

MEDIA POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Media is a vital partner in achieving the goals of RDA. In order to maximise the advantages of media representation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation, this policy aims to establish guidelines for how media contact should be conducted. It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather the intention is to establish a framework for achieving positive media outcomes.

In dealing with the media (including social media), staff, volunteers, coaches, Board members and participants should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participate in photo opportunities that do not represent the values of RDA or that may damage the reputation of RDA.

2. MEDIA RELEASES

Centres associated with RDA should seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media in their local community to increase RDA visibility. This may include sending good news stories to local newspapers or a representative speaking on community radio about such things as RDA events to be held in the local area, rider achievements, volunteer recruitment etc. However, all written media releases and scheduled media interviews must be reported in writing (email is acceptable) to the State/Territory RDA Office prior to distribution or the interview occurring.

Contact concerning any significant matter in the name of or on behalf of RDA should only be made by staff and Board members where they have the required expertise to speak on the issue in question and some experience in media relations. Where any of these criteria do not apply, staff, Board members and volunteers are recommended to exercise extreme caution and to seek guidance from a senior Board member or RDA Australia.

At no time shall an RDA member (including staff, volunteers, participants) offer their personal opinion as being representative of RDA's position, in a media release, that may be political or otherwise controversial in nature. This only applies to RDA specific issues or equestrian issues whether the person is on or off duty. When expressing a personal opinion, RDA members must observe their obligation not to bring RDA or its operations into disrepute.

Stories published in state-wide publications must be approved by the State/Territory RDA Office. Stories published in national publications must be approved by the RDA Australia Office. This will ensure that all messages are in line with the RDA Values. Allow five working days for approval of your story.

3. MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Any filming or taping on RDA property or at an organisational event by the media is subject to prior permission of the State/Territory or National Office.

Broadcasts that may appear state-wide must be approved by the State/Territory RDA Office. Broadcasts that may appear nationally must be approved by the RDA Australia Office. Approval shall be sought as soon as practicable.

If an RDA member is contacted by the media for comment or interviewed about an incident that is likely to lead to or have a controversial impact on RDA, it is important that their response is non-committal and the interviewer is referred to the State/Territory or National RDA Office without making further comment.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a powerful platform to market RDA and expand the reach to a vast audience. When published it can reach many people in a very short time and can attract both positive and unexpectedly controversial attention.

A social media site using the RDA Brand must:

- Correctly use the RDA logo according to the RDA Style Guide
- Reflect the RDA mission, values, philosophy and policies of the organisation
- Be administered by authorised RDA personnel
- Be approved by the State or National Office

Instances of an RDA Social Media site being used for miscommunication, bullying, privacy disputes, or inflammatory comments that bring negative attention to the RDA Brand must be referred to the State/Territory or National Office to be managed according to their policies and procedures. This may include removing the damaging posts or closure of unauthorised sites.

5. CRISIS RESPONSE

At times a situation or event may occur that if not dealt with appropriately, may cause harm to the RDA Brand. Some of these examples include (but are not limited to):

- Client injury
- Poor maintenance of a worksite
- Alleged cruelty or inhumane actions towards an animal(s)
- Industrial relations (discrimination etc)

All complaints or issues arising that could lead to detrimental media coverage must be reported to the State Board, the National Office and the National Board immediately following which a crisis management plan will be developed and implemented.

Depending on the assessed risk, the Chief Executive Officer of RDA Australia will act as spokesperson for the organisation unless the responsibility is delegated to a State/Territory proxy.

6. MANAGING PRIVACY

In communications with the media (advertising, news media, internet, social media or by any other means), everyone is responsible to ensure that photos of participants, volunteers, or staff shall be released to the public according to clause 7 and State organisational procedural instructions. This includes privacy legislation (Privacy Act 1988) and rider photo permission (as per RDA forms). State/National Offices will provide guidance to determine if this meets their procedures.

If any unauthorised releases of confidential information do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action will be taken.

7. TAKING PHOTOS

Photos that are used to represent RDA should be appropriate and reflect the values of RDA. They should be checked to ensure that:

- Written permission is obtained according to RDA policies and procedures
- Everyone in the photo is suitably attired and neatly presented. For equestrian activities this means no flapping clothing, large jewellery, open footwear or any other unsuitable attire.
- Participants are wearing the required safety equipment for the activities they are undertaking (e.g. helmets, footwear)
- The activities in the photo represent safe procedures (e.g. no dangling lead ropes)
- Horse equipment is fitted correctly

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- Stirrups are fitted correctly for the size of the rider's foot
- Make sure the horse being photographed is well groomed, neat and tidy and is in good health. Photographs of horses that are unwell, not in good condition or with injuries being treated can provide a negative impression to the public and should not be published in any social or other media.

Delegation	RDAAL Limited Board and State Delegations
Authority	Ratify policy and procedure
Status	Version 2 – voted and accepted at General Meeting 17/05/2015
Review	May 2015