SINGAPORE CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

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POLICY TITLE: SCBA CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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1. Purpose and application

- This Policy promotes fair and transparent decisions in SCBA's interests.
- It applies to Board and committee members, employees, and anyone exercising decision-making authority on SCBA's behalf, including coaches, tournament officials and volunteers.
- A conflict of interest arises when a personal, competitive, financial or organisational interest could affect, or could reasonably appear to affect a person's impartiality.
- Having a conflict is not itself misconduct. The person must disclose it and follow the steps agreed to manage it.
- SCBA's Constitution and applicable law take precedence. This Policy does not override existing selection, disciplinary or financial procedures, or permit an otherwise prohibited arrangement.

2. Interests requiring disclosure

- Any interest that could affect impartiality shall be disclosed, including interests involving:
    - The person concerned, a family member or close associate.
    - A regular bridge partner, teammate or student.
    - The person's employer, business, club or academy.
    - A competitor or someone with whom the person has a significant personal dispute.
- Relevant decisions may concern selection, seeding, funding, paid services, contracts or club benefits.
- Playing bridge, belonging to a club or knowing another player does not automatically create a conflict.
- A Board member's participation in bridge does not by itself require withdrawal from decisions on general competition policies. They may participate in setting general rules that apply consistently to all eligible participants, provided any relevant interests are disclosed.
- Withdrawal is required where a decision concerns the member's own selection, eligibility, seeding, funding or appeal, or could provide a specific advantage or disadvantage to the member, their partner or team. This includes changes to general rules that have such an effect.

3. Making a declaration

- The **S**ecretary General or meeting chair must be informed promptly, before the relevant discussion, assignment or decision. Any new or changed interests must be disclosed as they arise. If that person is also conflicted, this must be delegated to another Board member or committee member without a conflict.
- Board members and employees must complete a declaration on appointment and annually, even if there are no interests to declare.
- Other persons covered by this Policy shall disclose interests when a relevant matter arises. No annual form is required.

- A disclosure recorded in meeting minutes or made by email is sufficient for an individual matter. No additional form is required.
- An annual declaration does not replace disclosure before a relevant decision.

4. Managing a conflict of interest

- Board or committee members without a conflict will decide how the matter will be handled. Routine matters may be handled by an officer without a conflict, within their existing authority.
- No person may decide how their own conflict is managed.
- A person with a conflict must:
    - Withdraw from the affected discussion and decision, including voting.
    - Refrain from influencing the outcome privately, including through email or messaging.
    - Provide factual information only if requested and permitted by the Constitution, before withdrawing.
- If the Secretary General or meeting chair has a conflict, the remaining members without a conflict shall appoint another person to chair that matter.
- No person may approve their own appointment, fees or expense claims.

5. Handling of gifts and SCBA resources

- These requirements apply to Board members, management, employees and anyone making decisions or carrying out official duties on SCBA's behalf. They cover gifts or hospitality offered in connection with those duties, rather than personal gifts or social hospitality unrelated to SCBA.
- Modest, customary gifts or hospitality valued at S$250 or less per recipient per occasion may be accepted without a separate declaration, provided they do not affect, or reasonably appear to affect, impartiality.
- Gifts or hospitality valued above S$250 must be declared promptly after receipt to the Secretary General or another Board member without a conflict. The declaration must be recorded in SCBA's existing governance files.
- Regardless of value, acceptance must not compromise, or reasonably appear to compromise, impartiality. Declaration does not automatically permit a gift to be retained.
- A Board member without a conflict shall determine the appropriate action following a declaration. SCBA may require a gift to be returned. The decision and brief reasons shall be recorded by email or in meeting minutes.
- Repeated offers from the same source must be declared where their frequency or combined value could reasonably raise concerns about impartiality.
- The following must not be accepted, regardless of value:
    - Personal cash gifts or cash equivalents.
    - Benefits intended or reasonably likely to influence an SCBA decision.
- Properly approved fees, expense reimbursements, prizes awarded under published competition rules, and donations received on SCBA's behalf are not personal gifts under this section. They remain subject to SCBA's applicable procedures.
- Confidential information, member details and SCBA resources must not be used for unauthorised personal or commercial benefit.

6. Records and concerns

- The Secretary General or designated officer keeps declarations and relevant minutes or emails in SCBA's existing governance files.
- The record should briefly state:
    - The interest disclosed.
    - Who withdrew, or what other action was taken.
    - The decision and reasons.
- Concerns should be raised through SCBA's whistleblowing arrangements. The person concerned must have an opportunity to respond. Any corrective or disciplinary action must follow the Constitution and applicable procedures.
- Anyone reporting a concern in good faith must be protected from retaliation.
- The Board reviews this Policy when necessary, including after material changes to SCBA's governance arrangements.

Appendix - Annual declaration of interests

For Board members and employees to return to the Secretary General

Name: _____

SCBA role: _____

Declaration year: _____ Date: _____

Please select one:
[ ] I have no relevant interests to declare.
[ ] I declare the interests set out below.

Include relevant club or academy roles, paid bridge services, business interests, relationships, and competitive intentions that could affect an SCBA decision. Identify the person or organisation, the nature of the interest and the relevant SCBA matter, where known.

Person / organisation	Nature of interest / relevant SCBA matter

I confirm that this declaration is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I have read the Conflict of Interest Policy and agree to disclose new or changed interests promptly and comply with the measures required to manage any conflict.

Signature: _____ Date: _____