

## New South Wales Bridge Association Limited (SBC) – Conduct of Conduct

Authorisations:		Review:	
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### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Code is to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all who attend any SBC venue. It applies to all people (*Participants*) involved in Bridge or other activities at an SBC venue, including members, visitors, volunteers, employees, contractors, and officers.

SBC is committed to providing a safe environment for all Participants, that is free from harassment, bullying, abuse, and other unfair treatment and promotes respectful and positive behaviour towards everyone. This Code aims to ensure that the core values, good reputation, and positive behaviour that SBC values is always maintained. It also sets out the procedures for raising concerns and having issues and complaints resolved in a timely manner.

This Code of Conduct is to be prominently displayed at SBC venues and on SBC's website.

### 2. Ethical dealings

All Participants must be ethical, fair, and honest in their dealings with other people.

Participants must not use their involvement with SBC to promote their own beliefs, behaviours, or practices. SBC venues are not to be used to express political, social, religious, or other potentially divisive views.

### 3. Complaints

Issues and concerns may arise for a number of reasons. These include concerns regarding Bridge play or the Laws of Duplicate Bridge (the Laws), as well concerns about player behaviour. Concerns may arise during a Bridge tournament or event, or simply from the interactions between people while they are at a SBC venue or attending an SBC event.

SBC aims to resolve complaints in the most efficient manner possible, and in many cases, complaints can be resolved informally.

#### 3.1 Informal Resolution

Tournament directors and the Bridge Manager are responsible for handling queries, concerns and issues in the first instance, and will use their best endeavours to resolve any concerns promptly, calmly, and in an impartial manner.

If the concern is about Bridge play or the Laws (during a tournament), the director should be asked to attend the Bridge table, where the details of the concern can be discussed. The director will decide on a way forward. The director's decision on a matter of play or the Laws must be complied with, although a query or dispute on this can be raised following the close of the session.

If the concern is about player behavior during a Bridge session, the director should be approached, and the concerns discussed. This discussion may occur either during or after the session (or both).

If the concern is about behavior outside a Bridge playing session or event, then the matter should be raised with the Bridge Manager.

Concerns may be raised about a tournament director or the Bridge Manager.

Concerns should be raised as soon as is practicable. Generally, it is expected that concerns will be raised within 7 days of the occurrence, and that the concern will be resolved within 14 days of being raised.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively, and confidentially.

Details (including if, and how, the matter was resolved) regarding 'non-routine' complaints will be recorded in a register and regularly reviewed by the Bridge Manager and/or the Head of Operations.

### **3.2 Formal Resolution**

Anyone who remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the above informal resolution process may escalate the matter. Details regarding the concern and the resolution sought (if appropriate) should be sent to the Head of Operations.

The Head of Operations may:

- attempt to resolve the matter
- determine that the complaint is vexatious, trivial or lacks merit, or
- refer the matter for discussion at the next Board meeting.

The Board will be advised of all formal requests for complaint resolution (in addition to those referred for Board discussion).

### **3.3 Investigations Committee**

The Board may choose to establish a committee comprised of three people, one of whom is a Board Director, to act as an Investigations Committee. The Board may appoint any person (whether SBC members or not) it believes is appropriate to sit on this Committee.

Referred complaints will be investigated by the Committee by any means the Committee deems appropriate. In investigating a complaint, the Committee will take all steps necessary to ensure the collection of appropriate information and to adhere to the principles of natural justice.

The Committee will consider complaints and recommend to the Board steps which it deems appropriate to resolve issues.

Following consideration of a dispute, the Committee will report its finding to the Board with a recommendation as to the action to be taken.

### **3.4 Complaints involving a Board Director**

If a complaint involves a Board Director, the complaint will be managed by the entire Board, except that the Director involved will be excluded from all deliberations.

#### **4 Sanctions**

The Board will consider recommendations received from the Investigations Committee and decide, in relation to a member, whether to:

- take no action
- caution the member
- censure the member
- suspend membership for a specified time
- expel the member from membership
- refuse renewal of membership and/or
- generally to deprive a member of any of the rights and privileges of membership.

In relation to a non-member, the Board will decide whether to:

- take no action
- caution the non-member
- censure the non-member
- exclude the non-member from Club premises and/or events, for a specified time or permanently.

If the Board believes that a person should be expelled from membership, or renewal of membership should be refused, the decision will be an interim decision, subject to the member's appeal right set out below.

The Board's decision, or interim decision, will be promptly communicated in writing to the alleged offender.

#### **5 Appeal**

A member advised of an interim decision of expulsion from membership, or refusal of renewal, will be given the right to address the Board. To exercise this right the Club must receive a written notice of appeal within 7 business days of the Participant receiving notification of the Board's interim decision.

If, following consideration of any representations made by the member, the Board decides to end the member's membership, the decision will be communicated to the member in writing within 7 business days of the address to the Board.

#### **6 Mediation**

The people involved in a formal complaint – the complainant and the person being complained about – may also seek the assistance of a neutral third party or a mediator. Mediation may occur either before or after an investigation of a complaint. If a complainant wishes to try and resolve the complaint with the assistance of a mediator, the Chairman of SBC will, in consultation with the complainant, arrange for a mediator to mediate the complaint.