



SA Barrel Horse Association Inc – Complaints Policy



Policy overview and purpose

It is important for SA Barrel Horse Association Incorporated (SABHA) respond to all complaints, follow policies and seek clarification from the national affiliate Australian Barrel Horse Association (ABHA) if it is unsure how to handle a complaint received.

ABHA will only endorse, manage or support any complaints, disciplinary action that pertains to the ABHA rule book if these cannot be resolved at affiliate level.

If the ABHA manages a complaint, the role of the club is to co-operate with any investigation, manage the situation until the outcome of the complaint is decided and implement any disciplinary action if required

This section provides general information to assist committee members to understand:

Complaint handling principles

It is important that the SABHA committee handling of complaints is fair, just and transparent (i.e. we follow clear processes and procedures). Formal complaints will be dealt with in a confidential and sensitive manner by the SABHA Committee.

The following principles should be applied:

- **Treat** complaints seriously
- **Act** promptly
- **Treat** people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
- **Stay** neutral
- **Keep** parties to the complaint informed
- **Protect** against victimisation
- **Keep** accurate records
- **Make** decisions based only on information gathered not personal views
- **Disciplinary** action should be relative to the breach



Complaint options and steps

Refer to SABHA's constitution and rules for complaints managed at Association level. If the ABHA needs to be involved refer to the ABHA affiliate handbook which describes options and procedures for dealing with complaints at the affiliate level.

Where possible, less serious complaints should be resolved informally within the association by the committee. However, if circumstances require more formal processes and referral to an external agency may be required, then the affiliate body as well as the relevant authorities need to be involved

It is the preference of the ABHA that complaints are handled at an association level. SABHA recognises that there may be occasions when SABHA would benefit from the support of ABHA to deal with a complaint. If this is necessary it is important that an association representative contact the Affiliate secretary with relevant information and follow their processes.

Escalating a complaint

If a complaint is to be escalated to an external agency the committee must follow the association's policies that directs that this type of complaint to be dealt with at the state or national level and:

- There is a possible conflict of interest (or close relationship) between the people on the management committee and any of the parties to the complaint
- It is beyond the skills of the committee and specific expertise or experience may be required to manage the complaint
- The complaint has not been able to be resolved at the club level
- The issue is more serious than first thought

Understand that the person complaining can contact an external authority (e.g. an anti-discrimination agency) at any stage in a complaint process.

Key points:

- Minor complaints can be handled informally between the person making the complaint and SABHA officials.
- More serious complaints may require a mediator to help find a resolution.
- Where a SABHA member wishes to formally complain about any matters associated with SABHA, they may raise this with the SABHA Committee in writing via email to the SABHA email address (sabarrelhorseassociation@gmail.com).
- More serious complaints may require a mediator to help find a resolution. The complainant may be asked to attend a meeting with the SABHA Committee (or a sub committee appointed by the SABHA Committee to address the complaint) to explore the complaint further and to identify specifics about the issues being



raised. Where this occurs, the complainant will be entitled to bring a support person with them to that meeting.

- The SABHA Committee will review the complaint and respond in writing to the complainant, identifying the complaint review process undertaken, including considerations contemplated and the outcome of the review.
- If a complaint cannot be resolved at affiliate level, it will be escalated to the ABHA Board of Directors, as per the Affiliate Handbook

Document Details

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