



European Suzuki Association

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING PAPER

Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 March

2012

Artemis Hotel, Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS

National Suzuki Association for Germany

The decision to withdraw ESA membership from DSG and recognise SMD as the official national Suzuki association for Germany

Background information

Martin Rüttimann

History DSG ESA 1979-2011

- 1979** The history of the Suzuki movement in Germany starts in 1979, where the very first European Suzuki workshop took place in Munich.
- 1980** The European Suzuki Association (ESA) itself was founded as a Limited Company. The Chairperson at that time was Mrs. Marianne Klingler from Germany.
- 1983** The Deutsche Suzuki Gesellschaft (DSG) was founded by Marianne Klingler and Waltraud Mayer with its office in Munich.
DSG became the official national Suzuki association for Germany.
At the same time the Deutsche Suzuki Institut (DSI) was founded by Kerstin Wartberg and Waltraud Mayer as a subordinate organisation (at this time, the ESA policy of having only one national Suzuki association per country did not exist).
- 1990's** DSG experienced financial problems. In order to avoid bankruptcy, the German teachers became members of the British Suzuki Institute (BSI).
- 2000** The 'Deutsche Suzuki Gesellschaft' (DSG) was re-established with its office in Hof.
- 2002** The DSG became the official national Suzuki association for Germany with a representative on the Board of the ESA.
Since the ESA now had a policy that there would only be one National Association per country, the status of the DSI became unclear.
ESA Chairman Dr. Haukur F. Hannesson worked with those involved over a considerable period of time to try to resolve the situation.
- 2009** ESA Chairman Koen Rens with Martin Rüttimann as ESA Deputy Chairman met with the DSG President Mr. Anton, DSG Vice President Kerstin Wartberg, DSG Secretary Mr. Gähler and Gabriele Jahn as Minute Secretary.
In an agreement signed by all parties it was stated that –
- the DSI was not a legal entity
 - the Suzuki Violin Books 'revised edition' (international edition) were the core material of the Suzuki Violin Teacher Training courses.
- In this meeting it was made absolutely clear that all ESA accredited Teacher Trainers were able to offer their courses in the country where they are resident.
- 2011** Despite the efforts of three ESA Chairmen over a long period of time, the issues in Germany remained unsolved.
DSI continued to operate as a subdivision of the DSG promoting itself as responsible for conducting Suzuki Teacher Training programmes and claiming to be the only internationally recognised training course for Suzuki teachers in Germany.
- The ESA received complaints about the affect of DSG policies on Suzuki teaching in Germany such as
- 'Step by Step' Violin Books replacing Suzuki core material on Violin Teacher Training courses
 - exclusive use of the 'Step by Step' piano accompaniments at workshops and concerts



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It has always been a principle of ESA not to become involved in matters of the national Suzuki associations unless invited to do so.

It was made clear to all those who contacted the ESA that the official channels through which to process any complaints was the AGM of the national Suzuki association concerned.

November 2011

Immediately after the AGM of the DSG, the ESA received a request from a newly founded national Suzuki association namely 'SuzukiMusik Deutschland e.V.' (SMD).

Evidence of tampering with email correspondence between the DSG and Teacher Trainers persuaded the ESA to take immediate action to anticipate the strategy of attrition which was known to have been employed on previous occasions.

14 December

Extraordinary General Meeting

An Extraordinary General Meeting by electronic correspondence was called and all 27 ESA Board Members were invited to participate. The proposals put forward at this meeting were –

1. terminate the ESA membership of the DSG
2. to grant full membership for SMD
3. remove Kerstin Wartberg as the board member representing the DSG
4. elect Michaela Zirnbauer representing the SMD on the ESA board

14 Board Members took part in the meeting. The results of the voting were –

1. 4 Abstained 1 Disagreed 9 Agreed
2. 3 Abstained 2 Disagreed 9 Agreed
3. 3 Abstained 1 Disagreed 10 Agreed
4. 3 Abstained 2 Disagreed 9 Agreed

Reasons why the ESA Board took the opportunity to support a change for the Suzuki movement in Germany

For too long a time, the DSG was either unable or unwilling to conduct business according to ESA regulations. This was clearly outlined in the letter from Mr Anton, the then President of the DSG sent to the whole ESA Board on 3 December 2011. Mr. Anton explained in detail that the only long term solution for establishing a more democratic structure in the Suzuki movement in Germany (especially where Teacher Training Courses were concerned) was the formation of a new national Suzuki association.

On a majority vote, the ESA Board were not able to accept the following –

- The fact that the DSG has never signed an ESA Suzuki Name Agreement sub-licence.
The reasons for this were never clear until a 50 page document was brought to the attention of the ESA in which the Board Members of the DSG had been to court on several occasions to endeavour to protect the name 'Suzuki' within Germany so that the DSG could leave the ESA.
- The DSI ignoring the ESA/DSG agreement in 2009 and continuing to exercise exclusive rights to organize teacher training courses in Germany.
- ESA accredited Teacher Trainers not being integrated into the team of DSG Teacher Trainers.
- The continued use of the 'Step by Step' Books as core material for the Violin Teacher Training Courses rather than as supplementary material .
- The decision by a national Suzuki association to mandate the replacement of the official Piano accompaniments to Suzuki repertoire with unofficial Piano accompaniments and furthermore enforce this at several workshops.
- The breaking with ESA regulations which ensure that all Suzuki Teacher Trainers are valued equally and work on the same level of authority.
- The threat of legal action against teacher trainers who worked outside the umbrella of the DSI.