



INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS CHARTER

The ABF commits to a major investment through its program of Australia representative teams (“ART”) at international bridge tournaments (“IBT”).

This player’s charter outlines:

- the expectation of the ABF of all players & officials;
- summarise the **minimum** requirements which the ABF of its international representative players in terms of conduct and behaviour;
- summarise **minimum** additional commitments which the ABF expects from the players in terms of practice and team based elements which it believes will enhance the performance of teams at IBTs; and

Any player or official who accepts a position in an international team will be required to sign the international Representative Terms of Agreement. Acceptance of such position and completion of the Agreement results in acceptance of and agreement to abide by the contents of this charter. This document will be provided to all players on selection and ignorance of its existence or contents will not be an acceptable defence to the breach of the provisions contained herein.

Failure to comply with this charter may result in action by ABF which may include but not be limited to losing the right to represent or continue to represent the ABF and may also include losing the right to play any bridge sessions conducted under the auspices of the ABF or by any affiliated club. In respect of any such action the ABF is committed to the application of natural justice.

This document is intended to outline **minimum** requirements which the ABF expects of its international representative players including but not limited to:

- Participation
- Practice
- Commitment
- Behaviour
- General

Players are deemed to represent Australia and the ABF from the time selection is ratified for the IBT until they arrive at their first destination after leaving the final IBT tournament for the year. The relevance of this is that behaviour at places such as airports, transit to or from the IBT venue as well as at the tournament and at bridge events and venues in the lead up to the IBT events is expected to be appropriate to the role of a player representing their country.

PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS

All Players and Officials must:

- maintain the highest standard of behaviour at all times;

- not take any actions or undertake any behaviour in connection with any team member, the team, all officials to bring the ABF, any sponsors or the game into disrepute;
- show proper attitude and respect for all fellow team members and officials;
- properly accept and observe the authority and decisions of tournament organisers and officials as well as appeals committees and refrain from any type of intimidation and/or threats towards same;
- comply with all directives given by the team captain and any team official of an IBT at which they are competing;
- compete in all matches scheduled in the IBT and do their best at all times;
- be aware and comply with all tournament regulations of any IBT in which they compete. This is particularly important for captains and officials as well as players;
- maintain good health and hygiene standards while overseas;
- not be in possession of or use any illegal drugs or materials, note that by acceptance of team membership players confirm that to the best of their knowledge and belief they will pass all drug and illegal substance testing regimes proposed by the WBF;
- be available for all mandatory drug testing required by the organisers of any IBTs.
- not wager on any tournament in which they are competing until after they are eliminated from the tournament;
- comply with all alcohol and bedtime curfew rules set down by the non playing captain.

APPOINTMENT OF THE CAPTAIN

Once the composition of an ART has been confirmed, typically following a playoff, the team should submit a nomination for captaincy of the team to the ABF management committee. It should be noted that WBF regulations and ABF policy provide that a captain should be a person who would fulfil the WBF requirements to be eligible to represent Australia.

While the team may submit one name only it is recommended that two names be submitted in order of preference. In general terms and based on past history the ABF generally accepts the first nomination of the ART but reserves the right to accept any nomination or indeed to reject the nominations and appoint a captain of its own choosing.

On the basis that a close familial relationship between a non playing captain and a playing member may influence, or be seen to influence the captain's decisions in management of the team, any person with a familial relationship with a playing member of the team is ineligible for nomination as NPC. A close familial relationship means a relationship between a person and a player where the player is the spouse, de facto partner, parent or

child, brother or sister of the person. The ABF in their sole discretion reserves the right to deem other relationships not noted above as being close familial based on circumstances.

THE TEAM CAPTAIN

The team captain is responsible for enabling the team to play to the best of its ability at an IBT. The captain has the authority of the ABF to take all decisions relating to the playing of Bridge at a tournament, with the exception of decisions which this Charter reserves to the ABF's on-site representative. Players must therefore accept decisions and directives of the captain **at all times**.

The players can reasonably expect the captain to provide all details of the tournament, including but not limited to:

- Dates and times;
- Format of the tournament;
- Composition of opposing teams;
- Copies of opponents systems including highlighting and possible defences to unusual systems;
- Copy of all regulations preferably with highlighting of the provisions that players should be aware of, noting that players must be aware of **all** regulations regardless of whether this has been highlighted by the captain;
- Any other aspects of the tournament of which players should reasonably be aware.

The NPC should:

- Be aware of all player's travel arrangements; **but note that the captain is not the travel agent for players**. While he/she may become aware of airfare and transfer costs it is not the captain's obligation to investigate or provide travel options for the players. It is the sole responsibility of the players to make their own travel arrangements.

Each player should **immediately** advise the captain of their travel arrangements to thereby allowing him/her to in turn provide these to the IBT organisers.

- Be aware of and advise all visa and similar requirements and player's compliance therewith;
- Determine players preferred match seating positions and preferred playing times. While the captain will be aware of this he/she is not in any way bound by this and will take decisions based on the best expectations for the team;
- Be aware of any opponents who players have had a history of playing against and any preferences to play or not play against certain opponents;
- Designate a particular place at the venue for players to meet and score the match when they leave the playing area. Having to search for the captain or team mates **MUST** be avoided.

- Generally be in attendance at the beginning of all sessions to seat the players although it is reasonable for the captain to have a morning off where the line-ups have been determined the previous evening;
- Be at all score-ups;
- Make him/herself aware of the WBF drug policy and requirements and ensure the adherence of the team to all drug policies and testing regimes.
- In conjunction with the team establish an alcohol and bed curfew policy. In this regard the ABF's guidelines are:
 - a maximum of two alcohol equivalents i.e. 2 beers or two spirits per day;
 - no alcohol to be consumed after 23:00 (11:00pm)
 - all players to be in bed no later than 00:30 (12:30am)

While it is open to the captain in conjunction with the team to vary these guidelines, such variations should not be significant.

- Be the administrator of the team involved in:
 - All administration involving the ABF - e.g. If a player has not received his/her subsidy the first call should be to the captain;
 - All appeals administration;
 - All interaction with opponent's captains;
 - Being the interface with the IBT organisers and officials;

Successful captains are those who have exceeded expectations by:

- doing everything possible to allow the players to focus on their most important role – playing the best bridge they can at the table being relieved of as many administrative pressures as they can;
- ensuring player focus on the event and the goals and objectives of the team;
- examining all opponents' systems and providing exception reports for those pairs playing anything unusual;
- consulting leading players and determining defences to any unusual systems employed by opponents;
- seeking advice both within and outside of the team as to the style and capabilities of the opponents and advising the players;
- consult with members of the team and others as to experiences they have had with any players on opposing teams;
- being aware of where players on opposing teams sit in terms of the top bridge rankings.

In summary being the total administrator and “intelligence unit” for the team.

PRE TOURNAMENT

Practice: The ABF expects players to undertake regular practice and preparation in their team partnerships in the months preceding the target event, both in competition and in a training environment, in order to ensure performance levels are maximised at the target event.

The captain will generally arrange for practices:

- **Live** – where enough players reside in the same city then at the table practices (preferably with screens) or similar;
- **Online (BBO):** in the past players have rejected BBO as a practice medium by saying “I don’t play BBO”. This is unacceptable and the ABF requires all players to participate in whatever reasonable practice is designated by the captain;
- **Bidding hands:** such as French Training Papers and similar;
- **Bridge Questionnaires:** such as Partnership Understanding or the like
- **ABF event participation:** recognising pre-commitments as well professional obligations, the ABF has a distinct preference that the team participates in as many ABF national events (ANOT, VCC etc.) as possible between the time of selection and the IBT in which the team will compete. The reason for this is to build the team bond that the ABF believes is a pre-requisite for international success.

The captain should have ongoing dialogue with the players to ensure that they are optimally preparing for the IBT. He/she should provide support for any administrative or matters where the captain can add value to the player and the team.

AT THE TOURNAMENT

Arrival regulations: For all tournaments in countries where the time difference to Australian eastern or Australian eastern daylight time is more than three hours players are expected to arrive no less than four days before the commencement of play.

For all tournaments in countries where the time difference to Australian eastern or Australian eastern daylight time is less than three hours players are expected to arrive no less than two days before the commencement of play.

Players are expected to utilise the time between arrival at the IBT and commencement of play for some light warm-up matches and final preparations.

Travel Regulations Players are expected to provide the ABF Secretariat, and their team captain with a copy of their draft travel itinerary for approval prior to finalising travel arrangements. Players should note that in making their travel arrangements, since players are expected to undertake both competition and other practice in preparation for the target event, the ABF considers that extended holidays of more than one week duration prior to

arrival at the target event are not conducive to this objective. Payment of the subsidy will be conditional on submission and approval of player's travel itineraries.

Arrival at the Venue: Players should arrive at the venue at least twenty (20) minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of play. **Excuses such as traffic** are generally unacceptable if these can reasonably be foreseen. Arriving later than prescribed places a strain on the captain and other players and **must** be avoided.

Mobile Phones: The ABF expects the captain to have a working mobile phone at the venue. In addition and while all players **MUST** abide by mobile phone regulations, the ABF expects at least one member of each partnership to have a working mobile phone at the tournament to enable them to keep in touch with the captain regarding any issues which would affect the team.

Seating: Players should be seated at the table no less than ten (10) minutes before the commencement of the session.

Optimal Performance: The ABF expects **ALL** players to compete to the maximum of their abilities **AT ALL TIMES**. While there has been much debate about whether teams should be allowed to “shape” their results to meet objectives such as preferred opponents etc. The ABF’s position requires all players to perform to the best of their abilities at all times.

Score-up: Players are expected to promptly proceed from the playing area to the designated score-up meeting place. Players must not absent themselves from score-ups to engage in smoking as this has proven to create tension among team members in the past.

Line-ups: The ABF will, almost always, select a partnership to represent Australia. Players must play in the selected partnership at an IBT unless there is an exceptional reason, such as illness, for breaking up that partnership. Loss of form is not an exceptional reason for breaking up a partnership although it constitutes a valid reason for not selecting the partnership in the line-up for a match.

Only the ABF’s on-site representative has the authority to break up a partnership for the duration of an IBT, and the decision to break up the partnership can only be taken after consultation with the captain and with every member of the team.

The captain is the sole and final arbiter of the line-up for each and every match of the tournament. Players must properly accept the decisions of the captain at all times.

In many instances the captain will ask team members for their opinion and players are urged to be honest and forthright regarding their views at all times. However once the line-up has been agreed and certainly after it has been lodged there should

be no further discussion of the matter and certainly team members should not express any opinions regarding line-ups after the match.

Participation in subsequent events: in IBTs where there is a subsequent event, e.g. Bermuda bowl followed by transnational teams, teams which are eliminated from the main event are expected to participate in subsequent events. The ABF views this as an opportunity for teams to compete at the top level of the game thereby possibly improving performance in future events.

Participation in subsequent (such as consolation events, Transnational Teams etc.) is not compulsory but is a reasonable expectation of the ABF. In this regard the ABF's subsidies

are often based on participation up to the end of the qualifying stages of tournaments and will usually be increased to cover:

- Each additional stage the team qualifies for; and/or
- Participation in additional or consolation events.

Attendance at functions: the ABF regards attendance at official functions such as opening and closing ceremonies similar to attendance at the table and expects every player and captain to attend functions in uniforms as outlined herein.

Notwithstanding the above it is the ABF's view that staying for any closing ceremony is encouraged but not mandatory.

Players who are in attendance at the tournament when an official function is held and who do not attend may be subject to disciplinary action by the ABF. The result of such disciplinary action may include but not be limited to losing the right to represent or continue to represent the ABF and the right to play any bridge sessions conducted under the auspices of the ABF or by any affiliated club. In respect of any such action the ABF is committed to the application of natural justice.

Drugs: IBT organisers advise that they will conduct random drug testing on players, captains and officials. All players who are on prescription medications should take with them a letter from their doctor advising of their prescription medication regime.

POST TOURNAMENT

Reporting: Team Captains are required to submit a report to the ABF secretary no later than four weeks after the conclusion of the event. The ABF secretary will provide team captains with a suggested template for reporting. Team captains may or may not choose to share the content of the report with team members before submitting the report.

Players may also submit a report to the ABF secretary if they choose to do so. This report should highlight in particular any areas that they feel would improve the performance of future teams.

UNIFORMS

The WBF has a policy which seeks to encourage Federations to provide teams which participate in world championships, with appropriate uniforms incorporating a badge or emblem identifying the country which those players represent.

Team members will be supplied with sufficient changes of clothing to ensure that they look presentable at all times while at the playing venue. If sweaters, cardigans and sweatshirts are used they must be of the same colour and display their country's logo or name. All players are expected to be respectably dressed and are also required to follow the instructions given by Tournament Officials.

The ABF expects players and officials to adhere to these regulations in all tournaments in which they compete including for example the APBF.

Summary of WBF regulations

All players, captains and coaches of participating teams are required to wear t-shirts, polo shirts, shirts or blouses that are of the same colour and contain the federation's logo.

Everyone entering the playing rooms is obliged to wear the official identification badge which may be provided by the IBT.

World bridge series and world transnational open and mixed teams: at these events, participants are expected to be smartly dressed at formal events and ceremonies, with jacket and tie (or equivalent national dress) for male participants and equivalent style of dress for the women participants. Participants shall be appropriately dressed during the play.

World youth congress: at the world youth congress, the participants are expected to be smartly dressed at formal events and ceremonies and during play are required to wear t-shirts, polo shirts, shirts, blouses, sweat suits or jackets that contain the federation's or club's logo.



International Representative Terms of Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Australian Bridge Federation International Player Charter. I agree to be bound by the terms therein.

I understand that payment to me of the team member subsidy is conditional on compliance with the charter, and that my continued right to represent Australia is dependent upon my compliance.

I acknowledge that non-compliance with the charter could result in the withdrawal of my right to represent Australia for current and future teams, and in this case, I will be required to repay any subsidies paid to me.

(insert full name of player)

(insert full name of witness)

(signature)

(signature)

(date)

(date)

If the representative is under 18 years of age, this form must also be signed by a parent or guardian.

(insert full name)

(signature of parent or guardian)

This form must be signed and returned to the ABF Secretariat before any funding will be paid to the representative.