



Fauna Rescue of SA Inc
ABN 20 601 494 364

PO Box 241
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Wildlife Volunteer Help Line: 8289 0896

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COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Association acknowledges that all members have the right to be heard on issues of concern, and undertakes to address all concerns and complaints made about the service, members or Committee members, and to work towards an outcome satisfactory to all parties. This will be done without fear of retribution and in an equitable way. Grievance also refers to any complaint or concern.

Rights of Members

Members have the right to:

- a. Have concerns/complaints pursued confidentially, objectively and with an aim toward permanent resolution wherever possible.
- b. Be told what avenues are open to them to resolve complaints/concerns.
- c. Have a friend/advocate support them if attending a resolution meeting.

Responsibilities of Members

To promote a good working relationship between members, the public, RSPCA and DEWNR, it is recommended that members:

- d. Make their concerns/complaints in writing as soon as possible while the facts are still fresh.
- e. Make their complaints/concerns clear: try to summarise the complaint/concern. If detail is necessary, set out the order of occurrence with dates and description of incidents, phone calls, letters or meetings. Document everything and always try to get names and positions of persons.
- f. Maintain consideration of the needs and rights of other members.
- g. Understand that their exact words may be repeated to the person(s) they have a complaint or concern about and that they should be careful about what they say and what they wish to achieve, bearing in mind the law of defamation.

Responsibilities of Resolution Officers

- h. To assist in the resolution of complaints/concerns between members and between members and the association.
- i. On receipt of a complaint/concern the Resolution Officers will send an acknowledgment that they have received the complaint/concern and advise of the procedure to be used to resolving the dispute.
- j. Identify the correct process to handle the complaint/concern and notify all parties of this decision and their rights and obligations regarding the process. The complaint will be dealt with following one or more of the following procedures:



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Responsibilities of Resolution Officers contd.

- k. The Resolution Officer(s) will undertake confidential discussions with the parties involved on an individual basis.
- l. The Resolution Officer(s) will meet (if appropriate) with the parties involved with a view to resolving the dispute.
- m. Keep the parties involved informed of the status of the complaint/concern.
- n. Referring the matter to the relevant authorities such as RSPCA and DEWNR (if appropriate).
- o. The Resolution Officers are to provide a report to the Committee of the complaint/concern received and the outcome. In circumstances such as animal cruelty or issues in relation to animal care skills, details may be required to be noted on the association's data base and details given to the appropriate Species Co-ordinators.
- p. Once the matter has been resolved the records of the dispute will be held by the Secretary but can only be accessed by the appointed Resolution Officers. Once the complaint/concern has been finalised the Resolution Officers will pass on all correspondence and written reports on the outcome to the Secretary and will not keep any details for their personal files or use.

Appointment of Resolution Officers - to ensure the best possible solution, Committee will appoint up to two Resolution Officers and a Mediator if required. The independent Mediator may or may not be a member of Fauna Rescue and could be a paid mediator, depending on what is considered to be the most appropriate to deal with the situation.

- q. All complaints/concerns are to be initially assessed by an appropriate office holder who will nominate up to two Resolution Officers (or sometimes in the case of a minor concern, Co-Ordinators) who have the appropriate expertise to deal with that particular complaint/concern. If it is a minor issue to be dealt with immediately or if of a more major nature to be brought to the next Committee Meeting after an acknowledgement of receipt has been sent. In the instance where the complaint/ concern involves the Chairperson or Assistant Chairperson, the person voicing the complaint/concern can approach any committee member who will present it to the Committee by following the procedures below.
- r. When a complaint/concern is received about a Committee member they are to be notified prior to the complaint/concern being tabled at the Committee Meeting. The complaint/concern will be followed up through the usual channels. A special meeting can be called if it is felt it is needed.
- s. For major issues no less than two (2) Resolution Officers (or a Resolution Officer and a Mediator) are to be present at interviews regarding a complaint/concern, with one Resolution Officer taking notes for records.
- t. If an issue is considered to be affecting organisational procedures and needs addressing urgently, it can be resolved prior to a Committee Meeting. The Chairperson will nominate two Resolution Officers/ Co-Ordinators to deal with the complaint/concern who will report to Committee at the next meeting.

2. PROCEDURE

1. As a matter of principle, complaints/concerns shall be resolved at the lowest level. They must all be documented by the Resolution Officers and the documentation must be stored securely by the Secretary so that the privacy of member(s) is protected. Members may view any documentation related to their own complaints/concerns.



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2. PROCEDURE contd.

2. The matter shall be dealt with initially between the Resolution Officer(s) and the member or others concerned. In some circumstances the matter may need to be referred to the committee member(s) for noting or further decision making. If the complaint/concern is related to the care of fauna then a Species Co-ordinator may also be consulted and involved in its resolution.
3. If the Resolution Officers are unable to resolve the grievance a mutually selected external independent mediator can be appointed to meet with the involved parties to assist in resolving the problem.

3. RULES OF NATURAL JUSTICE

The rules of natural justice must be observed when a committee of an incorporated association adjudicates any dispute. Examples of the rules of natural justice are the right to:

- know there is a matter proceeding that concerns you;
- adequate notice that a matter is under discussion, or that a decision is to be made, including notice of any allegations against you;
- know the procedures that the committee intends to follow in making any decision;
- be aware of the evidence put in support of any allegations;
- have an opportunity to present a case before a decision is made;
- a fair hearing;
- an unbiased hearing;
- any decision must be based on relevant, probative evidence;
- be given reasons for a decision;
- challenge or appeal a decision.

4. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed yearly. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

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Reviewed and authorised at a Committee meeting held on 10th February 2014 Item no. 57

To be reviewed yearly