

NORTH ARM PISTOL CLUB INCORPORATED



North Arm Pistol Club Inc. operates within the Davison Range Complex at North Arm. The club has a total of 8 ranges (see Range Standing Orders and Range Approvals) for local competition and training in a range of ISSF, IPSC, Practical, Service, Black Powder, Air Pistol and Action events are undertaken on a bi-weekly basis for the benefit of members and visitors.

NAPC COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

North Arm Pistol Club Inc. has defined this complaints and appeals process to ensure members complaints and appeals are addressed effectively and efficiently.

North Arm Pistol Club Inc. strives to ensure that each member is satisfied with their membership experience. In the unlikely event that this is not the case, all Members have access to a rigorous, fair, and timely complaint and appeal process which are outlined in this policy and procedures document.

Any complaints or appeals will be reviewed as part of the Club's continuous improvement process and where corrective action has been highlighted, it will be implemented as a priority.

Complaints, Appeals and Grievances

North Arm Pistol Club Inc is committed to developing and maintaining a transparent, effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals handling system, which is easily accessible to all complainants, where the focus is on positive outcomes with undue blame and investigation and minimal expense.

This policy applies to all complainants from:

- Current Club Members
- Prospective Club Members
- Previous/Past Club Members
- Visitors
- The broader Community
- Other Stakeholders including associational memberships and Club Affiliations

Definitions

A grievance can be defined as an individual's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the services and activities provided/undertaken or experienced at North Arm Pistol Club Inc, including both competition and social activities between members, committee or visitors whilst attending the range.

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Informal grievance

A complaint is considered to be informal when it is made verbally. It is also considered to be informal when it is made in writing and addressed to the person against whom the complaint is being made. Complainants may raise an informal grievance by contacting the Club Secretary if required either in person or by phoning the new members officer on 1300 210 382, seeking advice or assistance from an appropriate person, to assist an effective and rapid resolution. Resolution of a complaint is to be achieved as quickly as possible, at the local level and with a minimum number of people involved.

Before an Issue Becomes a Formal Grievance Complainants are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the member/visitor involved in the action(s) in order that the issue may be resolved quickly and effectively. There are Committee Members and experienced members available to assist the resolution of issues at this level.

Where the informal discussion has not found a suitable resolution, or the circumstances do not allow this approach, a formal complaint may be lodged.

Formal grievance

A formal complaint is made by forwarding a written Complaint and Appeals Form signed by the complaint to the North Arm Pistol Club Secretary.

All parties have a right to confidentiality and privacy, subject to necessary legal responsibilities and the complaint will be forwarded to the most appropriate person (as determined by the Club President and Committee) to assist the effective and rapid resolution of any complaint.

At all times, parties to the complaint may be accompanied by an advocate of their choosing. Each party will have opportunity to formally present their case should they wish to do so.

Complainants can choose to utilise resources outside North Arm Pistol Club to assist to resolve their complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint this may include but is not limited to:

- North Arm Pistol Club Independent Arbitrator
- The Office of Fair-Trading Queensland
- An association or affiliation for support such as:
 - Pistol Shooting Queensland
 - IPSC Queensland
 - SSAA Queensland
- Other complaint handling agencies.

In handling a complaint, whether formal or informal, confidentiality will be maintained to:

- Protect all parties involved in a complaint under the principles of natural justice
- Prevent the possibility of a defamation or other legal action
- Involve the minimum number of people possible

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Procedure to Resolve Formal Grievances

North Arm Pistol Club applies the following principals in resolving formal grievances:

- The complainant and any respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against
- The complainant and the respondent have an opportunity to formally present their case
- That each party to a grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person/third party at any relevant meeting
- The complainant and respondent will be provided with a written statement of the outcome of the complaint and of any appeals, including reasons for the outcome
- A full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if so requested by the complainant or respondent
- The complainant and respondent are given appropriate access to records , whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, North Arm Pistol Club will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome
- There is no cost to the complainant to access this grievance procedure
- Costs of external appeals may apply
- Where NAPC considers more than 60 calendar days may be required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal the complainant or appellant will be informed in writing with reasons why and kept updated with progress
- The complainant has the right to withdraw the complaint at any stage

Stage 1 – Formal Grievance

Formal grievances must be submitted in writing or using the “Complaint and Appeals Form”; and should be marked to the attention of the Club Secretary as follows:

The Secretary

North Arm Pistol Club Incorporated

PO Box 132 Yandina Qld 4561

This form can be requested by contacting the secretary or emailing secretary@northarmpistol.org.au

Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged in writing. The grievance handling process will commence within 5 working days of receipt of the formal grievance and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable. The Club President, or their nominee, will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve.

Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview the complainant or respondent may ask for a third party to accompany them.

The President, or their nominee, will then endeavour to resolve the grievance and will provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days of receipt of the formal grievance. The report will further advise the complainant of their right to access the internal appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance.

Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome the resolution will be implemented and the complaint/appeal closed.

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Stage 2 – Internal Appeal

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their formal grievance they may lodge an appeal within 20 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of their formal grievance with the Club President, (if he is senior to the original decision maker). If the Club President was the decision maker they will appoint an appropriate committee to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within 10 working days of receipt of notification of appeal against formal grievance.

Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews.

Following the consultation, the President, or their nominee, will provide a written report to the complainant advising the further steps taken to address the grievance, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days of hearing the internal appeal. The report will further advise the complainant of their right to the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal.

Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome the internal appeal, any resolution will be implemented and the complaint/appeal closed.

Stage 3 – External Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may lodge an external appeal to the Club's independent Arbitrator appointed to conduct such an appeal within 20 working days of receiving notice of the outcome of their appeal.

Independent Arbitrator: ***John Grenalgh – Grenalgh Pickard Solicitors***

Complainants who wish to lodge an external appeal must complete and lodge the required external appeal form/documentation which is available by contacting the Independent Arbitrator. There are no costs involved to students for the external appeal process but members may be required to contribute to costs.

Once an application has been made; the Independent Arbitrator will advise North Arm Pistol Club of the external review application made by the complainant. Both the Complainant and North Arm Pistol Club will be requested to provide documents including student files and records in support of the application within 14 days of receipt of notification of external appeal. The Independent Arbitrator will then consider the documents and make a determination which will be sent to both parties.

Estimated turnaround time for an appeal is 4-6 weeks of lodgement.

North Arm Pistol Club agrees to be bound by the Independent Arbitrator's recommendations and the President will ensure that such recommendations are implemented within 30 days of receipt of the report from the Independent Arbitrator.

Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the external appeal, the resolution will be implemented and the complaint/appeal closed.

Further Action

If a grievance still remains unresolved after the external appeal, the complainant may decide to refer the matter to other relevant regulatory agency.

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At no time does this procedure replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection Laws. Neither does this procedure circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies

Membership Status

Where a current member chooses to utilise this process, North Arm Pistol Club Inc will ensure their membership status continues to be maintained whilst the grievance handling and appeals process is ongoing.

This protection applies to both the complainant and respondent as long as both members continue to comply with the Club Constitution, Operational Policies and State and Federal legal requirements pertaining to natural justice. This protection may be withdrawn if the subject of the complaint involves:

- Safety to the complainant, respondent or other persons using the ranges
- Ongoing harassment, victimation or vilification by any person while the matter is being investigated.
- The matters under review are so serious that in the opinion of the committee, the suspension of one or both parties is in the best interests of the club while the complaint is being investigated.

Record Keeping

A written record of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of at least 5 years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records. These records will be maintained in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements under North Arm Pistol Clubs Record Keeping Policy.

Procedural Fairness / Natural Justice

Natural justice principles will be used to ensure procedural fairness.

All parties will be given the opportunity to present their case, be fully informed about allegations and decisions made and have the right to be represented by another person.

The decision maker must have no personal interest, beyond the scope of their role in this process and must be unbiased.

In order to expedite the process, members must not unduly interfere with or influence the mediation process or any person investigating the grievance under this procedure.

Should interference by a member affect the normal process of events, North Arm Pistol Club Inc shall not be held responsible for the consequences.