

Rowing SA Disciplinary, Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy

Drafted by:	Policy number	Version number	Board approval on	Summary of changes
Andrew Swift	DCDRP001	1	July 2026	Initial release
Person Responsible:	CEO		Scheduled review date:	August 2030

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- a. provide a clear, fair and consistent framework for the management of complaints, disputes, grievances and disciplinary matters;
- b. ensure matters are referred to the appropriate governing policy, procedure or authority;
- c. support the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice;
- d. promote the timely and effective resolution of disputes; and
- e. protect the integrity, reputation and safety of rowing in South Australia.

2. Application

This Policy applies to:

- a. all Members of Rowing South Australia;
- b. Affiliate Members;
- c. Participants;
- d. athletes;
- e. coaches;
- f. officials;
- g. volunteers;
- h. employees and contractors; and
- i. any person participating in, attending or involved in a Rowing SA sanctioned activity.

3. Guiding Principles

All matters managed under this Policy shall be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- a. procedural fairness;
- b. impartiality;
- c. confidentiality where appropriate;
- d. timeliness;
- e. consistency;
- f. proportionality of outcomes; and
- g. respect for all parties.

4. Complaint and Dispute Pathways

The following table identifies the applicable process for different types of matters.

Matter	Governing Document	Responsible Authority
Race day objections and protests	Regulations for Boat Racing	Regatta Manager / President of the Jury
Administrative, eligibility or procedural appeals arising from a regatta	Regulations for Boat Racing	CEO / Independent Appeals Tribunal
Safety incidents occurring at regattas	Safety & Training Policy and Regulations for Boat Racing	Regatta Manager and Operations Manager
State Team selection matters	State Team Selection Policy and State Team Appeals Policy	State Team Selection Panel and Independent Appeals Tribunal
Child safeguarding concerns	National Integrity Framework	Rowing Australia / Sport Integrity Australia

Matter	Governing Document	Responsible Authority
Bullying, harassment or discrimination	National Integrity Framework	Rowing South Australia / Rowing Australia / Sport Integrity Australia
Member Protection matters	National Integrity Framework	Rowing South Australia / Rowing Australia / Sport Integrity Australia
Competition manipulation	National Integrity Framework	Rowing Australia / Sport Integrity Australia
Improper use of drugs or prohibited substances	National Integrity Framework	Sport Integrity Australia
Personal grievances between individuals	Rowing Australia Personal Grievances Policy	CEO
Breaches of Constitution, By-Laws, Regulations or Association Policies	Constitution, By-Laws and this Policy	CEO and/or Board
Membership disputes	Constitution and By-Laws	CEO and/or Board
Matters not otherwise covered	This Policy	CEO

5. Lodging a Complaint

A complaint should be lodged in writing with the CEO as soon as reasonably practicable following the incident or matter giving rise to the complaint.

A complaint should include:

- a. details of the persons involved;
- b. a description of the relevant events;
- c. relevant dates, locations and witnesses;
- d. any supporting documents; and
- e. the outcome sought.

Anonymous complaints will not ordinarily be investigated. However, Rowing SA may, in its absolute discretion, determine whether to consider an anonymous complaint, having regard to the seriousness of the allegations, the availability of supporting information or evidence, and whether the matter can be fairly assessed or investigated.

6. Preliminary Assessment

Upon receipt of a complaint, the CEO will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine:

- a. whether the matter falls within the jurisdiction of Rowing SA;
- b. whether another policy or organisation has responsibility for the matter;
- c. whether further information is required;
- d. whether the matter may be resolved informally; and
- e. whether immediate action is required to protect participants or the sport.

The CEO may seek legal, governance, integrity or other professional advice where appropriate.

Where a complaint, dispute or appeal is governed by the Regulations for Boat Racing, the CEO shall manage the matter in accordance with those Regulations and may refer any appeal that falls within the jurisdiction of the Independent Appeals Tribunal under those Regulations for determination.

7. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, matters may be resolved through:

- a. discussion;
- b. facilitated meetings;
- c. mediation;
- d. education;
- e. counselling;
- f. apology; or
- g. other agreed outcomes.

Participation in informal resolution does not prevent a matter proceeding to formal determination if required.

8. Formal Investigation

Where informal resolution is inappropriate or unsuccessful, the CEO may:

- a. investigate the matter;
- b. appoint an independent investigator;
- c. refer the matter to a committee, tribunal or disciplinary panel;
- d. refer the matter to Rowing Australia;
- e. refer the matter to Sport Integrity Australia; or
- f. refer the matter directly to the Board.

The respondent shall be provided with:

- a. details of the allegation;
- b. relevant supporting information; and
- c. a reasonable opportunity to respond.

9. Frivolous, Vexatious or Unsupported Complaints

The CEO may dismiss a complaint if satisfied that it is:

- a. frivolous;
- b. vexatious;
- c. lacking substance;
- d. outside the jurisdiction of Rowing SA; or
- e. incapable of being reasonably investigated.

The complainant shall be advised of the reasons for the dismissal.

10. Determination and Disciplinary Action

Where a breach is established, the Board or other authorised decision-maker may impose one or more sanctions permitted under the Constitution, By-Laws, Regulations or applicable policy.

When determining an appropriate sanction, consideration may be given to:

- a. the seriousness of the conduct;
- b. intent;
- c. previous conduct;
- d. mitigating circumstances;
- e. impact on participants or the sport; and
- f. actions taken to remedy the conduct.

11. Appeals

Appeals may only be made where a right of appeal exists under:

- a. the Constitution;
- b. the By-Laws;
- c. the State Team Appeals Policy;
- d. the National Integrity Framework; or
- e. another applicable policy.

The lodging of an appeal does not automatically suspend or delay the operation of the original decision unless otherwise determined by the relevant appeal body.

12. Confidentiality

All parties involved in a complaint, dispute or disciplinary matter must maintain confidentiality except:

- a. where disclosure is required by law;
- b. where disclosure is required by a governing policy;
- c. where disclosure is necessary for the proper management of the matter; or
- d. where authorised by the Board or CEO.

13. Records

The Association shall maintain appropriate records of complaints, investigations, determinations and outcomes in accordance with its privacy obligations and record keeping requirements.

14. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed by the Board at least every four years or sooner if required by legislative, governance or sporting integrity changes.

Appendix 1

Complaint and Dispute Resolution Decision Tree

STEP 1 – IS IT A RACE DAY OR REGATTA MATTER?

YES

Is it a race-day objection or protest?

→ Regulations for Boat Racing

→ President of the Jury Decision Final

OR

Is it an eligibility, procedural or administrative appeal?

→ Regulations for Boat Racing

→ CEO Assessment

→ Independent Appeals Tribunal (where applicable)

NO → Proceed to Step 2

STEP 2 – IS IT A STATE TEAM MATTER?

Does the matter relate to selection or appointment to a State Team?

→ YES → Proceed under the:

- State Team Selection Policy
- State Team Appeals Policy

Appeals are referred to the **Independent Appeals Tribunal**.

→ NO → Go to Step 3

STEP 3 – IS IT AN INTEGRITY MATTER?

Does the matter involve any of the following?

- Child safeguarding
- Child abuse
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Sexual misconduct
- Victimisation
- Competition manipulation
- Improper use of drugs or prohibited substances
- Member Protection concerns
- Any matter covered by the National Integrity Framework

→ YES → Refer to:

- Rowing Australia National Integrity Framework
- Sport Integrity Australia (where applicable)

These matters are generally managed outside Rowing SA.

→ NO → Go to Step 4

STEP 4 – IS IT A PERSONAL GRIEVANCE?

Is the matter a personal disagreement or grievance between individuals?

Examples:

- Interpersonal conflict
- Communication issues
- Relationship breakdowns
- Club or team disagreements

→ **YES** → Proceed under:

Rowing Australia Personal Grievances Policy

The CEO may facilitate discussion, mediation or other informal resolution processes.

→ **NO** → **Go to Step 5**

STEP 5 – IS IT A BREACH OF A ROWING SA RULE OR POLICY?

Does the matter involve an alleged breach of:

- The Constitution
- By-Laws
- Regulations
- Board Policies
- Membership obligations
- Directions issued by Rowing SA

→ **YES** → Proceed under:

- Rowing SA Disciplinary, Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy

The matter will be assessed by the CEO and may be:

- Resolved informally;
- Investigated;
- Referred to the Board; or
- Referred to another appropriate body

→ **NO** → **Go to Step 6**

STEP 6 – GENERAL DISPUTES

If the matter is not covered by any policy, regulation or framework:

1. The parties must first meet and attempt to resolve the matter in good faith.
2. If unresolved, the CEO may facilitate discussions.
3. The parties may agree to mediation.
4. If necessary, the matter may be referred to the Board for further consideration.

UNSURE WHICH PROCESS APPLIES?

Contact the Rowing SA CEO.

The CEO will determine the appropriate policy, regulation, framework or procedure under which the matter will be managed and may refer the matter to the Board, an Independent Appeals Tribunal, Rowing Australia, Sport Integrity Australia, a mediator or another appropriate body.