



## Blue Shield Australia 2018 Summary of Activities – Report

*Prepared by: Tanya Park Chair, Blue Shield Australia  
ICOMOS Representative: tanya\_park@hotmail.com  
November 2018*

### BSA Symposium 2018

One of main activities for BSA for 2018 was the BSA Symposium, held at the National Library of Australia on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018. There were 105 delegates from all pillar bodies and sectors attended the event. An informal committee lunch was held at the NLA Cafe on Monday prior to the Symposium starting, to enable committee members and speakers to meet each other in person (sometimes for the first time). In addition to the Symposium a meeting with government representatives was held on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

### WELCOME RECEPTION

A welcome social event was held at the National Library of Australia foyer on the Monday evening with 102 attendees. This welcome event included the re-signing of the Disaster ACT (DISACT) Letter of Intent on Co-operative Disaster preparedness. The Directors from cultural collecting organisations throughout the ACT came together for the re-signing. The DISACT Letter of Intent is a formal commitment entered into by these cultural organisations to support each other should a member organisation need aid when confronting a disaster affecting their collection.



Benefit is seen in facilitating contacts between those with disaster management responsibilities for collections. Development of a centralised list of equipment and materials is available for loan, alongside joint training in disaster management pertaining to collections.

*Participating Institutions:* ACT Government, ANU Archives, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Australian National Herbarium, Australian War Memorial, National Archives of Australia, National Film and Sound Archive, National Gallery of Australia, National Library of Australia, National Museum of Australia, National Portrait Gallery of Australia, Old Parliament House.

The Blue Shield Pasifika committee had not yet been ratified by Blue Shield International at the time of the Symposium, so it was not possible to officially launch BSP at the social event. The





strong and close relationships and support that Blue Shield Australia has with Blue Shield Pasifika was acknowledged at the welcome reception and throughout the Symposium.

## **SYMPOSIUM BUDGET**

The budget for the event was closely monitored by the organising committee and the BSA Chair, ConLog (Professional Conference Organising company) and the Chair of the Organising Committee. The final cost of the Symposium to Blue Shield Australia was \$13,365.78.

Being \$13,200 in agreed PCO fees and a small loss of -\$165.78.

This is an excellent result considering the small size and low registration numbers and fees of the event.

The cost of a new BSA Pull-Up Banner was included in the Symposium budget (cost of \$108.90). The banner is currently being stored at ALIA House in Canberra.

## **SPONSORSHIP**

The Symposium organising committee and ConLog put together a Sponsorship prospectus and was fortunate to secure a number of sponsors :

<http://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/symposium/sponsorship/>

These sponsorship funds and the support and assistance in-kind from the NLA and ALIA greatly assisted the Symposium budget. The sponsorship of \$1000 for a 'Pasifika' overseas speaker was awarded to Meretui Ratunabuabua (interim Chair of Blue Shield Pasifika).

BSA committee members agreed to pay their own registration fees and costs, to assist with the Symposium budget as well, ie no committee members received a free registration.

## **SPEAKERS | PROGRAM | PRESENTATIONS**

The final program (in PDF) and speaker presentations (that BSA have received permission to publish) are now available and will remain on the website at

<http://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/symposium/program/>

Photos and bios of all the speakers are available at

<http://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/symposium/speakers/>



## TOURS AND WORKSHOPS

Four tours were held on Monday morning: National Archives of Australia at Mitchell, National Museum of Australia, Mt Stromlo Observatory and the National Library of Australia. Three workshops were conducted on the Monday afternoon at the NLA prior to the Symposium starting. There was positive feedback about these workshops and delegates appreciated the opportunity to start networking at these prior to the main event.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

There were many promotional posts prior to the Symposium on Facebook and Twitter. The Symposium hashtag #BSAsymposium enabled conversation by delegates and those who were not able to attend. Links to the related media that the Symposium received e.g. an interview with Peter Stone by ABC Radio are also linked via Facebook and Twitter. We thank volunteer committee members for their work in writing and posting all the social media posts.

## FEEDBACK FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

A feedback survey was emailed to all delegates (using a free Survey Monkey). A total of 19 responses were received from 105 delegates, but not all questions were responded to. A full report on feedback was provided to the BSA Committee for the April 2018 meeting.

## Submissions 2018

In March Blue Shield Australia made a submission to the Australian Government Inquiry into the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

<http://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/news/blue-shield-australia-submission-to-the-australian-government-inquiry-into-the-united-nations-sustainable-development-goals-march-2018/>

## Blue Shield Pasifika

Blue Shield Pasifika continues to work towards ratification, in the meantime, initiatives have taken place over the months since the Symposium, which include:

- *Training of Trainers [Suva 12-13 November 2018]* for the Integration of the Cultural Property Protection and the Hague Convention in the Military training, upon recommendation by Dr Peter Stone, a visiting fellow at the Kings College in London with 16 years experience in the British Army, will be in attendance. The department of Heritage and Arts of the Ministry of Education in

Fiji had a meeting in July 2018 with the NZ High Commission in Suva and the NZ defence force to strengthen existing partnerships.

- Preparatory works for a Roundtable on the Celebration of the World Day on Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development [Port Moresby, 12 May 2019] A working Committee has been composed, and have met twice thus far.

## **BSA Committee Meetings 2018**

Five committee meetings of Blue Shield Australia were held during 2018 :

BSA 48 14 February 2018

BSA 49 27 March 2018

BSA 50 17 April 2018

BSA 51 13 June 2018

BSA 52 10 October 2018

Agendas and Minutes are held on the BSA Dropbox.

## **Advocacy Meetings 2018**

Cultural Property Protection Expert Group Roundtable Met at old Parliament House, Canberra [31st January 2018]. Tanya Park, Chair of Blue Shield Australia [BSA] organised the government meeting alongside Tara Gutman, Legal Adviser, International Humanitarian Law, Australian Red Cross [ARC]. Representatives attended from the Departments of Defence, Home Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Communications and Arts, and Environment and Energy, peak bodies and international observers from the United Kingdom, Japan and Pacific regions.

Discussions centred around enhancing discourse within relevant institutions and government departments on Cultural Property Protection and move towards the support of the Australian government in the adoption of the Protocols of Hague Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict. Additional objectives included the development of a practical and realistic plan in support for the adoption and to align Australia's legal framework for cultural property protection with best practice and contribute to the strengthening of International legal framework.

Considerations about the use of the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGS) as a catalyst as under these the government has existing commitment of CPP. Following discussion it was deemed premature to compile a singular list for heritage and protected sites throughout Australia. Suffice to note that many lists have been researched and have associated varied levels of protection under State and Federal legislation.

A second roundtable took place recently in July in Canberra to further advance discourse pertaining to Cultural Property Protection, the Hague Convention and Australian government possible ratification of the two protocols I and II.

## **Peter Stone, visiting Australia 2018**

Dr Peter Stone OBE is the UNESCO Chair for Cultural Property Protection and Peace, University of Newcastle, United Kingdom.

He visited Australia twice in 2018. First as our keynote speaker with BSA sponsoring him for \$2000 from BSA Symposium funds for this activity.

In July and August he visited Australia again, first visiting Karatha for a meeting, then conducting two speaking events in collaboration with Blue Shield Australia. For this trip, BSA sponsored Peter for \$780 for flights. Peter spoke at the following events:

#### SYDNEY

Protecting Cultural Property in Conflict: Critical responsibility or unnecessary, impossible, distraction?

Monday, 30 July 2018 at The University of Sydney

Sponsored by Australia ICOMOS, University of Sydney and Blue Shield Australia

#### HOBART

World Heritage Sites as Ambassadors for Peace

Tuesday, 7 August 2018 at University of Tasmania

Sponsored by University of Tasmania and Blue Shield Australia

Whilst in Hobart, Peter also met with key members from the Tasmania's Aboriginal Heritage Council.

Peter also contributed significantly to the two advocacy meetings (mentioned previously).

## May Day 2018

For May Day 2018 the various logos were placed on the BSA website <http://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/news-events/mayday-2018/> and there were social media messages. A number of pillar bodies promoted May Day through their newsletters and their own social media.

## May Day Logo Proposal for 2019 onwards

At the October 2018 BSA committee meeting it was agreed that BSA would promote May Day 2019 onwards with a new generic May Day logo, issued by Blue Shield Australia. This would replace logos issued by the United States Society of American Archivists, which often were only released a few weeks before May Day each year.

The ALIA National Office design team developed two logo designs and the BSA committee voted unanimously on the following logo :



This logo will be launched in January 2019 in conjunction with new information on the BSA website regarding Disaster Bins and will coincide with launching a campaign leading up to May Day 2019 to encourage more cultural and heritage institutions and organisations to have an up-

## **BSA Chair's comments**

2018 has been a successful year for Blue Shield Australia. Notwithstanding busy lives, members within the pillar bodies always work hard to further enhance and strengthen Blue Shield Australia and such work is paramount for the success of BSA and future initiatives. It is the four strong pillar bodies, centralising knowledge and specialisation, that makes BSA successful. This success is impossible without the combination of people working in union and alongside each other, not any singular individual.

Highlights for 2018 thus far have been the January Symposium. Sue Hutley, as Chair of the organising committee, worked tirelessly to pull together a very successful symposium. The Symposium also underlined Australia's strong relationship with Pasifika.

Two Cultural Property Protection Expert Group Roundtable meetings also continued discourse associated with a focused look at signing of Protocols I and II for Australia. Signing of the protocols is viewed as providing additional protection, given the comprehensive legal framework that has been developed under the Hague Convention. Current Australian protection legislation is under "Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986" which does not consider armed conflict. There are extensive inventories in place, alongside disaster plans and tangible property is generally protected at a state level rather than Federal level. Addressing risk preparedness assists with the management of cultural property and addresses risks associated with protection, such as armed conflict or environmental disaster.

The 1954 Hague Convention was adopted post the devastation of the Second World War and is focused exclusively on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict. The Blue Shield [International] has expanded its remit to include environmental disaster and is "*committed to the protection of the world's cultural property, and is concerned with the protection of cultural and natural heritage, tangible and intangible, in the event of armed conflict, natural - or human-made disaster*" (Article 2.1, 2016 Statutes). Frequently, but not exclusively, Intangible Cultural Heritage is associated with particular Tangible Heritage and thus it is both Tangible and Intangible Heritage that becomes an identifier of a particular group. If lost, memory and identity is Tangible, or Intangible and evidence of past or contemporary cultures are also lost. Such identity and well-being are difficult to maintain.

## **Plans and Activities for 2019**

A number of activities are currently being planned for 2019. Please discuss these further with your BSA representative:

**May Day 2019**

Leading up to May Day 2019 the Blue Shield Australia committee will be launching the new Australian logo for May Day as well as conducting an awareness campaign focusing on encouraging institutions to establish or update their Disaster Bins.

On Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 there will be a one-day event held in Canberra conducted by ALIA University and Research Libraries Group, DisACT and Blue Shield Australia at the National Library. Speakers will share their experience of disaster preparedness in academic institutions and general disaster planning and preparedness activities.

Other May Day events will be held in capital cities, co-ordinated by Blue Shield Australia committee members and other volunteers.