

Wednesday

23

March

The BABCP informed me that a complaint (a 20 page document copied to me) had been received and would be managed in accordance with the Jiscmail guidelines. Specifically, "Once a mediator has been agreed then a hearing must be organised on a mutually convenient date"

Thursday

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March

I acknowledged receipt of the complaint and asked for confirmation of the precise nature of the complaint as, although it was implied, it was not clear. I also proposed some solutions and was thanked for a "considered approach".

Friday

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March

Saturday

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March

I respond irritably to a JISCmail posting (from "Sam", the complainant), which I considered to be one of a number of references to me personally and to the complaint.

Sunday

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March

Monday

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I send a further e-mail request to the BABCP for clarification of the alleged breach, and of the proposed sanction; and observing that Sam had specifically stated that this was not a complaint being brought in line with the Jiscmail guidelines.

My Jiscmail account is suspended.

I e-mail expressing concern that the situation is escalating and state that I would like to seek a mediator, I am asked not to do so and informed that I would be given information in "a few days".

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BABCP Board Member 1 ("Bungle") sends an internal BABCP email asking if there are any guidelines for mediators.

Friday

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April

I send a further e-mail request asking for clarification of the complaint, further reference to the fact that the complaint specifically was not seeking mediation but sanction, and a further query with regard to the proposed sanction. I informed the BABCP that I had asked Alec Brady to act as mediator, and that he had accepted. I acknowledged that Alec might not be acceptable to the complainant, and requested them to canvass for alternatives in order to facilitate the process.

BABCP acknowledge my e-mail and confirm that they will "get back to me".

BABCP Board member 2 ("Zippy") contacts "Bungle" by internal BABCP e-mail, "on the grounds that we have agreed to act as mediators", with a résumé of events to date and a

request for a telephone
discussion.

BUNGLER replies, acknowledging that he
can't recall the new criteria
regarding Jiscmail mediation.

Saturday

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April

Sunday

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April

Monday

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April

BUNGLE states that having read the complaint his

"initial (and probably final) thoughts on this are:

- Suspend Mike Davidson from the list indefinitely. Some of his previous posts are extremely close to if not actually in breach of the guidelines and standards of etiquette. However, his post on 26 March is a flagrant breach deserving of automatic suspension.
- Suspend "Sam" from the list for a short period. The final sentence of [Sam's] post on [date] is also a breach of the guidelines and etiquette (and code of standards). A short suspension, say two

weeks, would be proportionate."

Also,

"I'd suggest that once we get this case sorted we tear up the current mediation process which obviously isn't going to work in practice and start again."

Tuesday

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April

ZIPPY requests a further teleconference.
BUNGLE responds,

"I'm not sure we need to discuss/teleconference further. I spent one of the most depressing hours in recent years reading through this stuff very carefully yesterday and you have my view on what should happen next. I suggest you have a look and then make a decision. I would urge you that you make a decision and suspend MD sooner rather than later though. Cheers."

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ZIPPY replies to BUNGLE,

"I agree that mediation is not going to be appropriate and that we should have another look at the guidelines we have. Permanent suspension of Mike seems a bit draconian as an initial step. I appreciate that you don't want to discuss this so I suggest that we consider a temporary suspension of both... For Mike I think we should invite him to apologise. Independently of that I propose suspension from Jiscmail for 3 months. If he repeats his behaviour when he returns I suggest the next suspension is longer, probably six months. If there is a 3rd incident then I think permanent suspension from the list would be warranted."

BUNGLER replies to ZIPPY

"I'm more than happy with your suggestion as a good middle ground between nice and nasty!"

"I'd suggest a formal letter...giving a clear but succinct explanation of the decision and how it was reached with reference to the guidelines and code. My experience of complaints (which could follow) suggests that you give only the information necessary to justify the decision, stick to the facts, don't over-elaborate in order to try to sweeten the pill, don't offer an opportunity for further discussion, and indicate the decision is final with no appeals process. Regards"

Friday

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I receive notification of my suspension:

"Having considered all aspects of this matter the Board have decided that you will be suspended from Jiscmail for a period of six months.

Elements of your posts forwarded by "Sam" to the Association as part of the complaint were judged to have breached Jiscmail guidelines and standards of etiquette in being hostile, non-constructive, and personally offensive.

Your post to Jiscmail of [date] deliberately made reference to "Sam's" complaint which shows contempt of the Association's Jiscmail guidelines and Standards of Conduct and could be considered intimidatory. This was judged to be deserving of an automatic suspension.

The BABCP Board's decision is final and there is no appeals process."