

# BENEFIT STATEMENT 2024/25

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# A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

*In recent years, our industry has seen a transformative shift due to innovative designs, technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences - all this in a economic and political climate that has made doing sustainable business an issue of its own.*

*Challenges such as supply chain disruptions, loadshedding and economic fluctuations require a united front. Enter the KSA, a unifying force promoting excellence, ethical standards, and innovation. For consumers and industry stakeholders, working with the KSA is a mark of assurance. Our members adhere to the highest standards of professionalism, craftsmanship, and ethical conduct, transcending all demographics and price ranges. Choosing a specialist affiliated with our association ensures that you are engaging with a professional who is dedicated to delivering quality and service no matter what the size of your budget.*

*The KSA serves as a hub for networking, knowledge-sharing, and professional development. We understand that the strength of our industry lies in the expertise and collaboration of its members and through workshops and networking events, we facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences, empowering our members to stay at the forefront of industry trends.*

*To make the most of what the industry offered in 2024, and can offer us throughout 2025 and beyond, let us reaffirm our commitment to excellence, innovation, and collaboration. Remember, the KSA is not just an association; it is a community of passionate professionals working together to shape the future of the kitchen industry in SA.*



Bo Bylin - KSA National  
Chairman



# OUR VALUE-ADD TO THE CONSUMER

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The consumer is a key stakeholder in the KSA, and as such our industry. We are aware that the advent of the Consumer Protection Act and the climate we live in - both economically and socially - has changed dynamics with consumers being more informed of their rights and expecting more for their money than ever before. They have also become more cautious as acts of fraud are on the rise.

The KSA acts to offer a safety-net for consumers - ensuring there is a pool of like-minded companies who are prepared to be held accountable by a third party for their ethics and workmanship and offer their clients recourse should they make a mistake.

The KSA offers consumers a free platform for advice and guidance. Our website is full of content aimed at helping the consumer be prepared and informed for a kitchen renovation. Our team are also available for consultation and to give free and objective advice.

Our free dispute and mediation service ensures consumers can have help traversing a problem on site. We offer on-site inspections and put together comprehensive reports detailing any issues and proposed solutions. These are compiled with consultation with industry experts with an aim to finding a fair and constructive solution to both parties. To ensure a fair and equitable report and inspection the KSA staff have been trained as mediators and are registered with the SA board of mediators. Most importantly, the KSA has now received full accreditation from the National Consumer Commission and acts with their sanction and support in all disputes that may arise between a consumer and a member.

To help guide consumers the KSA will always compare the work delivered on site to what is proposed on the quote and signed drawings, as well as the standard of workmanship displayed in the member's showroom. We also have an industry acceptable tolerances documents that shows what we will and will not entertain as a problem on site.

# THE CONSUMER CONTINUED...

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One of our most important Consumer tools is our Holding Account. This is similar to a Trust Account and is administered by Nedbank for us., This account is a safe place for consumers to place disputed funds in the event of a problem on site. It also offers a means for the parties to safely negotiate payment terms. By placing the funds into the KSA Holding Account the consumer and KSA member have the freedom to change their payment terms - turning them into drawers, administered by the KSA. Here the member has peace of mind that the client has the necessary funds to pay them while the consumer retains control of releasing these funds to the KSA member. Both parties get the security they need to proceed with the deal.

Ensuring the consumer is informed about what the KSA does is vitally important for both the consumer and our members. We are continually working on our website, social media platforms and our Google ads campaign to ensure our message reached consumers and industry professionals. Many consumers work with an industry professional so we make every effort to ensure they are informed about what we do as well.

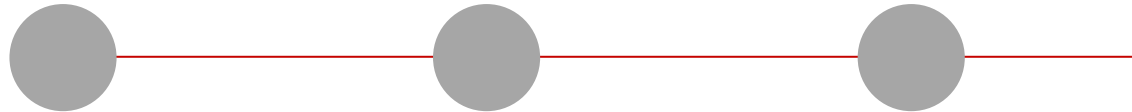
We also have a Consumer Guide which is published annually - this is designed to specifically inform consumers and industry professionals about what we do and each edition holds a wealth of advice and guidance. This booklet can also be downloaded off our website home-page.

We encourage consumers to always confirm claims of membership by visiting our website or calling our offices. Sadly, there are unscrupulous people out there who will make false claims of membership. To avoid being misled please double check that a company is in fact registered and in good standing.





# OUR VALUE-ADD TO THE KITCHEN AND FABRICATING MEMBER



The true value of KSA membership is in how our members use it as a tool to help instil confidence in the consumer and show them that they are a company that can be trusted - this is particularly true for our kitchen and fabricating members. The KSA offers multiple platforms and resources for you to promote your membership status to consumers. We also offer in person and online training for your teams on how to utilise your membership as a sales tool helping you to secure and close sales. To maximise this it is vital that members stay abreast of and make use of the resources made available to them and actively use the KSA branding in their showrooms and marketing materials.

It is important to remember that KSA membership is voluntary. This speaks volumes to a consumer or industry professional as it means that you have chosen to have a full background check done on your company, you have chosen to be held to a code of conduct and ethics, you have chosen to have your workmanship assessed by the KSA; and you have chosen to abide by any ruling the KSA hands down, follow our dispute procedures and offer your client use of the KSA holding account. All of this puts you ahead of your non-KSA competitor.

The KSA's holding account is a fantastic tool available to you and your client at no charge. It not only offers a safe place for disputed funds but also gives you the freedom to negotiate payment release terms with your customer. If the client is nervous about handing over large sums of money they can pay the funds into our holding account and then you can agree on release term - like draws. This lets you be sure your customer has the funds and is willing to pay while the customer has more control over your access to funds.

Our dispute resolution service is the most tangible value-add we offer to our kitchen and fabricating members. The KSA agrees to assist members and consumers with any legitimate dispute within the guarantee period of the work. Our main focus here is to help bring the two parties back together and ultimately get the job finished and the member paid. Many members have been able to get access to funds they thought they would have to walk away from through this service and the guidance of the KSA's trained mediators. As complaints are on the rise and consumers are becoming more informed about their rights having this service available to you free of charge helps bring funds into your business and hopefully ensure your job ends with a happy customer.

# THE KITCHEN AND FABRICATING MEMBER CONTINUED...

The KSA's certification by the National Consumer Commissions means that they have vetted our processes and deem them fair and objective. It also means that the Commission views the KSA as the leading expert in the field to assess and deliberate disputes and believes consumers should seek our assistance when there are issues rather than going legal. As the KSA is now recognised by the Consumer Commission this means our members do not have to be registered with the Consumer Goods and Services Ombuds and do not have to pay then annual contributions which can be a considerable saving to you as contributions are a percentage of your annual turnover.

We are aware that making key contact with industry professionals, builders, developers and suppliers is vital to your business and as such much of our time is spent putting together networking and CPD events so that the industry can engage and connect. It is vital for us to make sure these key stakeholders in your business are informed about what it means for you to be a KSA member and how that ultimately benefits them.

The KSA maintains strong relationships with fellow organisations like IID, GIFA, SAID and more and works to ensure members have networking opportunities with industry professionals and opportunities to introduce their businesses to them.

We are aware that our industry faces critical skills shortages and as such works with the SETA, DTIC and SAFI to address skills shortages through the Furniture Industry Master Plan and other programmes. We also have a kitchen design project that we run with eighteen tertiary campuses for second and third year interior design students, to increase their knowledge of kitchen design and entice them to consider it as a future career path.

It is important to us that kitchen designers be acknowledged for their unique skill sets and as such we have developed a Registered Kitchen Designer program whereby designers working in the industry for three or more years can formally register themselves and have their skills and experience certified increasing their accountability and credibility in the industry.

Issues like cheap imports, under declaration, misuse of tariff codes and lack of knowledge of customs officials are also impacting our industry and we are working alongside SAFI to address these issues with SARS, ITAC and the DTIC. By becoming a KSA member you add your voice to that of the other members and the more who speak out and the KSA represents the more we can impact change in these areas assuring the ongoing stability of the formalised kitchen industry.

Internally we are also always on the look out to provide much needed training and skills refresher courses. These are normally online and cover subjects like dispute avoidance, sales skills, stone and fabrication for the designer, appliance installation requirements, the CPA and bespoke items, the JBCC contract, acceptable industry tolerances and more.





# OUR VALUE-ADD TO OUR SUPPLIER MEMBERS

Suppliers, much like kitchen manufacturers and stone fabricators, are always looking for new ways to strengthen their businesses, better their relationships with their customer base and network with potential new customers. The KSA offers suppliers to the kitchen industry a unique opportunity to work closely with, and give back to their core client-base through several avenues:

- Showcasing your products to the industry and industry professionals at product evenings and our regional industry showcases.
- Providing opportunities to support clients, collaborate and showcase new products at trade shows.
- Distribute news of new products, staff and company news on the KSA web site, it's What's Hot page and social media platforms.
- Network with the industry on both formal and informal levels at events and social gatherings.
- Sponsorship and competition opportunities.
- Opportunities to offer training to designers and installers thus ensuring your product is properly used and installed, cutting down on 'under warranty' service and nuisance calls.
- A link to the designers of the future through our student kitchen design project.
- Exposure to industry professional and CPD talk opportunities through the KSA's relationship with the IID, GIFA, SAID, SACAP and more

Our dispute resolution process has also become a useful tool to our supplier members - assisting in ascertaining if their product or material is at fault in a site dispute. We also work closely with our supplier members to alert the industry of any issues pertaining to misuse of abuse of product, shortage of materials or to address the issues that may be affecting the supply chain. Our acceptable industry tolerances document outlines how we conduct assessment of products and what we deem as acceptable or not. This ensures consumers are assessing your products in a fair manner. Our certification by National Consumer Commission gives added gravitas to our dispute procedures and ensures your valued profits are not paid over to the Consumer Goods and Services Ombuds - as a KSA member you are not required to register with the Ombuds and pay over annual contributions. Your membership of a NCC recognised industry body ensures this.

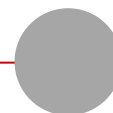
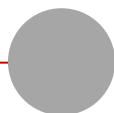
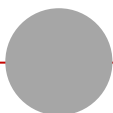
# OUR VALUE-ADD TO OUR SUPPLIER MEMBERS CONTINUED...

Issues like cheap imports, under declaration, misuse of tariff codes and lack of knowledge of customs officials are also impacting our industry and we are working alongside SAFI to address these issues with SARS, ITAC and the DTIC.

We are also working on addressing the vast skills shortages impacting the industry. Our student kitchen project is now in its fifth year and is designed to inform students about materials and applications as well as design and encourage them to look to the kitchen industry as a possible future career path. We are also a key participant in the SAFI skills development forum and have done extensive research into identifying scarce skills like CNC operators, saw and edge-band operators and we are investigating the fastest route into addressing these with appropriate, industry relevant training.

By becoming a KSA member you add your voice to that of the other members and the more who speak out and the KSA represents the more we can impact change in these areas assuring the ongoing stability of the formalised kitchen industry. You also claim the kitchen industry as one focal to your business and actively support and participate in it to ensure its success and survival.

The KSA actively encourages our kitchen members to work with and support KSA registered suppliers. This is because it ensures greater recourse and accountability to the consumer down the value chain. But the key reason a supplier looks at KSA membership is to claim the kitchen industry as a key market, show appreciation to it and give back to it.





# OUR KEY PROJECTS AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE



We have many ongoing key projects at the KSA which we hope will add value to the industry and benefit our members.

- **Student Kitchen Design Program** - working with 18 tertiary campuses expanding on what is being taught relating to kitchen design to ensure they students get a real taste of what they will need to know if they opt for a career in kitchen design. We don't only focus on design but on materials and budgeting as well. Members have opportunity to get involved by recording video content, giving talks, supplying samples and resources. The top five students each year have an opportunity for an internship with a KSA kitchen member.
- **Registered Kitchen Designer Program** - as there is no formal kitchen design qualification in South Africa this platform offers kitchen designers a means to have their credentials verified by the KSA giving them a proven track record in the industry and allowing us to put a database of designers working in the industry. This is a key step forward in elevating the status of kitchen designers in the design community.
- **Industry insurance scheme** - we are following the example set by associations like the KBSA in the UK who have specialised insurance products tailored for the industry to leverage the associations bulk buying capability and ensuring members are getting the best value for money and the best coverage available. The KSA has partnered with Econorisk and are embarking on industry engagement to find how we can best improve insurance offerings tailor made to our members.

# KEY PROJECTS AND THE FUTURE CONTINUED...



- **Our relationship with SAFI** - the KSA is a key player in SAFI - the South African Furniture Initiative - our national manager is a director of SAFI and is chair of their kitchen industry chamber. These roles have opened new doors for the KSA to speak with key role players in Government within the DTIC, the office of the minister of Trade and Industry, ITAC, SARS and FMESETA. We are actively involved in addressing imports into the country ensuring local products are protected and stopping dumping and cheap, poor quality materials are targeted. We are working with several key players identifying job skills shortages in the industry and looking at ways we can a) acknowledge the skills of those already working in the industry and b) train up previously unemployed people in key roles to fill the gaps we currently have. We are also working on access to market and how we can open up opportunities for our industry to export.
- **Registration with the Consumer Ombuds** - Mid 2024, after a two year process of assessment, the KSA was formally certified by the National Consumer Commission. This means we are recognised by the commission and the ombuds. KSA members do not have to register with the Consumer Goods and Services Ombuds - their registration will be through the KSA - this will not only save them money but also ensure they and their customers have direct and primary access to our dispute services. The KSA will have regular interaction with the Commission reporting back on consumer issues. The Commission will actively encourage consumers to use KSA members to take advantage of our dispute services, and encourage industry to become a member to ensure fair and informed recourse for their customers.
- **KSA CPD talks for industry professionals** - We have been looking at how we ensure that industry professionals are aware of the KSA and what we do. We want to reach a point that industry professionals recognise the KSA logo and actively look for it when appointing suppliers. We are now CPD accredited and have started a series of CPD talks aimed at educating industry professionals as to who the KSA is, what we do and why they should work with KSA members. We also actively assist members to put together and present CPD talks with content that the professionals are looking for and will identify with.

# KEY PROJECTS AND THE FUTURE CONTINUED...

- **Ensuring the KSA's name and function is known among consumers** - over the past two years we have been focused on expanding and improving the KSA's social media reach. We expanded our profile to include Instagram and LinkedIn and more recently Threads. We have also begun a strategic Google Ads campaign ensuring our messages are targeting key audiences that will best benefit our members.
- **Relationships with other key organisations** - We believe that it is vital for the KSA to work with other key organisations in the industry. Internationally we have built a relationship with the KBSA in the UK and the Marble Institute of America. Locally we are working with associations like IID (Institute of Interior Designers), GIFA (Gauteng Institute of Architects), SAID (South African Institute of Drafting Professionals), SACAP (South African Council for the Architectural Profession). We have a strong relationship with most of the interior design and architectural tertiary institutions and are well versed with the various trade shows available to industry.
- **International membership** - January 2024 saw us open a new membership category - international member - this is available to kitchen professionals outside of South Africa, who have no industry association to affiliate themselves to, and offers them a platform for support and accreditation as well as advice with consumer disputes. It is also available to supplier companies in Africa who have a parent or sister company in South Africa that is already a registered KSA member. This new category will expand the KSA's horizons and open doors for our existing members into Africa.

Most importantly, it is vital to know that the KSA team is small but dynamic - made up of people with various skillsets that all add value to our members. As a team we are open to hear from all members and look into all suggestions for events, courses and opportunities to add value to the industry. The KSA team ultimately becomes part of your team. Please take some time to look at our platforms to know more.



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