

SURREY COUNTY SMALL BORE RIFLE ASSOCIATION

CODE OF CONDUCT AND COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

CODE OF CONDUCT

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Surrey County Small Bore Rifle Association (“Association”) requires good standards of behaviour of its officials and other representatives, all those involved in its competitions and activities and by its individual and Affiliated Club members.

The Association is committed to upholding safety and the principles of fair play and sportsmanship, to fair selection of teams and representatives and to ensuring that all those who seek to or participate in its various activities and competitions can do so without being exposed to offensive, intimidating or hostile treatment or unlawful discrimination.

This Code of Conduct therefore applies to all individuals and Affiliated Clubs involved in Association activities, including:

- all officials of the Association
- all Affiliated Clubs (“Clubs”)
- all members of Affiliated Clubs
- all coaches, instructors, representatives or volunteers operating within Affiliated Clubs or on behalf of the Association
- all members of Surrey County small bore shooting teams
- all participants in Association events and competitions
- all individuals and Affiliated Clubs entitled to enter Association competitions or be selected for Association teams or squads

All those covered by this Code of Conduct must, above all, behave safely at all times and comply with relevant firearms legislation and within the rules of the Association and any applicable rules of the NSRA or other relevant National and International governing bodies.

The types of behaviour likely to give rise to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the Association or prohibition from entry or participation in Association events or competitions, include but are not limited to:

- Breach of safety rules
- Breach of rules and procedures designed to protect children and vulnerable adults
- Actions likely to bring the Association and/or shooting sports into disrepute
- Dishonesty and cheating

- Falsification of documents
- Violent, abusive or intimidating conduct
- Harassment or other unlawful discrimination on prohibited grounds*
- Conviction for any serious offence while an Official
- False or malicious allegations against another person or Club

*Prohibited grounds are the Protected Characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, being: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Anyone witnessing a breach of this Code of Conduct or who otherwise has concerns about the conduct of any person or Club covered by this policy or who has suggestions about how the Association might operate better may report their concerns to the Secretary in writing via: secretary@surreysbra.org

In the first instance all complaints will be treated confidentially and the Secretary will seek to establish whether the complainant wishes to provide further details and/or take the matter further on a formal basis, unless it is clear from the initial communication that a formal approach is required. It is appropriate for the Association to enquire whether a complainant seeks informal resolution and also about the outcome that they seek to achieve.

Even if a complaint is stated as being informal or the complainant states that they do not wish for the matter to be taken further, if the complaint gives rise to a suspicion of a serious breach of safety rules or child and vulnerable adult protection policy, the Association reserves the right to pass the information on to the appropriate authority.

In the event that a complaint is deemed by the Secretary and Chairman as appropriate to progress to the formal stage of the complaints procedure, the Association shall appoint a panel of two or three members of the Association Committee (or such other persons as may be suitably qualified or experienced to address the matter in hand) (“Enquiry Panel”) to investigate and respond to the complaint. The Enquiry Panel must investigate and respond to the complaint without unreasonable delay.

The Association may make further enquiries of the complainant and others as appropriate, seeking to maintain confidentiality to the extent reasonably achievable. However, complainants must accept that the facts or circumstances giving rise to investigation may allow a respondent to enquiries to surmise the identity of the complainant or the alleged wrongdoer. The Enquiry Panel must make efforts to ensure that it properly understands the details of the complaint and may request the complainant to attend a meeting if they deem that it is necessary and appropriate to do so.

In the event that the Enquiry Panel concludes that the complaint does not give rise to reasonable grounds to discipline a person or Club, the Enquiry Panel will respond to the complainant in writing, giving reasons for their finding. The Enquiry Panel must similarly inform the person or Club against who a relevant allegation has been made.

The complainant has the right to appeal against the outcome of the complaint in accordance with the Appeal procedure.

In the event that evidence is obtained that the Enquiry Panel reasonably believes should give rise to disciplinary action against a person or Club covered by this Policy, the Panel must inform the Secretary immediately. Provided that the Secretary and Chairman determine that there is a case to answer, the Secretary and Chairman must convene a Disciplinary Panel of two or three Committee Members, not including those involved in the Enquiry Panel. One member of the Disciplinary Panel may be a suitably qualified or experienced person (as determined by the Association) who is not a Committee Member.

In these circumstances, the Enquiry Panel, acting together or by a delegated member of it, may make further enquiries and shall take the investigatory role in the disciplinary process.

The response to a complaint giving rise to a formal disciplinary process must be suspended until the Disciplinary Procedure has been followed and concluded.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

If the Secretary receives information or evidence (whether under the complaint procedure or otherwise) that indicates a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Secretary and Chairman shall determine whether it is appropriate to consider informal resolution and/or issue appropriate guidance and may take appropriate steps.

If the Secretary and Chairman establish that there is a case to answer and that formal action is appropriate, the Secretary and Chairman must convene a Disciplinary Panel of three or four members, including at least two Committee Members, but not including those involved in the connected Enquiry Panel. The Disciplinary Panel will usually include the Chairman and/or Secretary. One member of the Disciplinary Panel may be a suitably qualified or experienced person (as determined by the Association) who is not a Committee Member.

The Disciplinary Panel must act in accordance with the principles of natural justice and reach a conclusion without unreasonable delay.

If an Enquiry Panel has not been convened prior to the decision to proceed with a formal disciplinary procedure, the Secretary and Chairman shall appoint an Enquiry Panel in compliance with the Complaints Procedure. The Enquiry Panel must pass all relevant evidence to the Complaint Panel without unreasonable delay.

The subject of the allegation must be invited to a formal disciplinary meeting in writing by the Disciplinary Panel, be advised of the nature of the allegation(s) against them, be given access to the evidence to be relied upon and notice of the sanction(s) under consideration and be given an opportunity to state their case before the Disciplinary Panel.

The subject of the allegation may be accompanied to a disciplinary meeting by an Official or a member of a Club if they so wish. In the event that the subject of the allegation is unwilling or repeatedly unable to attend a disciplinary hearing, the Disciplinary Panel may proceed in the subject's absence and reach its decision on the available evidence.

Any matter that is brought to the attention of the Association where the Disciplinary Panel decides that the matter should be dealt with by the Police will be referred accordingly. Any action to be brought under the Association's disciplinary procedures may be suspended until the outcome of a criminal investigation is determined or be proceeded with, as the Association shall at its discretion determine.

If an allegation is such that any Police Firearms Department should be notified of it, it is the duty of the Secretary to give such notice within 24 hours of receiving the report.

The Disciplinary Panel shall first decide whether the allegation has been proved.

If the Disciplinary Panel decides that the allegation has not been proved it shall declare formally that the matter is closed. The subject will be entitled to ask for notice to that effect to be given to all interested parties, and if he/she does so, such notice must be given without unreasonable delay.

If the Disciplinary Panel decides that the allegation has been proved, it may impose one or more of the following penalties:

- 1) A verbal warning
- 2) A written reprimand
- 3) Suspension of the right to enter any of the Association's competitions for a fixed period of time.
- 4) Suspension of the right to use any of the Association's facilities for a fixed period of time.
- 5) Suspension of all membership rights for a fixed period of time.
- 6) Immediate termination of membership of the Association or, in the case of a non-member, of the right to enter Association competitions or make use of any of the Association's facilities.

If the Disciplinary Panel finds that the allegation has been proved, the Disciplinary Panel must decide whether the circumstances are such that the matter should be reported to the NSRA or other National Governing Body which may consider whether further disciplinary action should be taken. If the Disciplinary Panel decides that the matter

should be so reported the Secretary shall make the report without undue delay after the Disciplinary Panel's decision.

All proceedings of the Enquiry Panel and of the Disciplinary Panel must be fully minuted and copies of the minutes shall accompany any report to the NSRA or other National Governing Body.

APPEALS

Should an individual or Club be dissatisfied with a decision taken by an Enquiry Panel or Disciplinary Panel, they may appeal to the Chairman at chairman@surreysbra.org or via the Secretary within 2 weeks of the decision. Any appeal must be in writing, stating the grounds for appeal. Appeals may be with regard to individual disciplinary matters or Association selection decisions. Any decision or penalty imposed by the original Panel will stand unless it is reversed on appeal.

The Chairman will refer the appeal to an Appeal Panel, drawn from the Affiliated Clubs of the Association. It will normally be composed of and chaired by one of the Affiliated Club's chairmen, and 3 other representatives from these Clubs, one of whom will act as a secretary. None of the Appeal Panel is to have been a member of the original Enquiry or Disciplinary Panels or a witness.

The Appeal Panel will have the authority to review all evidence and findings of the previous Panel. They may hear new evidence if it is thought relevant. The Appeal Panel may review and amend or reverse any disciplinary penalty. Their findings are to be promulgated in writing without unreasonable delay. The decision of the Panel is final. There is no further right of appeal.