



# Social Media Policy

Adopted by Southern Highlands Netball Association Inc.

The SHNA Netball Association *Social Media Policy* has been developed to serve the best interests of its members. Social networking through the use of internet-based and other electronic social media tools are integrated in to everyday life. SHNA recognises the importance of the internet to improve and increase the flow of information, shaping public thinking about SHNA, its members and sponsors.

SHNA is committed to supporting people's rights to interact knowledgeably and socially through electronic communication, blogging, wikis and interaction on social media.

## **Application of the Policy**

SHNA appreciates the value of using electronic communications tools and social media to build more meaningful relationships with its members and clubs. However, SHNA will not tolerate any behaviour whereby a SHNA policy is in breach or in risk of being breached.

All use of social media platforms which are directly governed by, or relate to the operations of, SHNA will be regulated by the SHNA & Netball Member Protection Policy and relevant Codes of Behaviour.

## **Prohibited Activity**

SHNA members must not do any of the following:

- Display any SHNA logo on any blog
- Represent or imply that the blog is authored or sanctioned by the Association
- Disclose or publish any confidential information about SHNA, its members or sponsors
- Discuss SHNA business
- Ridicule any SHNA member, official, player, sponsor or supplier
- Uploading of inappropriate website content and engaging in blogs that harass, bully, offend, intimidate or humiliate any SHNA member, official, player, sponsor or supplier
- State or display anything that would have a negative impact on SHNA's image or reputation.

## **Cyber bullying**

Bullying and harassment in all forms is regarded by SHNA as unacceptable. Given the emergence of new telephone and internet social networks, the opportunity for unwanted and improper comments and statements has dramatically increased. Messages or statements made in these ways using these means of communication are largely instantaneous and can easily be abused. Others may also manipulate a person by encouraging a statement to be made on Twitter or Facebook, for example, when the writer may be upset or vulnerable.

Bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and distress to the person who has been the target of any comments or statements. In some cases, bullying is regarded as a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment. Frustration at an umpire, teammate, coach or sporting body should never be communicated on social network channels, but rather by way of reasoned and logical verbal and written statements, and where appropriate, complaints to SHNA or the relevant club.

## Social Media Policy *continued*

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### **Comments of an offensive nature**

SHNA acknowledges that its members have the right to contribute content to public communications on websites not operated by the Association e.g. MySpace, Facebook or YouTube. However, inappropriate use of such communications has the potential to cause damage to SHNA, its officials, its members and sponsors.

SHNA members should be aware that any comments or opinions expressed via social media platforms that are defamatory, discriminatory, slanderous, offensive or intimidating about SHNA or one of its members could be considered illegal and may lead to prosecution.

SHNA members must not publish any material that may expose SHNA to any possible legal liability. Examples include, but are not limited to, defamation or discrimination of any sort.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

SHNA members need to be very mindful, once comments are made or published, that they are in the public domain for a long time and are hard to retract. Therefore, SHNA recommends:

- Do not include personal information of yourself or others in social media channels;
- Do not use offensive, provocative or hateful language;
- Use your best judgement — do not publish something that makes you the slightest bit uncomfortable and never write/publish if you are feeling emotional or upset (or are intoxicated).
- Always ask for a person's permission before posting their picture on a social networking forum;
- Never comment on rumours, do not deny, affirm or speculate about rumours; and
- Always use social network forums to add value and promote the sport in a positive way.

### **Policy Breaches and Consequences**

- i Any behaviour that is inconsistent with the Code of Behaviour (including players, officials, parents and spectators) and is directly related to SHNA may constitute a breach of this policy, and the SHNA and Netball NSW Member Protection Policy which can include referring the matter to the police.
- ii Examples of inappropriate behaviour may include, but is not limited to, uploading of inappropriate website content and engaging in blogs that harass, bully, offend, intimidate or humiliate any SHNA member, official, player, sponsor or supplier.
- iii The Association Representative Agreement states that players and parents must at all times comply with the rules, the Code of Conduct and all standards, policies, regulations, rules, determinations and resolutions which may be passed by SHNA.
- iv The Netball Association Code of Conduct applies to social media engagement. Inappropriate use of social media could fall into the category of bringing the game and SHNA into disrepute. For example, if players made comments deemed to be harassing, obscene, defamatory, libellous, threatening, hateful or embarrassing to any person or entity.
- v In such circumstances, or if any of the points above are breached, SHNA may impose sanctions which include but are not limited to:
  - a reprimand
  - a direction to make a verbal or written apology
  - placing the individual on a bond
  - imposing a fine
  - imposing a ban on taking part in any SHNA related activity
  - suspension from participation in a match or matches
  - imposing a ban (on parents/spectators) of attending any SHNA games or training sessions
  - imposing a ban (on parents/spectators) of attending any SHNA competition games or events.