

Dear Member

As promised, on behalf of the NC, I can now update you on developments since my last holding statement.

Some areas of the organisation are going through a challenging time but no different to what most organisations go through on a daily, weekly or annual basis.

Management of Change is an important concept which needs to be adopted to ensure the smooth running of any organisation whether public, private or voluntary sector. People imprint their own management style on how an organisation can be run but it should never change its core values and true purpose.

It is with deep regret therefore that the NC acknowledges and accepts that certain laido Japanese Sensei have withdrawn their support from BKA events at present. All official communication seems to indicate that this is not necessarily a permanent position. Indeed, our laido Japanese Sensei have requested they would like to see harmony restored. It is the NC's sincere hope therefore that with the co-operation of all our members we can achieve this objective and ensure our laido Japanese Sensei will be able to join us again at future laido Seminars. We are working diligently towards this outcome and would appreciate your support.

Related to this, the NC notes that various rumours/misinformation have been circulating, both here and in Japan, and it is the NC's belief that these rumours are bringing the BKA into disrepute. The NC strongly advises that individuals take great care when using social media forums and not to start or perpetuate rumours that dishonour and discredit our organisation.

With regards to the current situation, I can now report as follows:

BACKGROUND

In February 2017, a number of complaints were received by the Complaints Officer against the laido Bucho concerning the contents of a report by the Bucho posted on the BKA website. These complaints which were similar but multiple were referred to the Kendo Bu Complaints Panel.

The contents of the report in question were found to be offensive to some members and the laido Bucho replaced the report. The report also triggered other areas of grievances which made the matter very complex for the Kendo bu Complaints Panel to deal with.

After deliberation, the Complaints Panel made the following recommendations:

1. The NC should set up a new panel to investigate the alleged anomalies in the laido accounts. The Chair of such a panel should be independent and be acceptable to all parties.

2. The specific allegation that the previous Iaido Bucho took significant financial decisions himself without consultation requires a separate panel that can quickly report on this assertion.

These recommendations were referred to the NC to take appropriate action if they agreed to do so.

Recommendations to the NC by the Complaints Officer, BKA Chair and Vice Chair were as follows:

1. The NC should **NOT** commission any professional forensic style audit to investigate any alleged anomalies in the Iaido Bu accounts. This would be an unnecessary and disproportionate use of members' funds. If the NC wishes to support the Treasurer by further involvement of BKA members in re-looking at the 2015 accounts it can choose to do so, but that should only be done on the basis of setting future guidance to Bu Officers on the management of funds and accounts for events. The way forward is to appoint two respected Kendo members who have served as officers to form a sub-committee. Their brief will be to address any reasonable and appropriate queries the Treasurer has and to seek satisfactory answers which will enable the matter to be resolved. Their report will be presented to the NC to act as a basis for future improvement in this area and to assist with the aim of producing and implementing a structured ethical framework for our organisation.
2. The setting up of a separate Panel to look into the specific allegation that a previous Iaido Bucho took significant financial decisions in isolation from the other Officers of the Bu could be done by the NC. However, the Constitution does not require the make-up of this panel to be populated solely by NC Officers, given it is not an Appeal against a Complaint. We recommended, subject to the NC's agreement, that one NC member should be nominated to Chair the Panel and that two independent BKA members be invited to assist. We also recommended that the scope of the review should be broadened to look into the relationship between the Bucho and the Bu Officers in all of the Bu, to establish best practice for the BKA and, if appropriate, to amend and/or clarify the Constitution.

The above recommendations were adopted.

Recommendation 1

The sub-committee will comprise of Stephen Martin and Malcolm Smalley.

Recommendation 2

The Panel will be comprised of the DRC Iaido Representative Chair and two separate members outside of the NC.

The time frame for this work will hopefully be within a two-month period if not before.

BRINGING THE BKA INTO DISREPUTE

Another area of great concern raised at the NC meeting was who, why and how the Japanese Sensei were brought into BKA politics. It had long been established that the Japanese Sensei did not wish to be involved in BKA politics, so why has this approach now changed and who, NC Officers and Iaido Bu Officers included, had influenced this behaviour with such harmful consequences. This matter is to be investigated with a view to resolution and ensuring similar future situations do not occur.

NC ROLE AND THE WAY FORWARD

We, the NC, view our role as trying to guide us forward towards a positive resolution of all current difficulties and to restore calm. This we are endeavoring to do and I hope is clear from the actions outlined above.

In our budo practice we subscribe to on-going improvement 'Perfection is a moving target'. I believe this is the approach we should adopt in the on-going development and growth of our organisation. I personally believe we should subscribe to a Code of (Sport/Budo) Governance and promote an ethical framework to build on what already works well within our organisation.

Successful management of change involves respect, compassion, trust, empathy, fairness, objectivity – all qualities we look for in our practice of Budo.

I trust the above will go some way in clarifying recent concerns and to reassure you that we will keep you informed of all further developments related to this matter.

Yours sincerely

Fay Goodman

BKA Chair

1 October 2017