# Brisbane & GPS Rowing Club Communications Policy

## Policy status and review

Approved by the Management Committee. This policy is to be reviewed at least every two years, or earlier if required by changes to law, governing body policy, child-safety requirements, technology, club operations or identified risks.

## Purpose

This communication policy explains how Brisbane & GPS Rowing Club members, committee members, coaches, volunteers, officials, parents/carers and other authorised representatives communicate with members and stakeholders. It applies to all club-related communication, including email, SMS, phone calls, websites, social media, messaging apps, team communication platforms, video conferencing, livestreaming, photo and video sharing, cloud-based documents and any future digital channels used for club business.

## Our commitment

Electronic and digital communication is essential for sharing club news and information with our members and stakeholders. Our communication will be timely, accurate, respectful, inclusive, child safe, privacy-aware and related to club business. It will support the club's reputation, participation, member engagement, recruitment and growth while maintaining appropriate safeguards.

All club communications must be consistent with Brisbane & GPS Rowing Club's constitution, rules, by-laws, code of conduct and values, and with the applicable policies, codes and requirements of Rowing Australia, Rowing Queensland, Sport Integrity Australia and relevant Queensland and Australian laws.

## What we will do

We use a range of communication tools to communicate with members, parents/carers, volunteers, sponsors, rowing bodies and the wider community. These may include the club website, email, SMS, telephone, approved team communication applications, private member groups, public social media pages, online forms, digital newsletters, photo and video platforms and other channels approved by the Management Committee.

Our communication will protect members' privacy, maintain appropriate boundaries, promote positive club culture, support child safety, reduce the risk of bullying, harassment, discrimination, abuse, grooming, misinformation, reputational harm and unauthorised disclosure of personal information.

This policy incorporates the club's expectations for social media and digital communication. The Management Committee may approve additional procedures or channel-specific rules where required.

The Management Committee will appoint or authorise administrators for the club website, public social media accounts, private member groups and other official communication channels. Administrator access will be limited to approved persons, reviewed periodically, and removed promptly when a person no longer requires access.

## Governance and authorised communication

The club will maintain clear responsibility for official communication channels. Only authorised committee members, officers, coaches, team managers, volunteers or administrators may publish or send communications on behalf of the club. Permission must also be obtained before using the club's name, logo or visual identity.

Official communications should be accurate, courteous, lawful, consistent with approved club positions and limited to matters within the author's role or authority. Where a matter is sensitive, controversial, legal, disciplinary, child-safety related, media-related or reputationally significant, approval must be obtained from the President, Club Captain, Secretary or Management Committee before publication or external distribution.

## Website

- Our website will include current information on competitions, training, social events, committees, policies, constitution, rules, by-laws, safety information, membership information and club contacts.
- No offensive content or photos will be published.
- Photos or videos of children and young people will only be published where appropriate consent has been obtained from a parent/carer and the content is suitable, respectful, relevant to rowing or club activities, and does not disclose unnecessary identifying information such as address, school, personal contact details, travel arrangements or precise location details.
- We will seek feedback from members, parents/carers and relevant stakeholders to improve the information available on the site and to ensure it remains accessible, accurate and useful.

## Email, SMS, messaging apps and team communication platforms

Committee members, coaches, team managers explicitly authorised by the Committee may use email, SMS, approved messaging apps or team communication platforms to provide information about training, competition, regattas, safety notices, club-sanctioned social events, volunteering, administration and other club business, however:

- messages should be clear, respectful, necessary and related to club, team, safety or rowing matters
- email or approved club platforms should be used where more detailed information, attachments or formal records are required
- communication involving members under 18 must be transparent and must include a parent/carer wherever practicable; adults must not send private one-on-one club-related messages to a child or young person unless required in an emergency or approved safeguarding circumstance
- in the event of an emergency, urgent safety issue, training change, weather event, club closure or incident, communication may be sent by the fastest appropriate channel, with parents/carers included where the matter involves a member under 18.
- club communication groups should be administered by authorised adults, used for club purposes only, and moderated where necessary.

## Social media and public digital channels

- We understand that not all members use social media. Information intended for all members will be distributed by email or another approved official club channel, and may also be shared through approved private member groups or public social media channels.
- Public club social media pages, private member groups and other official digital channels will be managed by administrators appointed or authorised by the Management Committee.
- We treat all social media posts, comments, stories, reels, live streams, blogs, messages, tags, shares and reactions connected with club activities as public or potentially public communication.
- Posts, comments, photos and videos should be family-friendly, respectful, inclusive, accurate, positive and consistent with club values, rowing participation, member wellbeing and the club's reputation.
- Personal information about members, volunteers, children, families, officials or stakeholders must not be disclosed unless authorised, lawful, necessary and consistent with privacy and safeguarding obligations.
- No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements will be made that might bring our club into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating, threatening, humiliating, harassing, sexualised, exploitative, unsafe, offensive or otherwise inappropriate statements, images or conduct will not be tolerated. Offending content may be hidden, removed, reported, preserved as evidence and escalated under club, governing body or legal processes. Persons responsible may be blocked, removed from groups or subject to disciplinary action.

## Children and young people

The club has zero tolerance for harm, abuse, neglect, grooming, bullying, harassment or inappropriate conduct involving children and young people. All communication with or about members under 18 must be child safe, transparent, necessary, proportionate and connected to legitimate club purposes.

- Adults in a position of authority must not add, friend, follow or privately message a child or young person on personal social media accounts for club-related purposes.
- Where electronic communication is required with a child or young person, a parent/carer and, where practicable, another club representative should be included.
- Communication must not be secretive, unnecessarily personal, excessive, late at night, unrelated to club activities, or capable of creating dependency, favouritism, grooming risk or blurred boundaries.
- Parents/carers and children should be informed of the club's communication channels, expected conduct and reporting pathways at registration or commencement of junior participation.

### Images, video, livestreaming and tagging

Photos, videos and livestreams are valuable for promoting rowing, celebrating achievements and growing the club, but they must be managed safely and respectfully.

- Consent must be obtained before publishing identifiable images or videos of children and young people, and any withdrawal of consent must be respected as soon as practicable.
- Content must not show children or members in a state of undress, in private areas, injured, distressed, embarrassed, unsafe, or in any context that could reasonably be considered exploitative or inappropriate.
- Avoid publishing full names of children with images unless there is a legitimate club purpose and parent/carer consent. Do not publish personal contact details, addresses, school details, travel arrangements or precise live location information.
- Livestreaming and tagging should be limited to approved club purposes and moderated where practicable. Requests to remove content should be considered promptly and respectfully.

## What we ask you to do

We expect our members, parents/carers, volunteers, coaches, committee members and supporters to conduct themselves appropriately when using electronic communication, posting online content, sharing images or commenting on matters connected with the club, rowing or club members.

Electronic and digital communication:

- should be restricted to club, rowing, safety, team, event or member-related matters where connected to the club
- must not offend, intimidate, humiliate, bully, harass, threaten, discriminate against, victimise or vilify another person
- must not be misleading, false, defamatory, malicious or likely to injure the reputation of another person, the club or rowing
- must respect privacy, confidentiality, child safety and consent requirements
- must be consistent with club values, codes of conduct and governing body policies
- must not bring the club, rowing, Rowing Queensland or Rowing Australia into disrepute.

Coaches, committee members, volunteers and others who work with children and young people must direct electronic communication through parents/carers wherever practicable and must not use private one-on-one communication with a child or young person except in an emergency or approved safeguarding circumstance.

Because electronic communication is a primary club communication channel, members must ensure that the club has current contact details, including:

- mobile number
- email address.

For members who are children or young people, the club must have current contact details for at least one nominated parent/carer and should record any relevant communication, image or publication consent preferences.

## Communicating with stakeholders

External communication with stakeholders such as Rowing Queensland, Rowing Australia, sponsors, schools, government bodies, local political representatives, media, venue operators and community partners must be approved by the Management Committee or an authorised club officer.

Members must not communicate with external stakeholders in a way that suggests they are communicating on behalf of the club or a group within the club, including by using the club name, logo, uniform, email address, letterhead or social media identity, unless specifically authorised. Requests for approval should be directed to the Club Captain, Secretary, President or Management Committee using current club contact details.

## Records, privacy and security

The club will take reasonable steps to protect personal information collected or used for communication purposes. Access to member contact lists, mailing lists, online groups, image libraries and administrative accounts will be limited to authorised persons and used only for legitimate club purposes.

Where communication or online content may relate to misconduct, child safety, bullying, harassment, discrimination, a complaint, a safety incident or a legal matter, relevant records should be preserved where practicable, including screenshots, dates, sender details and surrounding context.

## Complaints, concerns and escalation

Members, parents/carers, volunteers and stakeholders are encouraged to raise communication concerns early. Concerns may relate to inappropriate messages, social media conduct, privacy, child safety, image use, bullying, harassment, discrimination, misinformation or unauthorised representation of the club.

Concerns should be reported to the Secretary, President, Club Captain, Member Protection Information Officer or another appropriate club officer. Where required, matters may be referred or reported in accordance with Rowing Australia, Rowing Queensland, Sport Integrity Australia, Queensland child safety, Blue Card, police or other legal requirements.

## Non-compliance

Members, volunteers, coaches, committee members, parents/carers or supporters may face disciplinary action for inappropriate communication or online content, including conduct that harasses, offends, intimidates, humiliates, bullies, discriminates against, victimises, vilifies, grooms, exploits, threatens or endangers another person, or that breaches privacy, child-safety requirements, club rules or governing body policies.

Non-compliance may be managed under the club's constitution, rules, by-laws, code of conduct and disciplinary processes, and may also be referred under relevant Rowing Australia, Rowing Queensland, Sport Integrity Australia, National Integrity Framework,

member protection, safeguarding children and young people, complaints and discipline, Blue Card, child safe organisation, police or other legal processes. Cyberbullying, image-based abuse, threats, grooming, child safety concerns, privacy breaches and defamation may have serious legal consequences.

**Reviewed**: June 2026
**Approved**: July 2026
**Next Review**: June 2028