

OBJECTIVES

1. In line with the objectives of AFF as stated in the Constitution, and in line with the AFF's Communications (Athletes) Policy (2015), Member Protection Policy (2016), and Disciplinary Policy (2008), this policy has been written to clarify the publication of and commentary on social media by all those people covered under the Member Protection Policy.

As a basic principle, all social media commentary must;

- a. be factually correct;
- b. be respectful of other users of social media;
- c. avoid commentary which is critical or defamatory of the AFF or its members; and
- d. conform to the principles underpinning the AFF's Member Protection Policy.

DEFINITIONS

2. For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation, blogs, wikis, social networking sites such as Face Book, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to, and complements existing employee, athlete and coaching codes of conduct.
3. For the purposes of this policy, a social media user includes any person specifically identified in the Member Protection Policy.

ACCEPTABLE USE

4. Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest to create, share or consume content, and is understood by the AFF to be a valid marketing, communication, and social interaction tool. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. Social media users are required to:
 - a. be clear about who they are representing at all times;
 - b. take responsibility for ensuring that any references to the AFF are factually correct, accurate and do not breach confidentiality requirements;
 - c. show respect at all times for the individuals and community with which they interact;
 - d. ensure they do not imply that they are authorised to speak on behalf of the AFF unless their role is management or mediation of the organisation's social media accounts;
 - e. only disclose or comment on AFF information that is publicly available, not that which is confidential (including but limited to financial information, commercial in confidence information, personal information relating to any member or volunteer);
 - f. be mindful of the importance of not damaging the reputation and interests of the AFF and/or bringing the AFF into disrepute;
 - g. ensure that they are not the first to make AFF announcements, unless they have been tasked to do so;
 - h. only offer advice, support or comment on topics that fall within their area of responsibility within the AFF (if they have one);
 - i. post material that is not a political comment, nor is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including the AFF, its members, its employees, its contractors, its partners and sponsors including the State and Federal AFF Social Media Policy, April 2012 Governments and/or other business related individuals or organisations;
 - j. be polite and respectful of others' opinions;

- k. use appropriate and formal channels to express any complaints or dissatisfaction regarding the AFF's policies and procedures, rather than social media;
- l. conform to the cultural and behavioural norms of the social media platform being used and respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 5. In the event of being advised of social media use that may violate this policy, the AFF will investigate such allegation, and will assess this violation. In addition to any other sanctions, the AFF may request, in its absolute discretion, the immediate removal of social media commentary which it believes contravenes any of the acceptable use items above. Further, violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action which may include termination for employees, or a termination of employment relationship in the case of contractors or consultants. Additionally, individuals may be subject to loss of access privileges and civil and/or criminal prosecution. Individuals may be subject to disciplinary procedures and / or member protection processes.