



### Management of Complaints

Henley Water Polo Club takes all complaints about on- and off-field behaviour seriously, and aims to provide a transparent procedure for managing complaints. The procedure is based on the principles of procedural fairness and the following principles:

- **Act** promptly
- **Treat** people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
- **Stay** neutral
- **Keep** parties to the complaint informed
- **Try to Maintain** confidentiality if possible
- **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 Handling: Five Step Process

In all cases, the lowest level at which a matter can be dealt with shall always be preferred.

If a complaint relates to:

- Behaviour or an incident that occurred at the team level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the President of the club in the first instance with the MPIO being available at all times.
- Behaviour or an incident that occurred at the state level or involves people operating at the state level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by Water Polo South Australia in the first instance, with the MPIO being available at all times.
- Behaviour or an incident that occurred at the national level or involves people operating at the state level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by AWPI in the first instance, with the MPIO being available at all times.
- All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. Individuals and organisations may also pursue their complaint externally under anti-discrimination, child protection, criminal or other relevant legislation.
- If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then Henley Sharks Water Polo Club and Water Polo South Australia will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority and our national body. This process does not preclude a member or associate from fulfilling their professional mandatory reporting responsibilities and obligations to the relevant authorities.
- The Henley Sharks Water Polo Club aims for its complaints procedure to have integrity and be free of unfair repercussions or victimisation.



an

### **Step 1: Talk with the other person & Club Officials (if this is reasonable & appropriate)**

In the first instance, you (the complainant) should try to address the problem with the person or people involved (respondent) if you feel able to do so. When issue arises it is the first preference for the attempted resolution to occur directly between the parties involved at a personal or club level.

If the complainant has any doubt on the seriousness of the issue then contact should be made with their club officials or Water Polo South Australia MPIO.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, as outlined in the resolution process. This may involve:

- Clarifying the different options available to help resolve the problem.
- Completing a Water Polo South Australia Complaint Form :(Located at end of this document)
- Mediating the discussion between the complainant and the respondent.
- Gathering more information (e.g. from other people who may have seen the behaviour).
- Seeking advice from Water Polo South Australia and/or AWPI or from an external agency (e.g. state department of sport (ORS) or anti-discrimination agency).
- Referring the complaint to Water Polo South Australia.
- Referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, the police or the anti-discrimination agency if required.

### **Step 2: Contact a Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) Club Level**

A Member Protection Information Officer is someone who is the first point of contact for issues of harassment, discrimination, bullying or abuse, and has been nominated by the association. They respond to all issues of harassment or complaints and child abuse as appropriate. The MPIO will listen to the complaint and advise the person of their options. The MPIO does not resolve the complaint, but is a critical resource for the complainant if:

- The first step is not possible, or reasonable.
- The complainant is not sure how to address the issue.
- The complainant wants to talk confidentially about the problem with someone and obtain more information about the process.
- The problem continues after the complainant tried to address the issue directly with the person or people involved.

### **Henley Water Polo Club MPIO is Loretta Martin**

The MPIO will:

- Take confidential notes about the complaint.
- Research the facts regarding the complaint.
- Determine how the compliant would like to address the matter and ask if the complainant requires support.
- Discuss with the compliant options for resolution of the problem.
- Act as a support person for the compliant.
- Provide reference to an appropriate person (e.g. Mediator) to help the complainant resolve the problem, if necessary.
- Inform the relevant government authorities and/or police if required by law to do so.
- Maintain confidentiality.



### **Step 3: Determine resolution response**

After talking with the MPIO, it may be decided:

- To seek a formal approach (refer Step 4).
- To seek a mediated resolution with the help of a third person (such as a mediator).
- To address the matter independently (or with support person such as a MPIO).
- There is no problem, or the problem is minor and the complainant elects not to take the matter further

At conclusion of the matter the MPIO shall ensure appropriate documentation is maintained by Water Polo South Australia or complainant's club. At minimum a copy of the Water Polo South Australia complaint form shall remain on file for a period of no less than 7 years.

### **Step 4: Making a formal complaint to Club Body and State Body**

If your complaint is not resolved following steps 1 to 3, then you can make a formal complaint in writing to the President of Henley Water Polo Club and possibly to Water Polo SA. On receiving a formal complaint and based on the material you have provided, the Presidents of Henley Sharks Water Polo Club will decide on the most appropriate or required action.

Henley Sharks Water Polo Club President in consultation with President of WPSA the nominated Board will make this decision based on a review of the facts as presented by the complainant, respondent and MPIO.

At conclusion of the matter the MPIO shall ensure appropriate documentation is maintained by Henley Sharks Water Polo Club. At minimum a copy of the Henley Sharks Water Polo Club complaint form shall remain on file for a period of no less than 7 years.

### **Step 5: Escalating to National Body**

If your complaint is not resolved by the listed approaches in steps 1 to 4, then the complainant can escalate the formal complaint in writing to the CEO of Australian Water Polo Inc. (AWPI). On receiving a formal complaint and based on the material you have provided, the CEO of Australian Water Polo Inc will decide on the next most appropriate pathway of action. For further information is provided on the AWPI website at:

<http://www.australianwaterpolo.com.au/development/clubs-associations/membership-protection/>

At conclusion of the matter the MPIO shall ensure appropriate documentation is maintained by Water Polo South Australia or complainant's club. At minimum a copy of the Water Polo South Australia complaint form shall remain on file for a period of no less than 7 years.

### **Storage of complaint information**

Documentation related to above matters will be stored in a confidential and secure place.

- If the complaint was dealt with at a state level the information will be stored in the state association office for a period of not more than 7 years to allow for any civil actions and ensure resolution is final.
- If the matter is of a serious nature, or if the matter was escalated to and/or dealt with at the national level, the original document will be stored at the national office with a copy stored at the state office.

Documentation is captured as a record of the matter and to aid the appropriate body in reforming practices and ensuring appropriate review of policies in the future.