



Reining Australia Media/Social Media Policy

Media: The main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively.

Social Media: Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking

1. Introduction

Media, Social media gives individuals, groups, organisations and businesses the opportunity to instantly share information via publishing, broadcasting and online communities. Blogs, forums, social networking and video sharing sites are the most popular types of social media sites; however, any forum which allows a user to upload and share information is considered part of the social media space. It is also important to note that information that is shared need not be written; it could take the form of an image or audio visual material.

Reining Australia supports the use of media/social media as a timely and effective method of communications. In addition to engaging with members of the equestrian community, media/social media can help the organisation reach members of the broader public and traditional media.

Whilst media/social media provides great opportunity to raise equestrian's profile and reach new audiences, it also has the potential to harm the reputation of the organisation, its athletes, members and stakeholders. It is crucial therefore that all Reining Australia members are aware of the implications of using media/social media.

The purpose of this document is to provide members of Reining Australia with guiding principles for using media/social media and the Reining Australia Logo. Reining Australia encourages anyone bound by this policy to use media /social media within the parameters outlined in this policy.

2. RA Logo and Name Use for Media

All members of Reining Australia benefit when its name and/or logo is well used, and suffer when it's not. Attaching the Reining Australia name or logo to an event, project or publication implies a close connection with the Association, usually sponsorship or endorsement. Involvement by members is not, by itself, a sufficient basis to use the logo or title an activity "Reining Australia". Rather the activity must be one for which the association takes responsibility. In some situations, the association can be held legally liable. The Reining Australia logo is the most visible and recognisable expression of Reining Australia. We understand and appreciate that outside parties may want to show affiliation with Reining Australia, however, use of the RA logo and Name to imply affiliation with or endorsement by Reining Australia without express written permission is strictly prohibited.

3. Policy Application

This policy applies to all members of Reining Australia, officers (including Board of Directors & Committee Members) volunteers, Judges, Parents, Carers of participating members and associated interested persons who have some form of 'duty' on behalf of Reining Australia.

All forms of media /social media activity are covered under this policy, including, but not limited to:

- Creating and maintaining social or business networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace or LinkedIn.
- Sharing audio-visual content on sites including Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest (photo sharing) and YouTube and Vimeo (video sharing)
- Authoring and commenting on blogs or forums or Editing a Wikipedia page
- Creating an article for publication or broadcasting medium

4. Guiding principles

Persons bound by this policy should be mindful that information shared on media/social media appears in public so careful consideration should be given to content before it is posted or released. Never forget that information shared within publishing, broadcasting and online communities could have implications for the sport and those associated with it. Information which is shared online or published can be difficult to retract. A representative might be able to remove his/her original comments however the very nature of social media encourages a person to share information which makes it difficult to know where the information they post finishes up. Persons bound by this policy should assume that all posts and information they share via social media can be traced back to them.

Adhering to these guidelines will ensure the reputation of Reining Australia, its members, athletes, officials, volunteers and stakeholders is protected. Persons bound by this policy should ensure that comments made on social media abide by Reining Australia's Code of Conduct specifically comments should:

- *Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others*
- *Refrain from any form of harassment of others*
- *Refrain from any behaviour that may bring Reining Australia, its member associations or affiliated clubs into disrepute. Members are advised to view the Reining Australia Codes of Conduct/ Constitution and Handbook in conjunction with this document. Any comments which are made on social media which contravene the Reining Australia Media/Social Media Policy by any Member will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary process outlined in the NRHA Handbook.*
- *Comments which are contrary to the spirit and integrity of sport will not be tolerated.*
- *Persons bound by this policy who share information online should consider themselves a spokesperson for the organisation and must never reveal confidential or sensitive information that could jeopardise Reining Australia's relationships with its Stakeholders.*

Please note: athletes, coaches, officials and other representatives that are selected on other teams and participate in major events such as the WEG should also adhere to the guidelines imposed by the governing bodies of those organisations.

5. Breach

If a person bound by this policy fails to follow these guidelines Reining Australia has the right to issue this individual with a take-down notice. An individual who is found to not comply with a take-down notice will face disciplinary action.

Repeated breaches of this policy could lead to disciplinary action. Reining Australia also has the right to administer sanctions and take legal action.

6. Reporting a breach

Individuals who wish to report an alleged breach of the Reining Australia Media/Social Media Policy should follow the disciplinary procedure outlined in the NRHA handbook Section 4. In addition the complaint should be made in writing and include evidence of the alleged breach.

7. Legislation

As with any form of public communication, online communication can also be subject to legislation. Persons bound by this policy should be mindful that unsubstantiated claims, false statements, defamatory, offensive and threatening comments could lead to prosecution.

8. Amendments/Interpretation

These Guidelines may be amended by Reining Australia as it deems appropriate. The Reining Australia Board will be the ultimate authority with respect to the interpretation and implementation of these Guidelines.

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