AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS

Australian Athletics Complaints Management Guide

Templates for Member Associations and Clubs

November 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we run, jump, throw, and roll. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge the significant contribution that First Nations people have and continue to make to athletics in Australia.

Table of Contents

Introduction

We recognise that athletics in Australia runs off the hard work of people who are stretched for time and fulfilling many roles but also have a strong desire to ensure processes are fair and consistent. This document was particularly created to support those responsible for handling complaints in Athletics at Member Association and Club level. It is intended to be a supplementary resource to the Australian Athletics (AA) Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy (CDDP), by providing practical and relevant guidance on the complaints management process.

Throughout this document, resources developed by Sport Integrity Australia and our other partners are referenced. Templates and resources developed by Australian Athletics can be found here or by visiting: https://www.athletics.com.au/info-hub/sports-integrity

At every stage, please refer to the AA Complaints Disputes & Discipline Policy for further process details.

Templates Index

The table below shows the templates available to Complaints Managers to assist you in the Complaints Management process. They are available in the Integrity section of the Australian Athletics website and will continue to be updated to reflect changes to policies or practices.

Document Title
Phase 3: Step 1 templates – available here
Email: Notification of a Report to Complainant
Email: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Complainant
Formal letter: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Complainant
Email: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Respondent
Email: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Complainant
Formal letter: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Complainant
Email: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Respondent
Formal letter: Notification of Formal Complaint requiring Investigation to Respondent
Paragraph template: Provisional Action
Paragraph template: Multiple Allegations
Formal letter: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Witness
Phase 3: Step 2 templates – available here
Request for written response
Phase 3: Step 4 templates – available here
Email: Outcome of Complaint to Complainant – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of Complaint to Complainant – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be Substantiated
Email: Outcome of Complaint to Respondent – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of Complaint to Respondent, Unsubstantiated or Unable to be Substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of complaint to Complainant, Substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of complaint to Respondent, Substantiated
Formal letter: Final Breach Notice

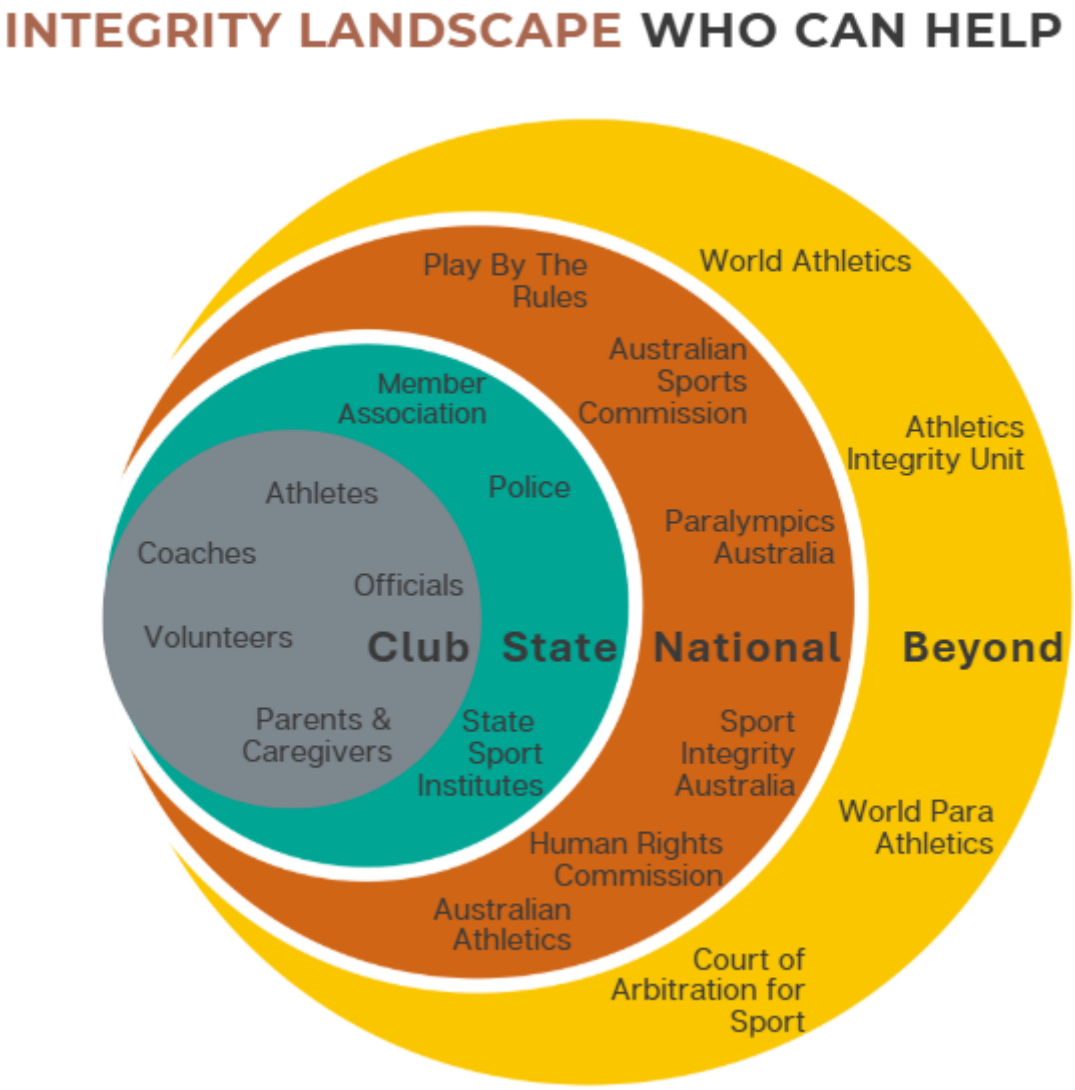
Glossary

Term	Definition
Aggravating circumstances	Factors that increase the severity of a breach or culpability of a person, eg. Repeated rather than one-off actions, a person is in a position of authority over another.
Allegations/Alleged conduct	The description of the incident(s) that took place that may be amount to a breach of a policy or rule.
Appeal	A request to have a decision or sanction reviewed by an independent panel or entity.
Balance of probabilities	The standard of proof applied when deciding whether a breach has been substantiated or not based on the analysis of the evidence.
Breach Notice	The correspondence sent to the Respondent notifying them that their conduct has breached a NIF policy and, if appropriate, the sanction.
Case Categorisation Model	The tiered framework used to evaluate a complaint and appropriate way to address the alleged breach.
Complaint	A formal written submission of an allegation relating to Prohibited Conduct under a relevant NIF Policy.
Complaint Manager	The person appointed to manage a complaint on behalf of an organisation.
Complainant	The person or organisation who is directly affected by the alleged Prohibited Conduct. If the person directly affected by the conduct is a Vulnerable Person, a complaint may be submitted on their behalf by a parent or carer.
Conflict of Interest	A person's direct or indirect association with a party to a complaint that may cause them to be influenced in a way that may create bias and unfairness in the complaint process.
Grooming	A pattern of seemingly insignificant behaviours perpetrated over time which has the effect of creating the conditions that normalizes prohibited conduct, particularly abuse.
Intentional Misrepresentation	Actions that are intended to deceive as to the true representation of an individual's level of impairment, particularly in relation to para classification.
Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)	A designated person who can provide information about making a complaint or raising a concern, and support during a complaint process. They do not manage the complaint themselves.
Mitigating circumstances	Factors that may decrease the severity of a complaint or level of culpability.
Person in a Position of Authority	A person who can exercise power, control or influence over a child or young person through their position or involvement in athletics.
Personal grievance	An interpersonal dispute that falls short of the threshold for abuse, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct under the AA Member Protection Policy or the AA Code of Conduct.

Procedural fairness	Providing the Respondent an adequate opportunity to respond to the allegations; ensuring the decision-makers are free from bias; and basing any findings on the relevant evidence that can be logically applied.
Prohibited Conduct	The specific behaviours and actions as delineated in each of the Relevant Policies.
Protected disclosure	Information that is shared about a "regulated entity" under the whistleblower laws in the Corporations Act 2001 qualifies for protection under those laws.
Provisional Action	The imposition of a temporary measure on a Respondent while they are subject to a Complaints Process, or an investigation.
Report	A submission of allegations which may be Prohibited Conduct and the person who makes the submission does not wish to be named.
Respondent	The person or organisation who is alleged to have committed the Prohibited Conduct.
Sanction	A sanction is the disciplinary action(s) taken against a Respondent following an investigation.
Substantiated	The instance where there has been sufficient evidence to suggest the alleged conduct is more likely to have occurred, than not.
Trauma-informed practice	Implementing processes or actions that acknowledge the impact that traumatic experiences can have on individuals, and support their participation in a complaint process by minimizing the risk of harm. This practice should be applied to complainants, respondents and witnesses.
Unsubstantiated	The instance where it is more likely than not that the Respondent did NOT breach a policy.
Unable to be substantiated	If there are two equally plausible versions of events, or not enough evidence to make a finding either way, the matter will be unable to be substantiated.
Vulnerable Person	Any person under the age of 18, or any person aged over 18 but not sufficiently able to care for themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
Whistleblower	A person who informs on a person, typically employed, or an organization regarded as engaging in an unlawful or immoral activity, and as defined by the Corporations Act 2001.

Key Organisations

This is a map of the 'Integrity Landscape' of athletics in Australia. Various people and organisations are identified and they all have a part to play to support you and provide guidance.



Sport Integrity Australia (SIA): Sport Integrity Australia is the lead integrity agency for sport and established to draw together the country's existing integrity capabilities, knowledge and expertise. SIA's role is to provide advice, education and resources to sports and individuals to address and/or prevent concerns. SIA manage all anti-doping matters and has jurisdiction to manage safeguarding and discrimination issues.
Website: https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/

Play by the Rules (PBTR): Play By The Rules supports volunteers, administrators, coaches, officials and parents by providing tools, resources and training to help people manage complaints or be the nominated person in an organisation to provide information to participants.
Website: https://www.playbytherules.net.au/

E-Safety Commissioner (eSafety): The eSafety Commissioner is the Australian independent online safety regulator. eSafety's purpose is to enforce the Online Safety Act (2021) by being a place to report breaches and concerns as well as obtain education and resources.
Website: https://www.esafety.gov.au/

Australian Athletics (AA): When Australian Athletics adopted the National Integrity Framework (NIF) in July 2022, all affiliated organisations and their members become bound by the NIF policies. AA manages all national level complaints and is the main conduit to Sport Integrity Australia. AA can also support individuals, clubs and Member Associations with athletics-specific guidance, education and resources.
Website: https://www.athletics.com.au/info-hub/sports-integrity/

Member Associations (MA): Each State and Territory organisation is bound by the NIF but will have their own personnel to address concerns raised about conduct that occur at MA events, activities and teams, involving MA staff and contractors or MA-level/representative athletes. Mas can also support Clubs to manage complaints and are the key conduit between clubs and individuals, and AA..

Affiliated Clubs / Groups: Club personnel and/or committees lead complaints management process for issues that occur at Club events, activities and teams, involving Club staff and contractors, Club Coaches, volunteers, helpers, parents and/or athletes. An MPIO typically supports at the club level.
It is important to note that club constitutions may also contain complaint management processes for issues that fall outside the scope of the NIF.

Roles and Responsibilities

As noted, many people might be fulfilling a range of roles as well as being an individual cog in a complaints process. The success profiles below can be used by clubs and individuals alike to help understand the type of person to recruit, how they continue to upskill, and where to focus their efforts, in these specific roles.

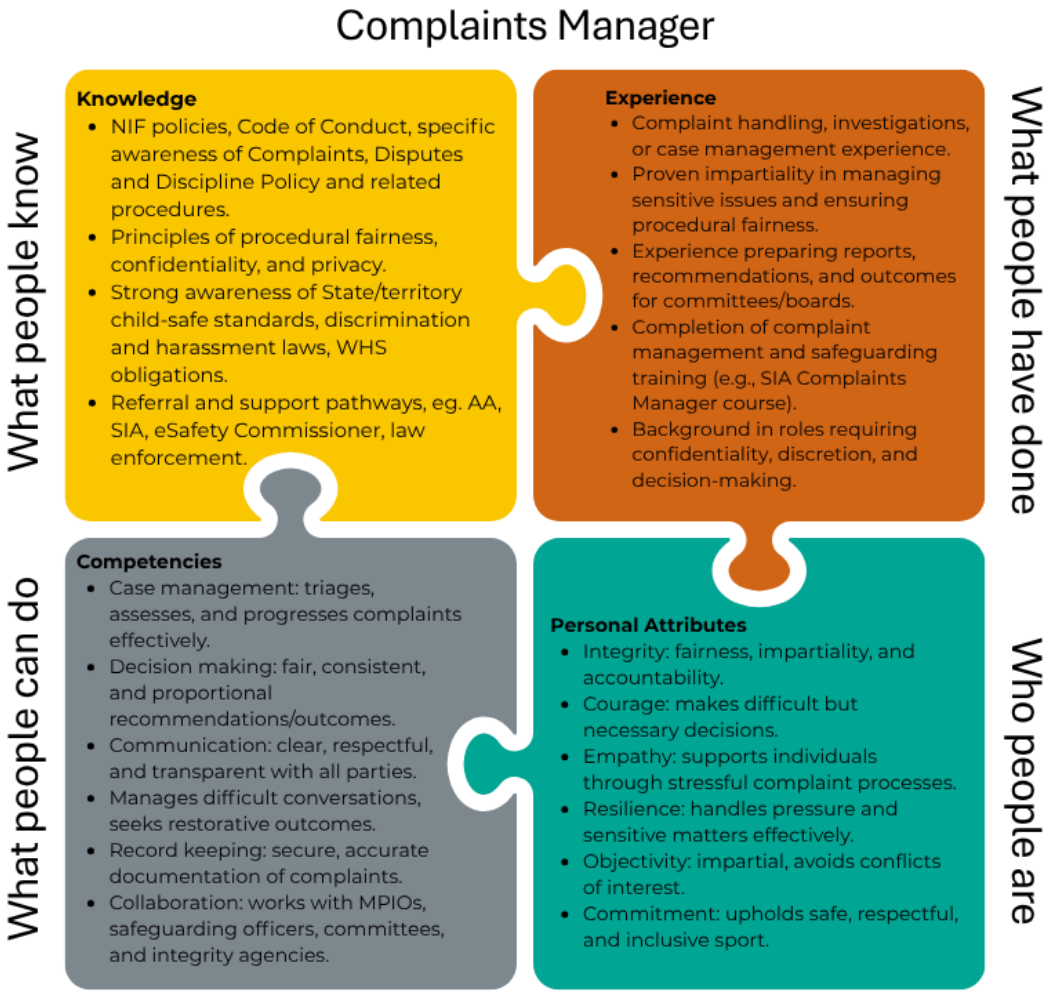
It's important to note that these are a list of *suggested* qualities and qualifications – not everyone will have all of them and some may have all of them and more. For further information on education and development opportunities, refer to chapter 0 of this guide.

- **Member Protection Information Officer**

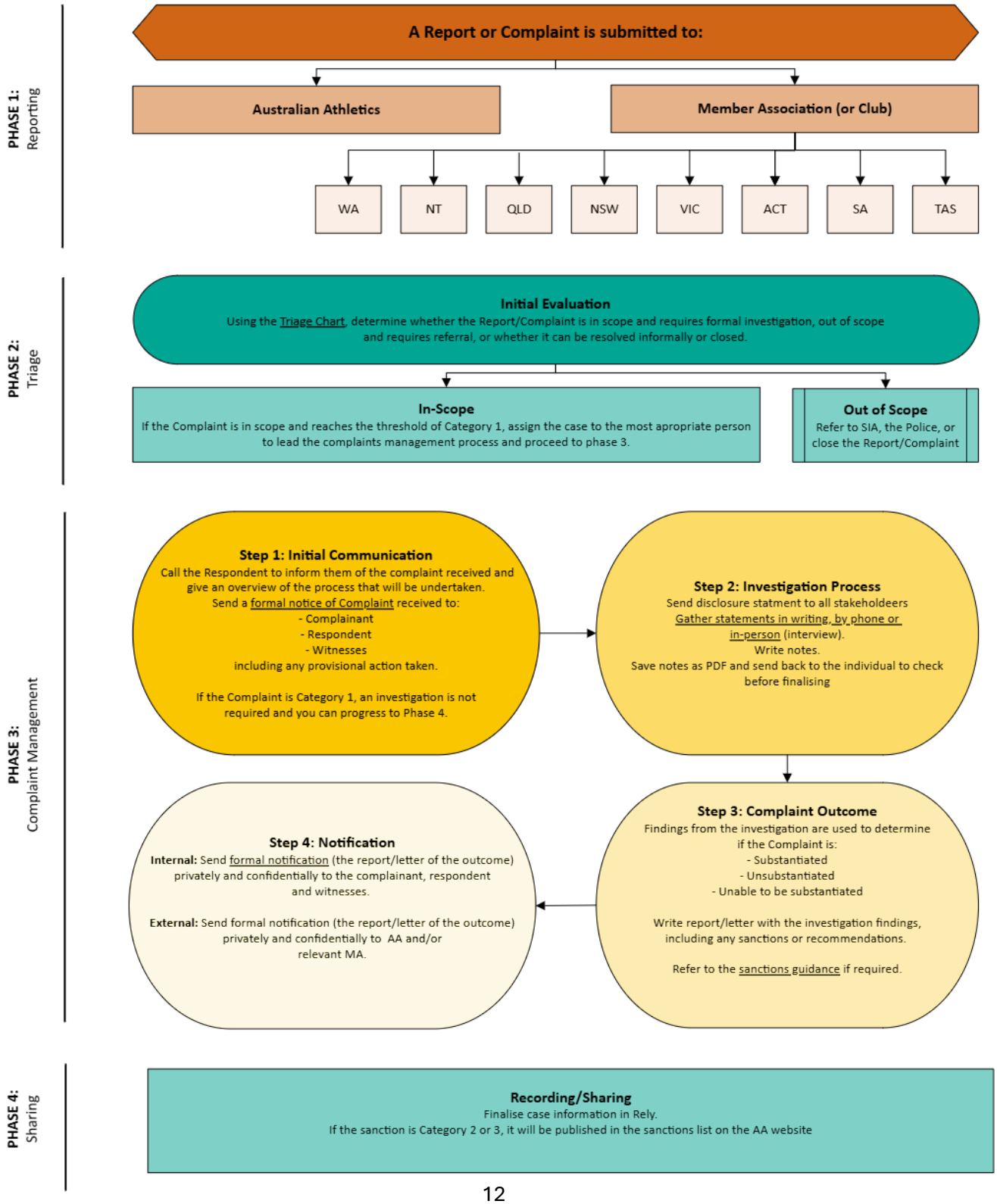
The Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) is the first point of contact for members with integrity or safeguarding concerns. The role provides impartial information and guidance about options for managing complaints or concerns

- **Complaints Manager**

The Complaint Manager oversees the receipt, management, and resolution of complaints within the club. They ensure complaints are addressed in line with the National Integrity Framework (NIF) and club policies, provide procedural fairness, and contribute to a safe, fair, and inclusive environment for all members.



Complaints Management Process Overview



Phase One: Reporting

Any Participant in athletics may submit a Report or Complaint through the following channels:

- Online, via the form on the AA website (there is an option for a callback)
- By email to integrity@athletics.org.au, the AA, MA or Club Complaints Manager (or equivalent position)
- In-person or over the phone. If the individual wishes to submit a Formal Complaint (rather than a Report), this must be followed up in writing.

What is the difference between a Report and a Complaint?

Report	Complaint
• A submission of information that alleges Prohibited Conduct, suspicions or general concerns • The Complainant/Reporter will/can remain anonymous • A complaint process is not necessarily started or being sought after by the Complainant/Reporter • Information is recorded by AA or the MA. • AA or an MA can use a report depending on the nature of the information provided and we may be in touch with the Complainant/Reporter if we need further information, but it wouldn't mean that the Complainant/Reporter needs to be named • Can be made in writing or verbally	• A submission of information that alleges Prohibited Conduct, suspicions or general concerns • The Complainant is named • After an initial evaluation of the complaint, an investigation may be undertaken and a potential disciplinary process • Information may be used from previously submitted reports, if relevant • Must be made in writing. Support can be provided to the complainant to doIt is str this.

Case Management System

It is strongly recommended that all organisations implement a Case Management System to track complaints from inception through to completion. Rely is the case management platform used by Australian Athletics and some Member Associations to ensure accurate record keeping of all reports and complaints. This supports the holistic tracking of complaints across the sport to address systemic and salient issues and put preventative measures or education in place.

If your MA or Club is a User of Rely and you have received a Report or Complaint in-person, over the phone or by email, please load this into Rely in the first instance.

Phase Two: Triage

Use the Triage Process chart on the following page to determine whether a Report/Complaint is in scope and requires formal investigation, out of scope and requires referral, or whether it can be resolved informally or closed.

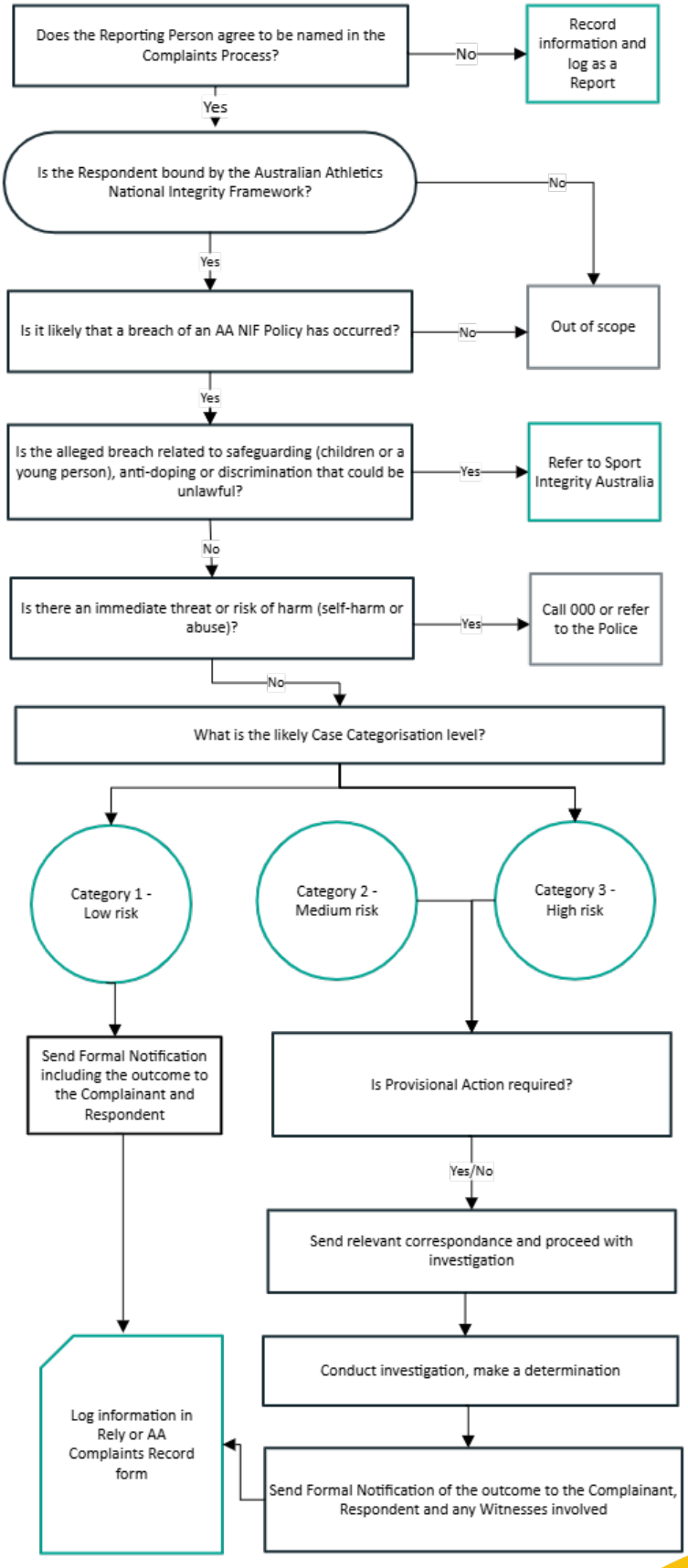
It is within the NIF jurisdiction to manage Reports and Complaints relating to:

- Bullying, abuse or harassment of adults
- Competition manipulation and sport gambling
- Team/representative selection disputes
- Organisational issues
- Competition rule disputes
- A complaint that has been managed within the sport or a decision made within the sport

Any Reports/Complaints related to **doping** (banned substances), **child safeguarding** (anything involving children aged under 18) or **discrimination** (unfair treatment based on age, disability, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion), should be referred to Sport Integrity Australia.

The MA/Club Complaints Manager can make a Report or Complaint to SIA via their website.

See the Triage Process chart on the right hand side.



Phase Two: Triage

Case Categorisation Model

The SIA Case Categorisation Model establishes a transparent, objective and consistent basis for evaluating allegations of Prohibited Conduct. It is used to support decisions about the appropriate way to manage a Complaint and the issuance of sanctions for allegations found to be substantiated. More information can be found in the SIA Guidance for Complaint Management and Sanctioning document here.

Case Categorisation Overview

Category	Example conduct	Possible outcome
Blue – Low Category 1 Complaints and Reports involve allegations of Prohibited Conduct that are assessed as low risk.	- Low level swearing - Verbal abuse - Aggressive tone, disrespectful comments - Lewd jokes - Unnecessary and/or overly physical contact (not involving sexual conduct) - Non-compliance with Child Safe Practices	- Investigation is not usually required - A formal reminder of the individual's obligations under the NIF - Education
Amber – Medium Category 2 matters may involve the risk of moderate or reasonable harm, or repeated, more severe or more complex Category 1 Complaints or Reports.	- Repeated or more severe Category 1 behaviours - Bullying - Discrimination - Abuse of position, trust or power - Harassing behaviours including unwanted sexual attention - Non-compliance with any Child Safe Practices - Betting by participants on their own sport - Inappropriate use of or supply of supplements - Failure to report criminal charges, convictions or any other Prohibited Conduct	- Investigation usually required - Provisional Action may be required to be imposed on the Respondent while the organization (MA/Club) manages the Complaint
Red – High Category 3 matters often clearly involve allegations of criminal behaviour and/or present immediate risk of harm. Category 3 matters must be reported to law enforcement and/or Child Protection services as mandated.	- Sexual misconduct and abuse - Child abuse - Exposing a child or young person to age-inappropriate and harmful material and behaviours - Criminal charges or convictions that may pose a risk to sport - Failing to report child abuse - Serious assaults - Supplying alcohol or drugs to a child or young person - Use, possession or trafficking of illegal drugs	- Investigation usually required - Provisional Action may be required to be imposed on the Respondent while the complaint is being investigated. However, in doing so, the MA or Club should connect with the relevant law enforcement agency so as not to impede any potential criminal investigation

Provisional Action

What is Provisional Action?
Any athletics organisation managing a matter may choose to impose Provisional Action on the person who is the subject of a complaint. This is temporary measure that has the effect of reducing or eliminating the risk of harm to participants or organisation(s), by removing or restricting a person's involvement in athletics.

How does Provisional Action work?
Provisional Action can include (but is not limited to) suspension, restriction of duties, temporary redeployment, or suspension or restriction of rights, privileges, or benefits.

For example, a club might choose to impose Provisional Action by temporarily suspending the club treasurer from their role if they become aware that this person is facing charges for theft. The Provisional Action has the effect of reducing the risk to the club because their role as treasurer provides them access to club and member funds. The Provisional Action can remain in place until the matter is complete and it is agreed by the appropriate person or committee that the risk no longer exists.

How long does Provisional Action last?
Generally, Provisional Action will remain in place until a finding is made in relation to the matter but depending on the length of time that a matter takes, the Respondent may request that the Provisional Action be reviewed on a periodic basis, eg. every three months, as the circumstances or facts available may change and the risk may have reduced.

Can Provisional Action be appealed?
If the person who the Provisional Action is taken against believes that the Provisional Action is disproportionate, they may seek an appeal to the decision. This appeal would only consider whether the decision to impose Provisional Action was proportionate – it is not a decision about the substance of the actual complaint.

For example, if Provisional Action was imposed to temporarily suspend a coach who has allegedly engaged in grooming and the coach appealed this decision, the panel may only consider whether the temporary suspension is proportionate to the risk and not whether the coach engaged in the alleged grooming. Provisional Action appeals may be heard by an appeal tribunal or National Sports Tribunal (by referral), as per the AA Complaints, Disputes and Disciplines Policy.

Phase Three: Complaint Management

It is important that Procedural Fairness be afforded to all parties in a complaint process. This requires obtaining as much information as possible and evidence that can then be put to the Respondent and providing them with a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations and evidence.

Step 1: Initial Communication

This step involves communicating receipt of a Complaint to all stakeholders, including the Complainant, Respondent and any possible witnesses who may need to be involved.

Templates available:
Email: Notification of a Report to Complainant
Email: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Complainant
Formal letter: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Complainant
Email: Notification of Category 1 Complaint to Respondent
Email: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Complainant
Formal letter: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Complainant
Email: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Respondent
Formal letter: Notification of Formal Complaint requiring Investigation to Respondent
Paragraph template: Provisional Action
Paragraph template: Multiple Allegations
Formal letter: Notification of Complaint Requiring Investigation to Witness

Access template here.

Step 2: Investigation Process

Templates available:
Request for written response to an allegation

Access template here.

Interviews

When meeting with a Respondent or Witness, it's important to approach the interview in a trauma-informed, neutral, and respectful way. This helps to support fairness, minimize harm (to all parties), and encourage open communication, while maintaining a clear focus on gathering the facts.

Tips for conducting an interview:

- Build rapport before questioning
- Use open-ended, non-leading questions
- Avoid confrontational or accusatory language
- Remain neutral—do not imply guilt or innocence
- Acknowledge power dynamics and provide reassurance that their perspective matters
- Remind them of procedural fairness, including their right to respond fully, have a support person, and the confidential nature of the process
- Avoid labels like "harassment" or "bullying" in questions unless they are quoted from the complaint
- Use neutral language. For example, "Can you describe what happened…" rather than "Why did you do that?"
- Maintain a non-threatening tone in voice, especially if the Respondent may be emotionally distressed or defensive.

On the following page are examples of trauma-informed interview questions (also refer to Interview Questions template). We recommend choosing a selection of questions from the list in preparation for your interview. The depth of questioning will depend on the context and seriousness of the allegation/s.

Introductory Questions

To establish comfort and clarify understanding:

1. "Thank you for your time today. How are you?"
2. "Before we start, do you have any questions about the process?"
3. "If you need a break at any time, or if there is anything that would help you feel more comfortable during this conversation as it comes up, please let me know."

Understanding Their Perspective

To allow them to share their side without judgment:

4. "Can you tell me, in your own words, what you recall about [the incident/date/event]?"
5. "What was your understanding of what was happening at the time?"
6. "How did you feel during that interaction?"
7. "Can you describe your relationship with [the Complainant] before and after the event?"
8. "Is there anything you think may have been misunderstood about your words or actions?"

Exploring Intent vs Impact

To explore context while remaining sensitive:

9. "What was your intention behind [specific behaviour/action]?"
10. "Looking back now, is there anything you might have done differently?"
11. "Were you aware of how the other person might have experienced or interpreted your behaviour at the time?"

Behaviour and Boundaries

To assess understanding of appropriate conduct:

12. "Have you received training on respectful behaviour or the code of conduct?"
13. "What does respectful behaviour in [your organization/sport/workplace] mean to you?"
14. "What do you think a healthy and professional interaction looks like in this context?"

Support and Resolution

To identify support and potential steps forward:

15. "Are there any support or resources you would find helpful at this time?"
16. "Is there anything else you'd like to share that you think is important for us to understand?"

Request for Written Response

If a Respondent or Witness would prefer to give a written response to the allegations rather than participate in an interview, use the template available to guide their response. Save the document in Word and send it to them as an attachment.

Evidence

In addition to statements, individuals may also submit evidence that seeks to confirm or dispute the allegations. The Complaint Manager may also collect this evidence themselves. Examples of evidence include:

- Emails, letters or other correspondence
- Competition reports
- Photos, video or sound recording
- Screenshots of text messages, online comments, images, websites
- Medical reports or certificates
- Policies, documents, agreements

Step 3: Investigation Completion

When the investigation process is complete, the Complaints Manager will use the findings to determine if the Complaint is substantiated, unsubstantiated or unable to be substantiated, and impose any appropriate sanctions.

- **Substantiated**: If there is sufficient evidence to suggest the alleged conduct is more likely to have occurred than not, the allegation/s in the complaint will be found to be substantiated.
- **Unsubstantiated**: If, based on the evidence, it is more likely than not that the Respondent did NOT breach a policy, the allegations will be found to be unsubstantiated, and the matter will be closed with no further action.
- **Unable to be substantiated**: If there are two equally plausible versions of events, or not enough evidence to make a finding either way, the matter will be unable to be substantiated.

Balance of Probabilities

The standard of proof is the Balance of Probabilities (also referred to as Reasonable Likelihood) and requires the Complaints Manager to determine whether, based on an analysis of the evidence, one party's version of events is more likely to have occurred than the other.

You should consider that some evidence may hold more weight than others, eg. CCTV footage of an incident rather than a second-hand account. Similarly, some witnesses may be more credible than others, eg. if a person witnessed an incident rather than a second-hand account.

Range of Sanctions and Related Measures

If a complaint is found to be substantiated, the sport is responsible for issuing a Breach Notice to the Respondent and may also determine an appropriate sanction.

Below are a range of actions/sanctions that may be utilised:

Category 1 Breaches	• Provided with a reminder of, or direction, to review relevant policies • Required to complete mandatory education requirements* • Formal warning
Category 2 Breaches	In conjunction with Category 1 sanctions: • Formal conciliation or mediation between relevant parties • Mandatory counselling • A change to the position, duties or access • Supervision for some or all athletics activities • Temporary suspension for some or all athletics activities (of which could be partly or wholly suspended pending a good behaviour period) • Subject to a good behaviour period
Category 3 Breaches	In conjunction with Category 1 and Category 2 sanctions: • Withdrawal of coaching or other accreditations • Temporary or permanent suspension/exclusion from some or all athletics activities • Return of awards or other relevant accolades

*The Australian Athletics Education Plan outlines the mandated education required by Members as part of their registration to AA. You may choose for the Respondent to re-do this education or remind them to complete the education.

See also the list of Education for Respondents.

Case Appraisal

The AA team can assist with Case Appraisal for any Complaints Managers undertaking investigations. This includes support and advice on Case Categorization and appropriate sanctions.

Step 4: Notification

Templates available:
Email: Outcome of Complaint to Complainant – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of Complaint to Complainant – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be Substantiated
Email: Outcome of Complaint to Respondent – Unsubstantiated or Unable to be substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of Complaint to Respondent, Unsubstantiated or Unable to be Substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of complaint to Complainant, Substantiated
Formal letter: Outcome of complaint to Respondent, Substantiated
Formal letter: Final Breach Notice

Access template here.

Breach Notice

If allegations are found to be substantiated, the MA or Club will issue the Respondent with a Breach Notice. A Breach Notice will:

a) Notify the Respondent of the allegations found to be substantiated
b) State the proposed sanction, if any, for the substantiated allegations
c) State that the Respondent has a right to provide a response to the findings to the allegations found to be substantiated
d) State that the Respondent may accept the findings, waive their right to a hearing and accept the proposed sanction
e) State that if the Respondent does not respond within 14 days of the date of the Breach Notice, they will be deemed to have accepted the findings, waive their right to a hearing and accepted the proposed sanction
f) State how to respond to a Breach Notice

If the Respondent fails to respond to the Breach Notice or accepts the findings and the sanction, the MA or Club may impose the sanction and proceed to finalise the complaint.

Appeals and Hearing Tribunals

If a Respondent disputes the substantiated allegations and/or the proposed Sanction in the Breach Notice, the Complaints Manager must refer the matter to a Hearing Tribunal or the National Sports Tribunal. Information on how to make the appeal will be contained within the Breach Notice.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the issuing organisation, to ensure that the prescribed Sanctions are undertaken, and that the Relevant Policies are implemented and applied.

Phase Four: Case Closure and Sharing of Information

Case Closure

Once a Report or Complaint has been closed, it is deemed to be finalized and no further action will be taken in relation to the matter under the CDDP, unless there is compelling reason to do so.

For complaints managed by a MA or Club, who are not using the Rely system, the Complaints Manager may log the complaint information into the Complaints Record form on the Australian Athletics website. AA takes their responsibility to provide leadership seriously and will continuously review and update systems within the sport to promote the safety of everyone.

Publication

Clause 8.9 of the AA Complaints Disputes & Discipline Policy, notes that an organisation may elect to publish the sanction in order to give full effect. AA publishes all Category 2 and Category 3 sanctions on the AA website.

Debrief

Although prohibited conduct, complaints and sanctions are negative part of any environment, it is useful to consider that insights and lessons might be learnt that can support deliver continuous improvement. Where possible, and observing all of the necessary privacy and confidentiality restraints, having a formal discussion to make observations about what can be done to make improvements or enhancements that may prevent or mitigate issues in future.

The people who are involved in a debrief discussion might include:

- The complaint manager
- MPIO
- Key club committee members
- Team manager

A debrief should be forward-focused and bring topics to light that everyone can contribute to implementing, rather than prosecuting the matter again or seeking to attribute blame. Questions that might help a debrief discussion include:

- What procedures, guidelines or policies applied here?
- What could have been done so the respondent knew not to engage in that behaviour?
- Are there patterns of this type of breach in our organisation/environment or was it a one-off?
- Who else might be able to make any changes or provide us with resources to support an improved understanding?
- Did the participants in the complaint process engage to the best of their ability? If not, why not?

Wellbeing Support and MPIO training

We understand that managing a complaints process may make people feel overwhelmed, isolated, confused or anxious. It can be a challenging time for anyone involved. It's important to look after your mental health and wellbeing and seek support if you need it.

Wellbeing Resources

At all times, the Australian Athletics Integrity team can support directly or refer you to local support resources. If you are unsure of what might suit you best, please email us at integrity@athletics.org.au and we will do our best to point you in the right direction.

IMPORTANT: If your or someone else's life is in immediate danger, call Police on 000.

The following services are free to access:

- **Lifeline** – Lifeline is a 24/7 telephone, text and online crisis counselling and information service.
  Website: https://www.lifeline.org.au/
  Phone: 13 11 14
- **Beyond Blue** – Beyond Blue is a 24/7 telephone and online support service for people affected by anxiety, depression and suicide.
  Website: https://www.beyondblue.org.au/
  Phone: 1300 224 636
- **Yarning Safe N Strong** – Yarning Safe N Strong is a 24/7 wellbeing telephone support service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
  Website: https://www.vahs.org.au/yarning-safenstrong/
  Phone: 1800 959 563
- **Black Dog Institute** – The Black Dog Institute offers mental health resources and support tools.
  Website: https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/
  Phone: (02) 9382 4530

Play By The Rules

A Member Protection Information Officer can often be the first port of call for complainants and therefore their education and upskilling is critical to ensure everyone feels valued and supported from the start.

To become an MPIO, individuals will need to complete the two-part training:

Part 1: Online module, facilitated by Play by the Rules

Part 2: In-person workshop, facilitated by Australian Athletics, Member Associations and state or territory Departments of Sport and Recreation

Play by the Rules e-learning: https://www.playbytherules.net.au/elearning-scenarios

A Final Note

Being the person who listens to and manages complaints can be a tough gig at times, there's no denying that. But it is really important that everyone who raises a complaint feels heard and everyone who needs to respond is afforded procedural fairness. Complaint processes have a role in building safe and inclusive athletics environments so it is important that resources and support be provided to complaint managers so we can ensure that they run as smoothly as possible.

Australian Athletics knows that this guide will not solve all of our problems but hopefully it can help you with some of your tasks. We would welcome any feedback you might have on this guide or requests for inclusion of additional material. Australian Athletics will update this guide periodically, particularly as updates to key legislation or National Integrity Framework policies occur.

Above all, we take the opportunity to remind you that everyone is human – including you. Take care of yourself so you can take care of others.

Australian Athletics – Integrity Department

October 2025

integrity@athletics.org.au

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