



WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

## WBF DISCIPLINARY CODE

Adopted by the WBF Executive Council, October 2011

### 1. Introduction

In accordance with the sporting ideals and precepts of the Olympic Charter, the World Bridge Federation expects its affiliated NBOs and their members to respect the principles of ethics and good conduct. In view of these principles, the Constitution prohibits political, religious or racial discrimination and any violation of human rights by the National Bridge Organizations ("NBOs").

In order to guarantee, as far as this is possible, the above-mentioned principles, it has been decided to institute this Disciplinary Code to deal with any breach of the principles in question and any reprehensible conduct, in the sense of the clauses of this Code.

The Code is in accordance with Article 2 of the Constitution.

### 2. Responsibility of NBOs

Member status of the WBF concerns only the NBOs. With the exception of certain cases (for example, the suspension or banning of Head Tournament Directors or Appeals Committees), the WBF is not entitled to exercise directly its authority on the members of NBOs or to ensure that any sanction imposed on them is being enforced. Consequently, the WBF holds the NBOs responsible for the behaviour of their members and, if the case arises, for the enforcing of any sanctions that the WBF imposes against them. Any failure to uphold this responsibility will result in the WBF imposing sanctions against the NBO.

### 3. Reprehensible Conduct

Examples of reprehensible conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) serious infringement of the WBF Constitution, By Laws or Regulations;
- b) serious prejudice against the WBF, its Zones or any other NBO;
- c) illicit actions or behavior affecting the proper running of the competition, or unethical conduct or the results of it, including violations of the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, cheating, and any betting purpose;
- d) improper conduct towards any official or body of the WBF in

- performance of their WBF duties or functions, or towards any official or body of the Zones or NBOs of the WBF in performance of their duties and functions at a WBF event;
- e) failure to respect financial obligations towards the WBF, its Zones or any other NBO;
  - f) failure to uphold contractual obligations towards the WBF, its Zones or any other NBO (for example, concerning the organization of events);
  - g) actions or behavior unbecoming a person participating in a WBF sanctioned tournament or event or a person attending a WBF sanctioned tournament or event, at the time and site of said tournament and event. Site includes, but is not limited to, the playing site, elevators, hallways, restaurants, bars and parking lots of the site of the event or tournament;
  - h) complete or partial failure – without valid reason - in respect of obligations linked to all functions exercised for the WBF or to any task carried out on behalf of the WBF;
  - i) corrupt actions, threats and/or other means intended to undermine the impartiality of the system of judgement or exercise an abnormal influence on the conduct of the affairs of the WBF;
  - j) knowingly making a false declaration or affirmation to WBF officials or bodies.

#### 4. Sanctions liable to be imposed by the WBF

Depending on the gravity of the case, sanctions can take the following form:

- a) Warning
- b) Suspension of the NBO or the person concerned from one or several official events
- c) Exclusion from participating in WBF activities;
- d) Banning from participating in WBF events;
- e) An order to pay the costs of the hearing and/or other monetary fine.

The Executive Council fixes annually the limit of the monetary fine.

Furthermore, an NBO can be excluded by a decision made by Congress. Other sanctions can be imposed within the framework of this Code, namely: suspension from responsibilities of a member elected to one of the organs of the WBF. Depending on the individual case, removal of the person(s) concerned (the decision to remove can only be made by Congress).

The above mentioned sanctions under the letters from b) to d) shall be officially communicated to all the WBF Zones and NBOs and possibly published on the WBF Web Site;

#### 5. Anticipated action in case of reprehensible conduct

If the case arises, a Disciplinary Commission, "the Commission" appointed by the WBF President, rules on the cases of reprehensible conduct referred to the WBF. The Commission consists of three people selected by the President from a group of five approved by the Executive Council and including at least two members of the EC. The Commission includes at least one member of the Executive Council, who acts as Chairman of the Commission.

The Commission shall rule on cases of any NBO or person accused, in the framework of the above-mentioned sanctions.

Before a meeting of the Commission charged with examining a case of reprehensible conduct, the WBF Secretary informs the accused NBO and/or person of the time, date and place of the meeting in order to give the accused NBO and/or person the opportunity to report on this action – by attending the meeting or submitting written explanations. The accused NBO and/or person is at liberty to attend the meeting in person or by a designated representative and may be accompanied by legal counsel or advisor.

The Commission makes a ruling – by majority vote – and informs the defendant, WBF President and WBF Secretary within two weeks of any sanction that it has decided to impose. To appeal against the Commission's decision, a written request to the WBF Secretary must be submitted within 20 days of notification of the aforementioned decision. This request must specify in detail the reasons for the appeal, indicate the desired redress and state whether an Appeal hearing is requested.

The Appeal is referred to an Appeal Tribunal constituted by the President. The Tribunal consists of three people who make a decision by majority vote. The Tribunal shall not include any member who was a member of the Disciplinary Commission which made the initial decision. The Appeal is examined in the 90-day period subsequent to the request, on the basis of a written document accompanied by probative elements or on the basis of a preamble presented by the appealing party. The appealing party may be represented.

The WBF General Counsel or his designee shall represent the WBF as the prosecutor before the Disciplinary Commission as well as before the Appeals Tribunal.

The decision of the Tribunal, which is definitive and binding for the WBF and the appealing party, is communicated to the latter within two weeks subsequent to the hearing. The expenses incurred by the WBF are to be borne by the appealing party, unless the Tribunal takes a decision contrary to that of the Commission.

## 6. Immediate intervention in cases of reprehensible action

When immediate intervention is necessary to deal with a reprehensible action (for example, in the case of prolonged, noisy behavior or protests preventing the progress of an event, or violent or offensive behavior disturbing a meeting), the person in charge is entitled to intervene immediately to restore order. In certain extreme cases, if necessary, the individual responsible may be forced to leave the premises. Subsequently, a report on the incident must be sent to the Secretary, who then submits it to the Executive Council.

## 7. Disagreements between the WBF and NBOs or disputes between NBOs

As well as cases of reprehensible action, disagreements can occur between the WBF and NBOs or between different NBOs. In such cases, and in accordance with the spirit of sport, recourse to tribunals should be avoided for such procedures involve significant expense and can cause adverse and untoward publicity.

The Statutes cannot include anything intending to prohibit judicial action by NBOs against the WBF, and vice-versa, but it is eminently desirable to resort to arbitration to settle disagreements, preferably with the Sports Arbitration Tribunal (TAS). In the case of arbitration, the arbitral sentence is of course binding for both parties. Another method of settling disagreements involves using mediation: in this case, both parties agree to resort to a third neutral party which meets both parties and endeavors to help them reach a mutually satisfactory solution.

## 8. Cases of non-application of the Code

When the WBF already has an established procedure in place following certain cases of reprehensible action, for example failing a doping test or minor technical infractions related to the Code of Practice for the Appeals Committee and for certain aspects appropriate to the Tournament Directors' conduct, the present Code is not applicable unless the Executive Council believe that certain elements of the reprehensible action in question relate to aspects of the Code.