

VICE CHAIR APPLICATION. KARL GIBBONS BKA 8139. The recent past has seen turmoil within our organisation, the reasons for this are many and varied but it has to stop, it is detrimental to the needs of the membership, the membership deserves better, our constitution demands it. If elected I would like to propose the formation of a "Guardian's of the constitution" subcommittee. The constitution is too important to rest on one person's shoulders, or just one person's judgement and interpretation. It is unsafe to assume a single person's neutrality and fairness when evoking the constitution in conflict situations, I propose to have a subcommittee of three people whose roll would be to ensure that all decisions made at all levels of BKA management comply with our constitution. I propose that at least one member of the constitutional committee MUST be present at all BKA meetings and has the final say as to whether decisions are legal, acceptable and within the requirements of the constitution. If the constitution officer attending a meeting feels that a proposal needs to be examined by the constitution committee than they have the power to put the proposal on hold in order to seek clarification and a decision from the whole subcommittee (by a majority vote 2 from 3 for approval). The constitution committee shall consist of only one person from any one dojo or dojo chain. The conduct of the constitutional committee shall be overseen by the Vice Chair (AGM elected position) to whom the committee shall report. I believe the above will make for more balanced, democratic and fairer enforcement of our constitution (which are the rules of our association and apply to all, regardless of grade, position or time served), it will also ensure that the democratic and financial principles that are demanded by our constitution are met.

I would also propose that for the protection of our senior graded Sensei (7th Dan's) that they focus and concentrate solely upon the technical advancement and teaching of the BKA membership, to enable them to do this without getting involved with politics, (which I feel they should be above), and to remain unsullied, they should not hold managerial positions in the BKA. An exception to this rule would be for the International affairs liaison officer. Naturally the NC can request input, advice and the opinion of senior grades (7th Dans) when it was felt necessary and of benefit to the association. This proposal I believe will maintain the "honour, status and respect" of our 7th Dan teachers and prevent them from being soiled by politics and controversy. I believe that the primary interests and concern of the BKA National Committee must be to the membership and the constitution, all other concerns are secondary. I would seek to have a simpler, less ambiguous constitution, possibly a "stock" constitution, with additions and omissions to suit BKA requirements. I would seek permission from the membership to start work on this without delay and allow for electronic voting for its approval, I would also ask to allow the membership an electronic vote on major decisions without having to wait for an annual AGM, I believe this will make for a more democratic BKA, where the opinions of the membership play a pivotal part in the management of the association and utilises the professional expertise and opinion that exist amongst our members. I would investigate the idea of making the position of Chairperson and Secretary of the BKA paid positions (even part-time positions), which would hold these positions to a contract of employment; normal business protocols and give us a professional management at the helm of the BKA.

I am in favour of a democratic association and will defend it against any challenge to its democratic status. I want to see the fear culture that seems to be present in our organisation (which appears to be driven by a conform or fail your next grade mentality) removed completely and the situation returned back to one that is healthy and in line with the constitution, this I believe is essential. In times of entrenched conflict our association should be required to seek outside independent and binding arbitration. All officers serving the BKA should declare that they will operate in the sole interests of the membership, comply with the constitution, respect democratic decisions and put Ryu interests aside when holding office and managing our association. I am 100% against any type of bullying of the membership, be it by grade, style or sub group. We need to learn by our mistakes, make the required changes and move forward together to a better future.