

PROCEDURE – DISPUTES and CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Purpose of Procedure

The purpose of this Eastern Community Broadcasters Inc. hereafter referred to as Radio Eastern fm procedure is to provide guidance to the management of disputes and conflict resolution.

Background

This procedure is based on the disputes and conflict resolution policy.

Procedure

When disputes or conflict occur within the Association between members/volunteers, the first step is negotiation between the disputants with the aim of bringing about agreement, settlement of the opposing demands or attitudes, or a compromise that is acceptable to all parties

In the first instance, it is the responsibility of members/volunteers to seek to achieve this themselves, and exhaust all reasonable options before seeking intervention. However, if the issue is very contentious and parties have strong personal views, where agreement is not going to be achieved, it is then their responsibility to seek assistance to mediate the matter.

Internal Dispute/Conflict procedures

Persons involved in any dispute resolution process need to be prepared to:

- remember that the interests of the Association and quality of on-air presentation to our community are the paramount concerns
- deal with issues promptly, fairly and honestly
- listen to others' views objectively and keep an open mind
- avoid assumptions about motives and attitudes
- develop options that everyone can own and agree will work
- ensure everyone is committed to agreements reached

Every reasonable effort shall be made to resolve disputes that arise within Radio Eastern FM conscientiously and as soon as practicable.

Disputes are to be notified by the parties concerned (if they cannot reach agreement) to the Secretary and/or President, who will invite the disputants to discuss their differences openly between themselves. If appropriate, the Secretary and/or President may meet with parties separately or together, and may engage the use of a mediation group (to be formed for the purpose of addressing the immediate dispute at the discretion of the Secretary and/or President) or external independent mediation organisation for assistance, as judged required. In this case, the disputants are to agree prior to the mediation to abide by the decision of the appointed independent mediator.

If the dispute still remains unresolved, the issue will be discussed by the Committee of Management and a solution proposed.

The station will keep a record of the matter and the outcome in a register which will be maintained by the responsible officer for a minimum period of 2 years and ensuring its availability to ACMA if requested.

External Dispute/Conflict Procedures

In line with the CBAA Code of Practice 7 requirements for the handling of complaints, the station will ensure that complaints or advice of a conflict between an individual/organisation in the community and a member of the Association will be received by the Secretary and/or President.

Complaints or advice of a conflict will be requested to be provided in writing (by letter or e-mail) as Code 7 requires. The matters will be considered, investigated (if necessary) and responded to as soon as practicable following receipt, as required.

If appropriate, the Secretary and/or President may meet with parties separately or together, and may engage the use of a mediation group (to be formed on the basis of addressing the immediate dispute at the discretion of the Secretary or President or external independent mediation organisation for assistance, as judged required. In this case, the disputants are to agree prior to the mediation to abide by the decision of the appointed independent mediator.

The external parties to the issue will be responded to in writing, to which a copy of the Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice will be attached. They will be advised in writing that they have the right to refer their complaint to the ACMA provided they have received a substantive response with which they are still dissatisfied.

The station will keep a record of the matter and the outcome in a register which will be maintained by the responsible officer for a minimum period of 2 years and ensuring its availability to ACMA if requested.

This Procedure is supported by the Disputes and Complaints Policy (ies):

Procedure reviewed and updated: 06-03-2025