# AUSTRALIAN OPEN TEAM PLAYOFF
# SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS 2027


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## 1 General

1.1 The 2027 Australian Open Team Playoffs (OP) are conducted by the ABF in accordance with the ABF Tournament Regulations (ABF TR) as augmented by these Supplementary Regulations.

1.2 The venue is the Canberra Bridge Club, 5-7 Duff Place, Deakin, ACT.

1.3 The Playoff dates are 12-17 December, 2026. Depending on the number of entries, all teams may not be required to attend for all days. See Event Format - Section 12 - for details.

1.4 Players must use the methods and equipment in the manner specified by the Tournament Organiser (TO). Players must record the score for each board after it is played and before the commencement of the next board. It is an offence to leave the table at the conclusion of a match without first confirming the completeness and validity of the data entered into the scoring unit. Every player present at the table is equally responsible for the accuracy of the scores.

1.5 Smoking is not permitted in any areas defined as non-smoking by the Canberra Bridge Club. In addition during a stanza, smoking is not permitted by any players currently playing. Breach of this regulation incurs a disciplinary penalty (see 6.2).

1.6 Consumption of alcohol is not permitted in the playing room during session time. Breach of this regulation incurs a disciplinary penalty (see 6.2).

1.7 During the session, any electronic communication equipment is prohibited in the playing area and other areas designated by the TO. Any such equipment may be deposited with the TO before each session. Breach of this regulation incurs a disciplinary penalty (see 6.2).

1.8 All requests for information about the auction or any alerted call must be made with the screen closed. They are made to, and responded to, by the screenmate in writing. A claim of misinformation should be supported by written evidence. Failure to do so may invalidate any claim of damage. Any spoken enquiries or responses which result in another table being unable to play a board due to the receipt of extraneous information will incur a disciplinary penalty (see 6.2).

1.9 Players are reminded of their obligation to not pass information to other tables via audible post-mortems or discussions. Repeated breaches of this regulation may incur a disciplinary penalty. Notwithstanding this, any audible discussion which results in another table being unable to play a board due to the receipt of extraneous information will incur a disciplinary penalty (see 6.2).

1.10 The TO may grant permission for still or moving photographs to be taken during the course of the event. Players may only refuse to be photographed for religious or cultural reasons deemed valid by the TO or CTD. In accordance with ABF Tournament Committee (ABF TC) policy, it is proposed to video record all tables.

1.11 Times referred to in these regulations refer to Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) or Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) as appropriate and in use in Canberra on the date specified.

1.12 Players must conform with the Dress Code of the Canberra Bridge Club.

1.13 Expressions used in these Regulations and not defined shall have their ordinary meaning in bridge terminology (which may include expressions defined in the Laws of Duplicate Bridge, 2017). In the event of any doubt or dispute as to such meaning, the decision of the Chief Tournament Director (CTD) shall be final and conclusive. Unless repugnant to the context or obvious meaning, all terms defined in the ABF TR shall have the same meaning for the purpose of these Supplementary Regulations.

## 2 Officials

2.1 The Tournament Organisers are Wendy Boxall and Judith Tobin.

2.2 The Chief Tournament Director is Laurie Kelso.

2.3 The Reviewer is Matthew McManus.

2.4 The ABF on site representative is TBA.

## 3 Entry

3.1 On entry, teams must nominate as either 2 or 3 pairs. These pairs will be defined as Nominated Pairs. A Nominated Pair must play in partnership for at least 50% of the stanzas in every match played. Provided a system card has been submitted in accordance with Section 5 hereunder, alternative partnerships will be permitted.

3.2 Only pairs who have at least one Partnership Playoff Qualifying Point (PQP) in the Open category are eligible to enter. PQP ranking will be based on the published PQP list as at October 31. https://www.abfevents.com.au/events/playoffs/2027/open/partnerships.asp#pan

3.3 All players in the team must be eligible to play for Australia as per the ABF's Eligibility to represent Australia Policy detailed in the appendices. Players entering the Playoff warrant their eligibility to play for Australia. If, at any time after the completion of the Playoffs, any member of a team is found not to be eligible, the team in which the player competed will be disqualified.

3.4 All players in the team declare their intention to represent Australia in the Target Event (Section 10 hereunder).

3.5 At the time of entry, each entrant must be a financial member of the ABF Masterpoint Scheme and of an organisation affiliated to the ABF or to an Australian State Bridge organisation.

3.6 Once a player is entered in a team they are prohibited from withdrawing and entering in another team.

3.7 By entering, the team if accepted becomes liable for the entry fee, regardless of whether they actually participate.

3.8 By entering, the team undertakes to abide by the General and Supplementary Regulations for the tournament.

3.9 Each team entered must designate a captain, either playing or non-playing. The following are specifically excluded from accepting the role of non-playing captain:
i. members of the ABF Board,
ii. members of the ABF Tournament Committee,
iii. any person holding an official position at the event.

3.10 No player may nominate for more than one team.

3.11 Nominations must be submitted via the ABF Webpage between Monday November 2 and 6.00 pm, Friday November 20.

3.12 Nominating teams are ranked according to the net PQPs of all members of the team. Ties are broken by using PQPs from the previous year, then by lot. A maximum of eight teams will be accepted into the Playoff.

3.13 All qualifying teams will be listed in ranked order on the Playoffs website on Saturday, November 21.

3.14 Following the close of entries (but not before that time), a team which entered with two pairs may augment an additional pair by advising the TO prior to 6.00 pm, Friday November 27. The augmented pair must satisfy all eligibility requirements detailed in these regulations and the team captain must satisfy the requirements for submission of system cards as detailed in 5.2. The augmentation of a pair will not change the ranking of the teams.

3.15 The entry fee will be $2,340 per team, irrespective of how far the team progresses. It is a requirement that players have sufficient funds in their MyABF account or have auto-top up enabled to cover all entry fees. The initial entry fee will be charged on December 12. By entering, a player authorises the ABF to charge the entry fee to their MyABF account. (Alternatively, the team may nominate one player on the team from whose account all entry fees will be deducted.)

3.16 Interstate players coming to Canberra will receive a travel subsidy from the ABF. These subsidies will be paid after the event has commenced. The player may elect to have them paid either by bank transfer or MyABF credits. Youth players are entitled to a 50% rebate on entry fees. Their MyABF account will be charged the standard rate. At the conclusion of the event, the 50% rebate will be paid by bank transfer or as MyABF credits, together with any travel subsidy. A table showing the interstate player travel subsidies will be found here:
https://www.abfevents.com.au/events/playoffs/2027/open/index.asp#fees

## 4 Substitutions

4.1 Substitution shall be permitted only for cause such as illness or personal emergency, not for convenience.

4.2 All substitutes must be approved in advance by the CTD. The CTD has sole discretion to approve any substitute. The CTD will weigh all factors, including the standard of the substitute, previous partnership experience, and the number of sessions for which the substitute is proposed to be used. Player eliminated from previous stages of the event may substitute. To act as a substitute a player must meet the eligibility criteria.

4.3 Substitutes will only be permitted if the team is unable to field two Nominated Pairs. If two Nominated Pairs are available to play, no substitutes will be allowed. The maximum number of substitutes permitted in a stanza is one. If a team has fewer than three of their original members available for any stanza, the team will forfeit the match.

## 5 Systems and Defences

5.1 GREEN, BLUE, RED and YELLOW systems, and BROWN STICKER conventions are permitted.

5.2 Team captains are responsible for ensuring that the system cards are lodged for each nominated pair. In addition, a system card must be lodged if a variation of the partnerships nominated under 3.1 is intended. A maximum of 4 system cards may be submitted for any team. The current electronic ABF Standard System Card must be used.

5.2.1 System cards must be uploaded to the event website prior to 6.00 pm, Friday November 27. Failure to lodge system cards in time will incur a penalty of 5 IMPs per day (or part thereof) per pair, up to a maximum of 35 IMPs per pair in the first match in which the team plays. For the purpose of this regulation, a day will be measured from 6.00 pm on each successive day. Failure to upload a card for every pair prior to 6.00 pm, Monday November 30 will result in the team being disqualified.

5.2.2 Uploaded system cards will be vetted by the National Event Co-ordinator (NEC). System cards that require amendment must be resubmitted to the NEC prior to 6.00 pm, December 4. Penalties for breach of this clause may be imposed at the discretion of the NEC.

5.3 If a pair other than one nominated under 3.1 competes or if a player competes with an approved substitute, the partnership must either play a system which has been submitted as per 5.2 or a system which the CTD considers is sufficiently natural as to cause no disadvantage to the opposition through lack of previous disclosure.

## 6 Disciplinary and Procedural Penalties

6.1 The general provisions of ABF TR 10 concerning punctuality and slow play apply. The table of penalties is listed in the Appendices.

6.2 The disciplinary penalty for breaches of regulations 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 or 1.9 is 9 IMPs.

6.3 Teams are expected to complete at least six stanzas of every match played. If a team concedes or does not present for play before six stanzas are completed, the team will forfeit any PQPs earnt, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## 7 Correction Period, Time to request a Review

7.1 A session is defined as any stanza of play after which there is comparison of scores by the players, except when the next stanza is scheduled to commence within 30 minutes of the scheduled finishing time of the previous stanza. In such a case, the session is defined as the time from the commencement of the first stanza to the end of the second stanza.

7.2 The Correction Period (Law 79C) expires:
i. for the last stanza of a match, 30 minutes after the scores for that stanza are made available for inspection;
ii. for other stanzas, 15 minutes before the commencement of the next session.

7.3 The time to request a review of the Director's ruling (Law 92B) expires 30 minutes after the ruling was delivered or 30 minutes after the conclusion of the session in which the ruling was delivered, whichever is later.

## 8 Seating, Carry-over, Scoring

8.1 In each match, the higher ranked team elects to sit first or last for the first stanza. For subsequent stanzas, the order of seating alternates.

8.2 The team captain is responsible for posting the seating positions of the players on the Line-up Form together with the system being played if more than one has been submitted. Posting must be completed at least 10 minutes and 5 minutes before the scheduled time of commencement of play, for the teams sitting first and last respectively. The CTD may alter posting times at their discretion.

8.3 The penalties for failure to post seating as required are loss of seating rights for that stanza and:
1st offence – warning,
2nd offence – 3 IMPs,
3rd and subsequent offences – 6 IMPs per offence.

8.4 In all matches, the higher ranked team will carry-forward 0.1 IMPs.

8.5 All matches are scored by IMPs, with any fraction of an IMP constituting a win.

## 9 Board Rule

9.1 A team is eligible to progress to the next match and to represent Australia only if each member of the team plays at least four stanzas in each match. In addition, each Nominated Pair defined in 3.1 must play in partnership in at least four stanzas in each match.

9.2 Notwithstanding 9.1, if a player is unavailable with due cause, the CTD may deem that Nominated Pair to have fulfilled the Board Rule and allow the team to progress to the next match. The CTD may ask for medical certificates or other documentary evidence to satisfy themself as to the nature and severity of any illness or injury.

9.3 In addition to 9.1, when a Nominated Pair fails to satisfy the Board Rule, the ABF Board, in its absolute discretion, following a report from the CTD and ABF TC, determines the eligibility of the player, the pair, and the team. Consideration is given first to disqualification of the entire team. This decision is made subsequent to the completion of the event and does not change the format of the event.

9.4 Boards played by an approved substitute (Section 4) count towards fulfilment of the Board Rule for the original player.

9.5 For the purpose of the Board Rule, where a match is conceded, players and pairs in the winning team who have not yet satisfied the Board Rule are deemed to have played every remaining stanza of the match. This regulation shall also apply to the conceding team provided at least six stanzas were completed.

## 10 Target Events and Representation

10.1 The Target Event is the Zone 7 Playoff (time and venue to be advised) leading to the WBF World Championships to be held in Barbados from August 24 to September 4.

10.2 The team is subject to ratification by the ABF Board.

10.3 Ranking order for the right to represent Australia in the target event will be:
i) the team winning the Final;
ii) the team defeated in the Final;
iii) the losing semi-finalist ranked higher on PQPs on entry to the Playoff;
iv) the other semi-finalist.

10.4 Except in circumstances as determined by the ABF Board, at its sole discretion, if sufficient members of the team do not accept the offer such that only one Nominated Partnership remains, the offer will pass to the next ranked team. If a team contains only two Nominated Partnerships, a third pair will be added to the team in accordance with the provisions of Section 11 hereunder.

10.5 Teams winning and/or accepting a place to play in WBF events confirm through such acceptance their knowledge and understanding of the WBF Dress and Drug Codes and regulations and the severe penalties for breaches of such regulations and codes. In summary The WBF Dress Code requires players to be dressed in team uniforms for all formal occasions and all play sessions.

10.6 The winning team will also be eligible to represent Australia at the APBF Championships expected to be held in the Philippines in April or May, 2027.

10.7 The ABF Board has set subsidies for both the APBF Championships and the WBF Championships. Details can be found at: https://www.abfevents.com.au/events/playoffs/2027/open/index.asp#target

## 11 Withdrawal, Disqualification, Augmentation and Replacement

11.1 Following the close of entries and prior to 6.00 pm on Monday November 30, a qualifying team of six may apply to the ABF TC to alter the team under 11.1.1 or 11.1.2, retaining two of the original three Nominated Pairs. Such application must be based on substantial cause, such as illness or personal emergency. Teams will be re-ranked as per 3.12 on the basis of the PQPs of the two remaining original Nominated Pairs. Should the ranking of the team now be lower than eighth, the team will be deemed to have withdrawn and 11.2 or 11.3 will be applied.

11.1.1 The team may apply to reduce to a team of four and PQP's will be recalculated based on the two Nominated Pairs. Should the ranking of the team now be lower than eighth, the team will be deemed to have withdrawn and 11.2 or 11.3 will be applied..

11.1.2 The team may apply to replace a Nominated Pair. Members of the replacement pair must satisfy 3.2 and may include a member of the original Nominated Pair, but may not include a player who has previously entered in a qualifying or non-qualifying team. The NEC must be advised of any replacement pair prior to 6.00 pm, Wednesday December 9. If a system card of the replacement pair has not been submitted prior to 6.00 pm, Wednesday December 9, the CTD, at their sole discretion, may prevent the amended pair from playing in the first and/or second stanza of the Quarter Final.

11.1.3 Subject to 11.3, following a successful application under 11.1.1 or 11.1.2, any elections already made under 12.3 will be voided, and new choices will be made in a time frame as determined by the CTD.

11.1.4 If the team fails to comply with the provisions of 11.1.1 or 11.1.2 or if the ABF TC rejects the application to make an alteration, the team will be deemed to have withdrawn. 11.2 or 11.3 will be applied as appropriate.

11.2 Where, after entries are closed but before December 7, a team is disqualified or withdraws, the highest ranked team which entered but failed to qualify to play in the event (if any) will be invited to play. The team must indicate their intention within 24 hours of the invitation being given.

11.2.1 In accepting the invitation offered under 11.2, the invited team must warrant to comply with the system card submission requirements of 5.2 within 24 hours. Should they fail to do so, the CTD, at their sole discretion, may require offending pairs to play a system which the CTD deems does not require significant preparation or discussion by the opponents. This restriction shall apply for the first and second stanzas of the Quarter Final.

11.2.2 Whether or not such an invitation is accepted, any elections made under 12.3 will be voided, and new choices will be made in a time frame as determined by the CTD.

11.3 After November 9, all elections made under 12.3 will stand. Any team which was drawn to play against a team which has withdrawn or is disqualified will be deemed to have won their match. If the withdrawing team had qualified directly to the Semi-Finals, the team which lost its quarter-final match by the smallest margin will qualify to the Semi-Final. In order, losing teams will be ranked according to i) IMP difference; ii) IMP quotient; iii) PQP ranking.

11.4 Where a team, having qualified to the next match of the event, voluntarily withdraws or is disqualified through failure to meet the Board Rule or for any other reason under the laws, the team will be replaced by the team it defeated in the previous match.

11.5 Where a team of four has won the right to represent Australia in a designated event, whether having entered the Playoffs as a team of two Nominated Pairs or having become a team of two Nominated Pairs following the withdrawal of a Nominated Pair permitted by the ABF Board under 10.4, they must augment a third pair.

11.5.1 The team shall suggest a pair to be added to the for consideration by the ABF TC.

11.5.2 The suggested pair must have participated in the OP as a Nominated Pair and must have satisfied the Board Rule in all stages in which their team played.

11.5.3 The suggestion under clause 11.5.1 shall include a brief summary of the pair's experience (as a partnership) and of their most recent achievements. A statement from each nominee confirming their availability for the respective target event must also be included.

11.5.4 The suggestion under clause 11.5.1 must be submitted to the Chairman of the ABF TC within 10 days of the conclusion of the Playoffs. The ABF TC, at its sole discretion, may reject the team's suggestion under clause 11.5.1 and ask the team for a new suggestion. The team will have 2 days to submit a new suggestion, complying with 11.5.2, and 11.5.3. If the ABF TC, at its sole discretion, rejects the teams second suggestion clause 11.5.5 will apply. The ABF TC will then make a recommendation to the ABF Board for endorsement.

11.5.5 If the suggestion under clause 11.5.1 is not received within 10 days, or 2 days following rejection of the first suggested pair, or the ABF TC rejects both suggested pairs the ABF TC may make a recommendation to the ABF Board on the basis of its own judgement.

## 12 Event format

12.1 Provided at least 5 teams enter the Playoff, all matches will be over 120 boards, played in 8 stanzas of 15. Four stanzas will be played on each day. The session times each day will be:

9.30 am - 11.38 am
11.50 am - 1.58 pm
2.30 pm - 4.38 pm
4.50 pm - 6.58 pm

12.2 The teams will be ranked as per 3.12, and will be then designated as Team 1, Team 2, etc. After each match, the remaining teams will again be ranked as per 3.12 and re-designated as Team 1, Team 2, etc.

12.3 The format will be determined by the number of entries:

12.3.1 3 entries – The teams will play a double round robin of 28 board matches, played in 14 board stanzas in a three-way Triangle format. Each match will be scored using the WBF Victory Point scale. The two leading teams will qualify to the Final. Length of event – 4 days.

12.3.2 4 entries – The four teams will play a double round robin of 20 board matches. Each match will be scored using the WBF Victory Point scale. The two leading teams will qualify to the Final. Length of event – 4 days.

12.3.3 5 entries – Teams 1, 2 and 3 qualify directly to the Semi-Finals. Teams 4 and 5 will play off in a Quarter-Final match. At the conclusion of the Quarter-Final, Team 1 chooses its Semi-Final opponent from amongst the remaining teams, with the proviso that Team 2 may elect not to be chosen. Teams 1, 2 and 3 need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2. Length of event – 6 days.

12.3.4 6 entries – Teams 1 and 2 qualify directly to the Semi-Finals. Teams 3 to 6 will play off in two Quarter-Final matches. Team 3 chooses its Quarter-Final match opponent from amongst Teams 4 to 6 with the proviso that Team 4 may elect not to be chosen. At the conclusion of the Quarter-Finals, Team 1 then chooses its Semi-Final opponent from amongst the remaining teams, with the proviso that Team 2 may elect not to be chosen. Teams with a bye need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2. Length of event – 6 days.

12.3.5 7 entries – Team 1 may choose to have a bye through to the Semi-Finals. Otherwise, Team 1 chooses its Quarter-Final opponent from amongst Teams 2 to 7 with the proviso that Teams 2 and 3 may elect not to be chosen. If not taken by Team 1, Team 2 may choose to have a bye through to the Semi-Finals. Otherwise, Team 2 chooses its Quarter-Final opponent from amongst the remaining teams with the proviso that Team 3 may elect not to be chosen. Team 3 then selects its opponent from the remaining teams or to have a bye if that option has not been selected by Teams 1 or 2. At the conclusion of the Quarter-Finals, Team 1 chooses its Semi-Final opponent from amongst the winning teams, with the proviso that Team 2 may elect not to be chosen. The team with a bye need not attend the venue on days 1 and 2. Length of event – 6 days.

12.3.6 8 entries – Team 1 chooses its Quarter-Final opponent from amongst Teams 2 to 8 with the proviso that Teams 2 and 3 may elect not to be chosen. Then Team 2 selects its opponent from the remaining teams with the proviso that Team 3 may elect not to be chosen. Then Team 3 selects its opponent from the remaining teams. At the conclusion of the Quarter-Finals, Team 1 chooses its Semi-Final opponent from amongst the winning teams, with the proviso that Team 2 may elect not to be chosen. Length of event – 6 days.

12.4 Choice of opponent.

12.4.1 Where a team is chosen by a higher ranked team and would otherwise have had a choice of opponent for the same match, the right to choice of opponent for that match will devolve to the next highest ranked team. The right to elect not to be chosen will not pass to lower ranked teams.

12.4.2 Where a team has either a choice of opponent or the option of not being chosen, the team captain must advise the CTD of the team's intentions prior to the times set out in 12.4.3. Failure to do so will result in either: (i) loss of right to declare itself unavailable for selection by a higher ranked team; or (ii) where the team would normally have a choice of opponent, the team being drawn against the lowest ranked available team for the following match.

12.4.3 Initial choice deadlines:
i) Option for Team 3 (7 entries), Team 4 (6 entries), Teams 2 and 3 (8 entries) to elect not to be chosen - 6.00 pm, Friday, December 4;
ii) Choice of opponents: Team 1 (4 or 8 entries), Team 2 (7 entries) or Team 3 (6 entries) - 6.00 pm, Sunday, December 6;
iii) Option for Team 3 (8 entries) to elect not to be chosen – 12 noon, Monday, December 7;
iv) Choice of opponents: Team 2 (8 entries) or Team 3 (7 entries) - 6.00 pm, Monday, December 7;
v) Choice of opponents: Team 3 (8 entries) – 6.00 pm, Tuesday, December 8.

12.4.4 Choices following Quarter-Finals:
i) Option to elect not to be chosen - 30 minutes after the conclusion of the last completed Quarter-Final match;
ii) Choice of opponents - 60 minutes after the conclusion of the last completed Quarter-Final match.
The CTD may alter these times at their discretion.

## Appendices

### Penalties for Late Arrival or Slow Play

| | |
|---|---|
| 0-5 mins | warning for first offence, then 3 IMPs for each subsequent offence |
| 5-10 mins | 3 IMPs |
| 10-15 mins | 6 IMPs |
| 15-20 mins | 9 IMPs |
| 20-30 mins | 15 IMPs |

For late arrival in excess of 30 minutes, the CTD may assess a more severe penalty including forfeiture of the match and/or disqualification from the event.

When boards are cancelled by the director due to a failure to complete them on time and a slow play warning has previously been issued to a team, the following penalties may be applied at the director's discretion:

| | |
|---|---|
| One board | 3 IMPs |
| Subsequent boards | 6 IMPs |

### Anticipated Finishing Time

The following times are provided solely as a guide to players and may change due to circumstances beyond the control of the TO:

| | |
|---|---|
| Quarter-Finals | 7.00 pm, Sunday, December 13 |
| Semi-Finals | 7.00 pm, Tuesday, December 15 |
| Finals | 7.00 pm, Thursday, December 17 |

**Eligibility to represent Australia**

Only financial members of the ABF Masterpoint Scheme, both at the time of the OP and of the Target Event, are eligible.

An eligible person must also be able to establish one or more of the following:

a. is eligible to hold an Australian passport and demonstrably regards Australia as their home, even though they might spend much of their time working overseas;
b. is an Australian citizen enrolled on the Australian federal and/or Australian State/Territory electoral roll(s);
c. is of dual citizenship (holds an Australian passport and the passport of another country) and demonstrably regards Australia as home, even though they might spend much of their time working overseas;
d. is of any nationality and holds a current Australian visa issued for a period of not less than three years and demonstrably regards Australia as their principal place of residence, even though they might spend much of their time working overseas;
e. is a current temporary resident, and can satisfy the ABF Board that they will be eligible to, and is in the process of becoming, a permanent Australian resident;
f. is of a nationality that does not require an Australian visa to reside in Australia and demonstrably regards Australia as home;
g. is of a nationality that does not require an Australian visa to work in Australia and demonstrably earns a significant proportion of their livelihood in Australia.

In WBF events WBF regulations relating to a player's eligibility to represent Australia will prevail.

Any players (including youth players) who seek to represent another NBO in an international (target) event in a calendar year are ineligible to seek (via an Australian Playoff) to represent Australia in the same target event in the same calendar year.

In the case of dispute, interpretation of these regulations is at the absolute discretion of the ABF Board. Any player in doubt about their eligibility to represent Australia must seek clarification from the Chairman of the ABF TC on or before 28 October, 2024. The Chairman may in turn seek guidance from the ABF Board.