

National Integrity Framework

Complaints Handling Procedure

PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

Version 1 August 2026

	Name	Position	Date
Prepared by	Joel Solak	National Management Committee	21-12-2025
Through	National Management Committee		13-07-2026
Approved	National Management Committee		13-07-2026

Version Controls

	Published	Amendments	Responsible Party
Version 1	01-08-2026	<i>Not applicable</i>	J. Solak

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Definitions

Capitalised terms used in this Policy have the meanings assigned to them in the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework unless otherwise specified.

Purpose

This Procedure prescribes the process for receiving, assessing, managing and resolving complaints made under the Pipe Bands Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework and all associated policies.

Scope

This Procedure applies to all complaints received under the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework.

Disputes that do not involve alleged misconduct must be managed in accordance with the dispute resolution provisions contained within the Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

Receiving Complaints

Form of Complaint

Complaints may be submitted:

- in writing;
- electronically;
- using any approved complaint form;
- by any other method accepted by Pipe Bands Australia or the relevant Branch

Anonymous complaints may be considered where sufficient information exists to assess the matter.

Information to be Provided

Where practicable, complaints should include:

- the complainant's name and contact details;
- the identity of the respondent (if known);
- a description of the conduct or circumstances giving rise to the complaint;
- relevant dates, locations and persons involved;
- supporting documents, photographs, correspondence or other evidence; and
- any immediate safety concerns.

A complaint will not be rejected solely because some information is unavailable.

Acknowledgement

Complaints should be acknowledged as soon as practicable (but no longer than 14 days) following receipt.

The acknowledgement should confirm receipt of the complaint and, where appropriate, provide information regarding the next steps in the assessment process.

Initial Assessment

Upon receipt, the complaint must be assessed to determine:

- whether the matter falls within the jurisdiction of Pipe Bands Australia;
- whether immediate risks to safety exist;
- whether mandatory reporting or external reporting obligations apply;
- whether interim measures should be considered;
- whether the matter is a Complaint or a Dispute as defined in the National Integrity Framework; and
- the most appropriate resolution pathway.

Resolution Pathways

Following assessment, one or more of the following pathways may be adopted:

No Further Action

- the complaint is outside jurisdiction;
- insufficient information exists to proceed;
- the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or lacking substance; or
- another pathway is more appropriate.

Early Resolution'

Where appropriate, matters may be resolved through:

- discussion;
- clarification;
- education;
- apology;
- agreement between the parties; or
- other informal resolution mechanisms.

Early Resolution

Matters involving potential criminal conduct, child protection concerns, workplace issues, or other matters beyond the authority of Pipe Bands Australia may be referred to an appropriate external authority.

Investigation

Where the seriousness, complexity or circumstances of the matter require it, a formal investigation may be commenced.

Investigations

Where an investigation is undertaken:

- the respondent must be informed of the substance of the allegations;
- the respondent must be provided a reasonable opportunity to respond;
- investigators must be impartial and free from conflicts of interest;
- relevant evidence should be gathered and considered; and
- procedural fairness must be afforded to all parties.

Investigations may be undertaken by:

- a Branch-appointed investigator;
- a National investigator; or
- an appropriately qualified external investigator.

Communication

Pipe Bands Australia recognises the importance of keeping parties appropriately informed.

Where practicable:

- complainants should be provided reasonable updates regarding the progress of a matter;
- respondents should be informed of significant developments affecting them; and
- parties should be advised of outcomes as soon as practicable following determination.

The extent of information shared may be limited by privacy, confidentiality, legal obligations, or procedural fairness considerations.

Records and Confidentiality

Complaints must be managed confidentially and records maintained securely.

Access to complaint information should be restricted to persons with a legitimate need to know.

Records must be maintained in accordance with applicable privacy obligations and any recordkeeping requirements adopted by Pipe Bands Australia.

Continuous Improvement

Information arising from complaints may be used to:

- identify systemic issues;
- improve education and prevention initiatives;
- inform policy development; and
- strengthen integrity, safeguarding and governance practices across Pipe Bands Australia.

The background of the entire page is composed of several overlapping, wavy, horizontal bands of different shades of blue. The colors range from a very light, almost white-blue at the top to a dark, navy blue at the bottom. The waves are smooth and fluid, creating a sense of movement and depth.

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