

BYE-LAWS  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION  
ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH – ICOH

1990

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**BYE-LAWS  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH**

**BYE-LAW 1 – Individual membership**

Individual membership includes:

(a) **Active members**: An individual shall be admitted to active membership upon fulfilling the following conditions:

(I) proposal by three members in good standing, two of whom should preferably be of the same country as the applicant or of the Scientific Committee closest to the applicant's field of interest;

(II) submission of the application form duly completed;

(III) payment of the membership fees for the current triennium (see Bye-law 3, section 1),

(IV) appointment by the President.

(b) **Honorary members**: An individual who has made a distinguished contribution to international occupational health and who is not active in the management of the ICOH, shall be admitted to honorary membership of the ICOH upon fulfilling the following conditions;

(I) proposal by five members in good standing from at least two different countries;

(II) approval by the Board;

(III) election by the General Assembly at the immediately following International Congress.

(c) **Emeritus members**: The President may appoint emeritus members on their retirement from professional activity after 15 years at least of active membership.

(d) **Retired members**: Any active member on retirement from professional activity is entitled to a reduction in the full membership fee.

(e) **Corresponding fellows**: The President may appoint corresponding fellows to the ICOH. Corresponding fellows enjoy limited rights (Article 2, section 4 of the Constitution). In addition, the Chairperson of a Scientific Committee has the right to appoint no more than two corresponding fellows to the Scientific Committee in question from among persons active in the Committee's field, who may have difficulties paying ICOH's membership fees. Upon approval by the President, these corresponding fellows become corresponding fellows of ICOH.

(f) **Associated experts**: The Chairperson of a Scientific Committee has the right to appoint associated experts of the scientific field covered by the Scientific Committee. Associated experts are appointed on their scientific expertise only and are defined as members solely of the relevant Scientific Committee and are not registered as ICOH members. Associated experts do not have the right to vote at the General Assembly or officially represent ICOH. Associated experts may serve as executive consultants to the Committee concerned.

## **BYE-LAW 2 – Collective membership**

Collective membership includes:

(a) **Sustaining members:** The President may appoint any organisation as a sustaining member. After payment of the prescribed fee, a sustaining member may nominate for any specified period one representative who will have the same rights as an active member in good standing.

(b) **Affiliate members:** Any professional organisation or scientific society pursuing the same or related purposes as the ICOH may be admitted to affiliate membership upon fulfilling the following conditions:

- (I) application by the president of the professional organisation or scientific society;
- (II) submission by the applicant society of its constitution and a report on its aims, structure, size and activities;
- (III) payment of the membership fees;
- (IV) appointment by the President.

An affiliate member may nominate for any specified period one representative who will have the same rights as an active member in good standing.

## **BYE-LAW 3 – Fees**

### *Section 1*

Membership fees shall be paid in the six months of the triennial period on receipt of a statement from the Secretary-General. Membership fees of new members shall be payable at any time within the triennial period, and shall be proportionate to the remaining years of the triennium.

### *Section 2*

In the event of non payment of fees within the first six months of the triennial period, the defaulting member shall be deemed not to be in good standing (Article 2, section 2 of the Constitution). Members not in good standing at the end of the triennial period shall cease to be members (Article 2, section 5 of the Constitution). Such members can be reinstated under the condition that they pay the fee for the whole current triennium together with any outstanding fees from the previous triennium.

### *Section 3*

There are the following categories of fees:

- (a) active membership;
- (b) retired membership;
- (c) sustaining membership;
- (d) affiliate membership for societies of less than 200 members, and of 200 or more members.

### *Section 4*

When the ICOH appoint an organisation to act as its Scientific Committee on a particular subject, the Board approves additional special financial arrangements to accord them affiliate member facilities.

## **BYE-LAW 4 – General Assembly**

### *Section 1*

Sessions of the General Assembly shall be held at least every three years in such a manner as to allow:

- (a) the announcement of the result of the postal ballot election of the Officers and the Board;
- (b) setting of fees for the next triennial period;
- (c) a decision on the venue of the International Congress six years ahead;
- (d) one meeting of the outgoing Board immediately before the General Assembly and one of the incoming Board immediately after the General Assembly.

### *Section 2*

The President shall preside; in his absence the Vice-President with the largest number of votes in the last election, in his absence the other Vice-President, in his absence the Secretary-General shall preside, in that order, or in their absence a member elected by the Board.

### *Section 3*

The Agenda shall be prepared by the Secretary-General and approved by the President, and circulated to the members at least three months prior to the date of the session of the General Assembly. At the written request of five or more members, received by the Secretary-General no later than four months in advance of the General Assembly, additional items can be included in the Agenda.

### *Section 4*

The business of the General Assembly shall include the following:

- (a) report on the activities of ICOH and other issues relevant to international progress of occupational health;
- (b) consideration and acceptance of the Secretary-General's report and the Auditor's report;
- (c) report of the Scientific Committees;
- (d) endorsement of the results of the postal ballot for the election of the Officers and Board;
- (e) decision on membership fees for the next triennial period;
- (f) decision on the venue for the International Congress six years ahead and other matters relating to International Congresses;
- (g) any amendments to the Constitution duly proposed, seconded and supported by the requisite majority;
- (h) items submitted by members under Section 3 of this Bye-Law;
- (i) any other business.

## **BYE-LAW 5 – Tasks of the Officers**

### *Section 1*

One Vice-President shall function in the capacity as President in the event of an emergency whereby the President is unable to continue in office (Article 10 of the Constitution), or represent the President in absentia or when required by the Board.

## *Section 2*

The remaining tasks of the Vice-Presidents shall be divided between the two Vice-Presidents by the Board at its first meeting. The tasks are as follows:

- (a) carry out the duties delegated by the President;
- (b) have responsibility for liaison between the Board and the Scientific Committees and the authority to follow up the activities of these Committees;
- (c) be responsible for the conduct and organisation of a periodic review of the activities of the scientific committees (Article 7, section 3 of the Constitution);
- (d) recommend to the President and the Board any change or dissolution of a Scientific Committee (Article 7, section 3 of the Constitution);
- (e) be responsible for any training activities undertaken by ICOH.

## *Section 3*

The Secretary-General shall:

- (a) have charge of the general correspondence;
- (b) prepare for the election of the Officers and the Board;
- (c) prepare the agenda of the General Assembly;
- (d) prepare the minutes of the meetings of the Board and the General Assembly;
- (e) have charge of the liaison with National, Regional and Area Secretaries;
- (f) submit a report on the administration and financial position of ICOH together with the Auditor's report to the General Assembly;
- (g) scrutinise the proposals for new members;
- (h) issue to each active and retired member the statement of dues at the beginning of the fiscal period;
- (i) collect fees and other financial contributions; (j) deposit all monies in the name and to the credit of the ICOH;
- (k) regulate expenditure and make payments under the supervision of the President. Any expenditure exceeding CHF 50,000 at any one time requires the joint signatures of the President and the Secretary-General;
- (l) submit to the Auditor relevant financial documents of each fiscal triennium such that the Auditor's report is available for the consideration of the General Assembly held at the end of that triennium;
- (m) submit a budget for the next triennium to the Board before the end of the current triennium.

## *Section 4*

The President appoints the Editor of the Quarterly Newsletter or any publication succeeding it.

The Editor shall have charge of:

- (a) editing and issuing the Quarterly Newsletter;
- (b) editing or co-editing and issuing any supplement to it;
- (c) marketing the ICOH publications;
- (d) the chairmanship of any ad hoc Publications Committee set up by the President to decide whether a publication may be issued under the aegis of the ICOH.

Editor may be assisted by an Editorial Board appointed by the President on the Editor's proposal.

*Section 4 bis*

The President may establish temporary Task Groups, Working Groups, Networks or ad hoc Groups for assisting the planning, management or operation of tasks aiming at the implementation of ICOH mission.

*Section 5*

The Officers and the members of the Board and the Officers of ICOH SCs and National, Regional and Area Secretaries of ICOH shall not receive any remuneration for their services to ICOH.

**BYE-LAW 6 – Voting procedure for election of Officers and members of the Board**

*Section 1*

The Secretary-General through the Editor shall issue in the Quarterly Newsletter, at least 12 months before the date of the International Congress, information on the procedure of the election of Officers and members of the Board. According to these instructions, the names of the candidates shall be submitted to the Returning Officer in writing at least nine months before the first day of the International Congress by at least fifteen members in good standing for an Officer candidate and ten members for a Board candidate, accompanied by the written agreement of the nominee that he is willing to serve if elected and a curriculum vitae of no more than 150 words. For presentation of candidature, the duly completed Declaration of Interest Form as well as the Curriculum Vitae shall be sent.

The candidates must be eligible under Article 5, sections 2 and 8 of the Constitution. The candidates must be in good standing at least twelve months before the International Congress.

The curricula shall be published in the Newsletter at least six months in advance of the Congress. Out of these names, the Returning Officer shall prepare the ballot form, with the names of the candidates for each office in random order. The President shall appoint the Returning Officer.

*Section 2*

If no candidates have been nominated for any one of the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary-General, and less than 16 for the Board by the term stated in Section 1, the President must take immediate action to activate nominations. The closing date of nominations may in such case be extended until three months before the first day of the International Congress.

*Section 3*

The right of voting belongs only to members who have been in good standing at least 12 months before the next ICOH International Congress.

The election takes place by secret ballot and shall consist of the completion of the ballot form(s) issued by the Secretary-General to designate the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and members of the Board. Voters are required to mark a minimum of 8 names for Board elections. In addition, the maximum number of marks made by voters must not exceed the number of posts available in any election. Any ballot paper failing to comply with the above requirements or containing extra marks will result in a null vote. The ballot form should be sealed in one envelope without identification, and this envelope shall be inserted in another together with the member's

identification. The ballot papers and envelopes shall reach ICOH's office no later than one month in advance of the first day of the International Congress. Votes shall be counted in the presence of scrutineers appointed by the President.

*Section 4*

If more than one officer is elected from the same country it requires that the excess officer(s) step down (Article 5, section 1 of the Constitution). The order of precedence for taking office is first the President, second the Secretary-General and third the Vice-Presidents.

**BYE-LAW 7 – Procedure for the determination of the venue of future International Congresses**

*Section 1*

Applications for hosting an International Congress should reach the ICOH office at least three months before the first General Assembly of the next International Congress and be signed by at least five members of ICOH in good standing of that country.

*Section 2*

A ballot to determine congress venue shall be held six years in advance at the time of each Congress. Voting will take place at the Congress after hearing the presentations by proposed host countries and taking into consideration the recommendation of the Board (Article 6, section 1 of the Constitution). In making its recommendation, the Board shall take into consideration also the need for rotation of venues among the different geographical regions. Each member can vote for one venue; the country which receives most votes will win. The procedure on voting at the Congress shall be secret ballot.

*Section 3*

Any national group offering to host the International Congress shall accept in writing the conditions laid down under Bye-law 12 and other requirements of the ICOH as specified by the Secretary-General.

**BYE-LAW 8 – Scrutineers**

The Board shall appoint three scrutineers for all voting at the General Assembly and for any postal ballot.

**BYE-LAW 9 – Voting**

Voting on the Board shall be by simple majority. If the votes are even, the President shall have the casting vote.

**BYE-LAW 10 – Triennial budget**

The Secretary-General shall, after consultation with the President, present to the Board a budget for the coming triennium for approval. The budget is considered a guidance, but the total expenditures must not be exceeded by more than 25 per cent without prior consultation with the Board or its Financial Committee.

**BYE-LAW 11 – Scientific Committees**

*Section 1*

The President appoints the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee, after consultation with the appropriate Vice-President, for a period of three years. The Committee

members may officially propose the Chairperson to the President. The Chairperson must fill in the Declaration of Interest Form prior to running for Office and be active member in good standing of ICOH. A Chairperson may be appointed for no more than one additional three-year period.

#### *Section 2*

The Chairperson of a Scientific Committee selects the Secretary in consultation with the Committee members. The proposed Secretary must Submit to the Secretary General the Declaration of Interest Form after which the appointment must be approved by the President. The Chairperson also appoints the members of the Committee and he may appoint no more than two corresponding fellows (Article 2, section 4 of the Constitution, Bye-Law 1).

#### *Section 3*

Chairperson of Scientific Committees shall liaise with the appropriate Vice-President as per Bye-Law 5 as soon as practicable in each triennium regarding a programme of work, its periodic review and the membership of the Committee (Article 5, section 4 and Article 7, section 1 of the Constitution).

#### *Section 4*

Each Scientific Committee shall establish rules for its management. In addition to what is stated in the Constitution and Bye-Laws, the rules should define the scope of the Committee, its mode of action, whether it will have other officers than the Chairperson and the Secretary, the mechanism by which new Chairperson and Secretaries are proposed to the President, the procedure for deciding future conference venues, the mechanism for changing the rules, and other administrative matters.

#### *Section 5*

A Scientific Committee may entrust its administration to a Management group comprising, in addition to the Chairperson and the Secretary, other officers and associated experts elected by registered members of the Committee, either by postal ballot or at a business meeting organised in connection with a conference.

#### *Section 6*

The Scientific Committees shall conduct an active membership policy by admitting as many members as is considered administratively efficient. All members of a Scientific Committee shall be active in the field of the Committee. Should a member's active interest cease, the Chairperson shall encourage the member to resign from the Committee.

#### *Section 7*

A member of ICOH can belong to no more than three Scientific Committees. Members of Scientific Committees are not required to pay any additional fee. The Officers and the immediate Past President are ex officio members of every Scientific Committee.

#### *Section 8*

A Scientific Committee shall organise special meetings and conduct other activities. The Scientific Committees shall plan their programme of work for each triennium. The Management Group shall keep the Editor of the Quarterly Newsletter informed of the

Committee's activities, and at the end of each triennium they shall submit a written report on the activities and the accomplishments of the Scientific Committee to the appropriate Vice President.

#### *Section 9*

The finances for the organisation and conduct of the meetings mentioned in Section 8 shall be the responsibility of the organisers of the meeting. Non-ICOH members may pay a registration fee higher than the members' fee. The organisers shall transfer the difference to the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee in question or his representative within two months of the end of the meeting. Such monies may either be used by the Scientific Committee or paid to the account of ICOH according to prior agreement with the Secretary-General.

#### *Section 10*

On request of the Chairperson of a Scientific Committee, the Secretary-General may be authorized by the President to assist financially a Scientific Committee in the organisation of a meeting.

#### *Section 11*

Scientific Committees may receive up to two thirds of the fees paid by sustaining members subscribing especially to promote activity in the field covered by the Scientific Committee concerned. A Scientific Committee may be required by agreement to remit to ICOH a proportion of any income deriving from its activities.

### **BYE-LAW 12 – Other Committees**

The Board and the Officers are advised in financial matters by the Finance Committee and in ethical matters by the Committee on Ethics and Transparency appointed by the President at the beginning each triennium.

### **BYE-LAW 13 – International Congresses**

#### *Section 1*

At request of the Organising Committee, the President and the Secretary-General are authorized jointly to grant an interest-free loan, to assist in the organisation of the Congress.

#### *Section 2*

The additional registration fees of non-members attending an International Congress (Article 6, section 5 of the Constitution) shall be paid by the Organising Committee to the account of the ICOH within two months of the end of the Congress.

#### *Section 3*

Prior agreement between the Organising Committee of the International Congress and the Secretary-General must be reached on how any funds deriving from the Congress should be allocated. Such agreement should be reached at least two years prior to an International Congress. Any monies due to the ICOH as a result of this agreement shall be remitted as soon as available after the Congress.

#### *Section 4*

The organisation of the scientific programme of the International Congress shall take place in close collaboration with the Officers and the Scientific Committees and shall include “State of the art” presentations, free communications, poster sections, and any other forms of scientific communication.

#### *Section 5*

A special guideline for organising Congresses and other ICOH meetings and conferences will be drawn up and when necessary, updated and approved by the Board.

#### **BYE-LAW 14 – Other Conferences**

Applications for the conferences mentioned in Article 6, section 7 of the Constitution should be submitted at least six months in advance to the Secretary-General.

#### **BYE-LAW 15 – International Cooperation**

Specialised organisations of the United Nations, such as the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization and other international bodies whose interests and objectives coincide with the purposes and aims of the ICOH may be invited to send representatives or observers to the International Congress, to the General Assembly and to meetings of the Scientific Committees. These representatives do not pay the congress fee and will not be entitled to vote at General Assembly.

#### **BYE-LAW 16 – National, Regional and Area Secretaries**

##### *Section 1*

ICOH National, Regional and Area Secretaries represent the activities of ICOH in the country, region or area for which they are designated and promote the cooperation and communication among ICOH members of their country, region or area and strengthen links to other ICOH bodies.

The National, Regional and Area Secretaries shall comply with the ICOH Constitution, Bye-Laws and International Code of Ethics for Occupational Health Professionals as well as with Good Association Practice.

##### *Section 2*

Members may organize themselves on a national, regional or area basis in order to facilitate their administrative work. They may elect a National, Regional or Area Secretary, to be approved by the President after the submission of the Declaration of Interest Form. If no national, regional or area organization exists, and if special reasons so require, the President can nominate a Secretary after consultation with ICOH members from the Nation, Region or Area in question.

The National, Regional or Area Secretary shall stay in close liaison with the Vice President in charge of the National, Regional or Area Secretaries and the Secretary General, and keep them informed on events within the nation, region and area.

#### **Bye-Law 17 - Declaration of Interest Form**

ICOH members who intend to apply as Chairperson or Secretary to a Scientific Committee or as a National, Regional or Area Secretary, before the assignment, shall send the duly completed Declaration of Interest Form to the Secretary General.

ICOH members who intend to apply as ICOH Officer or Board member shall present, on candidature, the duly completed Declaration of Interest Form to Secretary General.

The assessment of possible conflict of interest will be carried out by Secretary General for preliminary analysis. The Committee on Ethics and Transparency will evaluate the cases selected by Secretary General.

The President will assess possible conflict of interest of the members of the Committee on Ethics and Transparency and the Secretary General, and might decide to appoint an ad hoc group to evaluate, if necessary.

### **BYE-LAW 18 – Emergencies**

In case of sudden disability of the President to fulfill his duties, the Vice-President with the largest number of votes takes office (Article 5, section 4 and Article 10 of the Constitution).

In case of sudden disability of one of the Vice-Presidents, the President shall appoint a Board Member to function as acting Vice-President.

In case of sudden inability of the Secretary-General, the President shall immediately charge the Auditor to report on the financial situation and appoint an acting Secretary-General.

All these appointments become effective after approval by the Board, and are in force until elections are feasible.

In case of sudden disability or severe unavailability of a Board member, the President appoints the first after the last elected candidate as a member to ensure full composition of Board.

In case of sudden disability or severe unavailability of a SC Chairperson, the ICOH President, after hearing from the SC Secretary, appoints a member who will continue in office up to new elections, in accordance with guidelines on Scientific Committees.

### **BYE-LAW 19 – Guidelines on ICOH Publications**

ICOH publications must be drawn up in compliance with the ICOH Code of Ethics and the Good Association Practice.

All authors shall complete the Declaration of Interest Form in compliance with Bye-Law 17.

The document is approved by the Board.

### **BYE-LAW 20 – Amendments**

These Bye-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the Board present at a valid meeting.

Amendments can be proposed by each of the Officers or Board Members or by at least five ICOH members in good standing.

### **BYE-LAW 21 - Examination of allegations on misconduct and disciplinary actions**

Examination of allegations on cases referred to in Article 2, Section 7 of the Constitution shall be initiated by the President immediately if a member in good standing makes a formal request, presents evidence, and is seconded. The President may also initiate examination if information and evidence supporting allegations is provided from other well-identified and reliable sources.

The President shall ask the Committee on Ethics and Transparency to investigate the case. The person has a right for hearing by the Committee. On the basis of statement by the Committee on Ethics and Transparency the President in consultation with the Board may decide on following disciplinary actions:

- a) Written remark on improper behaviour

- b) Exclusion from the position of ICOH officer
- c) Exclusion from ICOH membership for a limited time
- d) Exclusion from the ICOH membership permanently.

The type of disciplinary action depends on the severity of the case in view of nature, duration and harm caused by the improper behaviour. Before the decision by the President and Board on exclusion from ICOH membership, the person has a right for a hearing by the Board. Detailed provisions on examination and disciplinary actions are given in the ICOH Good Association Practice Guideline.

#### **BYE-LAW 22 – Validity**

These Bye-laws dated 23 September 1990 supersede all existing bye-laws of the International Commission on Occupational Health.

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* Numbering of all other Bye-Laws will be changed.
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