



Dear members of the IRWA community:

It has been an extraordinary time, to say the least, to have begun as your new CEO just a few months ago. Despite the challenges we currently face, I'm excited and optimistic about where the Association is headed in the months ahead.

I wanted to make you all aware of some changes we've implemented at Headquarters in order to remain strong and financially resilient in the face of the current and unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic. Like many companies, the lock-down has dramatically impacted our revenue. We've taken steps to address both the revenue and costs sides as I'll discuss below:

After extensive consultation between staff, the IEC and members of the Professional Education Committee, we implemented two emergency, short-term pilot programs to allow and encourage instructors to teach classroom courses virtually, through an online video platform. This was necessitated as we watched our scheduled classroom courses get cancelled by the dozens each day when the bans on public gatherings began. These pilot programs, born of necessity, will nevertheless generate important data that will be helpful in determining the extent that virtual education will become a permanent option for our classes. We continue to address the core areas of need for our courses, such as the need for improved quality control and badly needed content updates, as our top priority in the meantime.

On the cost side, we've been forced to implement some difficult expense reduction measures. Staff is one of IRWA's greatest assets. It is also our largest fixed cost by far. Last month, I made the very difficult decision to address this challenge with a combination of a layoff and deep cuts in hours for the remaining staff. I'm sorry to inform everyone that April 24th was Daniel Stekol's final day on staff at IRWA. Daniel has been a key figure and a leader at the Association for 11 years. He has deep ties with many of you, and I hope you will join all of us at Headquarters in wishing him well as he enters the next chapter of his career. I had a relatively short opportunity to get to know and work with Daniel, but I was impressed with his passion for IRWA and greatly enjoyed our time together.

Let me assure everyone that IRWA is financially healthy and sound. We want to keep it that way. By taking these steps now, we are working to fortify ourselves against the uncertainty of the unknown and help assure that future, deeper cuts will not be necessary.

I know that all of you face similar challenges, not only in your businesses, but individually. First and foremost, everyone at Headquarters wishes you the best for your health, and secondly, that you are able to weather the economic aspects of the storm precipitated by the virus.

Respectfully,

Charlie Nobles, CEO