

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PONY STUD BOOK SOCIETY (APSB)

Forward

The Australian Pony Stud Book Society (APSB) acknowledges that social media gives individuals, groups, organisations and businesses the opportunity to instantly share information with online communities. Blogs, forums, social networking and video sharing 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.

The APSB supports the use of social media as an effective method of communication and is a valuable way to engage with members and the broader public.

Whilst social media provides great opportunity to raise the APSB's profile and reach new audiences, it also has the potential to harm the reputation of the organisation and its members. It is crucial therefore those individuals representing the APSB are aware of the implications of using social media. This policy has been prepared to provide all persons who represent the APSB in any capacity with guiding principles for using social media. You are encouraged to use social media within the parameters outlined in this policy.

Scope

Individuals bound by this policy include, but are not limited to Federal Council, State Branches, Members and Associate Members, Committees, Promotional Groups, Officials such as Judges and Stewards, Contractors, Sub-contractors and Volunteers. For the purpose of this document, the above mentioned will be collectively referred to as "APSB representatives".

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Social Media includes all internet-based publishing technologies. Most forms of Social Media are interactive, allowing authors, readers and publishers to connect and interact with one another. The published material can often be accessed by anyone. Forms of Social Media include, but are not limited to, social or business networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn), video and/or photo sharing websites (ie. YouTube, Flickr), business/corporate and personal blogs, micro-blogs (i.e. Twitter), chat rooms and forums and/or Social Media:

Principles

APSB representatives should be mindful that information shared on social media appears in public so careful consideration should be given to content before it is posted. Never forget that information posted on-line will eventually enter the public domain, even if this was not the intention of the original poster. Information which is shared online is difficult to retract. Even if a poster removes their original comments, this does not mean that the comments are removed from circulation by other people. Even after a post has been removed, it can still be traced back to the original poster.

Adhering to these guidelines will ensure the reputation of the APSB and its members, officials and volunteers is protected. In accordance with the APSB Member Protection Policy, defamatory, disrespectful and hateful comments about individuals or organisations will not be tolerated.

In accordance with the APSB's Member Protection Policy, APSB representatives must not bring the Society or its members into disrepute. The use of defamatory, disrespectful and hateful or threatening comments targeted at an individual or organisation will not be tolerated. Comments which are contrary to the spirit and integrity of the Society will not be tolerated.

Breach

If an APSB representative fails to follow these guidelines the APSB has the right to demand that the comments/post be removed immediately. Representatives who do not comply with this request will face disciplinary action.

Legislation

As with any form of public communication, online communication can be subject to legislation. Representatives should be mindful that unsubstantiated claims, false statements, defamatory, offensive and threatening comments can lead to legal action.

Conclusion

The APSB recognises that social media is a popular method of communication and encourages its use as a positive tool to help promote the aims and objectives of the Society and its members. The APSB concurs with the "Front Page Rule" - "if you are not prepared to see your comments on the front page of a newspaper – don't say it".

Policy

Our Code of Conduct and Member Protection policies apply to all members and provides the framework of principles for conducting business, dealing with other members, prospective members and the public. The Code of Conduct and Member Protection Policy do not replace legislation and if any part of them are in conflict, then legislation takes precedence. This policies are based on the following:

Act and maintain a high standard of integrity and professionalism

Be responsible and scrupulous in the proper use of the Society's information

Be considerate and respectful of the environment and others

Exercise fairness, equality, courtesy, consideration and sensitivity in dealing with other members and prospective members

Avoid apparent conflict of interests, promptly disclosing to your APSB Committee or Federal Council, as appropriate any interest which may constitute a conflict of interest

Promote the interests of the APSB

Perform duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence

Abide by policies, procedures and lawful directions that relate to your involvement with the APSB

Avoid the perception that any involvement with the APSB may influence any decisions in the show ring

Any member, who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an alleged breach of the Code, whilst following correct reporting procedures, will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced. All reports will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner.

The APSB expects co-operation from all members and representatives in conducting themselves in a professional, ethical and socially acceptable manner of the highest standards.

Any member in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including cancellation of their membership.

Should any member have doubts about any aspect of the Code of Conduct, they must seek clarification from their State Branch Committee or Federal Council, as appropriate.

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the APSB and any necessary changes will be implemented as appropriate

To protect the APSB from the potential effects of the misuse and abuse of email, the following instructions are for all users representing the APSB

No material is to be sent as email that is defamatory, in breach of copyright or business confidentiality, or prejudicial to the good standing of the APSB in the community or to its relationship with other members, or potential members, or the public, suppliers and any other person or business with whom it has a relationship.

Emails must not contain material that amounts to gossip about other members or that could be offensive, demeaning, persistently irritating, threatening, and discriminatory, involves the harassment of others or concerns personal relationships.

When using email a person must not pretend to be another person.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in suspension or cancellation of membership.

This policy also applies to all members, committees, promotional groups, officials, contractors, sub-contractors and volunteers of the APSB (hereinafter called APSB representatives) who:

have an active profile on a social or business networking site such as LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster or Twitter;

write or maintain a personal or business' blog; and/or

post comments on public and/or private web-based forums or message boards or any other internet sites.

PROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The APSB expects its representatives to maintain a certain standard of behaviour when using Social Media.

This policy applies to all APSB representatives who contribute to or perform duties such as: maintaining a profile page for the APSB on any social or business networking site (including, but not limited to LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster or Twitter);

making comments on such networking sites for and on behalf of the APSB

writing or contributing to a blog and/or commenting on other people's or business' blog posts for and on behalf of the APSB and/or

posting comments for and on behalf of the APSB on any public and/or private web-based forums or message boards or other internet sites.

Procedure

No APSB representative is to engage in Social Media as a representative or on behalf of the APSB unless they first obtain their State Branch or Federal Council's written approval.

If any APSB representative is directed to contribute to or participate in any form of Social Media related work, they are to act in a professional manner at all times and in the best interests of the APSB

All members, contractors, sub-contractors or volunteers of the APSB must ensure they do not communicate any:

Confidential Information relating to the APSB or its members, business partners or suppliers; material that violates the privacy or publicity rights of another party; and/or

information, (regardless of whether it is confidential or public knowledge), about members, business partners or suppliers of the APSB without their prior authorisation or approval to do so; on any social or business networking sites, web-based forums or message boards, or other internet sites.

Confidential Information includes any information in any form relating to the APSB and related bodies, members, businesses or members of the public, which is not in the public domain.

PRIVATE/PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Procedure

The APSB acknowledges that APSB representatives have the right to contribute content to public communications on websites, blogs and business or social networking sites not operated by the APSB. However, inappropriate behaviour on such sites has the potential to cause damage to the APSB, as well as its members, officials, business partners and/or suppliers or members of the public.

For this reason, all APSB representatives must agree to not publish any material, in any form, which identifies them as being associated with the APSB or its members, officials, business partners, suppliers or members of the public.

All APSB representatives must also refrain from posting, sending, forwarding or using, in any way, any inappropriate material including but not limited to material which:
is intended to (or could possibly) cause insult, offence, intimidation or humiliation to the APSB or its members, officials, business partners, suppliers, volunteers or the public
is defamatory or could adversely affect the image, reputation, viability or profitability of the APSB or its members, officials, business partners, suppliers, volunteers or the public and/or
contains any form of Confidential Information relating to the APSB or its members, officials, business partners, suppliers, volunteers or members of members of the public

All APSB representatives must comply with this policy. Any breach of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of membership or (for contractors, sub-contractors officials and volunteers) the termination or non-renewal of contractual arrangements.

Other disciplinary action that may be taken includes, but is not limited to, issuing a formal warning, directing people to attend mandatory training, suspension from the APSB.

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