

	The Rockhampton Bridge Club Inc.	
By-Law – 05d	COMPLAINTS	Approved: 21/07/2025

1. Purpose of By-law

This By-law has been made by the Management Committee pursuant to clause 39 of the Club's Constitution to inform club members of the process to be followed in the event of any written complaint being received by the Management Committee.

In dealing with complaints it is important that action taken does not compromise the Club's position from the viewpoint of QBA insurance, Club insurance, and legislation applying in the State of Queensland. Where there is any concern then Insurance providers and the Club's legal advisor need to be consulted.

2. Types of Complaint

Formal complaints (in writing) are categorised into:-

- (a) **Problem relating to the running of a bridge session,**
- (b) **Problem relating to the Club's assets and affairs,**
- (c) **Problem with Management Committee actions and processes,**
- (d) **Problem relating to actions of club members.**

3. Process

On receipt of a formal complaint the Secretary must enter the complaint in the register, and acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

The Secretary shall contact the person who submitted the complaint and endeavour to obtain further details of the incident including names of witnesses, any relevant details and what the person submitting the complaint considers should be the outcome. At this stage this is purely a fact determining exercise and no opinion is to be expressed by the Secretary. The Secretary must discuss the complaint with the President and may consult other Committee Members if deemed necessary.

The President will then arrange for the Secretary to take action as follows:-

If the President considers that the complaint may be able to be resolved by mediation the Secretary must then draw the attention of the Complainant to the Grievance Procedure contained in clause 12A of the Club's Constitution and in particular:-

- (a) That the parties to the dispute should in good faith attempt to resolve the complaint; and
- (b) If the dispute cannot be resolved the Complainant may request the Secretary to refer the dispute to mediation.

If the President considers that the complaint is not the proper subject for mediation or if the mediator does not resolve the complaint, the President must then categorise the complaint and arrange for the Secretary to:-

- (a) **Category "a" – Problem relating to the running of a bridge session** – Refer the complaint to either the Tournament Committee or Appeals Committee whichever is appropriate and request their report on outcomes with recommendations, for consideration by the Management Committee, who would determine what action should be taken. This could be expected to result in some corrective action. Where the report was from the Director concerned this could require the matter to be treated as category "d".
- (b) **Category "b" – Problem relating to the Club's assets and affairs** – Refer the complaint to the Management Committee and, if considered necessary, arrange for the person raising the problem to be interviewed so that the Committee can decide on action to be taken.
- (c) **Category "c" – Problem with Management Committee actions and processes** - Refer the complaint to the Management Committee and, if considered necessary, arrange for the person making the complaint to be interviewed by the Committee for the Committee to decide what action needs to be

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taken. This could result in some corrective action and involve a change to a Club process or procedure or By-laws.

(d) Category “d” – Problems relating to actions of club members

- (i) The President must contact the Director concerned, Members of Management Committee, Tournament Committee or legal advisor, as appropriate and refer the complaint to the Management Committee and if necessary arrange for the person making the complaint to be interviewed by the Committee so that the Committee can decide what action to be taken.
- (ii) The Secretary must inform the Management Committee in detail, and take such action as determined by Committee.
- (iii) If the Management Committee considers this to be an extreme situation, the President may request the person who has reportedly offended not to attend any Club activities until such time as the complaint is resolved.

4. Disciplinary action required.

Where the dispute is not resolved by mediation and the Management Committee decides that disciplinary action is necessary the following steps must be followed:-

- (a) The Secretary must give to the person complained of in writing the following:-
 - (i) A copy of the complaint received, and a copy of reports from the Director (if involved) and those persons appointed to investigate the complaint and such other material as the Management Committee considers relevant to the complaint.
 - (ii) Advice that the Management Committee considers disciplinary action may be appropriate, with clear advice as to what behaviour was considered unacceptable, with full details of when and where the situation took place.
 - (iii) To invite the person to appear before the Management Committee at a nominated date and time to enable the person to provide a full explanation of the circumstances surrounding the behaviour complained of.
 - (iv) The option for the person to provide one or more witnesses to support his/her explanation of the situation.
 - (v) The option for the person to provide a full written explanation in lieu of appearing before the Management Committee.
 - (vi) Advice that in the absence of any explanation, by the date stipulated in the letter, the Management Committee will proceed to deal with the complaint and advise the person of the decision as soon as possible.
- (b) The Secretary shall advise the Management Committee of the response to this letter and arrange for a meeting with the Management Committee and the person concerned, as necessary. The Secretary shall advise the offender of the Committee’s decision, after consideration of all information and advice received. This letter must include full details of any disciplinary action and also advise the offender of the right of appeal contained under Clause 11 of the Club Constitution.
- (c) Instead of dealing with the complaint the Management Committee may, for whatever reason it considers appropriate, refer the complaint to a Complaints Committee to investigate the Complaint and report back to the Committee with its recommendations as to what further action it considers should be taken.

5. Complaints Committee

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A Complaints Committee will be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Club each year to deal with complaints referred to it by the Management Committee. The Committee will consist of three members, who are not members of the Management Committee, who will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting or their prior death or retirement.

If because of a conflict of interest a member of the Complaints Committee is not able to deal with a particular complaint, the President may appoint another person in their place. If a casual vacancy occurs on the Complaints Committee the Management Committee must fill that vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting.

The Management Committee delegates to the Complaints Committee its power to investigate complaints, interview witnesses and take what other steps it may consider necessary.

After consideration of the complaint, the Complaints Committee must provide the Management Committee with a full report of the circumstances of the complaint and its recommendation as to the appropriate penalty.

The Management Committee must then consider the report and recommendation from the Complaints Committee and decide what penalty it considers appropriate.

6. Appeal against suspension or termination of membership imposed by the Management Committee

A person whose membership has been terminated or suspended by the Management Committee may appeal that decision by giving notice of intention to appeal within fourteen (14) days after the person receives written notice of the decision.