



Online Internal Appeal Panel Orientation
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February 2013

Appeal panel members are entrusted with decisions that will likely affect members of their sport organizations and may even have a significant impact on their sport. The SDRCC recognizes that, in the Canadian sport system, internal appeal panels are often comprised of volunteers who are not always familiar with conducting appeal hearings. Members of the sport community have expressed on several occasions the need for better information and resources on the internal appeal process and the challenges they face in recruiting volunteers to act as appeal panel members. In an effort to support the sport community in better managing sports-related disputes, and as a part of its mission under the *Physical Activity and Sport Act* to “provide expertise and assistance regarding alternative dispute resolution” to the sport community, the SDRCC gladly took on the challenge of developing an Online Internal Appeal Panel Orientation.

The objective of the initiative is to provide a free, simple, general orientation that is accessible online to all members of the Canadian sport community, from sport clubs to national sport organizations. The purpose of the orientation program is to provide, to current and future panel members, information on the appeal process and on the role of an appeal panel member. It will be offered in 5 short thematic units of approximately 6 to 8 minutes each, with interactive scenarios and questions and answers (see text box for an outline of each unit).

While this program is not intended to be comprehensive nor does it constitute a skills development tool, it will be an excellent starting point to help individuals identify the areas in which they may require more information and it will refer to additional resources that may assist in their preparation to conduct an appeal process.

The SDRCC wishes to take this opportunity to thank the members of its Working Group who have collaborated in the development of the content for this initiative. ■

Overview of topics discussed in the orientation program:

Unit 1 – Fairness in Decision Making

- Procedural fairness (natural justice);
- Conflict of interest.

Unit 2 – Case Management

- The basics of the internal appeal process;
- The importance of the timelines and deadlines;
- Document filing.

Unit 3 – The Hearing

- The different formats of a hearing;
- The standard structure of a hearing.

Unit 4 – The Decision

- Principles in the decision-making process;
- Major components of the written decision;
- A proposed structure for the written decision.

Unit 5 – The Human Factor

- Maintaining relationships between parties once a dispute is resolved;
- Respecting differences and reducing intimidation;
- Managing your stress during the decision process.