

	The Rockhampton Bridge Club Inc.	
By-Law - 05a.....	COMPLAINTS	Approved: 10 August 2010

1. Purpose of By-law

This By-law has been issued by the Management Committee to inform club members of the process to be followed in the event of any formal (written) complaint being received by the Management Committee. Formal complaints need to be resolved speedily in a structured manner.

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 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.**

This By-law covers all four categories.

All complaints are important and are to be entered in a register maintained by the Secretary and actions/outcomes recorded.

3. Process

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

The Secretary shall discuss with President who shall determine the level of urgency with the complaint. Other Committee Members may be consulted as deemed necessary.

The Secretary shall contact the person who submitted the complaint and endeavour to obtain further details of the incident. This would include details of who, when, what, details of witnesses, etc, 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 President shall categorise the complaint and arrange for the Secretary to take action as follows:-

- **Category "a" - Problem relating to the running of a bridge session** – Secretary must refer to Tournament Committee or Appeals Committee as appropriate and request their report on outcomes with recommendations, for consideration by the Management Committee, who would determine action to 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".
- **Category "b" - Problem relating to the Club's assets and affairs** – Secretary would refer to 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. This could be expected to result in some corrective action.
- **Category "c" - Problem with Management Committee actions and processes** Secretary would refer the complaint to the Management Committee and, if considered necessary, arrange for the person raising the problem to be interviewed by the Committee, so that the Committee can decide on action to be taken. This would be expected to result in some corrective action and could involve a change to a Club process/procedure/By-law, and which should provide an improvement to how we do things.
- **Category "d" – Problems relating to actions of club members**
 - **Serious complaint requiring immediate action** – President contact the Director concerned, Members of Management Committee or Tournament Committee, legal advisor, as necessary. Arrange for appointment of two uninvolved Management Committee Members, who would meet with complainant and obtain full details of situation, and if possible mediate the complaint. All discussions to be recorded in writing and forwarded to Secretary with recommendations. Secretary to inform Management Committee members in detail, and take such action as determined by Committee. 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.

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- **Complaint that can wait until next Management Committee meeting** – Where the President so decides, the Secretary shall acknowledge receipt, inform Management Committee members as considered necessary, and through President arrange for two uninvolved Committee Members, to meet separately with complainant and the person who has reportedly offended, obtain full details of the situation, and if possible mediate the complaint. All discussions to be recorded in writing. Secretary would include as an agenda item for the next meeting, with Committee members receiving full documentation prior to the meeting. Person raising the complaint to be advised by the Secretary, of outcomes from the Meeting.
- **General complaint** – Secretary to include matter in next Management Committee meeting agenda for consideration. Person raising the complaint to be advised by the Secretary of outcomes from the Meeting.

4. **Disciplinary action required.**

Where the Management Committee decides that disciplinary action is necessary the following steps shall be followed:-

- Secretary to forward letter to person to be disciplined. This letter must contain:-
 - A copy of the complaint received, and a copy of reports from the Director (if involved) and those persons appointed to investigate the complaint.
 - 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.
 - Invitation for the person to appear before the Management Committee at a nominated date & time to enable the person to provide a full explanation of the circumstances surrounding the behaviour complained of.
 - Option for the person to provide one or more witnesses to support his/her explanation of the situation.
 - Option for person to provide a full written explanation in lieu of appearing before the Management Committee
 - 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.
 - Such other material as the Management Committee considers is relevant to the complaint.
- Secretary shall advise Management Committee Members of the response to this letter and arrange for the meeting with the Management Committee and the person concerned, as necessary.
- Secretary shall advise the offender of the Committee 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.

5. **Appeal against disciplinary action imposed by Management Committee**

Should a Club Member appeal against any disciplinary action imposed in accordance with this By-law, then that appeal must be in writing and forwarded to the Secretary within one month of receipt of the letter detailing the disciplinary action imposed by the Management Committee. The appeal may detail any facts not previously considered.

The Secretary must within one month after receiving the notice call a general meeting of the Rockhampton Bridge Club members to decide the appeal.