



2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared by :

Rene Leblanc, IOHA President

December 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues of IOHA,

I'm honored to present this annual report for year 2019-2020. This will be a year that will be remembered. At the very end of 2019, a world treat appeared on our planet, Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19). Though the world had faced SARS and H1N1 at the beginning of the 21st Century, few had predicted that a virus as fast spreading would impact our planet. At the time I write this report, almost a year after the discovery of this new virus, 66M cases of Covid-19 infection had been reported resulting in 1,5M deaths, affecting all countries worldwide. This is a huge tragedy.



This event has demonstrated the importance of occupational hygiene. Through our education and experience, we have the fundamental knowledge required to reduce exposure to agents; chemicals, physicals and microbiologicals.

With all due respect, this has been a tough year for our science. First, with respect to the Precaution Principle we all learned in school. The classification of Sars-Cov-2 as a Group 3 microbiological agent is a decision that left many people speechless. Let's remind that for both Group 3 and 4 there is high individual risk, the difference being Group 4 has high community risk. With 66M worldwide cases it is hard to believe SARS-CoV-2 was not classified high community risk.

For months, occupational hygienist has been warning of potential risk of airborne transmission through aerosols and on proper selection of respiratory protective equipment. Meanwhile, thousands of healthcare workers were exposed, became sick or died of infection from Sars-CoV-2.

We must understand that this was a situation never seen since the Spanish Flu at the beginning of the 20th Century. However, I hope this event as shown the world that all resources must work together to help and protects all citizen.

Still, I would like to deeply thanks all OH/IH Organizations which has produced amazing reference documentation, expertise and guidelines to protect workers and general population. Your work was phenomenal and greatly valued. I would also want to express all my gratitude to all OH/IH experts who worked hard to fight this terrible disease.

2019-2020 was also a year of collaboration. Our committees were very active and continued their work to progress our profession. We warmly welcomed two new Countries as IOHA members with Guatemala and xxxx. We also renewed many NAR certifications to national associations and a Task Group was initiated to provide access to Spanish OH certification.

We participated at many of our member's national conference, which had the huge challenge to convert a face-to-face conference into a virtual conference. Many thanks for your effort and continuity to serve your members. We unfortunately had to postpone our International Conference in Deagu, South Korea due to travel restriction and high transmission hazards. We wish all the best success for year 2021.

My term is ending with the discovery of many Covid-19 vaccines and with a nice potential opportunity to work closer with ILO with whom we established productive and strong relation. A new Strategic Plan for the upcoming five years was adopted. This is therefore with a message of hope and faith that I conclude my year as President, with warm thanks for allowing me to serve this amazing organization that is the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rene Leblanc". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Rene Leblanc, 2019-2020 IOHA President

The International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) is an organisation of occupational hygiene organisations from across the world. All of these are dedicated to the discipline and application of the inherent principles of occupational hygiene.

Vision

A safe and healthy working environment for all.

Mission

Enhance the international network of occupational hygiene organisations that promote, develop and improve occupational hygiene worldwide, providing a safe and healthy working environment for all.

IOHA represents 34 countries (39 associations) from all continents. In 2019-2020, **we had the pleasure to welcome Guatemala and xxx as new members.**

Membership remained relatively stable at approximately 18,000 worldwide members.

Worldwide presence



IOHA

IOHA Management Structure is composed of a Board of Director with representatives from every countries and an Executive Committee as presented.

Due to Covid-19, the Board of Director met twice via teleconference. Although, we deeply prefer meeting face-to-face, having an online conference allowed an approximated 80% attendance, which is really positive and constructive.

The Board meetings were organized in two consecutive days, maximum four hours sessions, to maintain interest and concentration, not to say that with our board members located throughout the planet, its either very early in the morning or very late at night for some of our members.

The EXCO met approximately at a two months intervals to manage the organization.

Although we had to deal with Covid-19 constraint, we were able to maintain all activities and pursue great progress for our organization.

2019-2020 Executive Committee

President – Rene Leblanc, CBROH
(Canada)



President Elect - Thomas P. Fuller, AIHA
(USA)



Past President – Peter Jacobs, SAIOH
(South Africa)

Treasurer – Ruth Jimenez , AEHI
(Spain)

IOHA LEADERSHIP



Committee Structures



Governance Committee

The Governance Committee was very active in 2019-2020. Led by Peter Jacobs, this committee continued its strong effort in global coordination and management of corporate documents.

Followed by ISO 17025 principles, the committee implemented a management structure to ensure a sound and professional management of the organization.

Stakeholder Relation Committee

The Stakeholder Relation committee focused its work in identifying key partners and key contacts within IOHA to connect and maintain relations with these partners.

In October 2020, IOHA had a very positive and constructive meeting with M. Joachim Pintado Nunes, Chief, Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch, International Labour Organization, and his team.

The Stakeholder Relation Committee also contributed with the International Ergonomic Association in the preparation of a new document on Principles and Guidelines for HF/E Design and Management

Stakeholder Relation Committee Key Collaboration



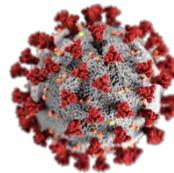
COMMITTEE WORKS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Communication Committee

IOHA communication committee continued to produce the bi-monthly production of the Newsletter under the leadership of Tom Fuller.

The committee continued providing relevant information on its website, including on Covid-19.

Many articles and posts were published on LinkedIn.



IOHA NEWSLETTER

GLOBAL EXPOSURE MANAGER



Update from the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH)

Andrew Orfanos, e-mail: President@aioh.org.au

The Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH) ended 2019 with a highly successful conference in Perth, Australia. The conference committee, ably chaired by Candace Absalom, delivered another high-quality event. In so doing, they provided a perfect illustration of the conference theme, *The Power of Many*.

The AIOH had an unusual start to the year, mainly due to the extreme weather conditions which IOHA members in other countries will have seen in the news. In response to the bushfires, the AIOH published a media release, highlighting the risks to the health of firefighters and first responders from smoke hazards. The AIOH president, Andrew Orfanos, gave a studio interview for Australia's main broadcaster, the ABC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9AZTYSUpo&feature=youtu.be>).

Also related to the bushfires, the AIOH would like to draw attention to a tremendous gesture from the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), which very generously donated 5 000 AUD to the Red Cross. The AIOH thanks the AIHA president, Kathleen Murphy, and chief executive officer (CEO), Larry Sloan, for their very thoughtful support for Australians in need.

Members of IOHA may also be aware of the emergence of accelerated silicosis in individuals working on engineered stone.^{1,2} In Australia, there has been an alarmingly high number of young men diagnosed with severe progressive silicosis from cutting artificial stone benchtops. In response, government occupational hygienists, particularly in the state of Queensland, have been active in visiting workplaces where engineered stone is fabricated.³ The Queensland government has produced an excellent code of practice, *Managing respirable crystalline silica dust exposure in the stone benchtop industry (2019)*, which the AIOH recommends to IOHA members.⁴

As a member of a consortium of concerned bodies, the AIOH lobbied the Australian federal government to look into the epidemic of silicosis. The Commonwealth health minister responded, in July 2019, by allocating 5 million AUD to the establishment of the National Dust Diseases Taskforce. The AIOH has been active in providing evidence to the taskforce. The AIOH is also meeting with the federal minister for vocational training and apprentices, as we consider that one of the main contributory factors is a lack of awareness in stonemasons and other workers in the construction industry. We hope that improved training material delivered to apprentices and construction workers will correct this.

With regard to training material, the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) has kindly allowed the AIOH to use its 'Breathe Freely' material in Australia. The AIOH has adapted the BOHS material to suit Australian workplaces, and rebadged it as 'Breathe Freely Australia' (<https://www.breathefreelyaustralia.org.au/>). Several road-shows have been delivered around the country to > 1 000 tradespeople from



the construction sector. Through Breathe Freely Australia, the AIOH has also entered into partnerships with state governments, industry associations, and unions.

If IOHA members google images associated with silicosis in Australia, they will notice one striking feature: stonemasons are often shown wearing totally inadequate respirators – such as surgeon's masks – or they are bearded or have some facial hair. In response, the AIOH is developing a national respirator fit testing and accreditation scheme (RESP-FIT) to promote best practice respirator fit testing in Australia through:

- A standardised training syllabus to improve respirator fit testing knowledge, and
- Demonstration of competence through the accreditation assessment.

The RESP-FIT programme will also provide information and tools for workplaces to make informed decisions on respiratory protection equipment (RPE) fit testing that is appropriate and suitable for the work environment.

LAUNCH OF A NEW RESOURCE TO HELP PROTECT WORKER HEALTH

Australia has experienced an increase in demand for disposable respiratory protection driven, initially, by the extensive bushfires and, more immediately, by SARS-CoV-2. This has resulted in non-compliant disposable respiratory protection entering our supply chain, which has been highlighted by several regulatory bodies, including SafeWork NSW (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/safety-alerts/safety-alerts/supply-of-fake-face-masks>) and WorkSafe New Zealand (<https://worksafe.govt.nz/about-us/news-and-media/non-compliant-respiratory-protective-equipment-on-the-market/>).

Identifying non-compliant products presents challenges for local businesses purchasing respirators for their workers, as the processes and checkpoints that provide compliance in our existing framework are complex. To address this, the AIOH collaborated with the Australian Institute of Health and Safety, the Indoor Air Quality Association, and the New Zealand Occupational Hygiene Society, to deliver a much-needed guide on this topic.

The final product, *A Guide to Buying P2, or Equivalent, Respiratory Protection for Use in the Australian & New Zealand Work Environment* is targeted towards those who buy disposable respiratory protection, and will help them make sure that it meets

COMMITTEE WORKS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



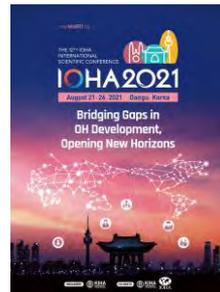
NAR Committee

The NAR committee continued its work with frequent meeting and good committee members attendance and participation. Over the year, the NAR committee and its volunteers, reviewed and approved the renewal of many country NAR certification.

Training and Education Committee

The training and education committee was strongly active including a ambitious project to implement a certification scheme for Spanish countries (Spanish task force). This project led by Tomas Fuller is moving positively with the intent to be officially launched in 2022.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the International IOHA Conference to be held in Deagu, South Korea had to be postponed to 2021. All the best to the organizing committee.



COMMITTEE WORKS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our world,
our (future) partners...



Work and efforts continued this past year to implement and reinforce the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. A new 2021-2025 Plan was developed and will include some Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Within the things achieved in 2019-2020 let's mention :

- **Strong Network** : IOHA joined two ILO/ISSA Vision Zero committee's, one on Higher Education and one on Vision Zero at Enterprise Level.
- **Visible** : IOHA President and President-Elect made many speeches at IOHA member Association conferences including, Australia, Indonesia, United States, England, Brazil, Colombia
- **Resourceful** : the website is getting more populated with relevant content applicable for all OH's around the World.
- **Tactfully Tactical** : IOHA met with ILO to discuss potential collaboration and strategies to improve workers health and safety.
- **Influential** : IOHA co-issued a statement with ICOH at the WHO General Assembly on Covid-19 and universal health coverage. IOHA joined the organizing committee of the 2nd Global Coalition on OSH to be held in Japan, Spring 2022.

VISION
A safe and healthy working environment for all

MISSION
Enhance the international network of occupational hygiene associations that promotes, develops and improves occupational hygiene worldwide, providing a safe and healthy working environment for all.

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| <p>Strong network</p> <p>Leader in developing a worldwide network that should lead to:</p> <p>Global outreach to the worldwide worker community</p> <p>New and innovative solutions</p> <p>Better public awareness</p> <p>Stimulation of new initiatives by our members</p> | <p>Visible</p> <p>World's clearing-house for OH/IH knowledge.</p> <p>Improving the number and caliber of practitioners of OH/IH internationally.</p> <p>As international organisation we accomplish our objectives through:</p> <p>Diplomacy</p> <p>Sensitivity</p> <p>Understanding</p> <p>Aspire to be influential through a strong network</p> | <p>Resourceful</p> <p>Education as most important factor in promoting OH/IH</p> <p>International OH/IH training standards</p> <p>Further development of the OHTA system</p> <p>Guidelines</p> | <p>Tactfully Tactical</p> <p>Judiciousness</p> <p>Perception to cultures and social norms</p> <p>Tactics that leverage our limited (human) resources</p> <p>Adopting new membership</p> | <p>Influential</p> <p>Creating committees within IOHA</p> |
|--|--|--|--|--|

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



IOHA makes every efforts to maintain a sound financial situation for the organization.

As of the end of 2019-2020, the financial situation of IOHA is in a good position, with a reserve fund of approximately two years of annual expenses in bank.

This being said, IOHA is searching for additional sources of revenue. The current revenues are from capitation fees from IOHA member organisations and from tri-annual International Conferences.

IOHA wish to secure funds to initiate International Projects and to eventually hire a General Director to ensure the continuity and the sustainability of the organization, and to get more collaboration and activities with our partners.

The Administrative Services are very well deserved by Mrs Retha van Niekerk (Prengco Pty Ltd) from South Africa.

We could see in the last year that the 40 hrs per month administrative management contract was not enough to carry all the work needed. The contract was renegotiated at 60 hrs/month and we are looking for a potential assistant to Retha to help in her work.

IOHA renewed its Professional Insurance with Alliant Insurance from USA.



In conclusion. IOHA currently has a great momentum with many initiatives and strong involvement from its member association.

The future is bright but still a lot needs to be done as we face many challenges. 2020 was a year where we saw, with Covid-19, a significant change in the life of work.

Many companies and people introduced remote working in their life habits. Webinars and video-conference became a standard for education and training.

The voice of OHs is much needed in our world. The Covid pandemic showed the importance of our expertise.

But the recognition of our profession in to laws and regulations, into request for bids, into international contracts, is more than ever essential.

Lets hope the best for the future of IOHA and the profession of occupational hygiene.

Kind Regards,



Rene Leblanc
2019-2020 President



CONCLUSION