



International Commission on Occupational Health - ICOH
Commission Internationale de la Santé au Travail - CIST

Founded in 1906 as Permanent Commission



Minutes of the 1st Board Meeting

May 16, 2023

Angers, France

Time: 15:00-18:15

Venue: Angers Congress Center, 33 Boulevard Carnot, 49100 Angers

Salle Panoramique, Niveau 0

Participants:

Prof. Seong Kyu-Kang (Rep. of Korea) - ICOH President
Dr Diana Gagliardi (Italy) - ICOH Secretary General
Ms Claudina Nogueira (South Africa) - ICOH Vice President
Dr Martin Hogan (Ireland) - ICOH Vice President
Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) - ICOH Past Secretary General
Prof. Won-Jun Choi (Rep. of Korea) - Editor-in-chief of the ICOH Newsletter
Prof. Alexis Descatha (France) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Maureen Dollard (Australia) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Frida Marina Fischer (Brazil) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Sunil Kumar Joshi (Nepal) - ICOH Board member
Dr Eun-A Kim (Rep. of Korea) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Stavroula Leka (UK) - ICOH Board member
Dr Olivier Lo (Singapore) - ICOH Board member
Dr Dingani Moyo (Zimbabwe) - ICOH Board member
Dr Shyam Pingle (India) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Riitta Sauni (Finland) - ICOH Board member
Dr Paul Schulte (USA) - ICOH Board member
Dr Sandeep Sharma (India) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Francesco Violante (Italy) - ICOH Board member
Dr Jukka Takala (Finland) - ICOH Immediate Past President (participating remotely)
Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) - ICOH Immediate Past Secretary General (participating remotely)

Participants invited on specific items:

Prof. Jorma Rantanen (Finland, ICOH Past President) - ICOH WG on Inequalities in Occupational Health (participating remotely)
Dr Acran Salmen-Navarro (USA) - ICOH WG on Future of Decent Work (participating remotely)

Dr Ashish Mishra (India) - member of the ICOH2027 delegation
Dr T Rajgopal (India) - member of the ICOH2027 delegation
Dr Sudha Ramachandran (India) - member of the ICOH2027 delegation
Dr Shrinivas Shanbhag (India) - member of the ICOH2027 delegation

ICOH Staff

Ms Valeria Boccuni (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Ms Erika Cannone (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr Pierluca Dionisi (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr Pasquale Fruscella (Italy) - ICOH Staff

Apologies:

Dr Kirsi Lappalainen (Finland) - ICOH Board member
Dr Rosylane Rocha (Brazil) - ICOH Board member

1. Opening

The President of ICOH, Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang, opened the Board Meeting by welcoming all the participants. Prof. Kang expressed his thanks to the University of Angers for hosting the ICOH 2023 Midterm Meeting and congratulated Prof. Alexis Descatha for supporting the organization of the event.

2. Approval of the minutes of ICOH Board Meeting of February 28, 2022

The minutes of the ICOH Board Meeting of February 28, 2022 held online were circulated among Board members before the meeting. No comments were made.

Decision:

- **The minutes of the ICOH Board Meeting of February 28, 2022 were approved.**

3. ICOH2027 Congress

The ICOH2027 Congress Chairperson, Dr Shrinivas Shanbhag, introduced the members of the Organizing Committee. Dr Shanbhag informed the Board that a contract was jointly prepared by ICOH President, ICOH Secretary General and ICOH2027 Congress Organizers and signed on May 16, 2023 in Angers, immediately before the Board meeting.

Then, Dr Ashish Mishra, current ICOH National Secretary (NS) for India and Organizing Secretary for the ICOH2027 Congress, reported to the Board on the progress in terms of congress preparation. The congress will take place in Mumbai, India, from 14 to 19 February 2027. The venue will be a new convention center in Mumbai, with a capacity of 3000 people. The host organization of the Congress will be the Indian Association of Occupational Health (IAOH). The proposed Congress theme is: "Sustainable Occupational Health: Global reach and local actions".

The Organizers commit themselves to allocate € 150,000.00 to support participants from low- and middle-income countries. Such funds will be managed in collaboration with the ICOH Vice President for NSs, in line with previous experiences.

The website domain www.icoh2027.in has been secured. Other domains (e.g. icoh2027.com) will also be secured to avoid duplicates.

The Congress is planned to take place as an in-presence event. However, the Board also requested the Organizing Committee to consider planning a possible, future switch to hybrid or fully digital format for ICOH2027, if special reasons so require.

The Board expressed satisfaction with the work done and the planning of the next steps to proceed with ICOH2027 Congress organization.

4. Report of the Task Group on Membership

The ICOH Secretary General and Chair of the TG, Dr Diana Gagliardi, presented membership data, which she had already illustrated in more detail to the Scientific Committee (SC) Officers and Board members the day before.

Despite the shorter duration of the current term, due to the postponement of the ICOH2021 Congress to 2022, membership data are satisfactory and the trend is in line with previous triennia.

Membership data show a significant increase in representation from low- and middle-income countries, now reaching 67% of the total membership. Regarding geographical distribution, the most represented areas are Asia (30%), Europe (26%), and Africa (20%). Compared with the past, European representation has decreased, while Asian and African representation has grown.

Collaboration with ICOH2024 Organizers and joint action with NSs and SC Officers will remain essential for recruitment of new members and consolidation of existing membership.

Collective membership promotion is another focus for ICOH. Most Sustaining members have renewed their membership for the current term. A former Sustaining member (IRSST, Canada) has been welcomed again to Sustaining membership, thanks to collaboration with the local NS. Two new affiliate members (SCMT, Colombia, and OMSOC, Canada) joined ICOH, again thanks to collaboration with the local NSs. Contacts are in progress with the representatives of Sustaining and Affiliate members for their membership renewal and with potential, new collective members.

The Board commented on membership results by identifying the following focuses for future action: (i) involvement of students and young researchers; (ii) improvement and modernization of communication and payment tools; (iii) possible re-evaluation of membership fees according to membership figures to secure the ICOH finances.

Decisions:

- **The Report of the Task Group (TG) on Membership was approved.**
- **The Board will identify possible actions for improvement of membership figures.**

5. Report of the Task Group on Information and Communication

Prof. Kang reported on the ongoing work of the TG. He provided an overview of the main information tools such as the website, Newsletter, social networks, Congress report and proceedings. He invited all ICOH members to submit contributions for the ICOH Newsletter. He also warned about fake emails and websites using the name of the ICOH President and/or ICOH. The Secretariat regularly informs ICOH members about such fake messages and potential scams.

Decision:

- **The Report of the TG on Information and Communication was approved.**

6. Report of Ethics and Transparency Committee

Prof. Paul Schulte summarized the activities carried out by the Ethics and Transparency Committee (ETC) during 2022-2023. The ETC supported the ICOH Officers and was available for consultation. In February of 2022, the ETC was asked to consult on one of the bids for the location of ICOH2027. The ETC investigated and provided a report to the ICOH President. Initially, the ETC considered if there were any pressing issues that it needed to address and agreed to be prepared to consult on issues consistent with the Bye-Laws that might arise. Suggested considerations include revision of code of conduct and a survey aimed at the SCs about topics to address.

Currently, the ETC is reviewing the ICOH Good Association Practices document and identifying areas for potential modification. As explained by Dr Schulte, the ETC will work on these areas and have recommendations for the Board at the ICOH2024 Congress.

The Board members congratulated Dr Schulte and colleagues for the work done. Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Immediate Past Secretary General) joined the discussion stressing the importance of ethics within ICOH and calling for the activation of internal discussion to update the ICOH Code of Ethics. He also reported to the ICOH President and Secretary General a case of possible misconduct by a SC Officer, calling for further investigation. The case will be analyzed by the ICOH Officers and managed in accordance with the ICOH Core Documents and Good Association Practices document.

The President thanked Dr Schulte for the activities and his leadership of the ETC.

Decision:

- **The Report of the Ethics and Transparency Committee was approved.**

7. Reports of the Working Groups (WGs)

WG on Future of Decent Work

Dr Schulte, Chair, reported on the activities carried out by the WG on Future of Decent Work in accordance with the tasks assigned by ICOH President. Dr Schulte reported on the work performed in collaboration with Prof. Frida Fischer and the ICOH WG on Demographic Changes and Occupational Health, resulting in the publication of the paper 'Occupational safety and health staging framework for decent work' in August 2022.

Another focus of the WG is migrant workers' health, with a subgroup coordinated by Dr Acran Salmen-Navarro, who joined the meeting virtually to present the activities of the subgroup. The subgroup contributed to the development of the ICOH statement 'Protection for the Occupational Safety and Health of Migrant Workers', posted in the ICOH website in June 2022 and subsequently published in Safety and Health at Work (SH@W). Dr Salmen-Navarro also reported on the continued collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Migration Health and Development Research Initiative (MHADRI). A meeting was held in Geneva in September 2022 to discuss potential routes for future collaboration on generating research evidence. The meeting was attended by Dr Salmen-Navarro and Dr Gagliardi, with the President Prof. Kang and Vice President Ms Claudina Nogueira participating remotely.

Currently, the WG is in the process of developing and administering a survey of ICOH members to identify those already involved in, or interested in working on, the topic of occupational health of migrant workers.

Decision:

- **The Report of the WG on Future of Decent Work was approved.**

WG on Demographic Changes and Occupational Health

Prof. Fischer reported on the work carried out by the WG in the first part of the term. One of the priorities was the collaboration with the WG on Future of Decent Work for a joint publication. Furthermore, the WG contributed to the scientific program of ICOH2024 by proposing two special sessions. Collaborations are underway with ICOH SCs and with international organization such as the International Ergonomics Association (IEA) and Workplace Health Without Borders (WHWB).

Decision:

- **The Report of the WG on Demographic Changes and Occupational Health was approved.**

WG on Implementation of the Global Strategy on Occupational Health for All with a special reference to global ban of asbestos

Dr Jukka Takala reported on the major accomplishments of the WG. One of the focuses has been the promotion of Universal Occupational Health Coverage (UOHC) within the WHO's strategy on Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Joint efforts to achieve a global ban of asbestos and the elimination of asbestos-related diseases should be done in collaboration with best experts globally, including the ICOH WG on Occupational Cancer and other ICOH bodies.

The presentation stressed the importance of contributing to ILO/WHO joint initiatives, implemented in different categories. In particular, ICOH should strongly encourage the development of occupational health services for all and the promotion of the BOHS approach as a strategy to expand the coverage of occupational health services for the underserved sectors and groups.

Decision:

- **The Report of the WG on Implementation of the Global Strategy of Occupational Health for All with a special reference to global ban of asbestos was approved.**

WG on Implementation of the ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization

Prof. Stavroula Leka reported on the activities of the WG. Considering the tasks assigned by the ICOH President, she reported that no major issues arose during the period.

Decision:

- **The Report of the WG on Implementation of the ICOH Guidelines on Congress Organization was approved.**

WG on Inequalities in Occupational Health

Prof. Jorma Rantanen, ICOH Past President and Chair of the WG, joined the meeting and illustrated the main goals of the WG. The WG is aimed at identifying the main aspects to be taken into consideration in defining a multidisciplinary and integrated approach to worker health safety and wellbeing, also considering the impact of the changing world of work on workers' health. The WG has been active in the preliminary analysis for conducting a review of international and national policies to address occupational health inequalities.

Another important focus of the WG is strengthening the ethical dimension in occupational health communities. Prof. Rantanen reported that the WG proposed a special session on Ethics for the ICOH2024 Congress.

Furthermore, Prof. Rantanen proposed collaboration with the WG on Demographic Changes and Occupational Health and the WG on Future of Decent Work to pursue joint objectives.

The Board member commented on the report by thanking Prof. Rantanen and colleagues for the work done. In particular, Prof. Leka informed the Board members about a submitted project proposal on occupational health services, with the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), UK, and the WG on Inequalities in Occupational Health.

Decision:

- **The Report of the WG on Inequalities in Occupational Health was approved.**

The ICOH President closed the first Board Meeting expressing his thanks to all the participants for the successful and productive meeting.



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Minutes of the 2nd Board Meeting

May 17, 2023

Angers, France

Time: 9:00-12:30

Venue: Angers Congress Center, 33 Boulevard Carnot, 49100 Angers

Salle Panoramique, Niveau 0

Participants:

Prof. Seong Kyu-Kang (Rep.of Korea) - ICOH President
Dr Diana Gagliardi (Italy) - ICOH Secretary General
Ms Claudina Nogueira (South Africa) - ICOH Vice President
Dr Martin Hogan (Ireland) - ICOH Vice President
Prof. Alexis Descatha (France) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Maureen Dollard (Australia) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Frida Marina Fischer (Brazil) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Sunil Kumar Joshi (Nepal) - ICOH Board member
Dr Eun-A Kim (Rep. of Korea) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Stavroula Leka (UK) - ICOH Board member
Dr Olivier Lo (Singapore) - ICOH Board member
Dr Dingani Moyo (Zimbabwe) - ICOH Board member
Dr Shyam Pingle (India) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Riitta Sauni (Finland) - ICOH Board member
Dr Paul Schulte (USA) - ICOH Board member
Dr Sandeep Sharma (India) - ICOH Board member
Prof. Francesco Violante (Italy) - ICOH Board member

ICOH Staff

Ms Valeria Boccuni (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Ms Erika Cannone (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr Pierluca Dionisi (Italy) - ICOH Staff
Mr Pasquale Fruscella (Italy) - ICOH Staff

Apologies:

Dr Jukka Takala - ICOH Immediate Past President

Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (Italy) - ICOH Immediate Past Secretary General

Dr Kirsi Lappalainen (Finland) - ICOH Board member

Dr Rosylane Rocha (Brazil) - ICOH Board member

1. Report of Finance Committee

Dr Shyam Pingle reported on the main tasks carried out to date by the Finance Committee, namely:

- a. ICOH2022 Congress organization costs and incomes;
- b. Evaluation of the membership fee system;
- c. General overall evaluation of incomes and expenditures on the current budget;
- d. Evaluation of incomes and expenditures on budget of Interim period October 1, 2021 to February 10, 2022.

The efforts for the organization of the ICOH2022 Congress, for which ICOH took full financial responsibility because of the exceptional, known circumstances, produced a result that far exceeded the expectations in terms of both participation and finances. The ICOH2022 Digital Congress organization produced an income that was in line with the income that ICOH generally receives from the organization of in-presence congresses. The excess of income over expenditure was CHF 92,695.

Regarding membership fees, the amounts and categories were approved, unchanged, by the General Assembly on February 6, 2022.

A general overall evaluation of incomes and expenditures on the current budget should consider the shortest duration of the financial period of this tenure (February 11, 2022 - November 30, 2023), as a result of the pandemic and the one-year postponement of the closure of the previous budget. Consequently, a cost reduction is expected compared to the previous terms. The budget shows that as of December 30, 2022 incomes reached 64% of the estimated budget, while the expenditures were about 8%.

General trends are secure and reflect those of previous triennia where the expenses are mainly incurred in the final part of the tenure.

The evaluation of incomes and expenditures on the budget of the Interim period October 1, 2021 to February 10, 2022 takes into account that most of the expenditures incurred in the interim period were related to the congress organization as planned. On the other hand, the interim budget gives evidence of part of the ICOH 2022 incomes (due to the participants' registration fees and sponsorship). As done in previous triennia, the interim period will be audited jointly with the current budget by the auditor firm BDO Italy S.p.A appointed by the General Assembly held on February 6, 2022 during the ICOH2022 Digital Congress.

The report was followed by discussion among Board members. Professor Kang emphasized the importance of holding the Congress for the financial sustainability of ICOH: in his role of entity taking the financial responsibility of the Congress, ICOH could collect the income of the Congress with revenues equaling those traditionally received from an in-presence Congress. Furthermore, the Board commented on the new fee system and underlined the need for attracting young and early-career professionals. Another important consideration raised by Board members concerns the fact that more than 60% of the membership is composed of members from low- and middle-income countries, which results in a lower income from membership fees.

Decision:

- **The Report of the Finance Committee was approved.**

2. ICOH Budget

Following Dr Pingle's report, ICOH Secretary General Dr Gagliardi presented the budget for 2022-2023. She showed the results obtained in terms of incomes and expenses. Incomes from membership fees were lower during this term, because there was no in-presence Congress where members could renew their membership on-site. Traditionally, the Congress is the main driver for membership renewals. Furthermore, because of the pandemic, the expenses during the term were lower than budgeted. General trends are secure as they reflect those of previous triennia where the expenses are mainly incurred in the final phase of the triennium.

Finally, Dr Gagliardi presented a proposal for the ICOH Interim budget, from December 1, 2023 to May 3, 2024. The allocations for the interim budget are in line with previous triennia.

Moving from the figures and considerations presented by Dr Gagliardi, the Board discussed potential points for innovation in terms of ICOH strategies and processes.

Decisions:

- **The Report on the Budget 2022-2023 was approved;**
- **The Interim Budget from December 1, 2023 to May 3, 2024 was approved. A total of 95,000 CHF will be allocated as the interim budget, in line with the previous triennia.**

3. Report of the ICOH TG on Constitution, Bye Laws and Guidelines

Prof. Kang briefly reported on the tasks assigned to the TG on Constitution, Bye Laws and Guidelines. Following the amendments to the ICOH Constitution approved by the General Assembly on February 6, 2022, the Board agreed upon the consequent amendment of ICOH Bye Law 11, Section 7.

The major point concerns election processes for SCs. Special provision will be made to integrate the SC Guidelines with more detailed instructions on how to manage elections of SC Chairs in case of equal number of votes. Traditionally, in such cases priority is given to the contestant with the longest history in ICOH as a member. This practice should be officially included in the text of the SC Guidelines.

Decisions:

- **The Report of the TG on Constitution, Bye Laws and Guidelines was approved;**
- **The Board agreed upon the amendment of ICOH Bye Law 11, Section 7 as follows:**

BYE LAW 11 - Scientific Committees

Section 7

A member of ICOH can belong to no more than three SCs. Members of SCs are not required to pay any additional fee. The Officers, and the immediate Past President and the immediate Past Secretary-General are ex officio members of every SC.

- **The new text on election process of SC Chairs will be prepared by the ICOH Secretariat and ICOH Officers and submitted to the Board for approval.**

4. Election procedures for 2024-2027

Dr Gagliardi illustrated the election procedure for the next tenure. She presented eligibility statuses for current Officers and Board members and communicated the important dates for submission of candidacies, as established by the ICOH Core Documents.

Then, Dr Gagliardi gave an overview of the electronic voting (e-voting) system functioning and requirements. E-voting was used for the first time for the 2022-2024 elections and the results were very satisfactory in terms of accessibility, functionality, reliability, and transparency. The e-voting system will be used again for the 2024-2027 elections.

Decisions:

- **The Board agreed with the use of the e-voting system;**
- **The Board acknowledged the deadlines for the election procedure as established by the ICOH Core Documents.**

5. ICOH2030 Congress

The ICOH Secretary General Dr Gagliardi gave an overview of the steps of the bidding process for the ICOH2030 Congress venue and organization, according to the ICOH Bye Laws and Guidelines on ICOH Congress Organization. She also reminded the Board about the criteria for bidders' admission to voting.

The basic criteria were set to guarantee that all accepted bids meet the required standards for the organization of an ICOH Congress. The Board recommendation will continue to be given, to advise on the best solution in terms of spaces and services. The ICOH members in good standing attending the ICOH2024 Congress will vote to decide the venue of ICOH2030, as set forth in the ICOH Bye Laws.

6. Relationships with WHO-ILO and NGOs

The ICOH Secretary President Prof. Kang reported that ICOH is collaborating in many joint activities with both ILO and WHO. The ICOH role is important to keep the promotion of health and safety at work and prevention of occupational diseases high on the global agenda. The ICOH2024 Congress will be an opportunity to involve WHO and ILO representatives.

Collaboration with ILO includes promotion of occupational safety and health to be recognized as a fundamental principle and right at work. Furthermore, ICOH has been involved in the ILO initiatives leading to the implementation of the ILO instruments - convention/recommendation on Biological Risks at Work, through Prof. Descatha and Dr Takala, ICOH Board members, and the ICOH SC on Biohazards and Occupational Health (SC BOH).

Collaboration with WHO included presentation of an ICOH statement at the 75th World Health Assembly, taking place from 22 to 28 May 2022 at the WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The ICOH statement was submitted under the agenda item 15: "Human resources for health". The ICOH statement calls for the inclusion of occupational health and safety services in all health and care facilities to promote the protection of health workers' physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, the ICOH Immediate Past President Dr Takala, participated in the fourth session of the Strategic Approach to International Chemical Management (SAICM), which aims for the sound management of chemicals. The session was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from February 27 to March 3, 2023. Dr Takala proposed estimates on deaths caused by hazardous substances, with support from ILO.

Prof. Mary Ross and Dr Tanusha Singh, the Chair and Secretary of the SC BOH, respectively, participated in a virtual meeting of the WHO Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Hub on March 14, 2023. The meeting focused on promoting improvements in IPC, such as hand hygiene, in healthcare. Prof. Ross and Dr Singh

introduced the ILO Technical Guidelines on Biological Hazards (draft), for which they were members of the ILO Task Team.

Dr Gagliardi added that a meeting of WHO Collaborating Centres will be held in conjunction with the ICOH2024 Congress.

Decision:

- **The Report on relationships with WHO-ILO and NGOs was approved.**

7. Proposal for Honorary Members appointment

Prof. Kang recollected the appointment procedure and requirements. Honorary members are individuals who have made exceptional contributions to international occupational health, either within ICOH or outside. Five members in good standing from at least two different countries can submit proposed names of individuals to be considered for Honorary membership. If approved by the Board, the election takes place in the General Assembly at the immediately following International Congress. Terms of reference are set out in Bye Law 1.

Prof. Kang presented to the Board his proposal of Prof. Toshiaki Higashi (Japan) and Prof. Bonnie Rogers (USA) as new ICOH Honorary members, in recognition of their contribution to occupational health and to ICOH. If approved, they will be elected by the ICOH General Assembly in Marrakesh.

Decision:

- **Prof. Toshiaki Higashi and Prof. Bonnie Rogers will be proposed to the ICOH General Assembly as new Honorary members.**

8. Overall discussion on ICOH current strategy and beyond

Prof. Kang invited the Board members to present ideas and proposals for the ICOH strategy. The Board agreed upon the need to identify strategies for modernization and improvement of ICOH practices. Prof. Leka proposed the creation of an ad hoc WG. The ICOH President and Board members welcomed the proposal and several Board members proposed to be members of the new WG. Furthermore, the Board agreed upon the implementation of strategic initiatives and networking opportunities with ICOH Sustaining members, to improve their involvement in ICOH activities.

The ICOH Secretary General reminded the Board members that their next meeting would take place in conjunction with the ICOH2024 Congress in Marrakesh.

The ICOH President closed the second Board Meeting expressing his thanks to all the participants for their participation and active contribution to the meetings. Prof. Kang also thanked Prof. Descatha and the ICOH Secretary General and staff for their hospitality and excellent organization of the meetings.

Decisions:

- **A new “Working Group on Modernization of ICOH Processes and Practices” will be created. The Board members who have expressed their interest in being members of the WG are: Prof. Stavroula Leka, Dr Shyam Pingle, Dr Olivier Lo, Dr Dingani Moyo, Dr Sandeep Sharma, Dr Paul Schulte, and Ms Claudina Nogueira. They will receive an official appointment letter signed by the ICOH President.**
- **ICOH Officers will organize a networking event of Sustaining members, to be held during the ICOH2024 Congress.**