

SEA ?
“Safety Equipment Association and the Issue of ISEA/SEDA Merger”
as appeared in SEMAA’s “Rep Rap”
January 1997

While I think the strategic vision is to be complemented in concept I don’t necessarily agree that the Safety Equipment Association (SEA) would (or should) be a “vertical” association – rather I believe it would be really more horizontal – encompassing all trade channel partner associations (manufacturers, distributors and manufacturers’ agents, etc.) Vertical to me is what we each (ISEA – Industrial Safety Equipment Association, SEDA – Safety Equipment Distributors Association, SEMAA – Safety Equipment Manufacturers’ Agents Association) are individually now – or better yet – NIGDA (National Industrial Glove Distributors Association) is vertical to industrial gloves.

We do need to streamline and reduce redundancies and share more in thoughts, ideas, strengths, mass, knowledge, resources, etc.

Stated, we may be now a “mature industry” and an important industry but we are very small in comparison to other really mature industries – i.e. electronics, medical, etc. – let’s study or gaze into the future through their eyes – and observe.

HIMA (Health Industry Manufacturers Association), HIDA (Health Industry Distributors Association) and HIRA (Health Industries Representatives Association) operate separately but share some resources, meeting sites, speakers but attend to each vertical agenda.

ASMMA (American Supply & Machinery Manufacturers’ Association Inc.), IDA (The Industrial Distribution Association) and NIRA (North American Industrial Representatives Association) same as above (and many others).

ISEA, SEDA, SEMAA, NIGDA (and/or others) --- as a homogeneous association by itself would not, long term, be the only real strength. An alliance of safety equipment associations or a consortium – or initially as a coalition of associations, bound, but autonomous, vertically sharing strengths.....or simply and immediately begin as a Council – SEAC (Safety Equipment Associations Council) not a formally structured entity, rather an informal alliance of vertical safety associations mutually interested in combining talent resources in further development and exploration of additional commitments, nationally and then globally. To present itself as the global high profile authority of safety equipment associations and their interrelated constituencies.

The ISEA/SEDA merger actually is a separate ongoing issue. While the decision could happen quickly (this year), it could take years to fully pull off – non-profit associations move much slower than for profit organizations. And, in the scheme of things, it’s really a relatively small part of this whole picture.

The exercise is a worthy adventure that should be carefully explored with all channel trade partner associations – It is deeply appreciated that SEMAA has been included in this exploration. We welcome the opportunity to travel in this journey into the next millennium!

George Hayward
SEMAA Executive Director