



HARASSMENT-FREE SPORT POLICY

Equestrian Western Australian Incorporated

ABN: 53 591 481 584

Policy:	Harassment Free Sport Policy
Policy Area:	Member Policies – Members, Affiliates, & Associations
Date Approved:	22 nd April 2010
Replaces Policy No:	Old EFAWA Bullying Policy
Sources/References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Sports Commission Information Sheets 2007 written by Sports Ethics Unit. - Parents – Child Health Promotion Research Centre (WA) - www.cybersmart.gov.au

Harassment in sport is damaging to everyone concerned: the person harassed, the harasser, the club, the association, and the sport itself. Every person in sport, in every role, has the right to participate in an environment that is fun, safe and healthy, and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

Bullying is a form of harassment and has been defined as behaviour that is intentional, harmful, repetitive, and reflects an abuse of power. Bullying behaviours can be physical, verbal, or relational. Equestrian Western Australia (EWA) wants members, organisers & officials to know that bullying is not acceptable at any events endorsed by EWA.

Every official, competitor & helper has the right to be treated with dignity & respect. EWA has a responsibility to ensure this occurs at our endorsed events. EWA can only discipline the appropriate person/s if intimidation is reported. We encourage any person who feels they have been bullied to report it in writing to the Member Protection Information Officers (MPIO) within EWA:

- Reports will be handled promptly and confidentially
- Disciplinary action will be taken against those who have bullied others at EWA endorsed events and activities.

BULLYING

Bullying denies participants these rights and can result in feelings of disgrace, embarrassment, shame or intimidation. Bullying can also affect an individual's athletic performance, level of enjoyment, work or school life, academic achievement and physical and mental health.

Research has shown that one in six Australian students are bullied every week, and are three times more likely to develop depressive illnesses.

Bullying can occur both on or outside of equestrian grounds and can involve riders, parents, coaches, spectators or officials. It is prohibited by all State Sporting Associations (SSA's) under their Codes of Conduct and can result in penalties and punishments being applied. Some forms of bullying constitute assault, harassment or discrimination under federal and state legislation and are therefore illegal. For detailed descriptions of other forms of Harassment please refer to the EWA Member Protection Policy.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is deliberately hurting a specific person either physically, verbally, psychologically or socially. It involves a power-imbalance where one person has power or strength (e.g. physical, mental, social or financial) over another and can be carried out by one person or several people who are either actively or passively involved. In a sports context bullying can take many forms, for example:

- A parent telling their child that they are incompetent, hopeless, useless, etc.
- A coach alienating a rider (adult or child)
- Several people ganging-up on an individual team member
- Spectators verbally abusing other riders
- A Rider calling a coach or official names and using put-downs
- A parent intimidating a coach
- A rider intimidating another rider

Bullying can be a 'one-off' incident, but usually involves repeated actions or incidences. It can occur everywhere: at home, school, work, playgrounds, while participating in sport, when using public transport or walking to or from home.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullies may use one or several types of bullying to hurt their victim.

- Physical
 1. Pushing
 2. Shoving
 3. Punching, hitting and kicking
 4. Intimidation
 5. Taking away a person's belongings (this may also constitute assault)
- Verbal
 1. Disparaging remarks
 2. Name calling
 3. Threatening comments
 4. Sarcasm and teasing
 5. Yelling abuse
 6. Using put-downs
- Psychological
 1. Ganging up

2. Preventing a person from going somewhere
 3. Taking a person's possessions
 4. Sending hostile or nasty emails or text messages
 5. Spreading rumours & Innuendo
- Socially
 1. excluding
 2. alienating
 3. ignoring
 4. spreading rumours
 - Cyber
 1. Sending hostile or nasty emails or text messages
 2. Use anonymity to bully through on-line pseudonyms
 3. Public criticism

Bullying behaviour is damaging to all involved: the bully, victim, family members, those that witness the behaviour and the sporting organisation involved. Athletes, parents, coaches, administrators, Clubs and SSA's all have an ethical (and possibly a legal) responsibility to take action to prevent bullying occurring in sport and manage it, should it occur.

PEOPLE WHO BULLY

People who bully may:

- Pick a victim randomly, or carefully choose their victim
- Pick a person who has made a mistake
- Find that they get what they want by bullying (power, acceptance, admiration)
- Have been bullied themselves
- May be arrogant, aggressive or impulsive
- Enjoy having power over others
- Enjoy doing it and not care that they cause their victim distress
- Believe that some people deserve to be bullied
- Have been influenced by aggressive 'models' (at home, school or in media etc)
- See their behaviour as justified or 'pay-back' for some treatment they have received

PEOPLE WHO ARE BULLIED

Any person can be bullied. Sometimes people who are popular, smarter, attractive or possess obvious sporting ability are victims of bullying. People can also be subject to bullying if they:

- Have no experience standing up for themselves against bullies
- Lack assertiveness, resilience and the social skills required to protect themselves against bullies
- Struggle academically or in terms of sporting ability
- Appear stressed, anxious or easily hurt or upset
- Look different or are different
- Have a disability or illness
- Lack confidence or are shy
- Have been overprotected at home

SIGNS OF A PERSON BEING BULLIED

A person, especially a child, may not always ask for support when being bullied. They may feel afraid, ashamed or embarrassed and that the person they tell will think they are weak. Victims of bullying may think that they deserve to be bullied or are 'dobbing' by telling someone what is happening to them. The following are signs that a person may be being bullied:

- Finds excuses for not wanting to attend training or games (e.g. feeling sick, has an injury, has too much work to do) or talking about hating their sport
- Wants to be driven to training or matches instead of walking
- Regularly the last one picked for team or group activities
- Alienated from social or shared activities
- Has bruising or other injuries
- Becomes uncharacteristically nervous, worried, shy or withdrawn
- Clothing or personal possessions are missing or are damaged
- Repeatedly 'loses' money or possessions
- Suddenly prone to lashing out at people either physically or verbally

HOW DO BULLIES RESPOND WHEN CHALLENGED?

- Deny it
- Blame others
- Claim victimisation if they are challenged
- Rationalise to explain their bad behaviour

MANAGING BULLYING

Bullying is more likely to occur in environments that are highly competitive and promote a 'win at all cost' mentality. By emphasising other aspects of sport such as enjoyment, team work, sportsmanship and skill development, especially at the junior level, SSA's may be able to prevent bullying behaviours.

EWA will not allow or tolerate bullying and has developed Codes of Conduct and this Policy that addresses bullying behaviours. Further the Equestrian Australia Member Protection Policy addresses a range of inappropriate behaviours including discrimination, harassment and abuse and provides a complaints process for dealing with incidents. This Policy can also provide a complaints handling process so equestrian organisations can deal with incidents of bullying in a practical manner that is consistent with other inappropriate behaviour.

There are several things that the SSA administrators, committee members, officials, coaches parents and members can do to prevent bullying occurring within their sport and assist both the victim/s and the bully(ies).

Action to help the victim/s

- Take all signs of bullying seriously. Show interest and sympathy with every allegation of bullying and provide support.
- Ensure the victim/s are safe.

- Some forms of bullying constitute assault, harassment or discrimination under federal and state legislation and are therefore illegal. Seek advice from EWA or DSR or human rights or equal opportunity commission if you suspect the behaviour breaches legislation.
- Encourage members to speak out and tell someone – a parent, coach, manager or senior club member– if they are being bullied or if they witness bullying.
- Reassure the victim/s that you will help them. Also advise them, that to help them you may need to tell others about the problem (i.e. do not say you will not tell anyone).
- Speak with the bully(ies) and victim/s separately. If children are involved also speak to their parents. Keep records of what was said (i.e. what happened, who was involved, when the incidents occurred, how the matter was handled).
- A Member Protection Information Officer may be able to assist the victim and provide information as to what they can do about the problem. Telling the victim/s to ‘ignore’ the bully rarely works. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can encourage the bully(ies) because it is the reaction they are looking for.
- After a period of time, follow-up with the victim/s (and parents if appropriate) to find out if the bullying has stopped.

Action towards the bully(ies)

- Talk with the bullies (but not in the presence of the victim/s), explain the situation and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. If children are involved also speak to their parents. Keep records of what was said (i.e. what happened, who was involved, when the incidents occurred, how the matter was handled)
- The bully may want to apologise to the victim/s for their behaviour.
- If appropriate, insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- If necessary impose sanctions or penalties.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change their behaviour.
- Monitor the behaviour of the bully(ies) over a period of time.

What can I do if I am bullied?

While it may not seem like it, you do have options. **There is always something you can do.** What you do will depend on many factors, including the type of bullying that occurred, the support available to you and what approach you want to take to manage the bullying.

Please note that bullying takes many forms and different approaches need to be considered. What works for one person in a particular situation may not work for another person. What to do:

- Speak out and tell someone – a parent, coach, manager or senior club member – if you are being bullied. Explain to them what is happening and that you want the bullying to stop. Most SSA’s prohibit bullying and should do something to stop bullying occurring.
- If possible, avoid the bully and being alone with the bully.
- In some situations ignoring the bully can work, for example if it is a one-off incident and is non-threatening verbal abuse. Remember, however, that ignoring the bully will not always work. Some types of bullying (e.g. physical and psychological) should not be ignored.
- Be aware of how you react when bullied and if necessary modify your reaction. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can encourage the bully(ies) because it is the reaction they are looking for. Try reacting in a calm, assertive manner.

- Consider confronting the bully(ies) and standing up to them. You could say, “What did I do to you?” But do not react by physically hurting them as you will most likely find yourself in trouble.
- A Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) may be able to assist you and provide information as to what to do about the problem. Further information below.

CYBER-BULLYING

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying, which is carried out through an internet service such as email, a chat room, discussion group, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS.

Examples of cyber bullying behaviour are:

- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading rumours online
- Sending unwanted messages or photos
- Defamation.

Anyone can be bullied online and the bully can act anonymously if he or she desires.

Under certain circumstances (such as harassment and making threats) cyber bullying is a criminal activity and illegal. If you feel your immediate safety is at risk, contact '000' in an emergency situation or your local police. Police around Australia work together to reduce this type of crime and there are serious consequences if people participate in such activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO STOP CYBER BULLYING

Children

- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Never post what you would not want others to know or would not say
- Do not share usernames or passwords
- Do not give names, addresses, phone numbers or personal details over the internet
- Keep personal details private with a username, not a real name
- On-line is forever, so think before or posting
- A photograph of someone else may be funny to you, but others may not see it the same way
- Private boyfriend/girlfriend images can end up on public sites where their removal is difficult
- Using someone else’s content without permission breaches copyright. Friends’ OK is needed to put their property online

Victims

- Don’t reply to threatening messages
- Record times and dates of bullying

- Threatening/serious type behaviours – report abuse to police
- Tell someone about bullying: a parent, friends, someone of trust
- Tell the internet provider and ask to have messages blocked
- Change contact details and only give new details to trusted friends

Parents

- Talk regularly with children about online activities and supervise their internet use
- Talk about private passwords and mobile phone safety to prevent identity theft
- Help your child implement strategies to minimize harassment
- Make home computers visible and define children’s online time
- Be part of children’s lives. Know all their friends, not just their closest
- Cyber-bullying awareness: less school interest, avoiding friends, feeling miserable, difficulty sleeping and a drop in school performance
- Learn the privacy settings and computer controls
- Contact the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to close a bully’s account
- Work with schools and the SSA if there is cyber-bullying
- Remember the law is on your side and it is a criminal offence to use mobile phone and on-line communication to menace or harass another person.

MEMBER PROTECTION

It is EA’s statement on its commitment to provide a safe environment that is fair and respectful and free from harassment and abuse for everyone. This Policy aims to ensure that core values and positive behaviors are maintained within the SSA/NSO. As a policy, it helps ensure that everyone involved with EWA is aware of their legal and moral rights and responsibilities and that inappropriate behavior will be addressed.

Please refer to the Equestrian Australia Member Protection Policy for detailed information.

WHAT IS A MPIO?

MPIO’s are staff members trained as the first point of contact within EWA for any person considering making a complaint under the Member Protection Policy. MPIO’s provide confidential, impartial and timely information and support. They act as a sounding board and provide information about EWA complaint resolution options available to address the individuals concerns. MPIO’s are not advocates but they may elect to accompany complainants, if requested, to talk with someone else.

Please contact the EWA Administration for our MPIO’s.

WHAT DO MPIO’S DO?

- Listen.
- Act as an impartial support person.
- Provide information about discrimination, harassment and child abuse.
- Provide information about the Member Protection Policy.
- Provide information about relevant laws and the right to complain externally.

- Discuss possible strategies the individual can use to deal directly with the other person.
- Provide contact details for counseling or other referral as appropriate or as requested.

WHAT DON'T MPIO'S DO?

- Advocate
- Take sides or judge
- Give advice
- Intervene
- Investigate
- Breach confidentiality

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Step 1	As a first step you (as the complainant) should try to discuss and resolve the problem with the person or people involved.
Step 2	<p>If:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the first step is not possible/reasonable; or • you are not sure how to address the problem by yourself; or • you wish to discuss the problem confidentially with someone, to gain details about what can be do; or • the problem continues after you have tried to approach the person or people involved; then <p>Approach and discuss the situation with an MPIO. Please contact the EWA Administration Office.</p> <p>The MPIO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take notes about your complaint (which will be kept in a secure and confidential place); • try to sort out the facts of the problem; • ask what outcome/how you want the problem resolved and if you need support; • provide possible options for you to resolve the problem; • explain how our complaints procedure works; • act as a support person if you so wish; • refer you to an appropriate person to help you resolve the problem, if necessary; • inform the relevant government authorities and/or police if required by law to do so; and • maintain strict confidentiality.
Step 3	<p>After talking with the MPIO, you may decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is no problem; • the problem is minor and you do not wish to take the matter forward; • to try and work out your own resolution (with or without a support person such as a MPIO); or • to seek an informal mediated resolution with the help of a third person (such as a mediator/facilitator). <p>If you wish to remain anonymous, EWA cannot assist you to resolve your complaint. We have to follow the principles of natural justice and be fair to both sides. This means that EWA or you may be required to provide the person/people you have complained about with full details of the complaint so they have a fair chance to respond to all the allegations.</p>
Step 4	<p>If your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a formal complaint in writing to the CEO • approach a relevant external agency such as an equal opportunity commission, for advice.
Step 5	<p>If you decide to make a formal complaint in writing under Step 4, the CEO will, on receiving the formal complaint and based on the material you have provided, decide whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are the most appropriate person to receive and handle the complaint; • the nature and seriousness of the complaint warrants a formal resolution procedure. Some complaints may be of a minor and/or purely personal nature with no connection to the activities of EWA. In these cases, the CEO may determine that the complaint does not warrant a formal resolution procedure; • to appoint a person to investigate the complaint; • to refer the complaint to an informal or formal mediation session; • to refer the complaint to a Disciplinary Committee; • to refer the matter to the police or other appropriate authority; and/or • to implement any interim administrative or other arrangements that will apply until the complaint process set out in these Procedures is completed.

	<p>In making the decision(s) outlined above, the CEO will take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether they have had any personal involvement in the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and, if so, whether their ability to impartially manage the complaint is compromised or may appear to be compromised; • whether, due to the nature of the complaint, specific expertise or experience may be required to manage the complaint; • your wishes, and the wishes of the respondent, regarding the manner in which the complaint should be handled; • whether, due to the nature of the complaint, the relationship between you and the respondent and any other relevant factors, the complaint should be referred (or should not be referred) to informal or formal mediation or to a hearings tribunal. Relevant factors may include an actual or perceived power imbalance between you and the respondent, the nature of any ongoing working relationship between you and the respondent, and the personal attributes of you and the respondent (for example, if one party does not speak English fluently, some of the possible complaints resolution mechanisms may not be appropriate); • the nature and sensitivity of any information or other material that must be provided by you, the respondent, and any of the other people involved in the complaint; • Whether the facts of the complaint are in dispute; • The urgency of the complaint, including the likelihood and the consequences (if the complaint is ultimately proven) that you will subject to further unacceptable behaviour while the complaint process set out in these procedures is being conducted. <p>If the CEO is the appropriate person to handle the complaint they will to the extent that these steps are necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • request full information from you (the complainant) about your complaint and how you want it resolved (if this information has not already been obtained through earlier steps); • put the information they've received to the person/people you're complaining about and ask them to provide their side of the story; • decide whether they have enough information to determine whether the matter alleged in your complaint did or didn't happen; and/or • determine what, if any, further action to take. This action may include disciplinary action in accordance with EA Disciplinary By-Laws, appointing a person to investigate the complaint, referring the complaint to an informal; or a formal mediation session or a hearing tribunal and/or referring the complaint to the police or other appropriate authority.
Step 6	<p>If:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person is appointed to investigate the complaint under step 5, the investigator will conduct the investigation and provide a written report to the EWA Disciplinary Committee who will determine what, if any, further action to take. This action may include a direction to the investigator to make further enquiries and obtain additional information, disciplinary action in accordance with the EA Disciplinary By-Laws, and referring the complaint to an informal or a formal mediation session, a hearing tribunal or the police to other appropriate authority. • The complaint is referred to an informal or a formal mediation session under Step 5, the mediation session will be conducted as agreed by you and the respondent; • The complaint is referred to a Disciplinary Committee under Step 5, the hearing will be conducted in accordance with the EA Disciplinary By-Laws; • The complaint is referred to the police or other appropriate authority under Step 5, EWA will use its best endeavours to provide all reasonable assistance lawfully required by the police or other appropriate authority; and • Interim administrative or other arrangements are implemented under Step 5, EWA will periodically review these arrangements to ensure that they are effective.[Any costs relating to the complaint process set out in this policy are to be met by EWA unless otherwise stated within the EA Disciplinary By-Laws and/or the EA Member Protection Policy.]
Step 7	<p>If, under Step 6, an informal or formal mediation session is conducted, and you and the respondent cannot reach a mutually acceptable mediated solution to the complaint, you may request that the EA Executive reconsider the complaint in accordance with Step 5.</p> <p>You or the respondent(s) may be entitled to appeal where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under Step 5, a decision was made by the CEO: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not to take any action; or - To take disciplinary action; or • Under Step 6, a decision was made by the EWA Disciplinary Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not to take any action; or - To take disciplinary action; or <p>The appeal process for this policy is set out in the EA Disciplinary By-Laws.</p>
Step 8	<p>The Member Protection Information Officer will document the complaint, the process followed and the outcome. This document will be stored in a confidential and secure place.</p>