



PO Box 127, Rondebosch, 7701
www.surfingsouthafrica.co.za

Surfing South Africa Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

Surfing South Africa (SSA) is committed to the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. This policy aims to provide a safe and confidential mechanism for individuals to report concerns about wrongdoing, misconduct, or unethical behaviour within SSA, without fear of victimisation or retaliation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- SSA Board and committee members
- SSA employees, contractors, and consultants
- Coaches, athletes, officials, and volunteers
- Any individual or organisation with a relationship or engagement with SSA

It covers concerns about:

- Fraud, corruption, or theft
 - Abuse of authority or misuse of SSA resources
 - Breach of SSA policies or the Code of Conduct
 - Discrimination, harassment, or abuse
 - Conflicts of interest or unethical behaviour
 - Any activity that brings SSA or the sport of surfing into disrepute
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3. Policy Statement

SSA encourages all individuals to report any genuine concern of misconduct in good faith. SSA will:

- Treat all disclosures seriously and investigate appropriately;
 - Protect whistleblowers from any form of retaliation or victimisation;
 - Maintain confidentiality of the reporter's identity as far as practicable;
 - Ensure fair treatment of all parties involved.
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4. Principles

1. **Good Faith:** Reports must be made honestly, based on a reasonable belief that wrongdoing has occurred or may occur.
 2. **Confidentiality:** All reports and investigations will be handled discreetly to protect the identity and dignity of all involved.
 3. **Protection:** SSA strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith.
 4. **Fair Process:** The accused will be treated fairly and given an opportunity to respond to any allegations.
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5. Reporting Procedure

5.1 How to Report

Reports of suspected wrongdoing may be made:

- **In writing** to the SSA Board ; or
- **Via email** to [\[confidential@surfingsouthafrica.co.za\]](mailto:confidential@surfingsouthafrica.co.za) (or similar designated address); or
- **Anonymously**, if the individual prefers, through a secure submission to the SSA office.

The report should include:

- A clear description of the concern;
- Relevant facts, dates, names, or evidence (if available);
- Whether the concern has been raised elsewhere.

5.2 Handling of Reports

- The SSA General Manager or Board Chairperson will acknowledge receipt within **5 working days**.
- A preliminary assessment will determine whether a formal investigation is warranted.
- Where necessary, an **independent investigator** or external body (e.g., SASCOC or a legal consultant) may be appointed.
- Findings and recommended actions will be presented to the SSA Board for consideration.

5.3 Confidentiality

- The identity of the whistleblower will only be disclosed with their consent or where required by law.
 - Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis to ensure effective investigation.
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6. Protection for Whistleblowers

- No whistleblower will suffer dismissal, demotion, intimidation, harassment, or any adverse consequence as a result of making a report in good faith.
 - Any individual who retaliates against a whistleblower will face disciplinary action, up to and including removal from office or termination of contract.
 - False or malicious reports made with intent to harm another person may themselves be subject to disciplinary action.
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7. Outcomes and Follow-up

- Once the investigation is complete, appropriate action will be taken based on the findings.
 - The whistleblower will be informed (where possible) that the process has concluded, while respecting confidentiality constraints.
 - Lessons learned will be used to improve SSA's internal controls and ethical culture.
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8. Record Keeping

The SSA General Manager or independent person will maintain a **Whistleblowing Register** recording:

- Nature of the report
 - Date received and actions taken
 - Investigation outcome
 - Steps taken to prevent recurrence
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9. Review and Approval

This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years or when legislative or governance changes require updates.

Approved by: SSA Board of Directors

Date Approved: October 2025

Next Review Date: October 2027
