



## HRV External Complaints Handling Policy

### Scope

This policy sets out the principles that Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) has adopted for the management of feedback, compliments, suggestions or complaints – received in relation to any service, issue or action concerning HRV.

HRV recognises that we are accountable for our actions and decisions, and that all stakeholders have a right to complain about us and seek remedy where they are dissatisfied or concerned about a particular issue or feel that their expectations of HRV is not being met. A stakeholder could be a licensed participant, customer or supplier, contractor, staff member, owner or trainer, members of harness racing clubs, punters, or any other person who has dealings with HRV.

This policy operates where there is no other statutory scheme covering the making of a complaint whether or not the complainant elects to use that remedy or right of appeal. For example –

- Matters which come under the jurisdiction of the Racing Act (Vic) 1958. This includes appeals to and charges heard by the HRV Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board and reviews by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) of decisions made by the HRV Racing Appeals and Disciplinary Board, and reviews by VCAT of decisions made by HRV in relation to an occupational racing licence.
- The making of complaints or disclosures to the Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner.
- Making of protected disclosures under the Whistleblowers Protection Act (Vic) 2001 concerning corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health or safety or the environment. The initial contact point for whistleblower disclosures is HRV's Human Resources Manager.
- The making of applications for internal review of refusal of access to or partial disclosure of documents under the Freedom of Information Act (Vic) 1982.
- The making of allegations of breaches of privacy under the Information Privacy Act (Vic) 2000.

HRV reserves the right to determine that a complaint will not be investigated where the complaint –

- Is subject to an existing mediation or dispute resolution process
- Relates to an industrial issue or legal proceedings
- Relates to a matter awaiting determination.

## **Our Commitment**

HRV is committed to effective and efficient complaint handling as we recognise that complaints allow all stakeholders to contribute to the improvement of HRV's services and processes.

This policy is available on [www.hrv.org.au](http://www.hrv.org.au).

## **Fairness**

HRV recognises the need to be fair when dealing with complaints. HRV will treat all complaints seriously and judge complaints on merits and facts. We ensure our core values are reflected when dealing with stakeholders. Our core values are –

- Integrity
- Responsiveness
- Accountability
- Impartiality
- Respect
- Leadership

## **Responsiveness**

HRV is committed to dealing with complaints quickly, courteously, fairly and within the following timelines:

- If the complaint is minor and easily solved you will be contacted by telephone or email to resolve the complaint.
- For more involved complaints you will receive written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint within 7 days of HRV receiving it.
- You will be contacted within 28 days of receipt of the complaint with the outcome. If investigation is not complete or outcome still outstanding then you will be still advised on the progress within 28 days.
- If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to seek review as detailed below.

## **Initial Assessment and Investigation**

When a complaint is received it will be referred to HRV's CEO for initial assessment and, as appropriate, delegation for investigation and response. If the complaint entails multiple aspects, investigation may be delegated to more than one person, and one person may be nominated for the purpose of co-ordinating HRV's response.

## **Complaints Register**

Following receipt of a complaint, an entry will be made in a complaints register maintained by HRV. The complaints register will also show summary information concerning HRV's investigation and resolution of the complaint, and the response to the complainant.

A template of the complaints register is annexed to this policy.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

If a conflict of interest arises in the course of the initial assessment or investigation of a complaint, the person who is conflicted must notify the CEO. If the conflict involves the CEO, HRV's Chairman must be notified. In all instances of a conflict, appropriate steps must be taken to address the conflict which may include the person having no further involvement in respect of the complaint.

## **Privacy & Confidentiality**

All complaints will be handled in the strictest of confidentiality and personal information will be handled in accordance with Privacy laws. Anonymous complaints cannot be fully investigated so HRV will be unable to respond to anonymous complaints, such complaints may more appropriately be directed to the Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner.

## **Accountability**

The CEO has ultimate responsibility and accountability for receipt, allocation and follow up of all complaints concerning HRV.

## **Business Improvement**

HRV is committed to taking action to change any underlying process or service where investigations reveal several complainants have experienced similar circumstances that have led them to making a complaint.

Reference may be made to the complaints register to assist identifying whether multiple complaints have arisen from similar circumstances.

## Internal and External Review

If you are not satisfied with a decision or action taken by HRV in response to your complaint you may seek review by HRV's CEO - via HRV's website or email to [complaints@hrv.org.au](mailto:complaints@hrv.org.au) in writing addressed to CEO, Harness Racing Victoria PO Box 184 Moonee Ponds 3039.

If following the complaints process, you are unhappy with the way your complaint was handled or with the outcome, as appropriate you may raise this with any of the following -

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| Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner             | <a href="http://www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au">www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au</a>                       |
| Consumer Affairs Victoria                               | <a href="http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au">www.consumer.vic.gov.au</a>                                     |
| Ombudsman Victoria                                      | <a href="http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au">www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au</a>                                   |
| Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission of Victoria | <a href="http://www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au">www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au</a> |
| Privacy Victoria  | <a href="http://www.privacy.vic.gov.au">www.privacy.vic.gov.au</a>                                       |
| Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal             | <a href="http://www.vcat.vic.gov.au">www.vcat.vic.gov.au</a>   |

Minister for Racing  
Level 3, 1 Treasury Place  
East Melbourne Vic 3002

## HRV Complaints Handling at a Glance

