

# HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC

## OFFICIAL POLICY

### TITLE: USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA



#### 1.0 PURPOSE

This policy is intended to protect the interests of the HRCAV; its members and associated stakeholders by defining the requirements expected in the use of social media.

Social Media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a member-based organisation, the HRCAV recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members.

Along with those benefits are associated risks to the reputation of the organisation, its members and followers and individuals who might interact with the organisation through social media channels.

The HRCAV, has a long history and is a highly respected organisation. It is important that the HRCAV's reputation is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

#### 2.0 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media includes, but is not limited to, the generation or sharing of content by an individual. It can include (but is not limited to) such activities as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Shutterfly, Twitter or MySpace);
- Content sharing include Pinterest, Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing);
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites, or customer review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards);
- Editing a Wikipedia or other editable page.

#### 3.0 INTENT OF THE POLICY

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, clubs, staff, sponsors or the HRCAV as an organisation.

Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to HRCAV members, officials, volunteers and staff.

When someone clearly identifies their association with the HRCAV, including references to the HRCAV through their personal profile, and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in areas defined as social media, they are expected to behave and express themselves

appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with the HRCAV's stated values and policies as outlined in the HRCAV Code of Conduct.

Where does it apply?

This policy covers all forms of social media.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media. This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media platforms by HRCAV members or staff where the HRCAV member or staff makes no reference to the HRCAV or related issues. However, it is recommended that members and staff remain aware of their personal online reputation. Even when not discussing HRCAV matters, if you engage in inappropriate conduct, it can have an impact on your employment or engagement with the HRCAV.

## **4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The web is not anonymous. HRCAV members and staff should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.

Due to the unique nature of sporting groups such as the HRCAV, the boundaries between a member's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that members make a clear distinction between what they do in a professional capacity and what they do, think or say in their capacity as a volunteer for the HRCAV

The HRCAV considers all members of the HRCAV are its representatives.

Honesty is always the best policy, especially online. It is important that HRCAV members think of the web as a permanent record of online actions and opinions.

When using the Internet for professional or personal pursuits, all members must respect the HRCAV brand and follow the guidelines in place to ensure its intellectual property or its relationships with sponsors and stakeholders is not compromised, or the organisation is brought into disrepute.

When using social media, sharing a message or post or 'liking' a post is considered your view and an endorsement of the original tweet or post.

Comments made or images posted, irrespective of privacy settings, are public remarks and can be shared, copied and distributed to a wider audience than may have been originally intended and therefore become publicly published views.

## **5.0 USAGE**

For HRCAV members and staff using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libelous, defamatory or harassing content. This also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to the HRCAV, its affiliates, partners or sponsors; and
- Must not bring the organisation or the sport into disrepute.

For HRCAV staff using social media, such use:

- Must not interfere with work commitments.
- Must abide by all existing policies and workplace rules and regulations

Furthermore, HRCAV members and staff may not use the HRCAV brand to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political candidate; and it must be abundantly clear to all readers that any and all opinion shared are those of the individual, and do not represent or reflect the views of ORGANISATION.

## **6.0 BRANDING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP)**

It is important that any trademarks belonging to the HRCAV or any club are not used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental – (where incidental is taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with something else.”).

Trademarks include:

- HRCAV or Club logos;
- Images depicting members, volunteers, staff and/or equipment, where they can be identified as being part of the HRCAV, except with the permission of those individuals and within other stated guidelines;
- Other HRCAV iconic imagery.

## **7.0 USE OF OFFICIAL ORGANISATION SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE OR PROFILES**

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a club/association level has given written consent to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images.

For official HRCAV blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through ‘pop up’ content, which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forums or social pages as the nature of the ‘pop up’ content cannot be controlled;
- HRCAV employees must not use HRCAV online pages to promote personal projects; and
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

## **8.0 CONSIDERATION TOWARDS OTHERS WHEN USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. HRCAV members and staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way. For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at a private event will not appear publicly on the Internet. In certain situations, HRCAV members could potentially breach the privacy act or inadvertently make the HRCAV liable for breach of copyright.

When joining an HRCAV Club, members acknowledge that photographs and electronic images may be taken of them at HRCAV activities and events by organisers, official photographers and press and consent to their use for HRCAV related promotional/publicity purposes.

Nevertheless, HRCAV members should be considerate to others and should not post information when they have been asked not to or consent has not been sought and given. They must also remove information about another person if that person asks them to do so.

Images of children are not to be published without the permission of the parent or guardian. Only appropriate images, relevant to the sport should be used.

HRCAV staff and officials should also not be seen to be in a position to be in photographs, videos or other social media content that might be considered controversial for the HRCAV if it can in any way be linked to their role in the HRCAV, including:

- Being at an HRCAV event or representing the HRCAV at an event
- Being in uniform whether public or private

Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about the HRCAV, members, officials, volunteers or staff online.

## **9.0 BREACH OF POLICY**

The HRCAV, and clubs continually monitor online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to the office.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other HRCAV policies. Members may be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary regulations.

## **10.0 CONSULTATION OR ADVICE**

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for HRCAV members and staff in a new area of social interaction. HRCAV members or staff who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online, should contact the HRCAV for clarification.