

AUSTRALIAN Quarter Horse ASSOCIATION

The Australian Quarter Horse Association hereby gives notice of new policies implemented with effect 9th February 2015 and is as follows:

1. PURPOSE OF OUR POLICIES

The main objective of this policy is to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making by participants in, and members of the Australian Quarter Horse Association (AQHA). These policies outline our Social Media policy, our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse.

Our policy informs everyone involved in our Association of responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in AQHA activities, Complaints Disciplinary Measures, Animal Welfare and Online Security.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

It is not uncommon for the attention of the AQHA to be drawn to posts on social media. Recently, the AQHA has been disappointed with some posts on social media concerning the AQHA and its members.

In particular, members are using social media to remark on AQHA events, including the conduct of other members of the AQHA.

Used responsibly, social media can be a valuable tool for communicating to the quarter horse community.

However, social media can also be used in ways that can cause great offence. For example, derogatory remarks about AQHA members that are posted on social media networks can have a harmful impact on those involved, as well as reflect unfavourably on the quarter horse industry in Australia.

Derogatory remarks can be insulting or disrespectful. They are usually based on an individual's view or judgment, but these can be formed about something not necessarily based on fact or knowledge. The result is often unflattering, unkind, or demeaning.

Members should be aware that the AQHA has a Professional Code of Ethics. This applies to the use of social media. The following is an extract from that Code:

"We, the members of the Australian Quarter Horse Association, in carrying out our role of providing service to the Australian Quarter Horse industry, recognise the need to do so in a professional manner, and to deal with the public and our colleagues with the highest degree of integrity."

Members are asked to use social media for collegiate purposes - to keep in touch with friends and family - and not as a forum for derogatory remarks and opinions about another person or their horse.

All members should be aware that the AQHA Constitution and Rule Book states that a member can be suspended or expelled for Conduct Unbecoming of a Member.

3. WHO OUR POLICIES APPLY TO

Our policy applies to everyone involved in AQHA including Directors, Affiliates, Staff, Members, Competitors, Trainers, Officials, parents and spectators.

4. EXTENT OF OUR POLICIES

Our policy covers breaches of our codes of behavior and inappropriate behaviour that occurs at any event approved by the AQHA which would include, but is not limited to Shows, Clinics, Meetings, sanctioned Social events, Team trips and any behaviour that brings or is likely to bring our Association into disrepute.

5. ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

We will:

- implement and comply with our policies
- promote our policies to everyone involved in our Association
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times

IT'S IN OUR BLOOD.

6. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone associated with our Association must:

- comply with the standards of behaviour outlined in our policy
- treat others with respect
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour.

7. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Child abuse involves conduct which puts children at risk of harm and takes a number of different forms, including:

- Physical abuse (e.g., deliberately hurting [hitting, punching], providing alcohol or drugs,
- Sexual abuse (e.g., sexual acts or threats, inappropriate touching or conversations)
- Emotional abuse (e.g., ill-treating by threats, humiliation or intimidation)
- Neglect (e.g., not providing child with basic necessities [food, drink, clothing], failing to protect a child from foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

Abuse is against the law. We will take measures to protect children involved in our Association from harm.

We will do this by:

- responding to all reports of abuse promptly, seriously and confidentially
- promoting and enforcing our codes of behaviour, particularly for roles associated with children
- making information about child protection available, particularly for roles associated with children
- adopting practices that provide the maximum opportunity for a child-safe environment.

Anyone who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused must report their concerns to the police or relevant government agency.

Supervision

All youth competing or taking part in an AQHA approved event, must have written permission from their parent/guardian to be at that event as a contestant or participant and in the case of a contest, the parent/guardian must also sign the entry form.

All youth competing or taking part in an AQHA approved event must be in the care of a responsible adult who is in attendance for the duration of that event, whilst the youth is in attendance at that event.

8. ANTI-HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND BULLYING

AQHA opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening.

Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race and marital status.

Our Association takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously.

9. VIDEOING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

By entry and participation in AQHA approved shows an owner and exhibitor agrees that the AQHA, Show Management and their agents and representatives may photograph, film or tape any portion thereof, and use their likenesses and that of the exhibited horses for training, promotional or other legitimate purpose of either organisation, without necessity of remuneration.

Parental permission must be sought for use of Youth Photos.

No images of Youth Competitors will be used publicly without parent consent.

Photos and videos taken at AQHA sanctioned events are not to be reproduce on social media unless they are of themselves or family, as they do not have the authority to do so.

All Affiliates running sanctioned AQHA events must place a notification in their official rules & regulations and/or entry forms for their events so that participants at your event are aware that this may occur.

10. ANIMAL WELFARE

This Animal Welfare Policy applies to any sanctioned event held by the AQHA, its Affiliates and any organisation that has been given Program approval.

Humane Treatment

The Association will not tolerate inhumane treatment of a horse, or any other animal used in competition.

- a) No member or non-member will treat any horse or animal in a cruel or inhumane manner.
- b) Inhumane treatment includes but is not limited to all relevant animal welfare legislation and rules of the National Authorities controlling the applicable sport.
- c) In any equestrian sporting event, the welfare of the horse is the primary consideration at all times.
- e) No horse should be ridden or trained in such a way that it is subject to extended periods of mental or physical distress.
- f) Association members must comply with all relevant animal welfare legislation and rules. This applies to all horses exhibited at events sanctioned by the AQHA, AQHA Affiliates and at any event that has been given AQHA Program approval;
- g) The Association encourages all members to follow best animal welfare practice in all their dealings with horses.

Any member will be disciplined, suspended, fined and/or expelled from the Association and any non-member will be denied Association privileges for any violations.

Responsibility:

An individual is absolutely responsible for the horse's condition if:

- a) He/she designates himself/herself on the entry form as the exhibitor, or authorises another to designate him/her as exhibitor on the entry form;
- b) He/she signs the entry form on behalf of himself/herself or another or causes an agent or representative to sign it;
- c) He/she physically participates in the class by riding or showing the horse; or
- d) He/she is the actual trainer, having presented or caused to be presented the horse at the grounds for exhibition;
- e) Both the exhibitor, designated on the entry form, and the person having actual possession of the horse while physically participating in the event are conclusively deemed to be authorised by the owner to execute all documents necessary or convenient to allow the horse's participation in an Association approved event, including documents pertaining to drug testing;
- f) If an individual is prevented from performing his/her duties, including absolute responsibility for the condition of the horses, or is absent from the show, he/she must:
 - i) immediately notify the show secretary and, at the same time;
 - ii) appoint a substitute, and
 - iii) such substitute must place his/her name on the entry form.
- g) The exhibitor represents the owner in regard to his/her horses entered in an approved show.

Prohibited conduct

No person on the grounds, including but not limited to barns, stall, practice areas, or show arena can treat a horse in a manner that includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Continuous and/or relentless pressure from the bit, legs or spurs;
- b) Placing an object, other than a legal bit, in a horse's mouth so as to cause undue discomfort or distress;
- c) Placing a legal bit in a horse's mouth in an abnormal manner;
- d) Leaving a bit in a horse's mouth for extended periods of time so as to cause undue discomfort or distress, broken skin and/or bleeding;
- e) Tying a horse's head up (above the withers), back, or around in a manner as to cause undue discomfort or distress. The horse must be able to hold its head comfortably in a "normal" position;
- f) Tying a horse in a stall without access to food or water for an extended period of time;
- g) Use of excessive training techniques such as striking a horse's legs;

- h) Excessive spurring or whipping;
- i) Excessive spinning (defined as more than eight (8) consecutive turns in either direction);
- j) Continuing to work or exhibit a horse which appears to be sullen, lethargic, emaciated, dehydrated, depressed, drawn or overly tired;
- k) Schooling using rails higher than 1.2 mtrs
- l) Breaking the skin and causing bleeding from the spur, bit or any other equipment;
- m) Riding or training in such a way that the horse is subject to periods of mental or physical distress;
- n) Exhibiting a horse that has an open wound and/or shows traces of blood;
- o) Using prohibited equipment on the horse at Association approved events.

Prohibited Equipment:

The use of prohibited equipment includes but is not limited to:

- a) saw tooth bits;
- b) hock hobbles;
- c) tack collars;
- d) curb straps with tack/rivets or tack hackamores;
- e) war bridles or like devices;
- f) riding in a curb bit without a curb strap;
- g) wire or solid metal curb straps, with or without padding;
- h) wire cavesson;
- i) wire or cable tie downs;
- j) bumper bits;
- k) metal bosals with or without padding;
- l) metal lunging hackamores;
- m) chambons; headstalls made of metal, with or without padding;
- n) running martingales used without rein stops;
- o) excessively tight nosebands;
- p) draw reins attached between or around the front legs;
- q) side reins (direct from bit to girth or surcingles)
- r) any item or appliance that restricts movement or circulation of the horse's tail;
- s) Any appliance or equipment, which results in any bleeding;
- t) Any other treatment or conduct deemed by a show official to be inhumane or abusive.

Nutraceuticals or Herbal Therapies

The onus is on the Owner/Trainer/Handler/Exhibitor, who decides to administer these type of products to a horse, to ensure that they are free of any prohibited substance.

Surgical Procedures:

A horse cannot compete if it has had any surgical procedure which could affect the horse's performance. Exception: for those surgical procedures performed by a duly licensed veterinarian for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the horse. If asked, a Veterinary Certificate detailing the surgery will be required.

Artificial appliances

- a) Artificial appliances are not permitted for use in approved classes.
- b) The following are not prohibited:
 - i) Conventional pads.
 - ii) Therapeutic shoes
 - i) Slip on (easy care) horse boots or related footwear; or
 - iv) Pacemakers or prosthetic eyes, as long as the owner obtains written permission from the Association and the resulting authorisation is noted on the horse's registration certificate.

Prohibited Drugs and Foreign Substances:

- a) A horse that has had any prohibited foreign substance or drugs administered internally or externally cannot compete.

- Exception: Acceptable foreign substances listed in Rule 2.9; drugs as administered under rule 2.8 c);
- b) A patch of any type, medicinal or otherwise cannot be on a horse when that horse is being exhibited;
 - c) Exception: A horse that is injured or taken ill, once it has arrived at the official show venue or whilst on the ground during the course of the event, may compete after that horse has been treated by a veterinarian, at that show. The attending veterinarian must sign a certificate which states:
 - i) What the horse is suffering from;
 - ii) What treatment, including any substances that have been administered internally or externally; and
 - iii) That the horse is sound enough to compete at that show;
 - iv) The certificate must be given to the Show Secretary/Show Manager prior to the horse competing.
 - d) A horse cannot be injected at a show unless the Veterinarian, that attended the horse at the show, has otherwise instructed. A Vet Certificate showing the treatment required must be obtained.

Acceptable Foreign Substances:

- a) The following substances are acceptable:
 - Antiprotozoals;
 - Anti-ulcer medication;
 - Insect repellent;
 - Anthelmintics;
 - Rehydration fluids;
 - B vitamins (orally);
 - Regumate/Altrenogest (mares only);
 - Topical ointments not containing Corticosteroids, irritant, or painkillers;
 - Preventative joint restorative therapies and general "over the counter" feed store supplements;
- b) Every exhibitor will, upon request of show management or an Association representative, permit a specimen of saliva, urine, blood, or any other substance to be taken for testing. Refusal to comply with such a request will constitute grounds for immediate disqualification of the horse from further participation at the event;
- c) If the laboratory report on the chemical analysis of saliva, urine, blood, or other sample taken from the horse indicates the presence of a foreign substance, prohibited drug or medication, this will be taken as prima facie evidence such substance has been administered to the horse.

Penalties and Restrictions:

- a) Any person found in violation of these rules, will be disciplined, suspended, fined, denied Association privileges, disqualified, expelled from the grounds, and/or expelled from the Association. Non-members will be denied Association privileges for any violation of Rule 2;
- b) If, upon examination by Association or show representatives (after Association authorisation) a horse's physiological functioning is found to be outside normal limits, the horse will automatically be reported to the Association;
- c) Upon written notification by the Association, the horse's participation privileges in Association approved events will be temporarily suspended pending a hearing to determine whether or not the horse's physiological functioning remains abnormal, with the burden of persuasion on the owner to prove normal physiological functioning;
- d) Participation privileges of the horse will remain temporarily suspended until any hearing;
- e) Any hearing under rule 2.9 d) must be requested by the owner;
- f) A conviction of an individual under State or Federal Law, for:
 - i) An offence of cruelty to; or
 - ii) Judicial confiscation of a horse, whether or not an Australian Quarter horse is involved, will constitute a presumed violation of these rules.

11. RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

AQHA takes all complaints seriously. Our Association will handle complaints based on the following principles of procedural fairness (natural justice):

- All complaints must be received in writing.
- All complaints will be heard.
- Both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story).
- Irrelevant matters will not be taken into account.
- Decisions will be unbiased and fair.
- Any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our Association will report the behaviour to the police.

12. ONLINE SECURITY POLICY

All images on our website are subject to Copyright Law and are not to be reproduced in any form without written permission.

AQHA respects the privacy of every individual who visits our website. This policy may change from time to time, so please check back periodically to review this information.

AQHA gathers personal information about our users when they are purchasing products or services.

When you transact online with us, AQHA requires you to provide certain details so that we can provide you with the product or service. This includes details such as your name and contact information, or in the case of businesses, information about the company, department or association making the purchase or setting up the account. AQHA will also ask for the customer's AQHA membership number, where applicable. AQHA requires this information to help us process and manage your account.

AQHA may use personal information collected online to develop and improve the products, benefits and services offered to members or website users.

AQHA may also use its database, including information provided by you through our website, to distribute information about other AQHA services and other organisations' services to you. AQHA may periodically send information, offers or other information to AQHA members. AQHA may also disclose to its business associates certain customer information for use in marketing goods and services to our customers.

The personal information collected from you at this site is or may be used:

- for credit verification purposes;
- for billing purposes;
- to maintain your account;
- to notify you about other or new services or promotions from time to time;
- to provide customer support;
- to provide you with the products, services or information you have requested.

Aspects of these functions may be outsourced to third parties, who are only authorised by AQHA to use this information for these purposes. AQHA may also disclose personal information to law enforcement agencies, government agencies, courts or external advisors where permitted or required by law.

AQHA's policy is to provide you with the opportunity to limit the use and/or disclosure of your personal information. You may do this at any time when you receive email communications from us, or at any other time by written notice to AQHA. If at any time you no longer wish to receive email or postal communications from AQHA or from third parties, you can contact AQHA and make a "no contact" request.

Cookie Technology – AQHA utilises cooked technology to process and identify order data. A cookie is a piece of information that is transferred to a user's hard drive for record-keeping purposes. If users choose to, they have the option to set their browser to refuse cookies.

Each time you visit AQHA's website, anonymous navigation information is collected by our servers.

This information includes:

- your server's IP address;
- the date and time of your visit;
- the address of the previous site you visited;
- the website you leave our site to visit;
- the type of browser and operating system you are using;
- the address of the pages you accessed.

This information provides AQHA with statistics about how the website is used and navigated, including the number of hits, the frequency of visits and the duration of visits to each web page on the site. It does not personally identify individual users.

Information collected on our website may also be combined to provide AQHA with anonymous demographic and usage information. AQHA can then use this aggregated information to develop new and/or more appropriate services and products to offer to customers and may also be provided to third parties.

Other than as described, AQHA will not make an attempt to identify users or their browsing activities. However, in the unlikely event of an investigation, a law enforcement agency or other government agency may exercise its legal authority to inspect our Internet Service Provider's logs.

Disclaimer

- The horse information contained on our website is based on detail provided to the AQHA by its members for the purpose of maintaining the Association's records.
- Whilst all due care is taken, the Association is not able to guarantee the accuracy or authenticity of such information and cannot accept any responsibility for reliance by any person upon any of the information.

**Australian Quarter Horse Association
Board of Directors**