# Horsemens Adult Riding Club

# Procedures Manual

August 2022

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# Code of Conduct

**Intent**

The aim of Horsemens is to provide a fun, supportive, friendly environment, where people are supported to achieve their equestrian goals. To achieve this, every member has an important role to play in how they engage with the Club and with each other. This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations of members to achieve this.

Horsemens promotes a club that is free from harassment and bullying, where members are treated with respect, consideration and dignity.

**Application**

This code of conduct applies to all members.

**Our Club Purpose**

*At Horsemen’s Adult Riding Club, we embrace riders from all backgrounds, interests, levels and motivations.  Whether your personal goal is to compete every weekend, or to canter on a trail ride, we’re the team that encourages and supports you along the way. We put our members interests first and foremost when making decisions for our club.  We aim to create a safe, welcoming, kind and friendly environment which is inclusive and free of judgement and criticism.  Like our equine friends we value kindness, calmness and a good meal with our herd.*

**Expectations of Members**

Members can contribute to a great Club environment by:

* Actively participating in rallies, events and fundraising activities.
* Providing feedback on activities, contributing ideas and suggestions for improvements and raising any personal concerns they may have in an appropriate and timely manner.
* Engaging constructively in HARC online forums, and avoiding any comments that could be construed as aggressive, unreasonable or dismissive.
* Ensuring they are aware of and comply with the Club’s policies and procedures.

**Expectations of Committee Members**

Committee members have been nominated by their peers to lead the Club, putting in place the processes and practices that facilitate a great club experience. In addition to the expectations of members, Committee Members will::

* Act honestly and in good faith putting the interests of members’ first and foremost
* Demonstrate a commitment to understanding and working within the Club procedures and practices
* Conduct the business of the club in a harmonious and respectful manner and ensure that decision making is approached in a calm, rational and considered manner.
* Ensure the confidentiality of information that may be shared with them as part of their role.
* Comply with the Club’s policies and procedures.

# Conflict of Interest Procedure

**Intent**

Horsemens recognises that in a tight knit community, such as the Perth Equestrian community, conflicts of interest will occur from time to time. The intention of this procedure is to ensure the potential for any conflict of interest to be understood and well managed, to limit any risk to the members.

A conflict of interest is where committee member has private interests or is part of another equestrian association that could improperly influence, or be seen to influence, their decisions or actions in the performance of their Horsemens duties. Conflicts may be actual, potential or perceived, or represent a conflict of duty

**Application**

This procedure applies to the Horsemens Committee, as individuals who are authorised to make decisions on behalf of the club and the members.

As general members are not authorised to make decisions, this procedure does not apply to them.

**Procedure**

Understanding potential for conflicts of interest

* The Committee will ensure that potential conflicts are understood prior to the first Committee meeting of each year.
* Each Committee member will declare any potential conflicts of interest, including but not limited to membership on other equestrian committees, ownership or employment by an organisation that the club has a relationship with or close personal relationships with vendors.
* The Secretary will maintain a register of conflicts, for use by the Executive.

Managing conflicts of interest (real or perceived)

* The Secretary will ensure that there is a conflict of interest item on the agenda at the start of each meeting whereby a committee member is able to declare any conflicts that they may have with any particular item for discussion.
* Where a discussion or decision arises, and committee member has a conflict registered they will be excused from the decision but may still take part in the discussion on the topic.
* In the case of a dispute with another party or organisation, where a conflict occurs for any reason, the Committee will ensure that a ‘chinese wall’\* is in place so that there is no reason for members to believe that any Committee member acted in any way other than for their best interests.

\* A ‘chinese wall’ describes a virtual barrier intended to block the exchange of any information between individuals or teams.

# Complaint Procedure

**Intent**

From time to time, members may have complaints in regards to rallies, membership processes or other members. The intention of this process applies to how these complaints are to be lodged and managed, to ensure that member feedback is heard, understood and acted upon by the Committee.

**Application**

This procedure applies to all complaints which are formally registered by a member.

It does not apply to general conversation or verbal feedback, which is not accompanied by a specific request for action to a Committee member.

It does not cover how to manage any conflict or dispute that arises from a complaint. In the event that adequate resolution of a complaint is not possible or is not viable, the Dispute Resolution procedure provides the pathway for rectification.

**Procedure**

Systems to manage complaints

* The Committee will appoint a Member Liaison, who will be responsible for facilitating any complaint outcomes. This Member Liaison should be a member of the Committee, but must not be the President.
* If the complaint is in relation to the Member Liaison, then the complaint should be directed to the Secretary instead.
* The Committee will maintain a dedicated feedback email for members, which only the Member Liaison and Secretary will have access to.
* Any complaint received will be treated as confidential and the anonymity of the individual will be protected as far as possible until initial investigation or information gathering is completed. The complaint should include a stated desired resolution or outcome from the member, which should be within the scope of authority for the Club.
	+ For example a reasonable complaint within the scope of authority could be ‘The food van does not offer any vegetarian food options”. This is both reasonable, and within the scope of Club authorities.
	+ However an unreasonable complaint would be ‘The staff at EA have been dismissive and rude to me when I came to rally’. In this case, this complaint is in regards to another organisation, over which the Club has no authority. In these cases, the Member Liaison will discuss this directly with the complainant to explain why the issue is not related to HARC, and then formalise this with an email restating the discussion.

Limitations of the process

* In the case of a complaint about another member (regardless of whether they are a Committee member or not), no complaint will be actioned until the individuals have made every reasonable endeavour to deal with the issue themselves. The Member Liaison will satisfy themselves that this has occurred, including supporting and coaching individuals on how to have an effective, constructive conversation.
* In general, the Committee will not act as an advocacy body for members where they have complaints related to other equestrian groups. The exception to this however is in relation to EA / EWA/ ARCA where the Committee believes that there is a systemic issue that is affecting multiple members.

Complaints resolution process

* The Member Liaison will determine the severity of the complaint and take action accordingly:
	+ Simple complaints such as requests for different rally activities will be discussed with Committee at the next Committee meeting. The outcome of the discussion will be verbally communicated, then formalised in a response email to the complainant. Where the request cannot be achieved (e.g. ‘I don’t like having rallies at the SEC’), a clear rationale will be given for why no change will occur.
	+ Complex complaints, including complaints regarding Club procedures or specific unacceptable behaviour will be initially discussed by the Executive only. Should the complaint relate to a member/s of the Executive, they will be excused from the discussion.
		- The Executive will agree a process for an investigation to occur, which will be conveyed to the complainant in writing.
		- Any investigation and discussions related to this complaint will be properly documented.
		- Where the investigation findings show a serious breach of the Club Code of Conduct or legal / procedural breaches, members may be subject to suspension of their membership, as per Constitutional requirements.

# Member Privacy Procedure

**Intent**

To manage memberships and support member activities, Horsemens collect a variety of personal information from members. The intention of this procedure is to ensure that Horsemens is compliant with Australian privacy legislation and that members’ privacy is adequately protected.

Horsemens will only collect data required for operational activities.

**Application**

This procedure applies to all members and associates, and the management of their personal details. This includes all information managed in the Membership Database, including but not limited to:

1. Contact information (phone, addresses, emails etc)
2. Medical information (contact person, medical conditions, medications etc)

Horsemens does not, and will not collect member financial information (such as credit cards or bank details).

**Procedure**

Information Security

* The storage of the membership information – both the database and the forms submitted – will be kept in a secure electronic location. This includes a home computer protected by a login password or a file sharing application.
* If file sharing applications are used, they must be encrypted (e.g. MEGA, Dropbox). Note that file sharing systems such as Google Docs have an unacceptable level of security and must not be used.
* Only those Committee members who require access to the data will be granted access. This will be determined on the basis of their role responsibilities.
* Medical information will only be accessible by the Executive roles and any safety representative.
* No part of the database should be printed without the express permission of the Secretary.

Information Sharing

* No committee member, acting on Club or associated Club business, is authorised to share any member information with any member, other organisation or individual outside of the Club without the express written permission of the individual, which should be emailed to the Horsemens email.
* Medical information is to be shared only with paramedics or medical professionals in a hospital in the event of an accident or injury, where the member is incapable of sharing this information themselves.
* Any Committee Member who is found to be in breach of this procedure will be disciplined, given its legal implications.
* All bulk email communications to be undertaken as BCCs (blind carbon copies) wherever possible for the privacy and security of Members.

# Dispute Resolution Procedure

**Intent**

From time to time, disputes may arise between members or between the Club and another organisation. It is necessary to have a constructive, clear, outcome-oriented process that will ensure disputes are managed fairly and transparently.

**Application**

This procedure applies to any dispute between members that has been escalated to Committee for assistance.

It also applies to any dispute between Horsemens and another organisation.

**Procedure**

Dispute resolution process

* + - The Member Liaison will be made aware of any dispute in the first instance
		- No action will be taken in relation to a dispute until the individuals concerned have made every reasonable endeavour to deal with the issue themselves. The Member Liaison will satisfy themselves that this has occurred, including supporting and coaching individuals on how to have an effective, constructive conversation.

The aim of dispute resolution process is to resolve the dispute at the earliest possible stage but if this is not possible there are three stages of escalation available to an individual. All stages follow a similar pattern as follows:

**Stage 1**

1. An initial meeting with the Member Liaison to discuss the concerns and clarify the facts with key parties involved and obtain the names of any witnesses.
2. An investigation which will include an interview of the parties involved and any witnesses.
3. Meetings with key parties to attempt to facilitate the resolution of the matter and if not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties the matter is escalated to the next stage
4. Following these meetings, a written summary of the meeting and clarification of the next steps to be taken will be provided.

At any meeting or interview those attending may bring a support person and the following guiding principles will be applied:

* If more than one person is present, the role of each person should be established
* An outline of the process that will be followed will be given.
* All parties involved will be informed that any information obtained in the conduct of the review is confidential.
* The Member Liaison will listen to the parties’ concerns and establish the cause of the problem.
* The meeting will be conducted with the aim of maintaining positive relationships, and will provide a fair, objective and independent analysis of the situation.
* Accurate and detailed notes of all conversations (including dates, people involved) will be taken and supported documentation will be collated.

**Stage 2**

If the matter remains unresolved then the matter can be referred to the President.

* The President will meet with the parties to clarify the facts to ensure they fully understand their concerns and to fully understand the investigation already conducted and will follow Steps 1-4)
* The President will take all appropriate steps to minimise any delays in responding to the matter of concern and will keep the parties informed of progress.

**Stage 3 (external escalation)**

If, having exhausted these procedures, and the matter cannot be resolved internally, Horsemen’s may seek external advice which may include mediation.

# Delegation of Authorities Procedure

**Intent**

To ensure the smooth running of the Club, the Committee is accountable for effective decision making. Some decisions are made by the Committee, some are able to be delegated to specific Committee roles.

The intention of this procedure is to outline the authorities for the Committee as a whole and specific roles, to ensure decision making is done effectively by the relevant Committee members.

**Application**

This procedure applies to the Horsemens Committee, as individuals who are authorised to make decisions on behalf of the club and the members.

As general members are not authorised to make decisions, this procedure does not apply to them.

**Procedure**

* Decisions will be delegated to specific Committee roles where there is a low risk to the Club and members, where the decisions are frequent (multiple times per rally) and repeated or where there is a procedure to guide the decision-making process.
* The delegation of authorities is contained within embedded Excel file.