



Toowoomba Royal Show Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

Social media gives individuals, groups, organisations and businesses the opportunity to instantly share information with online communities. Blogs, forums, social networking and video sharing sites are the most popular types of social media sites, however, any forum which allows a user to upload and share information is considered part of the social media space. It is also important to note that information that is shared need not be written; it could take the form of an image or audio visual material.

The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) supports the use of social media as a timely and effective method of communication. In addition to engaging with the community, social media can help the organisation reach members of the broader public and traditional media.

The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) proactively seeks positive media coverage. Traditionally this media coverage has been through TV, radio and print media outlets however the rise of social media has widened this space. Given these changes, all Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland members, employees, officers (including General Committee), administrators, volunteers, exhibitors and associated interested persons have the opportunity to act as ambassadors for the organisation, simply by maintaining an online presence.

Whilst social media provides great opportunity to raise the profile of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) and reach new audiences, it also has the potential to harm the reputation of the organisation, its members and stakeholders. It is crucial therefore that all people aware of the implications of using social media.

2. Policy Application

This policy applies to all members of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show), employees, officers (including General Committee) administrators, volunteers, exhibitors and associated interested persons who have some form of 'duty' on behalf of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show).

All forms of social media activity are covered under this policy, including, but not limited to:

- Creating and maintaining social or business networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace or LinkedIn.
- Sharing audio-visual content on sites including Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest (photo sharing) and YouTube and Vimeo (video sharing)
- Authoring and commenting on blogs or forums
- Editing a Wikipedia page

3. Guiding principles

Persons bound by this policy should be mindful that information shared on social media appears in public so careful consideration should be given to content before it is posted. Never forget that information shared within online communities could have implications for The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) and those associated with it.

Information which is shared online can be difficult to retract. A representative might be able to remove his/her original comments however the very nature of social media encourages a person to share information which makes it difficult to know where the information they post ends up.

Persons bound by this policy should assume that all posts and information they share via social media can be traced back to them.

Adhering to these guidelines will ensure the reputation of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland, officials, employees, volunteers and stakeholders is protected.

Persons bound by this policy should ensure that comments made on social media should:

- *Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others*
- *Refrain from any form of harassment of others*
- *Retrain from any behaviour that may bring The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland, its members, exhibitors, volunteers, officials, associations or affiliated clubs into disrepute.*
- Comments which are contrary to the spirit and integrity of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland.
- Persons bound by this policy who share information online should consider themselves a spokesperson for the organisation and must never reveal confidential or sensitive information that could jeopardise The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland's relationships with its commercial or government partners.
- Personal sites, blogs and accounts that have a 'look and feel' of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) and could be perceived as being The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) are strictly prohibited.

4. Breach

If a person bound by this policy fails to follow these guidelines The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland has the right to issue this individual with a take-down notice. An individual who is found to not comply with a take-down notice will face disciplinary action. Repeated breaches of this policy could lead to disciplinary action. The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland also has the right to administer sanctions and take legal action.

5. Reporting a breach

Individuals who wish to report an alleged breach of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) Social Media Policy should lodge a complaint in writing and include evidence of the alleged breach.

Complaints should be forwarded to the CEO of The Royal Agricultural Society the complaint will be taken before the Executive Committee of The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland.

6. Legislation

As with any form of public communication, online communication can also be subject to legislation. Persons bound by this policy should be mindful that unsubstantiated claims, false statements, defamatory, offensive and threatening comments could lead to prosecution.

7. Amendments/Interpretation

These Guidelines may be amended by The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland as it deems appropriate. The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland Executive will be the ultimate authority with respect to the interpretation and implementation of these Guidelines.

8. Conclusion

The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) understands that social media is a new method of communication and as such encourages all persons bound by this policy to seek clarification from The Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland (Toowoomba Royal Show) if they are unsure what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate content.