



Sydney Heritage Fleet Complaints Policy

Date adopted by the Board	27 th July 2021
Replacing policy dated	11 th October 2018
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Date for next review	July 2023
Related policies and documents	Sydney Maritime Museum Constitution Sydney Heritage Fleet Work Health and Safety Policy Sydney Heritage Fleet Privacy Policy Sydney Heritage Fleet Child Safety Policy Sydney Heritage Fleet Social Media and Communications Policy Sydney Heritage Fleet Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Sydney Heritage Fleet Volunteer Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

Sydney Maritime Museum Ltd (trading and hereafter referred to as Sydney Heritage Fleet or SHF) welcomes constructive feedback and will endeavour to review it carefully and act upon any matters arising from it.

2. Purpose

This policy is intended to minimise the occurrence of complaints and disputes and ensure that when they occur, they are managed in a fair, effective, responsive and efficient way. It also provides guidance to anyone who wishes to make a complaint and to those managing the complaint on the correct procedures to follow.

3. Scope

This policy applies to anyone associated with SHF who receives or is responsible for managing an internal or external complaint about SHF people, its services or products, or the complaint handling process.

4. Responsibilities

WHO	COMMITMENT	HOW
Board and senior staff	Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution	<p>Provide adequate support and direction to those responsible for handling complaints</p> <p>Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints</p> <p>Encourage staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly</p> <p>Encourage staff to make recommendations for system improvements</p> <p>Support recommendations for improvements arising from the analysis of complaint data</p>
The person delegated by the Board to triage complaints and senior people within SHF to whom this person assigns responsibility for managing the particular complaint	Demonstrate exemplary complaint handling practices	<p>Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints</p> <p>Assist people to make a complaint, if needed</p> <p>Comply with this policy and associated procedures</p> <p>Provide feedback to the Board on issues arising from complaints and suggestions about ways to improve complaints management</p> <p>Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis of complaint data as directed by management</p>
All Board Members, staff and volunteers	Understand and comply with our complaint handling practices	<p>Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints</p> <p>Be aware of our complaint handling policies and procedures</p> <p>Assist people who wish to make a complaint to access SHF's complaints process</p> <p>Be alert to complaints and assist those handling complaints to resolve matters promptly</p>

5. Complaints Handling Procedure

When concerns are raised about anything that SHF does or about any of its people, a three step process will be followed:



The procedure for implementing this is set out in Appendix 1.

6. Dispute Resolution and Disciplinary Procedures

Where it has not been possible to resolve a complaint using the procedures referenced above, the matter will be determined to be a dispute and is to be managed in accordance with Clauses 17 and 18 of the Sydney Maritime Museum Constitution.

APPENDIX 1:

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING A COMPLAINT

Sydney Heritage Fleet will use a three step procedure for managing complaints:

STEP 1: Facilitate Complaints

Anyone wishing to make a complaint about Sydney Heritage Fleet or any of its people should do so in writing, submitting this in an email to commodore@shf.org.au or by letter to Complaints, Sydney Heritage Fleet, Wharf 7, 58 Pirrama Road, Pyrmont NSW 2009.

SHF will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made is well publicised, including on our website. We will ensure that our systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

Anyone who indicates that they wish to make a complaint will be:

- provided with information about SHF's complaint handling process and how to access it;
- listened to, treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate; and
- provided with reasons for the decision/s and any options for redress or review.

SHF will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

SHF will accept anonymous complaints if there is a compelling reason to do so and will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/or resolution of their complaint, SHF will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member or legal representative).

STEP2: Acknowledge and Respond to Complaints

The Board will identify a person within the Fleet to be the first point of contact for anyone wishing to make a complaint. It is the responsibility of this person to triage any complaints received and determine how and by whom they are best managed in accordance with the process outlined below.

Wherever possible, complaints will be resolved as quickly as possible and at the point of first contact through the provision of an explanation and/or apology if this is warranted. If the complainant is satisfied with this, no further action need be taken. If it is not possible to resolve the complaint at this point, the following will be undertaken.

At this time, an assessment will be made about the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter:

- concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response it should be dealt with immediately and the President or a senior staff member informed without delay;

- is deemed serious, or if it concerns a senior staff member, the President (or the Vice President if the President is not available) should be notified immediately. This person will decide on how the complaint is to be managed.

For other complaints, the complaint should be drawn to the attention of the one of the following, depending on the nature of the complaint: the Chair of Volunteer Services Committee (VSC), a senior member of staff or the executive master of one of the operational vessels.

Further, in order to manage expectations, the complainant will be promptly advised about:

- receipt of the complaint;
- the steps that will be taken to investigate the complaint;
- the expected time frame;
- the progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay;
- their likely involvement in the process, and
- the possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

SHF will advise people promptly when it is not possible to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed.

Assessing Complaints:

SHF will:

- ensure an appropriate person is delegated to investigate and resolve the complaint;
- address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner;
- ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member or volunteer whose conduct or service is being complained about;
- ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties throughout the mediation process;
- manage responsibly any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Each complaint will be assessed on its merits and the complainant and/or their representative will be included in the process as far as possible.

Further, SHF will endeavour to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible. A flexible approach will be adopted to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives.

Confidentiality:

SHF will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate.

Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used as permitted under the relevant privacy laws and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

Other Relevant Considerations:

There are occasions when the nature of SHF activities (in the workshop, on vessels or elsewhere) requires 'tough instructions' to be given by superiors to ensure the safety of people and/or vessels, particularly in an emergency.

Tough instructions may include:

- demanding a job be done in a particular way or within a particular timeframe
- pushing crew members in rough weather or in terms of endurance
- providing guidance, counselling or feedback on unsatisfactory performance
- rejecting a request for a change of duty or promotion
- removing a person from duties and or requiring retraining.

Critical to understand in this context is the right and responsibility of masters on vessels to give orders and the obligation of crew to comply.

Given the SHF operating environment, some of the tougher instructions might result in volunteers feeling temporarily aggrieved or demoralised. This is distinctly different from the harmful behaviour known as bullying and should be viewed in a different context to normal interactions between SHF people.

STEP 3: Resolve the Complaint and Analyse Data

Once the complaint has been investigated, the complainant will be advised about the findings. This will include information about the assessed merits of the complaint and details of any remedial action that will be taken. Where relevant, this will also include an apology from the person against whom the complaint was made and/or a senior staff member and/or the President.

The complainant will then be offered the opportunity to respond to any issues raised in the report of the investigation.

If the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, no further action involving the complainant should be required. If the complainant is not satisfied, the matter should be escalated to the Board.

In all cases, consideration should be given by the investigator to ways to prevent the problem/issue from occurring again.

Accountability and Learning

Monitoring Responses to Complaints

SHF will ensure that formal complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis by management and the Board.

Monitoring the Complaints Handling Process

SHF is committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its complaint handling process and will therefore:

- implement best practices in complaint handling;
- recognise and reward exemplary complaint handling;
- regularly review the complaint management system and complaint data, and
- implement appropriate changes arising out of the analysis of complaints data and continual monitoring of the system.

Recording Feedback

Feedback received by SHF is also a valuable source of information about the organisation and its services and should be used to inform strategies and practices.