

2021 Director's Report
Paul Silverberg
Associates Members Group

The last 14 months has been a roller coaster ride for our Associate Members group. The only consistency has been the unprecedented and confusing business environment that we have all been encountering since the pandemic began in March, 2020. Never being through anything close to this, our members experienced a number of “highs and lows” throughout this time period. A number of our members have experienced some supply issues due to having manufacturing facilities close, or scale back production, due to COVID-19 issues +/- or having issues with receiving component parts and raw materials to finish product(s) from both domestically and overseas. The productivity within some of the manufacturing facilities is still an on-going issue based on the fact that some of these facilities have been hampered by the number of people showing up for work as they were/are afraid of a virus spread or the government protocols allowing only a certain number of people in the plants at any one time. Along with some very busy markets, in North America, the sentiment is that this will continue for the foreseeable future. In conjunction with these issues, there has been unprecedented/never seen before, price escalations in the fall of 2020 which has continued to this day. Although the sales slowdown was quite significant at the beginning of the pandemic, most members reported that their 2020 results were not as poor as they were expecting back in March/April 2020 when the pandemic changed the world in an instant. Based on the unknown, the constantly changing environment and the differing lockdown measures being enforced in each province, our members are cautiously optimistic for 2021.

On February 11th, 2021, the Associates Members held a zoom meeting. It was explained to our members of the reason for the change from the AMS name to the new Associates Members name. The reason for the change is to clarify the correct grouping for the different categories within the Associate Members and to capture all of our Associate Members in to one Associates Members category.

Staying with the February 11th Associates Members meeting, there was a lengthy discussion on the 2021 AGM Trade Show. A small amount of our members had participated in such an event in November, 2020 and were able to supply some great information on the pros, cons and opportunities of this type of event. We had some very good conversations around break out rooms, product information sessions, Passports and gift give-a-ways. Similar to past AGM's, the issue of getting participation from all CASA members will be instrumental for a successful 2021 AGM. The members felt that there is a strong line-up of out sourced, and in-house speakers for our AGM. Seeing that there is no travel necessary to attend the 2021 AGM, we are hopeful that all CASA members, from all of the different groups within CASA, will be able to find the time to participate and experience this annual event.

Most of our members have had a good start to 2021 and look forward to a continued upward trend of activity within our industry. Planning well in advance, further ahead than ever before, seems to be the new normal in our ever changing environment. As mentioned above, there have been some COVID-19 and many supply chain delays. However, some of the delays are due to a strong increased world demand for products and a shortage of shipping containers. World Steel pricing has increased significantly since the middle of 2020. This trend, albeit at a slower rate, is expected to continue well in to 2021. In conclusion, all signs are pointing towards a strong 2021 in most, but not all, of Canada.

Stay Safe.

Paul Silverberg
Chair – Associates Members Group