

AusCycling Safe Sport Club Complaints Management Guide



Acknowledgement of Country

AusCycling acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we meet.

We recognise and celebrate their spiritual and ongoing connection to culture and Country.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, who hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hope of First Nations people.

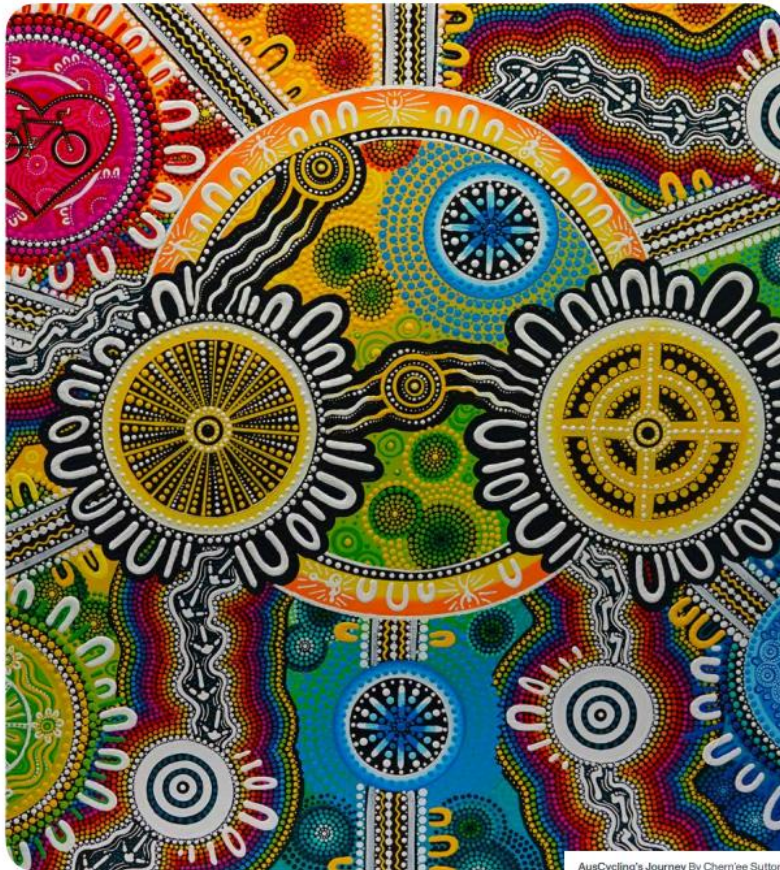




Table of Contents

Introduction	3
The National Integrity Framework.....	4
Complaints Management Process Overview.....	5
Phase 1 – Receiving a Report.....	6
Phase 2 – Initial Evaluation (Triage).....	7
Phase 3 – Complaint Management	10
Step 1: Initial Communication.....	10
Step 2: Investigation Process:.....	10
Step 3: Complaint Outcome	12
Step 4 Notification:	13
Phase 4: Case Closure and Recording	13
Wellbeing Support and MPIO training	14
Final Note:.....	15
Annexure 1:Templates Index.....	16
Annexure 2: Glossary	17



Introduction

At AusCycling, we're committed to keeping cycling in Australia safe and fair, for everyone who takes part. Sport integrity means that everyone involved in cycling, from athletes and supporters to officials and administrators, can participate with confidence in a fair, safe, and inclusive environment, at every level.

We recognise that managing concerns and complaints can feel challenging, emotional and, at times, overwhelming for volunteers and club leaders.

This guide has been developed to support clubs handling complaints. It is intended to be a supporting resource to the National Integrity Framework and AusCycling Complaints Disputes and Disciplinary Policy, by providing practical and relevant guidance on the complaints management process.

For more information or resources on handling complaints refer to the AusCycling Website.

[Integrity | AusCycling](#)



Key Organisations – The Integrity Landscape

Various people and organisations are identified below 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/>

AusCycling (AC): When AusCycling adopted the National Integrity Framework (NIF) in July 2022, all Affiliated Clubs and their members become bound by the NIF policies. AC manages all state and national level complaints and is the main conduit to Sport Integrity Australia. AC can also support individuals and clubs with complaint guidance, education and resources. Website: [Integrity | AusCycling](#)

AC Affiliated Clubs: Club personnel and/or committees lead complaints management process for issues that occur at Club events, activities and teams, involving Club staff, Club Coaches, volunteers, 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.

The National Integrity Framework

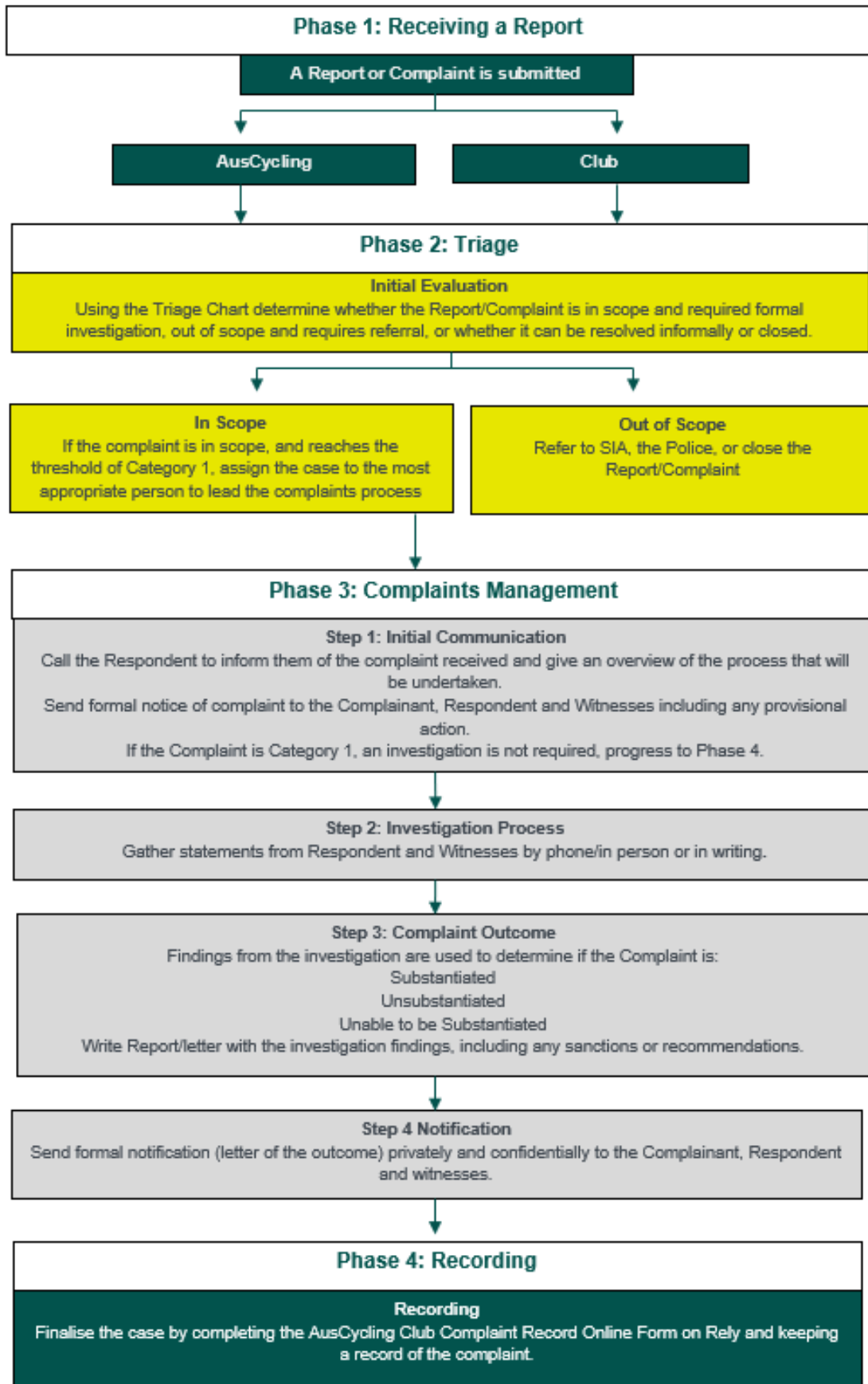
The National Integrity Framework is a suite of policies which will set out rules for unacceptable behavior in our sport and how complaints about breaches of these rules are managed. It includes policies on:

- [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#)
- [Member Protection Policy](#)
- [Improper Use of Drugs and Medicine Policy](#)
- [Competition Manipulation and Sport Gambling Policy](#)
- [Complaints Disputes and Disciplines Policy](#)

The National Integrity Framework (NIF) provides a consistent, whole-of-sport approach to preventing and responding to integrity issues in Australian sport. For clubs, it sets the standards for how complaints about behaviour, safety, fairness and misconduct must be handled. It outlines what types of matters must be reported, who is responsible for managing them, and when issues should be referred to Sport Integrity Australia or law enforcement. The Framework ensures complaints are dealt with fairly, transparently and in a way that protects participants, supports those affected, and upholds the integrity of the sport



Complaints Management Process Overview





Phase 1 – Receiving a Report

Any participant can submit a Report or Complaint through the following channels:

- Online, via the form on the AusCycling website
- Email to integrity@auscycling.org.au
- In-person or over the phone. If an individual would like to submit a Formal Complaint this must be followed up in writing.

It is important that Clubs ensure there is a clear process for the submission of complaints.

The following form template can be used to assist Clubs received Reports/Complaints.

Templates
Form: Report/Complaint Form

Access templates [available here](#)

What is the difference between a Report and a Complaint?

Report	Complaint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A submission of information that alleges Prohibited Conduct, suspicions or general concerns • A Report may be made anonymously • Reports received may be recorded for information purposes only with no further action taken • A complaint process is not necessarily started or being sought after by the Complainant/Reporter • AusCycling may use a report depending on the nature of the information provided and may be in touch with the Complainant/Reporter for further information • Can be made in writing or verbally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 do this.

Record Keeping:

It is strongly recommended that Clubs record and keep track of complaints from inception through to completion. It is essential that all reports and complaints are still recorded in a consistent, secure and centralised way.

Clubs should maintain a confidential complaints register (e.g. a secure spreadsheet) and ensure that every complaint received in person, by phone or by email is logged as soon as possible. This supports accurate record keeping and enables oversight of recurring issues.



Phase 2 – Initial Evaluation (Triage)

Use the Triage Flow Chart below 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
- Code of Conduct Breaches
- Social Media Policy Breaches

For a more detailed overview, refer to the Prohibited Conduct Information Sheet [here](#).

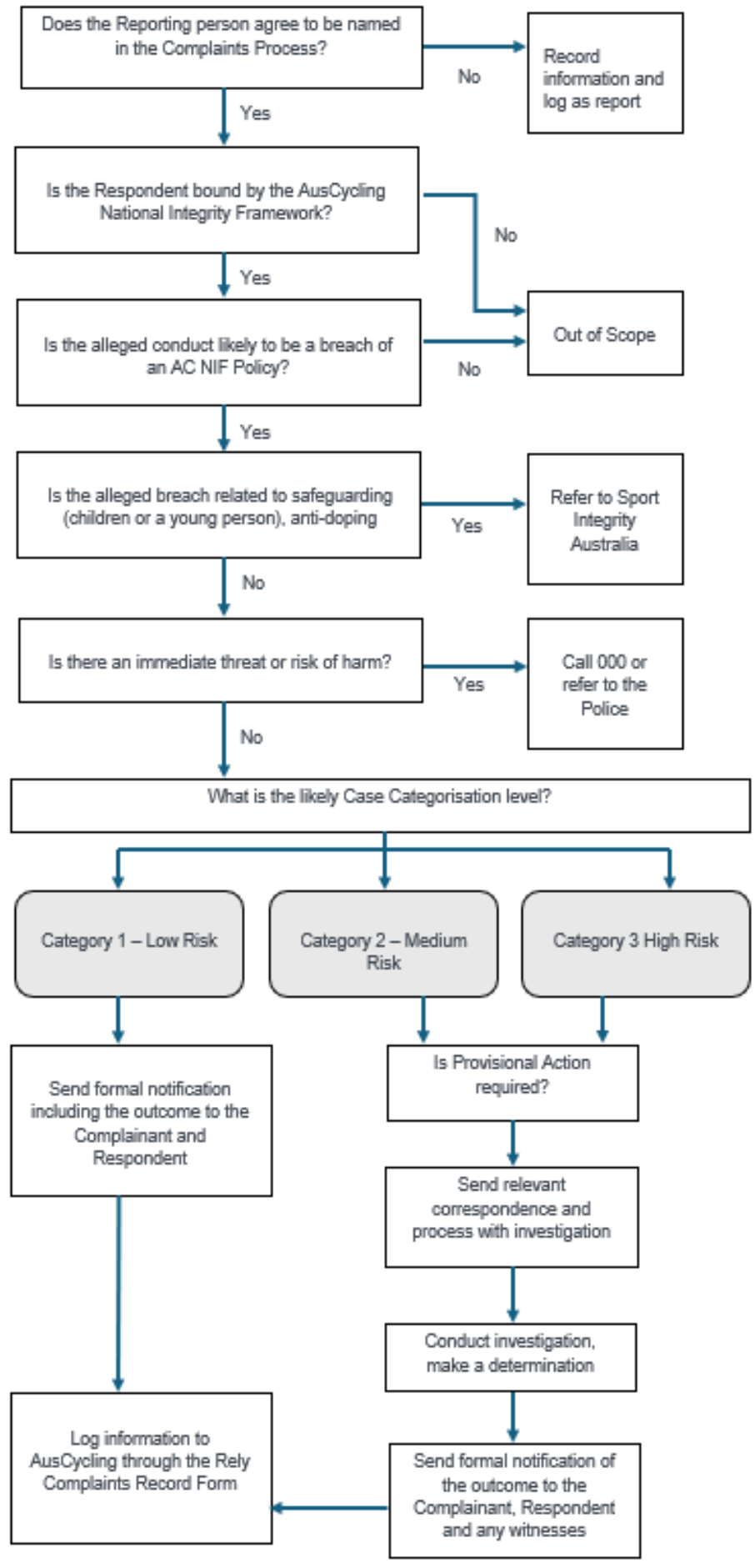
Any Reports/Complaints related the below conduct should be referred to Sport Integrity Australia:

- 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),

The Club Complaints Manager can make a Report or Complaint to SIA via their website. [What you can report | Sport Integrity Australia](#)



Triage Process Chart:





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](#).

Category	Example Conduct	Possible Outcome
<p>Blue – Low Category 1 Complaints and Reports involve allegations of Prohibited Conduct that are assessed as low risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation is not usually required • A formal reminder of the individual's obligations under the NIF • Education
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation usually required • Provisional Action may be required to be imposed on the Respondent while the organization (AC/Club) manages the Complain
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Club should connect with the relevant law enforcement agency so as not to impede any potential criminal investigation



Phase 3 – 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.

Provisional Action

Provisional Action may be required to be imposed on the Respondent while they are subject to a complaints process. This is temporary measure that has the effect of reducing or eliminating the risk of harm to participants or the club, by removing or restricting a person’s involvement in the sport.

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

When determining Provisional Action, the Club should take into consideration the potential consequences of such action (e.g. loss of income, selection eligibility) and ensure that any Provisional Action imposed is proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the alleged conduct.

Investigation processes can take time and so it may be appropriate for the Club to review the Provisional Action at regular intervals (e.g. monthly) to ensure it remains proportionate to the matter being investigated.

Templates:

The following templates can be used to assist communication with each stakeholder.

Templates: Step 1 – Initial Communication
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 templates [here](#).

Step 2: Investigation Process:

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 below link are trauma-informed interview questions. 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

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.

Template
Interview Questions Template
Request for written response to an allegation

Access templates [here](#).

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, agreement



Step 3: Complaint Outcome

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 Club 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided with a reminder of, or direction, to review relevant policies • Required to complete mandatory education requirements* • Formal warning
Category 2 Breaches	<p>In conjunction with Category 1 sanctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal conciliation or mediation between relevant parties • Mandatory counselling • A change to the position, duties or access • Supervision for some or all Club activities • Temporary suspension for some or all Club activities (of which could be partly or wholly suspended pending a good behaviour period) Subject to a good behaviour period
Category 3 Breaches	<p>In conjunction with Category 1 and Category 2 sanctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal of coaching or other accreditations • Temporary or permanent suspension/exclusion from some or all Club activities • Return of awards or other relevant accolades

- The AusCycling Education Plan outlines the mandated education required by Members as part of their registration to AusCycling. You may choose for the Respondent to re-do this education or remind them to complete the education.
- See a list of possible education for Respondents [here](#)

Case Appraisal

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



Step 4 Notification:

Breach Notice

If allegations are found to be substantiated, the 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 Club may impose the sanction and proceed to finalise the complaint.

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

Templates: Step 4 Breach Notice
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](#)

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 4: Case Closure and Recording

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 Club, the Complaints Manager may log the complaint information into the Online Club Complaints Record form [here](#).

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 complaints 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 AusCycling 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@auscycling.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 - MPIO

A Member Protection Information Officers 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, Departments of Sport and Recreation Play by the Rules e-learning:
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/elearning-scenarios>

Final Note:

Managing complaints is an important and often demanding responsibility. It requires care, judgement and consistency. It is essential that people who raise concerns feel respected and supported, and that those who respond are treated fairly and in line with procedural requirements.

Well-run complaint processes help create cycling environments that are safe, fair and inclusive for everyone. To do this well, complaint managers need clear guidance, practical tools and access to appropriate support.

AusCycling recognises that this guide will not resolve every issue. However, it is designed to support you in your role and provide a reliable reference when navigating complex situations. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for additional material, and this guide will be updated over time as legislation and National Integrity Framework policies evolve.

Most importantly, we acknowledge the people doing this work. Please take care of yourself and seek support when needed, so you can continue to support others effectively.

AusCycling Integrity Team

February 2026

Integrity@auscycling.org.au



Annexure 1: Templates Index

The table below shows the templates available to Complaints Managers to assist you in the Complaints Management process.

Document Title
Phase 1 – Receiving a Report – available here
Form: Report/Complaint Form
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
Interview Questions
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



Annexure 2: Glossary

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 Framework	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 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.
Member Protection Information Officer	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
Personal grievance	An interpersonal dispute that falls short of the threshold for abuse, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct under the AC Member Protection Policy or the 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
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.
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.