustainable Tourism Awards](#) aims to raise the visibility and give recognition to entities in the tourism industry.

Skål International established the Sustainable Tourism Awards, in line with the United Nations declaration, in 2002 to highlight best practices around the world. As an Affiliate Member of the UNWTO, whose mission is to promote the development of accessible, sustainable and universal responsible tourism, Skål International presents in 2022 its Sustainable Tourism Awards, with the participation of the [World Tourism Organisation](#) (UNWTO), maintaining the collaboration with [Biosphere](#)[®] and the [Responsible Tourism Institute](#) to give the 'Skål Biosphere Sustainable Special Award'.



APPLICATION DETAILS

The **Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards** are open annually to all public and private sector companies, educational institutions, NGOs and tourism-related government agencies worldwide. We encourage all entities working for sustainability in the tourism industry to apply.

All sustainable operations and activities must be implemented by the company, NGO or agency applying for the award. Projects that are not yet operational are not eligible.

A new feature of the 2022 edition is that entries must be endorsed by an Skål International club or National Committee to be eligible, except Government entities, who will be required to enclose a document certifying their involvement with sustainability instead.

The call for entries opened on 1 March and will remain open until 30 June 2022 on the following form: [Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards 2022 form](#).

After the closing date for the acceptance of applications, the projects will be judged by three independent judges, who are invited to the process for their expertise in the tourism industry.

The Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards will undoubtedly enhance the visibility of candidates and gain recognition for their outstanding performance in sustainable and responsible tourism.

It will also allow them to increase their contacts and introduce their products and services to tourism industry professionals around the world through the promotion of the awards.

In addition, candidates will gain media coverage among Skål International's worldwide membership and our international press contacts and have the chance to win a free subscription to the Biosphere Tourism Sustainable platform.



AWARDS CEREMONY

The Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards ceremony will take place **during the Opening Ceremony of the Skål International 2022 World Congress**, which this year will be held from **13-18 October in Rijeka-Opatija**, in the Kvarner region of Croatia.

The event, which will bring together many members of the organisation, its International Committees and Executive Board, will also be attended by an official representative of the **Affiliate Members Department of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**, to which we are grateful for their valuable experience and dedication to these awards.

 [MORE INFORMATION HERE.](#)



SKÅL



INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS

CALL FOR ENTRIES
1 MARCH 2022 - 30 JUNE 2022

WITH
PARTICIPATION
OF UNWTO



UNWTO

AFFILIATE MEMBER

WITH THE
COLLABORATION OF



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ALL ENTRIES
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One of the main problems in certain coastal tourist destinations is overexploitation.

Summer arrives and environments multiply their population by two or even three times; a reality that greatly favors the economies of the area, which in turn generates a great ecological impact. In this sense, public institutions and private companies must go hand in hand in the search for a solution.

The main objective must always be prevention and, if not possible, compensation and minimization of negative impacts. To this end, the action proven to be most effective is information, as tourists are most likely to be unaware of the particularities of the environment and, consequently, of their needs for care and conservation.

It is recommended for the institutions in the area to draw up **comprehensive communication plans** and, if necessary, specific plans for each particular problem detected. The aim is to **make tourists aware of the specific circumstances of the area and its resources**, and to provide them with the necessary tools to conserve it.

THE PLASTIC PROBLEM

Another major sustainability challenge is the **reduction of plastic pollution**, which particularly affects the seas and oceans.

From an individual perspective, certain actions can be taken, such as reuse or recycling. However, the scale of the problem requires plans involving societies, institutions and companies around the world.

To understand the real scale of plastic pollution of the oceans, it can be enough to investigate the figures: **95% of maritime waste is plastic** and, in total, it is estimated to contain around 200 billion tons in the sea. Given these figures, it is unfortunate that the predictions are so unfavorable: **by 2050 the oceans could have more plastics than fish** (by weight).

Yet social awareness of the importance of protecting natural areas is growing alongside demand for more and more sustainable products and services. This reality is forcing the various stakeholders in the sector of tourism to include this perspective in their offer, which promotes the preservation of destinations and, in the case of maritime destinations, of their coastal resources.

Even it's the right path, the results will not be immediate. In other words, the sustainability measures derived by the arrival of tourists will happen in stages. It depends on the level of involvement of tourist agents in the area, responsible for creating and informing different strategies, as well as involvement of visitors responsible for contributing to maintaining the marine ecosystem in optimal conditions.



INDUSTRY EVENTS



WELCOME TO THE 81ST SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS

13-18 OCTOBER 2022. CROATIA.

It is well known by now that the [81st Skål International World Congress](#) will be in Croatia's most beautiful region - Kvarner, in Opatija and Rijeka. It may seem that we have plenty of time before October, but summer is right here and before you know it, you are going to be enjoying the company of your fellows Skållegues.

After a long battle with the pandemic, we are excited to announce that this year's congress will mainly be focused on reconnecting with old friends and colleagues whilst allowing you to do so on the very first day.

We believe that there isn't a better way to start this World Congress than with a **special 'Get-together' party at Opatija's unique cultural oasis, the Gervais Center.**

A very special **opening ceremony in the Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc** will mark the beginning of the program. This breath-taking building was designed by theatre

specialists, architects Herman Gottlieb Helmer and Ferdinand Fellner in 1883. The building was revealed to the public with a real technological marvel of its time: the first electric light bulb and the first

telephone in the city.

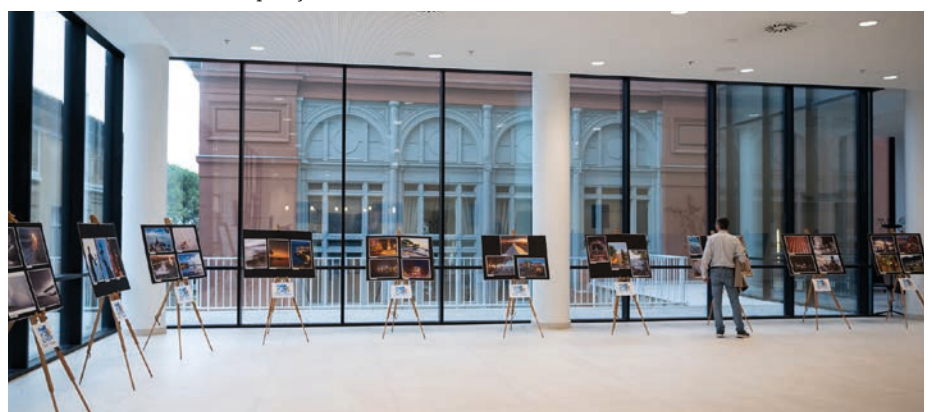
Throughout the entire duration of the Congress, we will ensure plenty of time for our participants to explore the beauty of this region with our optional excursions or free time.



PHOTO
Gervais Center. Opatija.

PHOTO 

Croatian National Theatre
Ivan pl. Zajc. Rijeka.



We suggest trying out local cuisine and many of Croatia’s reward-winning wines.

Visiting Croatia’s biggest Island of Krk or the famous Istria peninsula, we can guarantee a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

A must-see is a 13th-century fortress **Trsat Castle**, located high on a hill above the city of Rijeka, with a magnificent view of the Kvarner bay and the islands.

We cannot forget that the Skål International World Congress is an amazing opportunity for the tourism industry to meet customers and partners, and also to examine any recent market trends and happenings.

With the main thought of connecting companies in



this industry, the weekend will be filled with business activities including the **General Assembly held at the Royal Conference Hall**, Global Market Place and Trade Fair, Young Skål workshops, and many more.

The cherry on top of this year’s Congress will be the **President’s Gala Dinner at the Crystal Hall Kvarner** which is Opatija’s oldest and most elegant ballroom, the venue of the most prestigious events in this region.

Accompanied by dancing, music, and a toast by our very own President of Skål International we will close the night and this 81st World Congress.

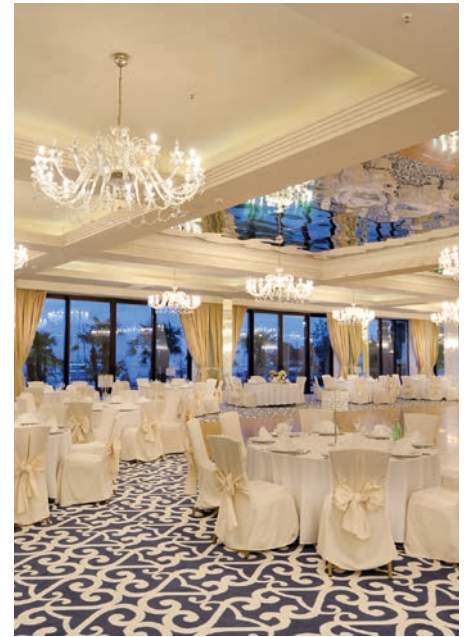
But our job doesn’t stop here yet! You have the opportunity to **join our Pre&Post tours** and get to know Croatia a little better only to find out why it is an ideal holiday destination for visitors of all ages. Simply breathing the fresh sea air, and admiring the stunning variety of natural, historical and cultural charms will for sure enrich your body as well as your mind. We look forward to hosting our dear Skållegues and celebrating this special occasion with all of you!



PHOTO
Crystal Hall
Kvarner.
Opatija.



PHOTO
Trsat Castle.
Rijeka.



PHOTO

Royal Conference Hall.

CANCELATION POLICY

We are happy to announce that we are extending our refundable cancellation policy for the 81st Skål International World Congress until the 1st of September.

Our HQ hotel Ambassador is selling out quickly, so make sure to register for the Congress and book one of our amazing tours!

Don’t forget to also check out the stunning Heritage Hotel Imperial that is best situated for all congress events – just a few minutes walk from all the venues.

Find more information on our [website](#).

For any help, or information you might need, feel free to [contact us](#).



CAMARADERIE, OPTIMISM AND FORTITUDE MARK 20 YEARS OF IMEX IN FRANKFURT

THE FIRST IMEX IN FRANKFURT SINCE 2019 PROVED TO BE A MOMENTOUS OCCASION FOR THE GLOBAL MEETINGS, EVENTS AND INCENTIVE TRAVEL INDUSTRY THIS YEAR.

It was marked by an outpouring of camaraderie, celebration and, most importantly, business.

After an enforced break of three years due to the pandemic, this IMEX show was always going to feel special. The question was, how special? Feedback from exhibitors and buyers made that abundantly clear. Day one saw Messe Frankfurt land two unexpected contracts, an endorsement of the team's decision to exhibit on their own stand for the first time in 20 years and to promote their venue more assertively.

Daniel Reid, Assistant VP of Global Sales Europe for Shangri-La Group was delighted with the quality of business leads: "For example,

we had six really strong enquiries from big brands for large groups. They include Google, Herbalife and a big telecoms company. Those enquiries span London, Abu Dhabi, Tokyo and Dubai. I'd sum it up as serious business from serious buyers", he said.

Christine Spitzenberg, Senior Sales Manager at Messe Frankfurt who were exhibiting on their own stand for the first time, said: "This is my 17th IMEX, and the best IMEX in years. My first appointment on Tuesday was a direct enquiry with a new client for a medical congress for 5,500 people with 15,000 sqm of exhibition space for 2028 or 2030".

Similarly positive feedback came from Lourdes Bizarro, Meetings & Bids Manager,

Los Cabos Tourism Board: "This is our first IMEX and it's been fantastic to meet planners and to educate them on Los Cabos because our destination isn't famous for business events. We've had more than 180 appointments and pre-IMEX we established alliances with MPI and Site to run events with them to help raise our profile".

Throughout the IMEX education programme, many presentations focused on **future trends, current behaviours and changes to 'industry norms'**. Shorter sales cycles; an emphasis on sustainability; niche, highly targeted events plus shorter meetings and events are all forecast, and desired by attendees. Wellness is now front and

centre, with a change in the story: an end-to-end duty of care to attendees, including consideration for their mental health, rather than a traditional focus on smoothies for breakfast or morning yoga, although both are expected too.

A CHANGE IN THE STORY

Corporate planners attending Exclusively Corporate on Monday 31 May, confirmed that, although some destinations are offering financial incentives of up to 100 Euros per delegate to attract events, buyers' current top priority is how well that destination has managed Covid. Many agreed that financial incentives are helpful (if ethics policies allow) but proof of consistent and ongoing health management is more important, coupled with strong partnership values.

IMEX saw an excellent attendance of around 9000 in the halls this week, including close to 3000 buyers, of which the majority were hosted. Exhibiting companies numbered 2300.

SHOW EXPERIENCE – UNEXPECTED TOUCHES GOOD FOR THE SOUL

Over in Hall 9, IMEX's focus on an improved show experience was impossible to miss, leaving many attendees gasping 'wow' as they entered the hall. A feast for the eyes with its colourful rainbow road, grassy Central Park surrounded by cabin-style food trucks, trees and abundant live plants, Hall 9 expressed the IMEX team's commitment to biophilia (our innate human affinity with the natural world). The design team at suppliers, Fair Services, together with IMEX's inhouse design studio succeeded in making a huge hall feel homely, comforting, accessible and 'good for the soul'. Attendees commented on the level of investment and care that had gone into crafting this special space, which included three branded education theatres, Forest, Ocean and Canyon; the hosted buyer lounge; food court, private 'nook' pods, Media Zone and more. For the first time, MPI and ICCA also offered education

and a series of hot topic meetups in Hall 9.

Speaking after the closing press conference, IMEX Group CEO, Carina Bauer said: *"It's clearly been a great week for our global industry. The show was imbued with a sense of camaraderie and celebration, and it felt good to be back together in the same room - that's the feeling our industry thrives on and is motivated by. We've heard about some huge contracts being signed and masses of business deals being done. All the indicators suggest that 2023 and 2024 are going to be very good years for our industry. However, we can't deny the challenges of a new business reality – labour shortages, travel disruptions, supply chain issues. However, planners are resourceful, adaptable and determined by nature. They've learned a lot and I sense a strong determination to rebuild, but on new foundations. Equally, suppliers are doing their level best to flex and respond. The future looks bright"*.



IMEX

Article previously published in [IMEX web](#).





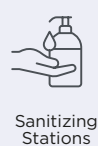
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When you are ready to travel, we are ready to welcome you back with a full heart.



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