

AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION  
REGULATIONS FOR WRITTEN BIDDING AND BIDDING BOXES

**A. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Written bidding or bidding boxes are used in all Australian Bridge Federation Tournaments. However when the Tournament Director in Charge (TDIC) believes that the circumstances warrant it, alternative bidding procedures for one or more tables or for all competitors may be instituted.
- 1.2 In accordance with Law 7A the board in play must remain on (the centre of) the table until play is completed.
- 1.3 Players must decide their call before commencing to write or to touch the bidding box. Any vacillation among calls may convey unauthorised information and restrict partner's actions according to Laws 16B1 and 73C.
- 1.4 The Laws concerning correct procedure in the auction, irregularities in the auction and the proprieties apply *mutatis mutandi* to written bidding and bidding boxes.
- 1.5 The use of Stop Cards is authorized for ABF controlled Tournaments and recommended for use in other tournaments. The use of Stop Cards for a particular tournament, or for a particular event within a tournament, is at the discretion of the Tournament Organiser.
  - 1.5.1 The Stop Card is used during the auction as a Skip Bid Warning.
  - 1.5.2 Before a player makes a bid that skips one or more levels, a Stop Card should be placed face up on the table in front of the left-hand opponent. After an appropriate period (approximately 10 seconds but less at one's own discretion) the person who made the skip bid picks up the Stop Card, whereupon the left hand opponent may then call.
  - 1.5.3 Left-hand opponent should ask any questions during the period in which the stop card is on the table.
  - 1.5.4 When a player omits to use the Stop Card before making a Skip Bid, or apply the mandatory 10 second pause when required, the failure to do so may be taken into account by the Director, and subsequently by an Appeals Committee, when assessing what action to take with respect to possible extraneous information (Law 16).

**B. WRITTEN BIDDING**

- 2.1 The written bidding record sheet ("bidding slip") to be used is as determined by the TDIC.
- 2.2 When the TDIC determines that play and score records are required, the recorder records cards played; and South (or the recorder) enters the score which is then checked and initialed by West.

- 2.3 It is not necessary to mark the dealer and vulnerability on the written bidding record sheet unless screens are in operation, when the players must mark the sheet even if a recorder is present.
- 2.4 When a player elects to mark the written bidding record sheet, a circle at the appropriate compass position designates the Dealer and a single or double line through N & S and/or E & W denotes the vulnerability.
- 2.5 The Director may apply a procedural penalty to a player who marks the written bidding sheet incorrectly. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of all players to know and to use the dealer and vulnerability marked on the board: players who take action based on a written bidding sheet that is marked incorrectly have no recourse.
- 2.6 A call is not made until the player has written the appropriate numeral, if necessary, with the appropriate symbol. Each call should be written in the next vacant box working from left to right of that player's segment of the bidding slip. The symbols are:
- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>C</b> for clubs      | The numerals <b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</b>                             |
| <b>D</b> for diamonds   | <b>/</b> for pass   |
| <b>H</b> for hearts     | Either <b>/</b> or <b>//</b> for the concluding pass of the auction |
| <b>S</b> for spades     | <b>X</b> for double   |
| <b>NT</b> for no trumps | <b>XX</b> for redouble  |
- 2.7 Calls must be made in a consistent manner without any emphasis or additional notations such as full stops.
- 2.8 All calls must be made in neat, legible, handwriting. Where there is any doubt about what is written, players should seek verbal clarification.
- 2.9 The director is the sole judge and final arbiter in respect to the legibility of any written call. A player has no redress if he has made a call based on his own misunderstanding (Law 21A). If however, in the opinion of the director, a player has made a mistaken call as a result of an opponent's illegible handwriting, then Law 21B may be applied.
- 2.10 The written bidding sheet remains in view until the third player (partner of the opening leader) has played to the first trick when it should be removed (or turned over) by dummy. If dummy omits to do this then another player may remove the bidding sheet.
- 2.11 The stationary pair, or N/S if both pairs are moving, must ensure that used bidding slips are not available to players who have yet to play that board.

## **C. BIDDING BOXES**

- 3.1 A call is made by the player selecting the appropriate card from the bidding box and placing it on the table (no screens) or on the bidding tray (with screens). Players should not touch any bidding cards before they have determined their call. (Law 73F may apply and also, when there are no screens, Law 16B1).
- 3.2 Starting with the dealer, players place the bidding cards on the table in front of them. When a bidding tray is used, the first call is placed at the extreme edge of the player's segment of the tray. Subsequent calls should then overlap neatly and evenly so that every call is visible and faced towards partner.

- 3.3 Should a call be cancelled following an irregularity, then the bidding card that represents the withdrawn call shall be restored to the player's bidding box.
- 3.4 Alerts are made by saying, "Alert" audibly and placing the alert card across the bidding card designating the alertable call. The alerted player must acknowledge the alert before calling.
- 3.5 A call is considered made (without screens) when a bidding card is removed from the bidding box and held face up, touching or nearly touching the table; or maintained in such a position as to indicate that the call has been made.
- 3.6 A call selected may be changed without penalty if it is determined by the Director that
- It is a call selected unintentionally *or*
  - It has not passed the screen *and* the Director consents to the change.
- 3.7 When screens are in use the bidding cards are restored to their boxes prior to the opening lead.
- 3.8 When screens are not in use, all the bidding cards should remain on the table until after the opening lead has been faced.
- 3.9 Until they are removed from the table, a player can review the auction by inspecting the bidding cards. After the bidding cards are restored to their boxes a player may, at his first turn to play, require all previous calls to be restated (Law 20C2). Only an opponent shall respond to this request and when screens are in use it shall be written.