

National Integrity Framework

National Communications & Online Conduct Policy

PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

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	Name	Position	Date
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Version Controls

	Published	Amendments	Responsible Party
Version 1	Draft only	<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

Pipe Bands Australia (PBA) is committed to fostering respectful, professional and responsible communication across all levels of the Association.

This Policy establishes expectations regarding communications, online conduct, representation of Pipe Bands Australia, and the responsible use of communication platforms and technologies in connection with PBA activities.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- promote respectful and constructive communication;
- protect the reputation and integrity of Pipe Bands Australia;
- support safe and inclusive participation;
- provide guidance regarding official and unofficial communications;
- encourage responsible online behaviour; and
- ensure communication practices align with the values and objectives of Pipe Bands Australia.

Relationship to the National Integrity Framework

This Policy forms part of the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework and operates in conjunction with:

- the Pipe Bands Australia Code of Conduct Policy;
- the Pipe Bands Australia Member Protection Policy;
- the Pipe Bands Australia Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
- the Pipe Bands Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy; and
- any procedures, standards or guidance documents adopted under the National Integrity Framework.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework, including the definitions and interpretation provisions contained within that Framework.

Scope and Application

Who this Policy Applies to:

This Policy applies to Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations as defined in the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework.

When this Policy Applies

This Policy applies whenever a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation is:

- communicating on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia;
- representing Pipe Bands Australia in an official capacity;
- participating in, attending or administering a PBA Activity;
- using communication channels, platforms or systems provided, administered or authorised by Pipe Bands Australia;

- communicating with other Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations in connection with PBA activities; or
- engaging in conduct, including online conduct, that has a recognised connection to Pipe Bands Australia, a PBA Activity, a PBA Member, a PBA Office Holder, or the reputation of the Association.

Private communications and activities that have no direct or indirect connection to Pipe Bands Australia are outside the scope of this Policy.

Principles of Communication

Pipe Bands Australia expects communications undertaken in connection with the Association to be:

- respectful and professional;
- accurate and honest;
- constructive and courteous;
- consistent with the values and objectives of Pipe Bands Australia;
- mindful of the diversity of members, participants and audiences; and
- undertaken in a manner that protects the reputation, integrity and legitimate interests of the Association.

Relevant Persons should seek to resolve disagreements respectfully and avoid communication that is inflammatory, misleading, unnecessarily provocative or likely to undermine confidence in the Association.

Official Communications

Authority to Communicate

Only persons authorised to do so may issue official statements, media releases, public announcements or other communications on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia, a Branch, College, Committee or other authorised body.

Authorisation may arise through a person's elected or appointed position, delegation, or other authority granted by the relevant organisation.

Personal Views

Relevant Persons remain free to express personal views and opinions.

Where a Relevant Person is communicating in a personal capacity, they should take reasonable steps to avoid creating the impression that their views represent those of Pipe Bands Australia unless authorised to do so.

Accuracy and Integrity

Persons making official communications on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia should take reasonable steps to ensure information is accurate, complete and not misleading.

Where material errors are identified, reasonable efforts should be made to correct the information as soon as practicable.

Internal Communications

Relevant Persons involved in the administration of Pipe Bands Australia should communicate respectfully and professionally, including where disagreements arise.

Differences of opinion should be addressed constructively and through appropriate governance processes.

Online Conduct

Pipe Bands Australia recognises that online platforms provide valuable opportunities for communication, collaboration, promotion and engagement. Relevant Persons are expected to use online platforms responsibly and in a manner consistent with the values and objectives of the Association.

Application

This section applies to online conduct that has a recognised connection to Pipe Bands Australia, including:

- social media platforms;
- websites and blogs;
- discussion forums;
- messaging applications;
- email;
- livestreaming platforms; and
- any other electronic communication platform.

Expected Standards

When engaging in online communications connected to Pipe Bands Australia, Relevant Persons should:

- communicate respectfully and professionally;
- consider the potential impact of their communications on individuals, Bands, Branches and the Association;
- ensure information shared is accurate to the best of their knowledge;
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of others; and
- comply with all applicable Pipe Bands Australia policies.

Prohibited Conduct

Relevant Persons must not use online platforms connected to Pipe Bands Australia to:

- engage in conduct that breaches the Code of Conduct, Member Protection Policy or Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
- knowingly publish false or misleading information relating to Pipe Bands Australia, its members or activities;
- disclose confidential information without authority;
- impersonate another person or misrepresent their authority to act on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia;
- harass, intimidate, threaten or victimise another person; or
- otherwise engage in conduct that is likely to cause significant harm to the reputation, operations or legitimate interests of Pipe Bands Australia.

Personal Accounts

Relevant Persons may maintain personal social media and online accounts.

Where a Relevant Person is identifiable as being connected to Pipe Bands Australia, they should take reasonable steps to distinguish personal opinions from official positions of the Association.

The use of a personal account does not remove a person's obligations under this Policy where the conduct has a recognised connection to Pipe Bands Australia.

Reporting Online Conduct

Concerns regarding online conduct may be reported and managed in accordance with the Pipe Bands Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Pipe Bands Australia recognises that Relevant Persons may have access to information that is confidential, sensitive or intended for limited distribution.

Confidential Information

Confidential information may include, but is not limited to:

- complaint, investigation and disciplinary matters;
- personal information relating to members, participants or volunteers;
- governance discussions and deliberations;
- draft policies, reports and strategic documents;
- commercial, contractual or financial information; and
- any information identified as confidential or reasonably understood to be confidential.

Responsibilities

Relevant Persons who have access to confidential information should:

- protect the privacy of individuals;
- use information only for legitimate purposes connected to their role;
- take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised disclosure;
- comply with applicable privacy obligations; and
- respect any confidentiality requirements imposed by Pipe Bands Australia.

Authorised Information Sharing

Nothing in this Policy prevents the sharing of information where:

- disclosure is authorised by Pipe Bands Australia;
- disclosure is required by law;

- disclosure is necessary to protect the safety or wellbeing of a person; or
- disclosure is otherwise permitted under an applicable policy, procedure or legal obligation.

Media and Public Disclosure

Relevant Persons must not disclose confidential information through social media, websites, public forums, media outlets or other public channels unless authorised to do so.

Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information may constitute misconduct and may be managed under the Pipe Bands Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

Branding, Representation and Media

Representation of Pipe Bands Australia

Relevant Persons representing Pipe Bands Australia in an official capacity should:

- act professionally and respectfully;
- communicate consistently with the values and objectives of Pipe Bands Australia;
- ensure public statements are accurate and appropriate; and
- avoid conduct that may reasonably create confusion regarding the official position of the Association.

Media Engagement

Media enquiries relating to Pipe Bands Australia should be directed to the appropriate Office Holder or authorised representative where practicable.

Only persons authorised to do so may make official statements on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia to media organisations.

Use of Branding

The name, logo, branding and other identifying marks of Pipe Bands Australia should be used respectfully and in a manner consistent with any standards, guidelines or directions adopted by the Association.

Relevant Persons must not falsely represent themselves as acting on behalf of Pipe Bands Australia or imply endorsement where no such authority exists.

Internal Governance Communications

Pipe Bands Australia recognises that robust discussion, differing viewpoints and constructive debate are important elements of effective governance.

Relevant Persons involved in governance, administration or decision-making processes should:

- communicate respectfully and professionally;
- focus on issues rather than individuals;
- engage in discussions in good faith;
- support orderly decision-making processes; and

- respect decisions properly made by the relevant authority, while retaining the right to advocate for future change through appropriate channels.

Nothing in this Policy prevents legitimate disagreement, debate or advocacy undertaken respectfully and in accordance with the Rules of the Association.

Reporting and Enforcement

Concerns regarding conduct under this Policy may be reported and managed in accordance with the Pipe Bands Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy and any associated procedures.

Conduct that breaches this Policy may result in education, corrective action, disciplinary measures or other outcomes authorised under the National Integrity Framework.

Nothing in this Policy limits the ability of Pipe Bands Australia to refer matters to external authorities where appropriate.

Education and Awareness

Pipe Bands Australia will promote education and awareness initiatives to support the effective implementation of this Policy.

Relevant Persons involved in communications, governance, administration, media engagement or digital platform management may be required to undertake education or training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

Legislative Compliance

Pipe Bands Australia recognises that legal obligations relating to communications, privacy, online safety, defamation, intellectual property and information management may differ between jurisdictions and may change over time.

This Policy is intended to operate consistently with applicable legislation and should be read in conjunction with any relevant legal obligations.

Where a provision of this Policy is inconsistent with an applicable legal requirement, the legal requirement prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Responsibilities

By:

- accepting nomination or appointment to any office-bearing position; or
- being granted membership; or
- participating in a Pipe Bands Australia Activity in a capacity to which this Policy applies,

Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations agree to uphold and comply with the requirements of this Policy.

Non-compliance may result in education, corrective action, removal of access, disciplinary action, or other outcomes authorised under the Pipe Bands Australia National Integrity Framework.

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.

PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

pipebandsaustralia.com.au