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## STATEMENT BY PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

2 July 2016

National management committee advises that all prescribed processes associated with the investigation, determination of breach of the Member Protection Policy and determination of penalty for four members who admitted actions contrary to the policy have been concluded.

The investigation was triggered by Pipe Bands Australia being alerted to a photograph in circulation of an offending social media post and comments – the post photograph did not identify a highly-respected and long-standing adjudicator mentioned in post comments. That the offending posts were on a facebook page with increased privacy settings only compounded the seriousness of the breaches when the image entered the public domain.

The serious and disappointing actions of five members included unacceptable vilification of a highly-respected and long-standing adjudicator and publication of false and misleading information as part of a social media post and commentary that breached the Member Protection Policy by engaging in cyberbullying and created a hostile environment bringing the association into disrepute.

National management committee has subsequently determined that as no formal appeal document had been lodged and no apology received as required prior to resignation from membership of Pipe Bands Australia, suspension commenced on 22 June for four players.

It has been further resolved that the four former members be unable to re-apply for membership of Pipe Bands Australia for the penalty periods of both suspension and probation.

The determination relates to:

- George Shepherd, 48 months
- Olav Goud, 24 months
- Jamie Gibson, 24 months
- Kirsty McLellan, 24 months

A determination on a fifth member will be made following completion of all processes.

Under the suspension terms, the four are suspended from participation in any PBA activity Under international affiliations and agreements, Pipe Bands Australia will notify those jurisdictions of the determinations.

This has been an extremely disappointing and difficult situation. However, Pipe Bands Australia remains committed to the responsibility to protect all members and officials from intimidation, cyberbullying and publication of false information and fostering a friendly environment for music and performance. We strongly recommend greater care and respect by all members when posting on social media and in other fora.