

ICFF Weekly *Connect*



By Ingrid du Buisson, CEO – ICFF

ICFF Weekly Connect – Keeping the Industry and Our Members Informed and Connected

This is certainly a year of change and growth for us here at the ICFF. You may have noticed a difference in our communication platform. We are replacing our monthly news editions with a new platform called “**ICFF Weekly Connect**” which will communicate weekly updates, articles and announcements of interest to the industry and our ICFF members keeping you constantly updated and informed.

You will find our latest thought leadership piece as published in FTW, interesting reading on crucial challenges to watch out for in 2026.

SAQA Recognition

The ICFF has started this year on a very strong and positive note, SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority) have published their intention to finally recognise us as the official Professional Body for this sector. This has been a four-year journey of preparation and development of strategies, processes and infrastructure to meet the SAQA regulatory requirements. As the professional body, we are the cornerstone of excellence in this sector.



ICFF – Fix Bite Sized Insights

We commence in February with our monthly webinars focusing on industry challenges and issues that matter. Our speakers are individuals from industry with immense expertise, ready to share their insights and have the conversation with all our members. Attending these webinars is part of our members’ continuous professional development, which is an ICFF requirement to maintain a professional designation. Please check out our events schedule on www.icff.co.za for all the webinar dates.



ICFF
Institute of Customs & Freight Forwarding

ICFF Fix

Bite-Sized Insights

12 Feb 2026
via MS Teams
from 12:00 – 13:00


Maxeen Naidoo Bharath

Topic:

Artificial Intelligence – How this affects Customs Clearances; The effects on Industry and their clients

R350.00 for non-members.

✉ RSVP to Imapheto@icff.co.za ➤ www.icff.co.za



ICFF Membership Portal

The ICFF are currently developing a new membership portal, which will be accessible to all our members. This portal allows our members to upload their profiles, career achievements and update their CPD logs, have access to endorsed programs and many other features. We will advise you when the portal will be available for business shortly.

Course / Program Evaluators Required

We are urgently seeking industry experts to avail themselves in assisting us with the evaluation of programs we are receiving for ICFF endorsement. These evaluations are done in line with our ICFF evaluations Policy and Professional Standards Framework. The ICFF does offer remuneration for this purpose.

Interested parties can contact us for further information on this.



Learning and Development Chapter

The ICFF has introduced a Learning and Development Chapter, the purpose of this is to provide guidance and support to the industry employers and organizations on implementing an L&D strategy that is focused on actual verifiable needs of the organization, thereby streamlining training budgets for more effective return on investment towards professionalization – collectively also addressing EE and BBBEE requirements.

We have a bimonthly webinar for this purpose which we encourage all HR and L&D Managers / Executive's to attend. Please refer to our events schedule on www.icff.co.za



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Charles Dey



Dave Walls

ICFF - Industry's Strategic Partner for a Sustainable Future

By Charles Dey (Industry Stalwart and Education Expert) & Dave Walls (Industry and Education Expert) - Both are ICFF Committee Members with 90 years of collective industry and education experience

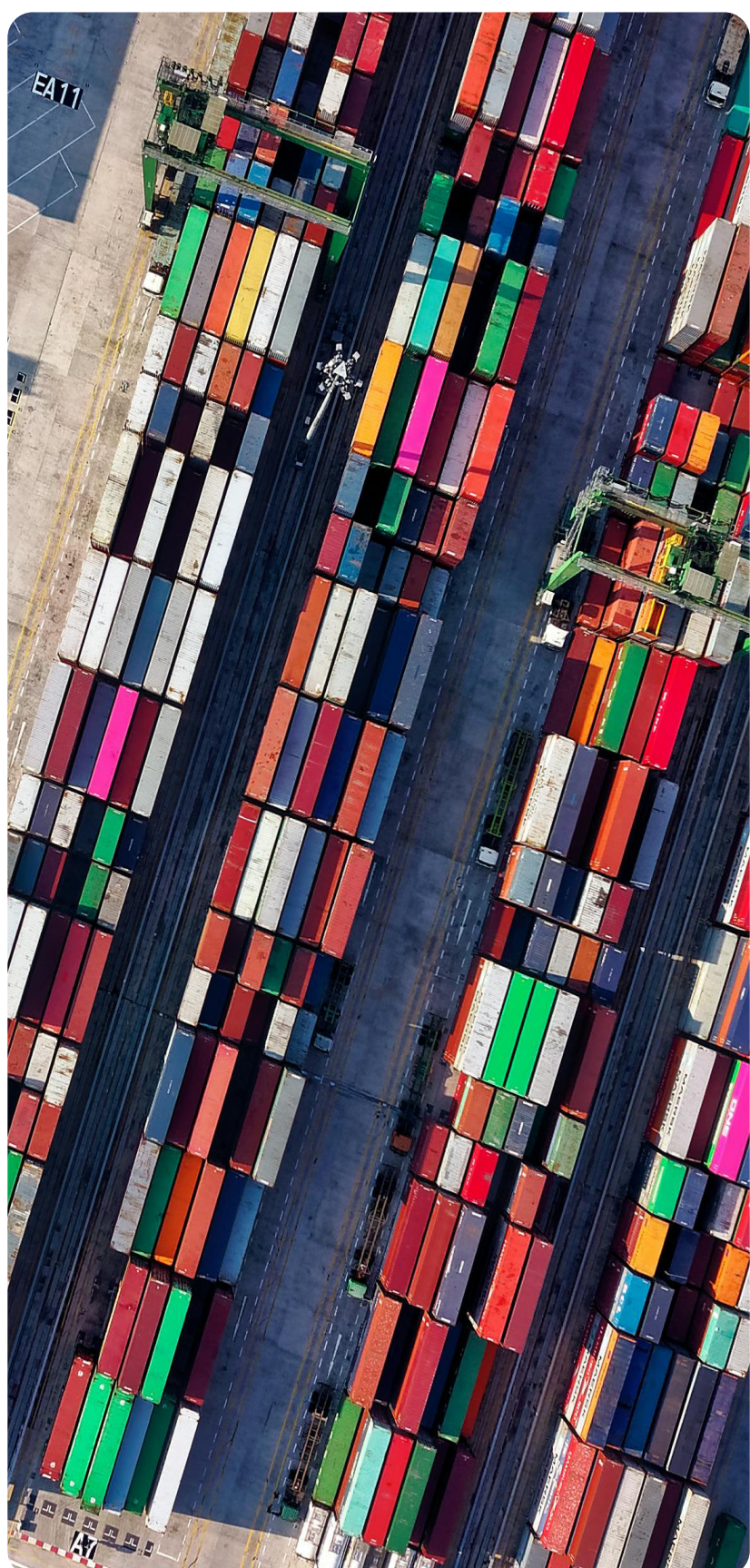
CFO: "What if we train our people and they leave?"

CEO: "What if we don't... and they stay?"

The greatest risk isn't in losing its trained employees — it's in keeping the untrained ones.

Training can also be part of an employee retention strategy which ensures that the investment is not lost to the company.

Viewed both locally and globally, the customs and freight forwarding industry has experienced more changes over the last 10 years than at any time in its history. This rate of change is expected to accelerate exponentially over the foreseeable, immediate future.



This is a substantial challenge to organisations: "According to research done by Stanford University, the amount of knowledge generated in the last 30 years is equivalent to the amount of knowledge generated in the rest of human history.

Textbooks are becoming outdated by the time they are printed. Curricula are no longer reliable records of what we know. Predictable career paths and stable worldviews are things of the past." (Andre Croucamp, Totem Media)

This places an urgent imperative on top management teams of companies to put in place strategies aimed at empowering employees by arming them with the competencies needed to meet the challenges and capitalise on the opportunities in ways that maximise bottom line return.

ICFF – Industry’s Strategic Partner for Future Prosperity

The ICFF is wholly future oriented, has been established by industry, for industry, is supported by industry experts of long standing and pending registration by SAQA as a Professional Body.

There are two pathways to designation, with the first being through an industry qualification and relevant experience and the second through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) through experience and proficiency evaluation.

In order to measure the alignment between each individual’s proficiency and that of ICFF’s designation criteria, individuals may participate in a very user friendly, online evaluation. This evaluation has been in development with full industry participation since 2009 and acts as a very powerful tool to identify for the individual the specific areas in which they need training in order to meet the ICFF criteria for their particular designation category.



For the organisation prepared to invest in their employees ‘challenging and exciting learning and designation journeys with the ICFF, these costs are fully identifiable as Professional Body endorsed CPD Programs, which are reflected in the Learning / Training Matrix of the B-BBEE scorecard and, by diverting funds into these investments, the company will achieve its return on investment as well as its B-BBEE scorecard targets.

**Contact the ICFF for more information on:
info@icff.co.za | idubuisson@icff.co.za
and visit our website on www.icff.co.za**



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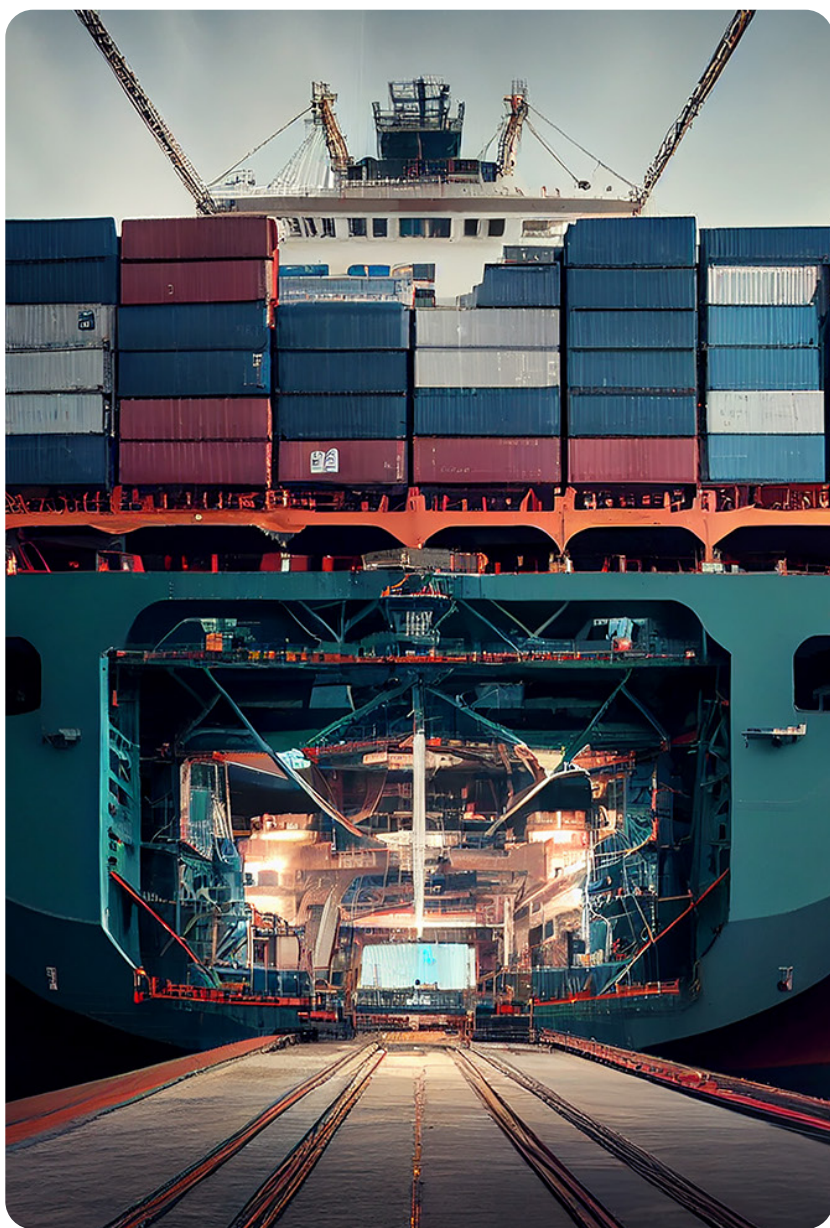
By Yolandi Dercksen - Chairperson: ICFF

Anchored Within: Prioritising Mental and Emotional Wellness as We Step Into 2026

By Yolandi Dercksen, Chairperson – ICFF

As we welcome 2026, many of us feel a sense of renewed energy following the Festive Season, refreshed, hopeful, and ready for what's ahead. Yet as the world around us continues to shift rapidly, it's critical that we recognise the importance of sustaining our mental and emotional wellbeing throughout the year, not just at the start of it.

The global conversation around mental health has never been more urgent. According to new data from the World Health Organization, over one billion people worldwide are living with a mental health condition such as anxiety or depression, underscoring the immense and ongoing need for mental health support and awareness.



Closer to home in South Africa, the situation is equally sobering: more than 90% of people experiencing mental health conditions do not receive the care they need, driven by historical, social, and economic challenges that have limited access to services. These statistics are not just “numbers on a page”, they represent parents, children, colleagues, and neighbours trying to cope with stress, pressure, and emotional fatigue in environments that don't always support their wellbeing.

A Global Landscape of Rising Stress and Mental Health Challenges

Recent surveys further reinforce that mental health is not just a personal concern, it's an **industry and societal challenge**:

- Across the U.S. and other nations, stress has become a defining feature of modern life, with a majority of adults reporting stress-related physical or emotional symptoms as part of everyday living.
- Workers globally are reporting increased stress levels compared to five years ago, nearly 44% say they feel more stressed today than in the past, driven by economic pressures, workload, and workplace expectations.

- Younger generations, in particular, are feeling the strain: large segments report stress or anxiety regularly, with work and long hours, financial uncertainty, and future prospects contributing to ongoing pressure.

These global trends ring true in many of our professional environments, including our own industry, where workload, regulatory demands, and performance expectations can unintentionally amplify stress.

Why This Matters for 2026 and Beyond

It's easy to experience a "post-festive high" but maintaining mental and emotional wellness throughout the year requires intentional focus. Personal wellbeing isn't a side project; it's foundational to effective leadership, decision-making, and sustainable performance.

At the core of our work in Freight Forwarding and Customs is people, professionals whose mental clarity, resilience, and emotional balance directly influence the calibre of service they provide, the relationships they build, and the strategic decisions they make.

As we grow as an industry body, here's how we encourage every professional to build wellness into everyday life:

- **Prioritise self-awareness:** Know when you're stressed, tired, overwhelmed and give yourself permission to address it.
- **Build supportive workplaces:** Foster open dialogue, psychological safety, and a culture where mental wellbeing is spoken about openly, not in whispers.
- **Champion continuous personal growth:** The journey of self-development helps strengthen resilience, deepen emotional intelligence, and guide meaningful engagement with colleagues and clients.
- **Seek support when needed:** Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness and contributes to long-term wellbeing.

A Call to Action for the Industry

As we shape the ICFF's strategic focus for 2026, let us keep in mind that mental and emotional wellness isn't separate from professional excellence, it enables it. Together, let's commit to:

- Embedding wellness awareness into our professional development programmes
- Advocating for mental health support systems within workplaces
- Normalising conversations about mental health across all levels of our industry

The coming year can be one where we are not just productive, but purposeful; not just technically sharp, but emotionally grounded. When we take care of ourselves, body, mind, and heart, we show up better for our teams, our clients, and our community.

Here's to a 2026 filled with strength, balance, growth, and wellbeing.

Warmly,
Yolandi Dercksen
Chairperson – ICFF