



President's statement

Dear Ms. Stocker,

The world is facing one of its biggest challenges of our lifetimes – the COVID-19 global humanitarian situation. Now is the time to pull together, support each other and to abide by the guidance given by our local governments and health services. ***The carton and cartonboard industry is doing its utmost to maintain the flow of essential goods, in particular packaging for foods, pharmaceuticals and hygiene products being aware of its crucial role to ensure security of supply.*** We take our responsibility to society very seriously and all European cartonboard mills are working at full capacity and converters are striving to meet the high demand of the critical sectors. A big thank you goes out to all the employees within our industry who are doing a tremendous job to cope with the huge increase in demand that we are seeing.

There will inevitably be challenges ahead. To ensure wide availability of goods, the supply chain needs to work smoothly from its start right through to the consumer's home. For us that means having sufficient raw material, both virgin and recycled fibre. It is essential that the supply of wood pulp is maintained and equally that paper based packaging and other paper products are sent for recycling (with separate collection where this is practised). It is imperative that local Governments and Councils maintain the operation of these recycling systems to guarantee that sufficient recycled paper fibre is available.

The haulage industry is under pressure to supply the numbers of drivers, vehicles and containers that are required. This is likely to be even more of a problem after the Easter break when some drivers may be required to quarantine before returning to their duties. The EU Commission has recognised the important role that the packaging industry plays in the supply chain of essential goods and has opened up their "green lanes" with the aim of ensuring good transport flow throughout Europe.

The carton and carton board industry is all about sustainability and we are determined to sustain the supply of packaging for essential goods. With common goals, co-operation and a will to succeed, the carton and cartonboard industry will continue to play its vital part in getting us through this crisis.

Stay healthy.

Horst Bittermann
President, Pro Carton