

INTERNAL CONFLICT

Background

Volunteers are energetic, interesting, good-natured people. The idea of conflict and bullying doesn't fit well. Surprisingly, it is a big issue and can be a part of any organisation when a variety of people are brought together who are all passionate and wanting to contribute.

Whether it is volunteer/staff relations that are causing tension or volunteers amongst themselves who are disagreeing, it is important that problems are brought to light early and resolved using the correct process and procedures.

For the purpose of this policy, internal conflict is defined as a serious dispute arising between volunteers, staff or Committee of Management that threatens the operation of Alpine FM.

Common reasons for conflict include:

1. You may be having trouble understanding someone else's perspective on a radio issue, e.g. programming, on air presenting, policy interpretation.
2. You may disagree with how the radio station's rules, guidelines, procedures or program allocations are being implemented.
3. You may feel that other members are dismissing new ideas or being unresponsive.
4. Your needs may conflict with someone else's at the radio station.
5. You may be experiencing discomfort about changes being introduced at the radio station.
6. You may not be happy about how someone is treating you.
7. You may be feeling stressed or angry about something that causes you to be confrontational.
8. You may have different beliefs and values to someone else.

Conflict can also occur when conflicts of interest arise from Alpine FM's involvement and/or relations with similar or competing organisations; in situations that place at risk the professional reputation of Alpine FM or its members; or any other matter deemed as inappropriate or unacceptable for the professional good of Alpine FM.

Purpose

Community radio is required to follow a Code of Practice dedicated to managing conflicts within station. Community Radio Code of Practice #1 (1.6) requires all stations to have a policy for internal dispute resolution.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for Alpine FM members to express grievances, dissatisfaction and concerns with the volunteer program or organisation and to have their grievances heard, respected and dealt with in a professional, efficient and fair manner.

These policies and procedures are for and apply to presenters, volunteers, staff and Committee of Management.

You are required to comply with the policies and procedures outlined below.

Policy

Alpine FM is committed to ensuring:

1. the rights of its members with respect to the above;
2. that members are aware of the internal dispute and grievances policy, and
3. that the internal dispute and grievances procedure is easily accessible.

While Alpine FM grievances and disputes procedure is outlined in this document, it is important to note that Alpine FM's Constitution (the rules) defines the stages that must be followed at Division 3—Grievance procedure.

Our approach to resolving conflict

1. Parties to a dispute must attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves within 14 days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party.
2. If unable to resolve the dispute between themselves within 14 days, the parties must contact the CoM or Station Manager within 10 days.
3. The Station Manager is responsible for managing the internal conflict process.
4. If there is a conflict of interest or the Manager is subject of or party to the internal conflict the dispute is directed to the President of the Committee of Management.
5. The Manager with another Committee of Management member/Volunteer Wellbeing Coordinator will lead the people involved through the conflict at a meeting to hopefully resolve the issue and prevent it from escalating.

Alpine FM Grievance and Dispute procedure

If the grievance has not been able to be resolved at a meeting with the Manager and the parties involved, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Details of complaint/grievance/dispute to be sent in writing to the Station Manager or Secretary. Please note that personal email addresses of station staff and management are not to be used by volunteers to lodge complaints,

grievances or disputes. Instead, please write to manager@alpineradio.com.au and the Station Manager will ensure the Secretary is informed.

2. A meeting will be convened to be held between disputants and the Station Manager with one other Committee of Management (CoM) member also to be present within 14 days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party.
3. If the matter is still unresolved after the above process, then the matter may be brought before a full CoM meeting.
4. If all the above procedures still fail to achieve resolution, then outside mediation may be sought. If this is the case then the disputants may be required to equally share the costs of such mediation with Alpine FM.
5. Refer to the rules for further guidance as appropriate.
6. The above conflict resolution procedures are only to be used in the case of genuine friction or conflict between individuals or groups within the structure of Alpine FM. These procedures are not to be used to reverse programming decisions, broadcasting or sponsorship decisions made by Alpine FM.


Related documents

Alpine FM Constitution (the rules) – Division 3 Grievance Procedure

Alpine FM Volunteering Policy

Alpine FM Internal Conflict Fact Sheet

Policy updates

Version Control	Date Amended	Author
Version 2.0	19 August 2024	Helen McDougall
Version 0.3 Approver Nick Brown	17 November 2018	Linda Parkinson
Approver name and position: Michael Ahearn, Station Manager	Signature: 	
Date of approval: 19 August 2024		
Review date 19 August 2025		