

SOA urgent board meeting via ZOOM on 24 July at 3pm West Coast. (90 minutes)

Present: Connie, Jim, David P., Rob G. Absent: Laura, David F.

Agenda:

- I. Code of Ethics & Code of Conduct
- II. Policy to review ethical complaints
- III. Process to train on ethics
- IV. Next Meeting : 28 August 2025, 11am West Coast, 2pm East Coast, 8pm Europe

I. Welcome and Code of Ethics and Code of conduct

A . Connie welcomed the members and thanked everyone for being able to meet on short notice. Today's meeting is to begin the process to develop an ethics/code of conduct for SOA. There will be additional meetings. There will be inclusion of the SOA NTC. Ultimately there will be training and information provided to members on the SOA Code of ethics/code of conduct.

B. Connie asked the group if there was agreement on the value of having an SOA policy on ethics and code of conduct. Agreement

C. Confidentially. Connie requested the group agree to confidentiality over any specifics of given examples/ethics concerns. Agreement. At present there is NO formal ethics complaint. Committee adjourned to executive session.

At 3:30pm West Coast time, the committee returned to a general board meeting.

D. Connie presented the first draft for SOA code of ethics that was adapted from the IS/ITEC model as well as a prior Pacshin model. David P. presented an alternative model that is from a martial arts group. One area to clarify is does the code of ethics apply within the dojo or apply both within the dojo and outside the dojo. Agreement focus would be both within the dojo and outside the dojo.

There was a suggestion to be more explicit on behaviors such as alcohol/drug use, sexual harassment/abuse, and financial abuse. **Action items:** David P. to share the alternative code with Connie for integration into current draft. David P. to share confidential agreement with Connie. Connie to integrate documents, place into SOA Google Drive, have SOA board members ability to edit google docs.

II. Policy to review ethical complaints

A. Connie and David presented the latest policy Titled Shintaido of America Ethics Complaint and Resolution Policy. Overall, the format and content of this policy was approved. One area to consider is a definition of terms such

as ethics officer and ethics committee. At present it is recommended to stay with the SOA Board as ethics committee for the first year. (It is noted the SOA board has two members without Dan rank and 4 Dan ranked members) During this first year, the board can review the process and then expand/change ethics committee membership. Training in ethics and handling ethical complaints will be the ongoing learning process. The board agreed that at present there has been no formal complaint submitted in writing to the SOA Board. One board member was blindly copied on an email dated 21 July 2025 from the potential complainant and this board member reached out via phone on 21 July 2025 to this person. This person texted a response requesting a different time to talk. **Action item:** This policy to be included in SOA Google Drive. SOA Board requested the SOA board member to contact potential complainant to inform them of the upcoming SOA Ethics code and resolution policy and ask if this person wishes to submit a formal complaint.

III. **Process to train on ethics**

- A. Connie presented a preliminary outline and idea to include Nancy Billias as a trainer/consultant. Nancy Billias was a former SOA Board member, is a Ph.D. in ethics and has agreed to be available to assist with ethical situations. Board agreed to reach out to Nancy Billias to determine her interest. A question was raised, should an attorney review our code and resolution process? It was agreed our first step is to have Nancy Billias do the review and then determine if a legal opinion is needed. Connie presented she has been in contact with British Shintaido as they are also developing an ethics code post IS dissolving. ESC and SOA meet in March 2025 and agreed that without an international membership organization, national groups would need to develop their own code of ethics. **Action item:** Connie to contact Nancy Billias to ask if she is interested and has the time to assist.

IV. **Next meeting**

28 August 2025 11am West Coast, 2pm East Coast, 8pm Europe

Agenda

Review documents for additional edits. (Code, resolution policy and training)

Plan to present at SOA board meeting on 7 September

Plan to present at SOA NTC meeting on 14 September

Update progress at ESC/SOA meeting on 28 September

Target November 2025 for ZOOM training on ethics (pending Nancy Billias and progress on documents)

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Connie Borden

July 25, 2025