



**International Sport Federation (IF) recognized by the International Olympic Committee**

*Gianarrigo Rona*  
*President*

WBF NBO Presidents

c/c WBF Zonal Presidents  
WBF Executive Council Members  
WBF Advisory Committee Members  
WBF General Counsel  
WBF Secretary

Milano, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020

To Marie Topp  
President Welsh Bridge Union

Dear Marie

As I have already reported to the Congress, we are facing a very unpleasant and unacceptable situation due to the explosion of online cheating. The image of bridge cannot and must not be deformed and the enjoyment and pleasure given by the game cannot and must not be infected by this vile behaviour.

The WBF, sharing the indignation of the bridge community, reacted with a statement, reaffirming the strong revulsion, the unwavering rejection and the firm condemnation of this kind of aberrant and unacceptable behaviour which, wherever it occurs, causes great harm to bridge and threaten the fairness of our sport.

The WBF reiterated its full support of the players in fighting against cheating and improper behaviour, adopting all measures needed to prevent and to repress these actions.

I am very pleased to inform you that the WBF Management Committee has been working extremely hard on the wording of a new WBF Disciplinary Code. As a result of this the WBF Executive Council, reaffirming its institutional position of Governing Body of Bridge and rejecting any external and



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private interference, at the Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> November unanimously approved the new Code which is attached herewith.

Specific rules, including the appointment of a WBF Investigation Committee to allow the WBF to act and to apply sanctions in cases of improper behaviour, including events organised by third parties (whether in-person or online), whilst of course absolutely respecting the right of everyone to have a fair trial.

Mr Eric Laurant, member of the WBF Executive Council, whose expertise in this specific field is recognised and appreciated worldwide, has been appointed Chairperson of this new Committee, with Ms Georgia Heth, member of the WBF Advisory Committee and President of the ACBL, as Vice-Chairperson.

This Investigation Committee will include legal and technical experts with a panel of top players using their own judgement and the best technology and tools they can obtain.

It must be remembered that in order to be genuinely effective the best rules of any society, of any organisation, need the indispensable and determined support of all its components.

You, the NBOs are the core of our system and your cooperation in translating, publicising and implementing the Disciplinary Code and its principles and rules is essential to enable them to be successful and to achieve the result for which have been provided.

The architecture of the new disciplinary code is such that the NBO is the first official body to undertake the task of investigating any case (excluding the cases of strict competence of the WBF and its Zonal Conferences like the WBF or Zonal events) where one of its player members is accused and then to decide whether to prosecute or not. If your Statutes or Bylaws don't allow you to deal with this sort of cases mainly because the supposed offense occurred during a third party event (for example online), or if you prefer to choose a different channel, then the WBF will have the discretion to ~~be~~ decide its involvement and determine the follow up.

One of the fundamental principles of any law is that it must be known by all recipients. In our case the WBF will activate all its communications channels, but it's not enough and thus it is absolutely essential that every NBO uses all the communication tools available to it to reach its individual members, and make them aware of the Code and its conditions.



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For the sake of bridge, the game that we all love so much, zero tolerance has always been our motto and guideline: from now on this unquestionable principle will be reinforced online (with the cooperation of the platforms) as well as off-line. We all want a clean game leading to a popular sport respecting all the ethics.

Being more than confident that you will share our conviction, I remain at your disposal to clarify and help, especially with our experts if you have to modify your own disciplinary process and I am looking forward to meeting you in person as soon as this awful Covid-19 crisis will be over.

Un abbraccio  
Gianarrigo



**GAISF**



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