



## **Social Media Policy**

**Last Updated January 2014**

## Purpose

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a member-based organisation, Hockey Victoria (HV) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members. HV welcomes comments, ideas, and insights from its hockey community. Social media is now part of everyday life for a growing number of people and is evolving the way we communicate. It is an important tool that when used appropriately increases the visibility of the sport.

HV, its affiliates, associations and clubs have long histories and are highly respected organisations. It is important that HV's and hockey's reputation is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

When someone clearly identifies their association with HV, and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with HV's stated values and policies.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media. This policy does **not** apply to the personal use of social media platforms by HV members or staff where the HV member or staff member makes no reference to HV or related issues.

## Scope

This policy applies to HV affiliates, clubs, associations, staff, directors and any individual representing themselves or passing themselves off as being a member of HV.

This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, such activities as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Shutterfly, Twitter, or MySpace);
- Content sharing include Flickr (photo sharing) and You Tube (video sharing);
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving products or service reviews on retailer sites, or stakeholder review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards); or
- Editing a Wikipedia page.

The intent of the policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, colleagues, stakeholders, sponsors or HV as an organisation.

## Guiding Principles

1. The web is not anonymous, HV members and staff should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.



2. The boundaries between a member's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that members make a clear distinction between what they do in a professional capacity and what they do, think and say in their capacity as a volunteer for HV, their club or association.
3. Honesty is always the best policy, especially online. It is important that HV members think of the web as a permanent record of online actions and opinions.
4. When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all members must respect the HV brand and follow guidelines in place to ensure HV's intellectual property or its relationships with sponsors and stakeholders is not compromised or the organisation is brought into disrepute.
5. Protect your personal privacy and that of others by not including personal information about yourself or others in your posts.
6. Represent your own views and not impersonate or falsely represent any other person
7. Ensure you are not abusive and do not harass or threaten others
8. Do not make defamatory or libellous comments
9. Do not use offensive, insulting, provocative or hateful language
10. Do not use obscene or offensive language
11. Show courtesy and respect for others and their opinions at all times
12. Always use social media network forums to add value and promote hockey in a positive way.

## Usage

For HV members and staff using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing content. This also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to HV, its affiliates, partners or sponsors; and
- Must not bring the organisation or hockey into disrepute.

Furthermore, HV members and staff may not use the HV brand to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political candidate; and it must be abundantly clear to all readers that any and all opinion shared are those of the individual, and do not represent or reflect the views of HV.

## The HV's Staff online usage guidelines

If you are authorised to represent the HV through social media or if you intend to discuss issues linked to HV we expect you to follow these guidelines.

1. Only those authorised by the HV's CEO have permission to represent the organisation through social media. If you do not have authority then you must not imply that you are in any way authorised to speak on behalf of the HV.
2. If expressing your own views and opinions about HV, or hockey, please use a disclaimer. An example of a disclaimer is: "the views expressed in this post are mine only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the HV."



3. Please be aware that it is very easy for the HV to track and identify the source of any comments in the social media environment. If you make comments that contravene these guidelines the issue will be escalated as required.
4. If you are unsure of answering a question directed at you, please do not answer, but instead respond with: 'That's a good question. Let me check and I'll get back to you as quickly as I can'. Please then contact the HV Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Chief Operating Officer (COO) to receive further guidance.
5. Please be aware that it is very difficult to take-back or remove any comments from the social media environment. Please be certain that your comments will not be damaging to any parties.
6. Please do not respond directly to any media enquiries you receive online. Please refer any media to the CEO.
7. If you do make a mistake in the social media environment (i.e. accidentally posting inaccurate information) please notify the CEO as soon as possible; they will advise on the best course of action.
8. Please ensure you are not the first to make any HV announcement unless you have received appropriate approval from the CEO. Do not include HV trademarks or logos in your postings.

### **Branding and Intellectual Property (IP)**

It is important that any trademarks belonging to HV or any Club, association are not used in personal social media applications. Trademarks include:

- HV, Club or association logos;
- HV Tag line – "Growing our game"

### **Official Hockey Victoria blogs, social pages and online forums**

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for staff/ club member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a club/HV has given written consent to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permission must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of minor children may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child's parent and /or guardian.

For official HV blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through 'pop up' content which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should **not** be used for online forums or social pages as the nature of the 'pop up' content cannot be controlled;
- HV staff must not use HV online pages to promote personal projects; and

- All material published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

### **Considerations towards others when using social networking sites**

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. HV members and staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way.

Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about HV members of staff online.

### **Breach of Policy**

HV, clubs and associations continually monitor online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to HV.

If a HV staff member or an affiliate notices an inappropriate comment posted that defames or is abusive, contact the HV CEO immediately. Staff will be instructed to hide and report inappropriate content posted to official HV sites as soon as it is noticed or reported. Staff will also be required to take a screen shot/copy of all inappropriate content prior to removing, as potential evidence.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from HV. This may include being barred from using the page. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other HV policies. This may involve a verbal or written warning or in a serious cases, termination of employment for staff or engagement with HV. HV members may be disciplined in accordance with HV disciplinary regulations (Codes of Behaviour).

### **Consultation or Advice**

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for HV members and staff in a new area of social interaction. HV members or staff, who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification, should contact HV Media & Communications Coordinator.

### **Review, Additions or Amendments**

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated bi-annually. In addition recommendations for changes can be submitted at any time to the Manager- People and Culture. If a change is consequently required, this will then be tabled for discussion at the next board meeting. All changes to policy will be communicated with staff and affiliates and revised policy made available on HV website.