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Australian Football is a game for ALL Australians.  
The players and fans pictured in this brochure come from  
a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds.



# One game for ALL Australians

**How Australian Football has acted to  
counteract racial and religious abuse**



## One game for ALL Australians

In June 1995 the Australian Football League introduced a new rule to deal with on-field racial and religious vilification. The AFL remains determined to send a strong message to the football community that such behaviour is not acceptable, and, following the 1997 season, upgraded AFL Rule 30 to include new conditions for conciliation, education and confidentiality. The rule has new penalties, and its provisions extend to employees of AFL clubs with on-field access, as well as players.

Under the rule, an umpire, player or club can raise a complaint. Initially the matter is dealt with through confidential conciliation between the persons involved but if it cannot be resolved in that way, it is referred to the AFL Tribunal or the AFL Commission for determination. After a first offence, the AFL Complaints Officer may send any complaint about a player straight to the Tribunal or the AFL Commission.

### Education and conciliation

Racial and religious abuse is best tackled by education and conciliation. Clubs are required to conduct annual education programs for all players, coaches, officials and other employees, with further education required following any attempted resolution through conciliation. The conciliation between persons is held in confidence to give all parties the opportunity to come together face-to-face to resolve their differences with the assistance of a suitable independent person appointed by the AFL Commission upon agreement between the parties. Any person alleged to have contravened the rule, and attending conciliation for the first time (whether the conciliation resolves the issue or not) is required to attend an approved education program in relation to racial and religious vilification. If the conciliation fails, the meeting remains private: nothing said or done during conciliation is used as evidence before the Tribunal or the AFL Commission.

### Penalties

Penalties are to be determined by the AFL Tribunal or AFL Commission. All matters discussed in conciliation hearings are to remain confidential. Any offences under this confidentiality agreement can elicit fines of up to \$20,000 for a first offence, and up to \$40,000 for subsequent offences.

If a complaint is proven at the tribunal or before the AFL Commission, a club can be fined up to \$50,000. Fines will not apply when it is seen that a club has taken all reasonable steps to prevent offences by its employees.



This brochure contains a full script of AFL Rule 30. For further information, contact the AFL Football Administration Manager.

# AFL Rule 30: A rule to combat racial and religious vilification

## 30. RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION

### 30.1 Prohibited Conduct

No person subject to these Rules shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person ("the person vilified") on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

### 30.2 Lodging Complaint

In the event that it is alleged that a person has contravened Rule 30.1 an Umpire, Club or Player may by 5pm on the first working day following the day on which the contravention is alleged to have occurred, lodge a complaint in writing with the person appointed from time to time by the General Manager Football Operations as the Complaints Officer for the purposes of this Rule. The complaint must outline the circumstances of the allegations made against a person.

### 30.3 Complaints Officer

The Complaints Officer shall:

- (a) inform the person alleged to have contravened Rule 30.1 of the complaint and provide that person with an opportunity to respond to it in writing;
- (b) identify and obtain written statements from any available witnesses;
- (c) obtain video or other evidence produced through the media; and
- (d) arrange for the complaint to be conciliated and take all steps necessary for the complaint to be conciliated.

### 30.4 Confidentiality and No Public Comment

Subject to Rule 30.7:-

- (a) the particulars of a complaint and the conciliation shall at all times remain confidential; and
- (b) a person shall not publicly comment on or disseminate to any person information concerning a complaint at any time prior to, during or after the conciliation.

#### Sanction:

IN THE CASE OF A PLAYER:

<b>First offence:</b>	<b>10 units</b>
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<b>Subsequent offences:</b>	<b>20 units</b>
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IN THE CASE OF A CLUB OR OFFICIAL:

<b>First offence:</b>	<b>20 units</b>
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<b>Subsequent offences:</b>	<b>40 units</b>
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### 30.5 Conciliator

A conciliation arranged under Rule 30.3 shall be conducted by the nominee of the General Manager Football Operations.

### 30.6 Attendance at Education Program

- (a) Where:-
  - (i) a person alleged to have contravened Rule 30.1 attends a conciliation for the first time (other than as a person vilified); and
  - (ii) the complaint against the person is resolved at conciliation, the person shall attend an education program conducted by the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria or similar body in another state.
- (b) Where a person employed, engaged or otherwise associated with a Club is required to attend an education program conducted by the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria or similar body in another state, the Club shall pay the costs of that person's attendance.
- (c) A person who fails to attend the education program shall be deemed to have contravened this Rule and shall pay to the AFL a sanction of two units.

### 30.7 Public Statement

Where a complaint is resolved by conciliation, the only public statement that shall be made concerning the complaint and its resolution shall be that agreed upon by the parties.

### 30.8 Unsuccessful Conciliation

Where the Complaints Officer is of the opinion that the matter has not been resolved by conciliation, the Complaints Officer shall:

- (i) in the case of a Player, refer the complaint to the Tribunal to be dealt with as a Reportable Offence; or
- (ii) in the case of any other person, refer the complaint to the Commission to be dealt with under Rule 1.6 of these Rules.

### 30.9 Previous Involvement

- (a) Where a person alleged to have contravened Rule 30.1 has previously taken part in a conciliation (other than as a person vilified), the Complaints Officer may refer the complaint directly to the Tribunal to be dealt with as a Reportable Offence in the case of a Player, or directly to the Commission to be dealt with under Rule 1.6 of these Rules in the case of any other person.
- (b) For the purposes of this Rule, a conciliation includes a conciliation arranged under Rule 30.3 or such other form of conciliation arranged by the AFL or directly between the parties concerned.

### 30.10 Evidence before Tribunal or Commission

In the event that a complaint is referred to the Tribunal or the Commission under this Rule 30, no evidence shall be given to or be accepted by the Tribunal or the Commission relating to anything said or done in any conciliation carried out pursuant to Rule 30.3.

### 30.11 General Manager Football Operations

In the event that a Complaints Officer has not been appointed for the purposes of these Rules or if appointed is for any reason unavailable to act under these Rules the Complaints Officer for the purpose of these Rules shall be the General Manager Football Operations of the AFL.

### 30.12 Referring Complaint

In any case where the Complaints Officer determines to refer the complaint to the Tribunal or the Commission, the complaint shall be referred to the Tribunal or the Commission, as the case may be, as soon as practicable.

### 30.13 Legal Representation

Where a complaint is referred to the Tribunal or the Commission under this Rule, the person alleged to have contravened Rule 30.1 may be represented by a legal practitioner.

### 30.14 Time limit

Any time limit for the doing of anything referred to in this Rule may be extended by the General Manager Football Operations if in his or her opinion it is just and equitable to do so.

### 30.15 Liability of Club

- (a) In the event that a complaint under these Rules in respect of conduct engaged in by a person is found to have been proven by the Tribunal or where the Commission determines that a person the subject of a complaint has been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the AFL, the Club employing, engaging or otherwise associated with the person at the time of the conduct shall be deemed to be vicariously liable, for the conduct of the person and shall be liable to a sanction to be determined by the Commission.

#### Sanction: Up to 50 units

- (b) Rule 30.15 (a) does not apply to a contravention by a person if in the opinion of the Tribunal or the Commission, as the case may be, the Club took all reasonable steps to prevent persons employed, engaged or otherwise associated with the Club from engaging in the conduct which contravened the vilification rules.

### 30.16 Continuous Education

Each Club must:

- (a) ensure that all of its players, coaches, officials and other employees attend any education program organised and conducted by the AFL; and
- (b) maintain and keep a written record of all such attendees, (to be signed by each attendee and the Chief Executive Officer), and provide a copy immediately upon request to the General Manager Football Operations.

#### Sanction: Up to 50 units

### 30.17 False or misleading information

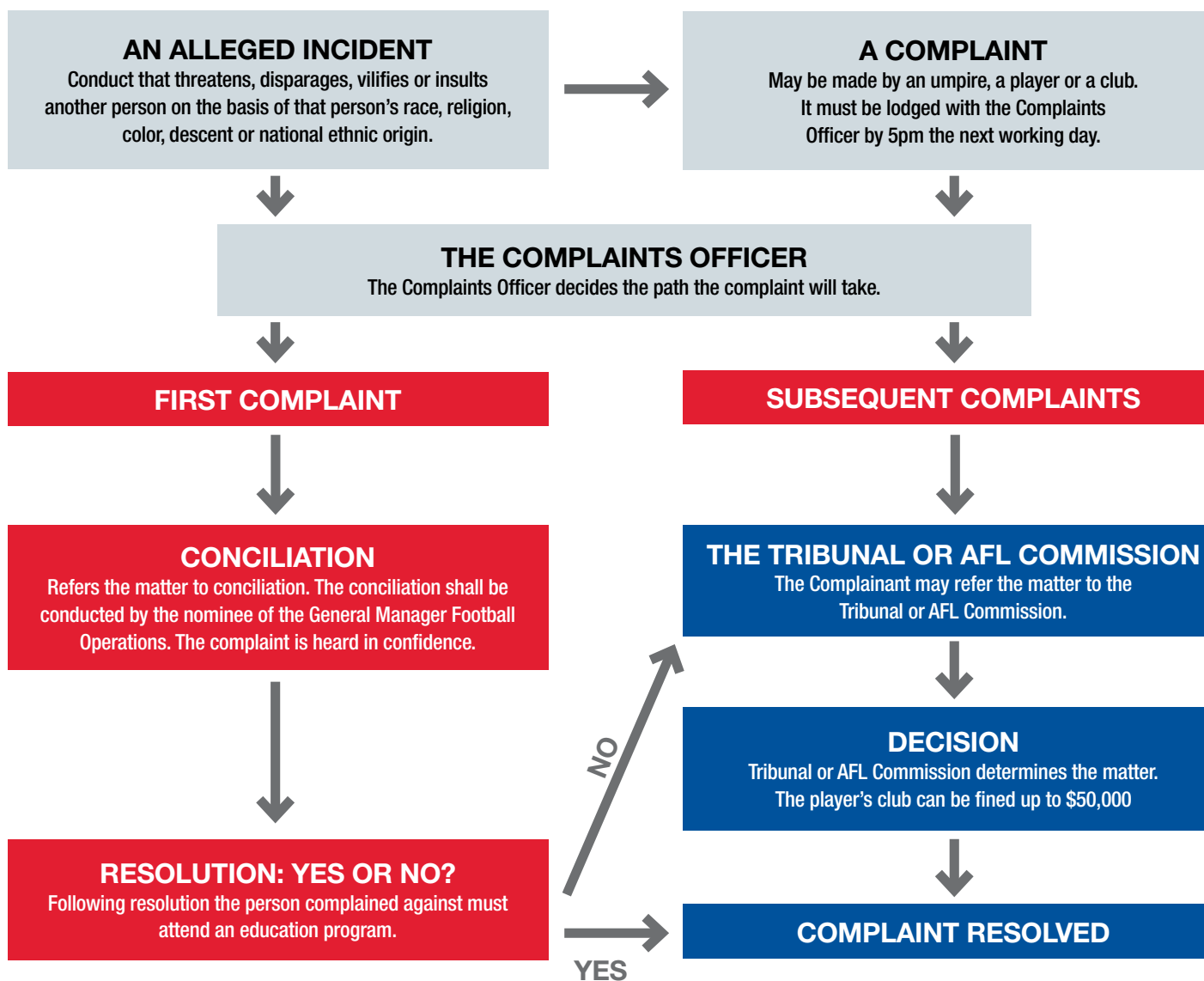
A person who:

- (a) in a complaint lodged under Rule 30.2 or during the conciliation process, provides any information or acts in a manner which is in any respect false or misleading or likely to mislead; or
- (b) falsely accuses a person of breaching Rule 30.1.

Shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the General Manager Football Operations in his absolute discretion.



# AFL Rule 30 in action



- Breaches of confidentiality can incur substantial fines against players, clubs and officials