



Whistleblowing: ARA policy on fraud and wrongdoing

'Whistleblower' is a term commonly used to describe a person who alerts an authority to acts of wrongdoing, usually by someone within the authority's jurisdiction. Whistleblowers are witnesses to a malpractice and must not be penalised for any disclosure of information, in fact certain categories of whistleblowers are protected by the law.

The Amateur Rowing Association is committed to encouraging a culture of openness in order to uphold the reputation of the organisation, maintain the sport's and the public's confidence, and to protect its members. It is in the interests of the Association that you raise your concerns internally rather than disclose them to the press or other external body. This policy provides a mechanism by which serious concerns may be raised within the Association and addressed correctly.

Anyone approaching the Association, in good faith, with information regarding matters of wrongdoing, such as fraud, misappropriation, bad practice in child protection or water safety, discrimination or breach of codes of conduct, by staff or volunteers working in the Association's name, will have the matter dealt with in a positive manner.

If you discover any wrongdoing, including bad practice or abuse you should report it to the relevant officer, the chairman of the Association or a member of the Executive, all of whom are listed in the ARA Year Book, published in the Almanack, or on the ARA website: www.ara-rowing.org

Your concerns will initially be considered by the officer with responsibility for that area, who will make preliminary enquiries. If appropriate they will investigate the matter and take any remedial action to rectify the situation or, where such action is not in the power of such officer, they will make recommendations to the Executive Committee to take appropriate action. Any investigation will not, at any stage, be carried out by any person against whom allegations are made. The investigation will be done promptly, although more complex matters may require a longer and more thorough investigation. The officer will advise you of the outcome of any enquiry and any remedial action taken.

If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily by the officer, or if the concern relates to that person, you may raise the matter directly with the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will make enquiries and, if appropriate, investigate the matter and take any remedial action to rectify the situation. Investigations will not be carried out by any person previously involved in the matter and at no stage will they involve any person against whom allegations are made. Again, any investigation will be done promptly, although more complex matters may require a longer and more thorough investigation. The Executive Committee will advise you of the outcome of any enquiry and any remedial action taken.

In some instances, particularly those involving child safety, it may be necessary to refer the matter to an external authority, such as the police. If this is the case, both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made will be notified of this, unless the Association is prohibited from doing so by law or at the direction of the external authority.

Any person approaching the Association with genuine concerns will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against in any way because of the disclosure. However, the Association will take a serious view and act accordingly, including taking disciplinary action against appropriate parties, should it be found that the allegations are untrue or have been raised maliciously.

Individuals are encouraged to put their name to any disclosure. Allegations raised anonymously may be investigated depending on the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Where possible, confidentiality will be maintained, although it must be stressed that in serious cases of fraud and in cases of child protection it will not always be possible to maintain strict confidentiality if the concerns reach the investigation stage.

Please note that grievances or disputes with the Association should be raised in the normal way under the Association's complaints and disciplinary procedure, outlined in the Almanack, rather than under this procedure.

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