

**AUSTRALIAN ENDURANCE RIDERS ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**RULEBOOK**

**SECTION FOUR**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**ENGAGEMENT RULES**



**EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1<sup>st</sup> 2016**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This document, AERA Inc. Rulebook Section 4 Social Media Engagement Rules, constitutes part of the Australian Endurance Riders Association Incorporated Rulebook.
- 1.2 This document will be amended from time to time in a manner determined by the AERA. Such amendments shall become effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January the year following the amendment.
- 1.3 This document shall be interpreted as an independent and autonomous text and not by reference to existing law or statutes and shall take precedence over other clauses in the AERA Rulebook should there be a conflict or contradiction. If this document is silent on a particular matter, then other relevant clauses in the AERA Rulebook relating to that matter shall prevail subject however, to the application of the legal principle of *lex specialis derogat legi generali* which provides that a specific provision should govern over a general provision.
- 1.4 The headings used for the various parts and Clauses of these Rules are for convenience only and shall not be deemed part of the substance of these Rules or to affect in any way the language of the provisions to which they refer.
- 1.5 Unless the contrary intention appears in this document:
  - a) words importing a gender include every other gender and
  - b) words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular and
  - c) words appearing in *italics* in this document require the *italicised* word to be interpreted for that sentence with reference to the definition for the *italicised* word as provided in Table 2 of the AERA General Rules.

**PURPOSE**

- 1.6 Social media provides an excellent opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share and utilise content. The interest and participation in social media is growing very quickly and this extends to the Australian Endurance Riders Association Inc., the individual Division Associations (DA's) and Ride Organising Committees (ROC's) who recognise that social media offers new opportunities to communicate with members and non-members alike.
- 1.7 The AERA sees social media as an important tool for both member and non-member engagement. AERA's rules for Social Media Engagement is designed to protect the interests of the AERA, affiliated DA's and their members, volunteers, sponsors and the sport as a whole.

**2. APPLICATION**

- 2.1 These Social Media Engagement Rules apply to the AERA, affiliated DA's and their members, volunteers, sponsors and to any other person who is notified that this policy applies to them.
- 2.2 These rules do not apply to the personal use of social media unless a reference is made to the business or associated activities of the AERA or any of its affiliated DA's or their members.
- 2.3 For the purpose of these Rules, references to "Social Media" will include, but is not limited to, any one of a broad scope of online communication channels and tools that allow and/or facilitate various means of interaction (through comments, posts, updates or any other means of response), communication and information sharing such as:
  - Blogs
  - Microblogs (i.e. Twitter, Tumblr)
  - Podcasts
  - Message boards and other community forums
  - Streaming and online video
  - Websites
  - Social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, MySpace)
  - Individual pages and groups on social networking sites (i.e. Facebook "fan" pages)
  - Professional networking sites (i.e. LinkedIn, Groupsite, Plaxo)
  - Media repositories (i.e. YouTube, Flickr)
  - Wikis
  - Any other mechanism that is published, posted to, uploaded to, downloaded from or accessible from a variety of social media.

2.4 The AERA, affiliated DA's and their members must adhere to all applicable laws with respect to intellectual property (including trademarks and copyrights), disclosure/confidentiality, defamation, harassment and invasion of privacy.

### 3. BREACHING THESE RULES

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3.1 A breach of these Rules shall include but is not limited to the following:

- Vulgarities, whether they be language, images or other offensive material, including, but not limited to, race, nudity or pornography. The administrators and moderators shall be the sole judges of what does and does not violate the standards.
- Accusatory and perceived libellous posts, whether stated as fact, perception, or hearsay.
- Bullying and/or harassment. The AERA and affiliated DA's and their members must adhere to all applicable laws with respect to cyber bullying and/or harassment and perpetrators' will be reported to the appropriate statutory authority.
- Debate and discussion is encouraged and everyone is entitled to express their own opinion freely as long as the opinion is stated appropriately. Whether it is blatant or covert, the AERA will not tolerate rudeness, insults or personal attacks. Do not disrespect, taunt or antagonise anyone, either on the Group page or via private messages or email.
- Inflammatory posts and remarks about activities of members should not be discussed in a public forum. If you have legitimate concerns about the conduct of any member or fellow group poster, you are encouraged to raise these concerns directly via a personal email to the AERA Secretary (secretary@aera.asn.au).
- If you have a problem or complaint about an AERA sponsored page in general, or with another member/poster, you should private message it directly to the moderators; posting to the group is not appropriate and will only inflame the situation. The moderators will evaluate the situation and mediate where appropriate.

### 4. CONSEQUENCES OF A BREACH

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4.1 Depending on the social media device being used at the time and the nature and severity of the breach the following consequences may be applied:

#### **AERA AND AFFILIATED DIVISION ASSOCIATION SPONSORED SITES**

- Temporary ban from posting/interacting – this will generally mean the person is still able to view but not to contribute for a set period of time.
- Permanent ban from posting/interacting – generally only applied to a person who has consistently shown disregard for these social media engagement rules.

#### **ANY AND ALL SITES**

- Disciplinary action. A member of an affiliated DA who has continued to demonstrate a disregard for these social media engagement rules may face disciplinary action by their respective DA including the temporary suspension of membership, or where a member continues with the behaviour, a permanent ban on membership of the DA.

### 5. AERA SPONSORED SITES

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- 5.1 The AERA sponsors (employs) varying social media platforms from time to time.
- 5.2 The AERA reserves the right to refuse an application to join any AERA sponsored social media platform without reason and may also temporarily or permanently ban a member.
- 5.3 By 'Liking' the AERA Facebook page, or by joining the Aussie Endurance group on Yahoo, or by joining any other social media platform sponsored by the AERA, each person agrees to abide by these Rules.
- 5.4 The AERA reserves the right to remove, edit, move or close any thread / post / comment or similar interaction.
- 5.5 This document will be referenced on all social media sites / tools employed by AERA including but not limited to Facebook and chat forums.

### 6. THE ROLE OF MODERATORS

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- 6.1 Moderators manage the social media platforms on a day to day basis to ensure compliance with these Social Media Engagement Rules and thereby assists the AERA, the affiliated DA's and their members to protect the image of the Sport.
- 6.2 Moderators for AERA sponsored social media platforms are appointed by the AERA and moderators for DA sponsored social media platforms are appointed by the DA. In all cases the moderators will:
- a) Ensure that all aspects of these Rules as stated or inferred are followed and adhered to and are vested with the authority to act when a breach occurs.

- b) Ensure topics remain relevant to the purpose of the social media tool being engaged. This means that some interactions and posts may be either asked to cease or be removed.
- c) Ensure that personal harassment and online interactions that are likely to be viewed negatively by the majority of the public or, for closed/private social media tools, members only are ceased and/or removed.
- d) Manage those allowed to view only or both view and post/interact on AERA social media tools.