



Endorsement

Member Certification

Terms and Conditions of Membership

The Association of **Laundry Machinery,
Equipment and Chemicals Suppliers**

ALMECS

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1. Executive Summary

This document outlines the articles of a new company, an industry association, modelled upon the Society of Laundry Engineers and Allied Trades (SLEAT), but with a new identity and purpose entitled the Association of Laundry Machinery, Equipment and Chemicals Suppliers. It defines the need for a credible body to certify suppliers of laundry machinery, equipment and chemicals, thus assuring regulatory compliance and performance standards. The document incorporates useful background information, as well as the scope, membership terms and conditions and the criteria by which members will be judged to gain membership approval.

2. Foreword

In the UK, Europe and indeed globally, there are unfortunately, adverse issues concerning the manufacture and supply of laundry machinery; its origin, regulatory compliance, safe design, performance, maintenance and ultimately its purchase, ownership and operation are raising developing causes for concern.

Recent issues/incidents particularly focused on the UK have escalated to the point where it was necessary for the UK Textile Services Association (TSA) to generate a machinery safety and procurement guidance document to raise the awareness to its laundry members and machinery suppliers, launched at a one-day seminar to address the subject.

Such issues extend beyond machinery to various equipment, chemicals and other products.

There are two key concerns:

- That laundry companies may be unaware of their ubiquitous responsibilities as Duty Holders under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and the increasing importation of offshore equipment which may not conform to be recognised industry standards for safety and performance and which ultimately control CE or UKCA marking, prohibits their PUWER compliance.
- There is no recognised body to regulate or endorse the placing of equipment on the market, and it is intended that ALMECS will act indirectly as an authority to assure the credibility of suppliers.

3. Scope

The Association of Laundry Machinery, Equipment and Chemicals Suppliers, ALMECS Ltd. is tasked with establishing and developing its key role of certifying suppliers of machinery, equipment and services to the laundry industry and assuring their regulatory compliance and performance.

The key objectives of the Association will be to provide the following benefits:

- promote, support and protect the interests of member companies who supply the laundry industry.
- enable a 'VOICE' for independent, authoritative representation for member companies.
- promote (or oppose) regulatory or legislative proposals in the interests of member companies.
- be a focal point of reference and information relevant to member companies, their customers and their customers' customers.
- promote sustainable supply practices that enables the members and their customers to monitor, analyse and reduce their scopes 1,2 and 3 emissions.
- liaise with other organisations, trade associations and authoritative bodies in both generic and individual matters.
- represent member and industry interests at the various trade shows or exhibitions.
- coordinate training activities for members' staff and their customers, e.g., engineers, processing technicians, etc.
- coordinate the combined expertise of members towards supporting industry standards, research and technical development.

Having developed and promulgated this proposal across the industry, considerable interest was proven, leading to the formation of this new company and promoting it for the benefit of the whole industry as well as its third-party customers.

4. Member Certification: Process and Criteria

The Directors and Executive Committee of ALMECS Ltd. will assess potential supplier companies before approving their membership and may also appoint an independent consultant for this purpose. The evaluation fee is a fixed rate, regardless of the size of the company's portfolio. If approved, suppliers receive the ALMECS Membership Certificate and are listed on the ALMECS Assured list at almecs.org.

4.1 Key Criteria

The certification process will entail the interrogation of suppliers to the laundry industry in order to verify their regulatory compliance and performance with due consideration of the following **key** criteria:

- conformance of sample machinery, products, equipment or services to relevant standards
- competence in the supply, installation (RAMS), commissioning, after sales service and break-down support, etc
- financial credibility, terms of warranty, business continuity plan, regulatory compliance, etc.
- ethical standards, sustainability (ESPR and EPR), net zero strategy, environment and health and safety policies, etc
- sound relationship with manufacturer(s) and/or proven distributor performance achievements

4.2 Broad Criteria

The process of evaluation will utilise a constructed template stating a score with comments for the key criteria above and the following **broad** criteria:

- **Quality consistency:**
What quality standards certification(s) are held. Are reliable quality standards achievements records maintained and able to be demonstrated
- **Delivery reliability:**
Can agreed timelines be demonstrated as achieved by reference to completed sales/project records
- **Total costs of ownership:**
Beyond base pricing, what are the complete costs, including shipping, maintenance, handling charges, and quality-related expenses. N.B. Analysis frequently reveals "low-cost" suppliers actually have higher total costs when all factors are considered.
- **Financial stability:**
Can the financial position be demonstrated to indicate a sustainable operation. Financial

assessments may include standard industry ratios (KPIs), credit ratings and liquidity measures.

- **Technical capability:**

Are satisfactory levels of knowledge and expertise demonstrable for all aspects of specification, installation, operation and maintaining of equipment

Is the interface between manufacturer and distributor sound and are training requirements maintained for all parties to manage changing specifications

- **Communication effectiveness:**

Demonstrate examples of responsiveness and transparency regarding issues which have arisen.

- **Geographic considerations:**

How does your location impact risk, lead times, etc; address example problematic customer locations for delivery, response time, etc

- **Capacity and scalability:**

Are current customer requirements achieved and are there plans for future growth.

- **Compliance documentation:**

In addition to the key elements above, are general national and local regulatory compliance requirements confirmed.

- **Risk management protocols:**

What contingency plans exist for disruptions; can a business continuity plan be demonstrated. Are there any relevant experiences.

- **Sustainability practices:**

Are environmental and social responsibility policies in place and practised; do such standards align with your customers.

- **Strategic alignment:**

Are customers' businesses fully understood to enable your business objectives to suit their demands, competitively.

- **Ethical standards:**

Are ethical business practices demonstrated throughout your operations

Are appropriate relationships maintained with all stakeholders, especially contracted customers who depend on your services

- **Customer orientation:**

How do you assist your customers through innovation in maintaining a response to market trends or end user demands.

- **Organizational culture:**

Do you promote inclusion, collaboration and diversity towards ensuring a culture of employee care and mutual respect.

- **Business strategy:**

Are operational development plans in line with foreseen or demanded customer expectations of growth.

- **Production capacity:**

As a manufacturer, distributor or supplier of services, is your supply chain and all their facilities routinely audited for similar criteria as in this evaluation.

- **Environmental impact:**

In accordance with your environmental policy, are all practices undertaken with due environmental responsibility and with an improvement plan.

- **Innovation capabilities:**

Can you and your suppliers demonstrate awareness and the practising of best available technologies and innovations to realise process improvement.

- **Legal compliance:**

- Demonstrate adherence to contractual terms.
- Have there been conflicts of interest or legal proceedings which have or may not have been resolved, and you are able to divulge.

The results of the evaluation will be held confidential and evidenced only by a certificate of membership of ALMECS Ltd.

5. Terms & Conditions of Membership

Completion of an application for membership is an offer to subscribe to the Association which, if accepted, will result in a legally binding contract. A legally binding contract is formed on the date the application is confirmed in writing. Membership will renew automatically unless and until terminated in advance in accordance with these terms and conditions. The annual membership fees for the year in which termination of membership is notified remain due and payable in full and the Association reserves the right to recover such fees as a debt. At the point of renewal, your renewal payment is confirmation of your continued acceptance of this contract. You should print or save a copy of these Terms and Conditions for future reference.

There is a seven-day cooling off period in which to cancel or withdraw your application without penalty, which is effective from the date we accept your application. You must notify us in writing within seven days by email or letter.

As an individual, corporate body, unincorporated body or other organisation which is applying for membership(s), it is a continuing requirement, that all members shall:

1. be of good repute and standing in the industry and where the applicant or member is a corporate body, its directors and officers must be of good repute and standing in the industry
2. demonstrate written documentation and proof of machinery and equipment conformance to all relevant ISO, EN and BS standards as such validating CE or UKCA conformance e.g., the suite of standards BS EN ISO 10472.
3. have adequate and appropriate safety procedures in place and demonstrate a record of good safety practice.

4. agree to be bound by, and at all times comply with these Terms and Conditions of Membership of ALMECS, as stated herein and which may be amended by the Association and available upon request and published on its website from time to time.
5. pay an agreed validation fee which is common to all prospective members as determined by the Association in its absolute discretion from time to time. The validation fee is to cover the cost of site visit(s), the interviewing of staff and viewing documentation as detailed in the Member Certification process in this document, including the completion of the ALMECS Certification Checklist which will remain strictly private and confidential between ALMECS and the prospective member candidate. Payment of the validation fee must be received before the site visit(s) may be undertaken.

Upon satisfactory completion of the Certification process the Member shall within 30 days of receipt of invoice, make payment of the annual membership fee, as determined by ALMECS, in its absolute discretion from time to time. Upon receipt of payment, a Membership Certificate will be presented. In the event of failure of the Certification process there will not be a refund of the fee, however the ALMECS representative(s) will identify and advise upon the necessary improvements or non-conformances to be corrected.

ALMECS will operate on the UK financial year (April to March) basis in all respects.

Members joining part way through the year will be invoiced for their first membership fee on a pro-rata basis to the end of the current year.

6. Provide (updated as any changes may dictate), accurate details of:
 - a) your registered company name, number, office address and place of registration (in the case of a registered company) or full business name and current trading address (in the case of an unincorporated body or individual).
 - b) all trading names and styles (where applicable).
 - c) all domain names (where applicable), including social media pages, and identify your primary domain name from which your business is promoted.
 - d) contact details; and consent to the Association publishing such details on the ALMECS website.
7. display your registered company name, registered number, place of registration and registered office address on all promotional and marketing material, including websites and other electronic/soft copy material, stationery and other business documents.
8. refrain from doing anything that does or may mislead the public, in particular but not limited to representations regarding your legal status, address, contact details and membership status with ALMECS.

9. warrant that all information provided to ALMECS on application for membership is true and accurate at the point of submission. Failure to provide true and accurate information may result in an application for membership being refused or membership being revoked. There will be no refund of fees.
10. in the event of a change of circumstances in your registered or trading name, trading position, regulatory sanctions, moving jobs, change of contact details or any other such change, provide updated information by email to the Association within 14 days of such change occurring.
11. as Suppliers, have and/or offer for sale or hire, only products which meet the appropriate National, European or International Standards.
12. as Suppliers of Training or Service/installation, have such relevant Approved Training Centre, Approved Contractor, etc status and displayed proof thereof.

5.1 Use of the Association's Marks

The Association is and will be the owner of all current and future intellectual property rights in its trademarks ("Marks").

The Mark(s) shall only be used by authorised members in accordance with the Regulations, these terms and conditions as amended from time to time, and the Association's Brand Guidelines as amended from time to time.

The Association shall not be liable to any member for any losses resulting from suspension or termination, in accordance with these terms and conditions, of the member's right to use the Mark(s).

5.2 Members who are entitled to use the Marks

1. must display the Marks and display their registered name and/or sole trading name (in the case of a company) or full name and/or sole trading name (in the case of an individual) in all promotion and advertising, including on the Member's Website (being a single website on which the member's business is promoted)
2. may not use the Marks on any other website or in respect of any domain name which does not redirect to the Member's Website.

Termination or Cancellation of Membership

Where a party is in breach or otherwise has or is likely to fail to comply with these terms and conditions that party may be given notice of the breach or non-compliance and given a reasonable period of time to remedy the breach or non-compliance.

Any party whose membership is removed shall be entitled to appeal in writing in accordance with the Association's Membership Appeals Procedure, from time to time in force. In addition, membership shall immediately cease:

- a. on a member giving notice, in accordance with the resignation procedure outlined on the members portal of the Association's website, effective on expiry of the current annual membership term, to the Association of resignation as a member, provided always that membership fees for the current year shall remain due and payable as a debt
- b. where any membership fee remains unpaid or unsubmitted or any breach remains uncorrected on the expiry of the agreed notice period by the Association, always provided that such unpaid membership and any other fees remain due and payable and the Association reserves the right to recover such fees as a debt; or
- c. if there is, in the reasonable opinion of the Association a material or persistent breach of any of these terms and conditions.

Effect of Termination of Membership; upon termination of membership, for whatever reason:

- a. use of the Marks must immediately cease.
- b. representations that they are members of the Association must immediately cease and
- c. at the request of the Association, all hardcopy materials of any kind displaying the Marks in the former member's possession, custody or control must be returned or destroyed within 10 days of such a request.

6. Background Notes (for information only)

Whilst national laundry associations have always had suppliers in membership, their roles were necessarily disparate in representing suppliers' interests. The SLEAT (Society of Laundry Engineers and Allied Trades) structure was trifurcated in order to represent suppliers to the Dry Cleaning, On-Premise Laundry (OPL or Commercial Laundries) and Industrial segments of the laundry industry. There were many essential activities undertaken involving liaison with TSA. The essence of the role which SLEAT adopted was to focus on technical, engineering, regulatory and safety issues or opportunities. The singularly greatest example of such liaison was the CTW CoP, wherein SLEAT representatives had great input and were duly credited.

There is also of course the TSA Health, Safety and Environmental Guidelines, generated and perpetually updated with TSA and SLEAT input, up to a few years ago and a particular company, Mike Clark Safety Associates had a wide range of laundry clients operating his H&S

management system which used the TSA Guidelines as its basis. The responsibility for and the developing/updating of the guidelines has since, with great regret, fallen by the wayside. This task could/should have fallen to SLEAT. Cutting to the chase, we have an unfortunately developing issue with a range of laundry machinery; its origin, regulatory compliance, safety of design, performance, maintenance and ultimately the responsibility for its ownership with respect to PUWER. Some industry issues/incidents have been highlighted recently to the point where it was necessary to generate a machine safety and procurement guidance document and to hold a seminar to address the subject (in part). There is an increasing concern that owners are still not totally au fait with their responsibilities as Duty Holders under PUWER and also that there is an increase in the importing of offshore equipment which may not enable compliance. CE or UKCA marking should indicate conformance with relevant standards, but this is not always the case and there is only a token (if any?) policing of conformity. Despite the gov.uk guidance (link below) the validation of a machine and all of its components in order to prove the Declaration of Conformity (if such exists) is an incredibly difficult and time-consuming task which should of course be undertaken by the manufacturer. It is also necessary for a distributor to validate the DoC and ultimately the purchaser must have total proof and confidence in all elements of the DoC in order to operate the machine and comply with PUWER. The UK Conformity Assessed mark is a mandatory mark on a product to indicate that it conforms to GB legislation. The manufacturer or, if mandated, their authorised representative will be responsible for affixing the UKCA mark to the product, which is the same principle as CE marking but for the GB market. The detailed explanation is provided in a Gov.uk link.

[Gov.uk CE Marking Guidance Link](#)

There is however currently no authorising body able to validate the CE or UKCA conformance and the purchaser of equipment has to accept the 'mark' unless a certificate of conformity is presented along with the machine. The endorsement or certification of a supplier may be generated by associated membership of a credible body.



ALMECS is the trading name of ALMECS
incorporated in England and Wales

ASSOCIATION OF LAUNDRY MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT
AND CHEMICALS SUPPLIERS

ALMECS