

Minutes of the General Assembly of the Members of the Blue Shield

Thursday 16 December 2021, 13.00 CET – 15.00 CET

On 16 December, the Blue Shield hosted its 2021 General Assembly online. We were delighted to welcome representatives from all our Blue Shield national committees, committees under construction, and the founding four organisations. Attendees are listed in Appendix 1.

The General Assembly was recorded and is available on the Blue Shield YouTube channel¹. Relevant comments from the Zoom chat are included in these minutes.

1. Welcome

The meeting began with a welcome from the President, Professor Peter Stone (PGS), and brief housekeeping elaborating how the meeting would work. He thanked those who attended the 25th anniversary conference, for which a large number of congratulatory emails and texts have been received. The event was very successful, and he thanked those involved for their hard work. The conference should be available shortly on YouTube.

The President apologised that the General Assembly would not, as hoped, be commenting or discussing proposed revisions to the Articles of Association (AoA)². At the beginning of this year, the Board asked their lawyers in the Netherlands for minor amendments, for example, the post of Vice-President and the ability to have regional committees added to the AoA. They also asked them to streamline the AoA to the absolute minimum as required under Dutch law, moving any other information or processes to an Internal Regulations document, a document which would come entirely under the control of the General Assembly, and not need legal notary sign off for every change. Simultaneously, Dutch law governing Associations has changed; for example, the need for annual (rather than tri-annual) General Assemblies, the introduction of the auditing committee, and a number of other issues. This resulted in the lawyers returning even longer draft AoA to Blue Shield despite the request to reduce them. The Board continues to work with the lawyers to see if the size of the Articles can be reduced, and as much as possible moved to be under the control of the General Assembly.

Even without the new articles, there are other changes Blue Shield are required to abide by: the annual accounts must now be audited within six months of the year end, therefore future General Assemblies must be held on an annual basis in the first half of the year, to allow the Auditing

¹ <https://youtu.be/9F-uijyM8oo>

[*Technical difficulties encountered were edited out of the video. The full video is available on request.*]

² Blue Shield is legally registered in the Netherlands as what the Dutch call an “association”, under Dutch law governing associations.

Committee to report to the General Assembly in due time. Going forwards, the Board hope to hold the General Assembly in May or June every year.

In order to meet that change of the move from a triannual general assembly to an annual General Assembly in the first half of the year, the Board must ask all national committees for 2021 Annual Reports and 2022 Strategic Plans by the end of February 2022. The President hoped this would not be too much additional work for national committees, and reiterated that the Board and Secretariat are here to support national committees as much as possible.

2. Approval of Annual Documentation

The President introduced the voting. There are three votes to approve the Blue Shield Annual Documentation

- 2.1 BSI Annual Report
- 2.2 BSI Financial Report of the Treasurer
- 2.3 BSI Strategic Plan

The President apologised that there was a mistake in the documents sent out. Although the documents were correctly labelled, the Agenda and the electronic voting system questions refer to the 2021 Annual Plan. He clarified that the 2021 Annual Plan referred to in the electronic voting system should be the 2022 Annual Plan. [*In fact, the three documents are the 2022 Strategic Plan; 2020-21 Annual Report; and 2020 Treasurer's Report*]. He hoped that it was clear to those voting which document was which and apologised for the confusion.

2.1. Annual Report Nov 2020-Nov 2021

PGS flagged that the Annual Report goes from November to November as that was when it was written. From 2022 onwards it will become an Annual Report written for each calendar year.

No questions were received on the Annual Report before the General Assembly.

PGS presented the highlights of the 2022 Annual Report. These included:

- Blue Shield's successful increase in social media presence, thanking Emma Cunliffe (EC) and Jessica Barry (JB)
- The Secretariat is funded through the money Newcastle University gives to the President in his role as the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Property Protection and Peace. EC is full-time and Michael Delacruz (MD) is part time. The President formally thanked Newcastle University for their funding and support, without which Blue Shield would not be in such a strong position. However, that funding currently runs out on 31 December 2023: the search for future funding will be critical
- The increasing cooperation between national committees, and Blue Shield international, flagging several projects from the Annual Report
- The hard work of the Accreditation Committee, and the successful accreditation of Mali and Turkey, with a number of others in progress

- The hard work of The Illicit Trafficking Working Group which (whilst confidential) is making a real difference in the fight against Illicit trafficking
- A planned document to come from the Emergency Response Working Group, due to the Board next year
- The 25th Anniversary celebrations, with thanks to all the volunteers have worked to support it
- He concluded by highlighting the new Blue Shield Training Course, which is has been very positively received. The Secretariat are working to incorporate the feedback into block one and in preparation for block 2. It is hoped to circulate Block 2 in the new year.

The President opened the floor for questions. Manana Tevzadze (MT) of the Georgian National Committee queried the paper on the work of the Emergency Response Working Group. The President clarified that the group has been approved in the principle, but that a paper on the proposed remit of the group is to be presented to the Board at (hopefully) the April 2022 Board meeting.

2.2. Treasurer's Report for the 2020 Financial Year

The Treasurer, Klaus Weschenfelder (KW), presented the Treasurer's Report for the 2020 Financial Year (a legally mandated period). Most activities have revolved around legal compliance, such as registering all Board members with Kamer van Kooperhandel (the Dutch Chamber of Commerce), which is nearly complete. KW has also been investigating banking options. Although BSI has no direct funding, some figures are included for transparency. The current holdings (from our previous bank account) of €183 are still held by the National Committee of the Netherlands; Newcastle University pays BSI staff costs, and some travel and website costs; the NGO Biladi paid the BSI website domain costs. The main goals for 2022 are to finalise the KvK registration, open a bank account, and create financial compliance guidance based on the new AoA.

2.3. Strategic Plan 20200

The President presented the draft 2022 Strategic Plan (which he referred to as the Annual Plan). He noted it builds on the last few years of work, highlighting **[1.4] Work with the national committee of the Czech Republic regarding the feasibility of an in-person General Assembly in 2023**. He hoped that would be possible to host the General Assembly with them in person in the future, and highlighted the enormous amount of work by the Czech National Committee to plan the 2020 General Assembly in person, before COVID restricted travel. He also flagged the newsletter they produced for the Conference, which was circulated and shared online³, and all their work to get the viewing rights for the Destruction of Memory for the conference⁴.

³ During the meeting, EC added a link to it in the chat: <https://theblueshield.org/registration-open-blue-shield-25th-anniversary-conference/>

⁴ The screening of the Destruction of Memory was arranged by the Czech Republic National Committee of the Blue Shield, with their colleagues from the National Film Archive, namely Mr. Tomas Lachman, Mr. David Havas, and Ms. Nikola Krutilova. Access to the film for our Anniversary was supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. We offer them our sincere thanks for their support.

Angela Dellebeke (Netherlands) (AD) asked a question regarding **[1.9] Develop and sign formal agreements with [a] UNESCO [b] The Smithsonian** - “Could you elaborate a little on what type of agreements we want to sign with those parties?”

The President clarified that the point of the formal agreements which Blue Shield now has with NATO, the UN Peacekeeping Deployment in Lebanon, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and – Blue Shield hopes - in the next few months with UNESCO and the Smithsonian, is to build the credibility and international profile of the Blue Shield. The President directed the Assembly to Helen Durham’s video (from the ICRC) at the 25th Anniversary Conference, noting that following the MoU, the ICRC’s real commitment to working more closely with Blue Shield is a massive step forward in our profile and our work internationally. The idea behind the MoUs is to build momentum for the Blue Shield movement with these international agreements.

Inkyung CHANG (IC) of BS Korea asked for elaboration on Blocks Two and Three of the Training Program. *[In the meeting, this was deferred to after the voting (approximately 48 minutes into the video), to enable EC to find the proposed outline, but it is presented here for clarity.]*

EC shared the draft of the proposed Blocks Two and Three of the training course with the Assembly via screen share (presented as Appendix Two to these minutes). The President reviewed Block One, and outlined Block Two, noting red indicated areas that were under discussion. He also noted that Block Three is less developed than Block Two as it is planned to get National Committees to get involved as well. The aim of Blocks Two and Three is to provide more detail on the areas already presented, with case studies in addition to further theory. He also noted that further feedback sessions on Block One are to be held in January: this may result in changes to Blocks Two and Three.

IC queried what the process is for cooperation between NCs and BSI? The President emphasised that such cooperation is a two-way process. He noted the work of Blue Shield Germany finding financial support for the African Committees, as was the Turkish research initiative, which BSI was asked to support. Conversely, following the explosion in Beirut on 4th August 2020, PGS was in conversation with colleagues in Beirut within 4 hours. Those on the ground produced a visual report to identify the needs within 4 days, whilst BSI spoke to funders to get the money based on that needs assessment. Collaboration is based on need and capability.

IC clarified she meant with regards to the course. PGS explained Block One is all online for all national committees, who were asked to take part. It is produced in a format to allow all participants to take part at a time that is suitable for them. After 6 weeks, all NCs were invited to feedback sessions in various east/west and weekend/weekday time zones. As the final sessions were posted later than hoped, the final feedback sessions have been postponed to January. All Block One material is still available online (and will be all year). PGS encouraged all BS members to take the course. Block Two will be made available the same way, and followed by feedback sessions. The course also contains the opportunity to give online feedback.

IC also asked about the languages: the course is predominantly available in English, but has subtitles in English, French, Spanish and Arabic (using free translation software). EC noted that languages were more problematic in non-Latin alphabets, and may be of variable quality, but adding more languages was relatively simple. If NCs want other languages, please just email her. IC asked if Block Two was a pre-requisite for Block One: PGS felt that Block One laid the foundations for Block Two, and that Block Two would refer back to Block One, so he encouraged people to take both Blocks to get the most out of the course.

MT asked in the Zoom chat if BSI would still like the NCs to contribute? EC replied that Blue Shield will be refining the programme for Block Two based on feedback for Block One. After Block 2, Blue Shield will get further feedback, and will be reaching out to people for contributions. If any NC feels there is something that should be in the course that they can contribute, she asked them to please put it in the feedback.

2.4. Voting

EC introduced the Election Runner online voting programme, and noted the President only votes in case of a tie. She emphasised that although who has voted is publicly visible, what they have voted is *not* visible. Voting was opened on Monday 13th December. Once all votes were received during the Assembly, EC closed voting and displayed the results. Results are available online⁵.

Do you approve the Nov 2020-Nov 2021 Annual Report of the Board?

Yes	30	No	0	Abstain	0
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Do you approve the Treasurer's Report for the 2020 Financial Year?

Yes	28	No	0	Abstain	2
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Do you approve the 2022 Strategic Plan?

Yes	30	No	0	Abstain	0
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All reports were approved by the General Assembly.

3. Election of the Auditing Committee for financial year 2021

The President then asked KW to introduce the Election of the Auditing Committee for Financial Year 2021. KW explained that Dutch law for Associations requires an Auditing Committee of two members of the Association if no external auditors are employed. These individuals must audit the Associations accounts to determine if the financial report is sufficient and correct. The Treasurer and Secretariat must supply all required information, such as the balance sheet, and explanations to enable the Committee to do their work. The Committee will be re-elected each year; it is good practice (but not mandatory) for members to rotate every 2-3 years, so at least one is experienced. The Committee can question the Treasurer and Board and must make a final report to the General

⁵ <https://app.electionrunner.com/election/229050/results>

Assembly: however, there is *no* liability of Committee members in the event of malpractice. This first report will be extremely minimal, as there is no financial expenditure for Blue Shield. The General Assembly were given the opportunity to ask questions: there were none.

KW introduced the two candidates: Dr Ömer Dabanli (ÖD) of Blue Shield Turkey, and Gerrit de Bruin (GdB) of Blue Shield Netherlands. Both candidates circulated a biography and statement in advance, and presented themselves to the General Assembly. (GdB was unable to be present and was presented by AD). There were no questions from the Assembly for either candidate.

Voting took place via the online system Election Runner, and results are available Election Runner⁶.

Election of Candidates to the Auditing Committee of Blue Shield

Voters are required to select a minimum of 1 option(s). Voters can select up to 2 options.

Gerrit de Bruin 25 votes Ömer Dabanli 14 votes Abstain 1 vote

Both candidates were elected to the Auditing Committee. EC and the President congratulated the candidates.

[EC apologises that it does not seem to have been clear to the General Assembly that they should elect two [2] candidates.]

4. BSI Accreditation of Training Courses

BSI is working to establish itself as an organisation others may come to accredit their training, but also to accredit national committee training if appropriate. The Vice-President, Professor Bae Kidong (BK), presented his work on the Accreditation of Training Courses (Papers I – BSI Accreditation of Training Program Checklist, and J - Doc J - Report of the Accreditation of Training Program, circulated previously).

BK has been leading on the Accreditation of Training Programme. When building up the checklist to accredit training, BK thanked IC and others in Blue Shield Korea, and support from BS Poland. This project has been ongoing since January 2018. However, suggestions to improve the questions and scope of the checklist's contents are welcome, in the future. The checklist consists of several sections:

1. detailed description of the institution holding the training course;
2. an overview of the training, its delivery methods, and its relevance to Blue Shield;
3. the administration and management structure of the organisers;
4. the administration of the training course, including fees and qualifications of trainers;
5. facilities, equipment, and services provided in the course (including accessibility);
6. budget and finance for the course; and
7. Post-evaluation/follow-up management.

⁶ <https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/pJh1h/results>

In total, the checklist has 59 questions and is about 10 pages. The checklist will be evaluated on 3 key principles

1. Impact of Program on the expansion of philosophy and knowledge of heritage protection under any kinds of wars, conflicts, disasters, and other emergent contexts.
2. Feasibility of program management with consideration of readiness of financial resources, the composition of teaching staff, leadership, etc.
3. Visibility of BSI in the region where the program takes place

A report and evaluation must be provided within three months of the completion of the course: feedback and evaluation should be collected during the course as part of this. BSI may attend and evaluate any course they are accrediting. Applications should be submitted at least 6 months before a course is taking place to allow time to review the course. BK stated the forms are available online: EC clarified that as BSI is moving to a new website host, they will not be available until the new year.

PGS thanked BK. There were no questions.

5. Any Other Business

PGS noted the dates of the feedback meetings for Block One.

He thanked the Founding Four (ICA, ICOM, ICOMOS, IFLA) for their ongoing support. He thanked the Board and the Bureau for all their hard work over the last year, particularly KW and BK for the work highlighted in the General Assembly, for their work in the Bureau, and Sophie Delepierre for her work in Bureau and in the Accreditation Committee with KW and EC. He thanked the Illicit Trafficking Working Group for their work, some of the successes of which were highlighted in the 25th Anniversary Conference. He thanked those creating the Emergency Response Working Group. He particularly thanked the volunteers who are not always noticed in the background, including Jessica Barry, who is working not only on social media, but on the 25th Anniversary interviews, and Martyn Cox who assisted her in the interview editing. He thanked Marcela Szalanska for her work interviewing national committees. He thanked the BSI interns Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi and Lawrence Brenner; Newcastle University PhD student Brittni Bradford; Michael Delacruz of the BSI Secretariat, and Emma Cunliffe for organising and administrating the General Assembly, 25th Anniversary Conference without whom the Blue Shield would not be where it is today.

The President closed by thanking the national committees:

“Without the national committees, we would not have a basis and the foundation of working with everybody else, so national committees are key. We're going to grow into a larger, stronger organization, and we will need to work out our relationship with the national committees more carefully. That's going to be an exciting journey to go on over the next 25 years. I'm not going to be around for the 25 years, but I hope to be around for the next five years or so - let's hope that those are as exciting and as successful as the last 25 years have been. Thank you to everybody.”

The following thanks were received in the chat (along with a number of festive greetings):

Sophie Delepierre: Thank you Peter and I second you with thanks for my colleagues from the Accreditation Committee: Emma and Klaus who are great dedicated professionals!

Bijan Rouhani: Thank you everyone, especially Peter and Emma on behalf of ICOMOS

Claire Mcguire: Thank you to everyone for all the great work and dedication! And special thank you to Peter and Emma on behalf of IFLA!

Manana Tevsadze: Thank you, Peter, Emma, and the entire board and working groups for all the work

Elisabeth Korinth: Thank you to everyone and all mentioned people who work hard to strengthen the work of Blue Shield nationally and internationally. Thank you, Peter!

Ömer Dabanlı: Thank you everyone, especially Peter and Emma- on behalf of BS Turkey

Max Scriwanek: Thanks Peter and Emma

Babacar Ndiaye: Thank very much to Peter and Emma

Christina Ceulmans: Congratulations to the President and the members of the Board.

Luis Martin Bogdanovich: Thank you all for your hard work on behalf of BS Peru

Fionnuala Rogers: Thank you to all and especially Emma from UKBS and illicit trafficking WG for all your support and assistance you give us.

Elizabethanne Boran: Thanks to Peter, Emma and the members of the board and all involved, from the Irish NC.

Mary Cain: Thank you Peter and Emma!

Bae Kidong: Thanks and congratulation Peter and Emma for this great event!

Elena Korka: Congratulations!!

Lidia Klupsz: Thank you

Appendix 1: Attendees

Blue Shield Board:

President Peter Stone

Representatives of the Founding Four Organisations:

ICA Emilie G. Leumas

ICOMOS Bijan Rouhani

ICOM Sophie Delepierre

IFLA Claire McGuire

Elected Members

Korea Bae Kidong (Vice President)

Germany Klaus Weschenfelder (Treasurer)

Senegal Hamady Gaye

Poland Lidia Klupsz (under the username Admin)

Secretariat (non-voting)

Emma Cunliffe

Representatives of the Founding Four Organisations:

ICOM Peter Keller

Representatives of National Committees:

Austria Anna Puhr

Austria Friedrich Schipper

Belgium Christina Ceulmans (under 85891784032)

Curacao Max Scriwanek

Czech Republic Jana Souckova

Germany Elisabeth Korinth

Germany Mary Cain

Germany Meetali Gupta

Germany Sina Knopf

Georgia Manana Tevzadze

Greece (Hellenic) Elena Korka

Guatemala Samuel Franco Arce

Ireland Elizabethanne Boran

Korea Inkung Chang

Macedonia Olivera Djartovska Tachevska

Netherlands Angela Dellebeke

Peru Luis Martin Bogdanovich

Senegal Babacar Ndiaye

Turkey Ömer Dabanli

UK Fionnuala Rogers

USA (USCBS) Corine Wegener

USA (USCBS) James Reap

Representatives of National Committees Under Construction

Croatia Dragica Krstic
Croatia Tamara Štefanac
Mozambique Daniel Inoque

Remote Voting

Votes were also received from some National Committees who were unable to be present in person:

Australia Kathryn Dan
Denmark Søren la Cour Jensen
France Francois Collange
Mali Mamadou Samaké
Norway Håkon Roland
Poland Krzysztof Salacinski
USCBS Patty Gerstenblith

Appendix 2: Training Course Outline

BLOCK 2	CPP: Its wider context	
Session 1	Overview of Block 1 and introduction to Block 2	PGS
Session 2	CPP within the military context/continuum (Peacetime – kinetic ops/post disaster – stability policing)	MD
Session 3	Introduction to International Law Brief introduction to the terminology and types of international law. Brief introduction to UN SC Resolutions; 1977 Add Protocols to Gen Cons; Rome Statute; UNESCO Declarations etc.	EC
Session 4	The key messages in the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 & 1999. From Safeguarding to Respect – a peacetime Convention	EC
Session 5	The 3 levels of protection	EC
Session 6	Refuges and safe havens	EC
Session 7	1 st Protocol & 1970 Convention	FR? UNESCO?
Session 8	Illicit trafficking of CP – the theory	FR? PG? NB?
Session 9	Illicit trafficking of CP – some examples	FR? PG? NB?
Session 10	The Sendai Framework for DRR	IFLA expertise?
Session 11	Block summary	EC?
	Risk Management? Humanitarian coordination?	

BLOCK 3	BLUE SHIELD AT A NATIONAL LEVEL		
Session 1	Overview of Blocks 1 & 2 and introduction to Block 3	ALL	PGS
Session 2	Suggested make-up of national committees Partners and modes of working (national examples)	ALL	
Session 9	Principles of Risk Preparedness and Management for CPP	?EL	Session 9
Session 3	Building Capacity – National Legal implementation Examples from NCs		
Session 4	Building Capacity – National-level Disaster Response and Post Disaster Recovery Examples from NCs		
Session 10	Lessons identified from recent case studies (Beirut, European floods, Libya)	BSL/ BSG/ BSB /BSN/ BSF	Session 10
Session 5	Building Capacity – National-level Military coordination Examples from NCs		
Session 6	Possibly: [a] Contributions from national committees [b] Additional topics suggested by national committees [c]?? Do we have any national examples of humanitarian coordination?		
Session 7	Review and summary of whole course		