

**Subject:** ITSA - April Newsletter

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**From:** Nicola Sudan - ITSA

**To:** Philippe Sudan

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Member Newsletter  
April 2020 Edition

Dear ITSA Members

This newsletter comes at a time when the world is at a standstill in many respects due to the coronavirus.

On the other hand, we are hearing that some tax stamp producers are currently very busy attending to the increased orders resulting from the rising consumption of cigarettes. So while some countries have prohibited the sale of cigarettes during lockdown – and while doctors are warning people who smoke that they stand a greater chance of dying if they contract COVID-19 – consumption is rising anyway, maybe as a result of cabin fever, anxiety and sheer boredom!

What a world we are currently living in!

Inevitably, the number of opportunities for face-to-face meetings in the tax stamp, and most other industries, will be extremely difficult over the next few months, as a result of worldwide travel bans and the fact that most conferences due to take place in the first half of this year have been postponed. However, we are fortunate enough to be living in an era where communicating remotely through video conferencing and the like has never been easier – and this is something that ITSA intends to make full use of.

We will, therefore continue to be very active during this period of extensive confinement, and will make sure we stay in regular touch with all members. Above all, though, at this unprecedented and difficult time in global history, the ITSA Board and secretariat would like to wish you the very best, both in terms of the sustainability of your businesses and the health and safety of your family and friends.

Stay safe!

## Launch of New ITSA Membership Category

The Memberships working group of ITSA – which currently comprises Gerben van Wijk of

Luminescence Sun Chemical Security and Kelly Smith of Ashton Potter – is pleased to announce the launch of an associate membership category for government authorities, NGOs, universities and other associations with a legitimate and established interest in tax stamps.

The initiative behind this new type of membership actually came from the revenue authorities themselves, some of whom had been asking ITSA members and the secretariat if they could become more involved in its activities.

Associate membership benefits will therefore be similar to the benefits for full members but minus the voting right and the right to hold a seat on the Board.

In particular, associate members will be able to attend member meetings (whether in person or via teleconferencing), as well as receive all information shared with members. They will represent the views of government authorities and institutions involved in tax stamp issuance and excise product control and will be able to contribute to some of the decisions made and activities carried out by the association.

Another important benefit for associate members is that they will be able to form a closer relationship to a neutral, non-partisan body that represents leading tax stamp and secure track and trace producers that are independent from economic operators of excisable products.

There is, therefore, a clear benefit, both for regular and associate members, in admitting other stakeholders into the association as active members.

As with regular memberships, all applications for associate membership will need to be approved by the ITSA Board, and, once approved, the applicant is requested to pay an annual fee of £300.

We are now in the process of distributing a press release announcing this new membership category and will also be contacting potential members directly to learn of their interest in joining ITSA.

Any interested parties will then be invited to join a short introductory webinar about ITSA and its projects and goals going forward.

Let us know your thoughts on this new plan for extending the membership base of ITSA. Do you know of any government or other institution that may be interested in such membership? If so, please let Nicola know.

**News from Advocacy and International Organisations Working Group  
– Christine Macqueen, SICPA, and Tim Driscoll, Authentix**

The Advocacy and International Organisations working group has been continuing its actions to engage with key stakeholders such as the FCTC Secretariat and NGOs with

whom our positions are aligned.

In particular, we reached out to the new Uruguayan head of the FCTC Secretariat Dr Adriana Blanco Marquizo who took up her post at the beginning of March. We have yet to receive a response from her but are making plans in the run up to the November Meeting of the Parties to the FCTC Protocol, including formally applying for accreditation to attend this meeting. We think it is crucial that governments are given the opportunity to benefit from ITSA's collective expertise as the key suppliers of independent systems.

With this in mind we launched a [blueprint proposal](#) for an FCTC-compliant system, focusing on what is practicable in real life. This has been shared with a wide range of partners and government and was also highlighted in the March issue of *Tax Stamp & Traceability News* which is widely distributed to revenue authorities.

We have also produced inputs for [UNICRI](#) (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute), which is looking for innovative ideas and new technologies for mitigating risks posed by counterfeiting and criminal infiltration in the supply chain, in particular in the areas of food, fishing, pesticides, fuel, and precious metals.

The Advocacy and International Organisations group continues to function during the COVID-19 confinements although a number of conference opportunities have been cancelled and alternative arrangements have yet to be put in place. We are monitoring these arrangements closely and will make sure we are able to attend any future events in whatever way is possible.

## ITSA at Conferences



Thanks to Barna Barabas of JURA for presenting on behalf of ITSA at the *High Security Printing EMEA* conference in Lisbon in March, on the subject of the coming revolution of excise tax stamps and programmes.

## ITSA in the News

[Pakistan: ITSA warns against influence on track and trace systems](#)

[The EU's Track and Trace Smokescreen](#)

[ITSA launches tobacco control system blueprint](#)

## Remember to Share!

Don't forget that we have a Twitter account and LinkedIn Group which we encourage you all to join, use, share, like, and retweet on!

The Twitter account is called [InternationalTaxStampAssociation \(@TaxStamp\)](#), which we urge you to follow, as well as like and retweet our messages. We only have 39 followers at the moment so we still have some work to do to boost our following.

Then there's the LinkedIn group called [International Tax Stamp Association](#). Again, we only have 74 members in this group, and need to build this number up as well. Please remember to visit this group from time to time and to regularly 'like' or comment on the posts – as well as to post your own messages of relevance to the tax stamp community.

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## Get In Touch

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in contact with the secretariat team:

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