



Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

As a national body for a developing, family orientated sport, ASSA acknowledges electronic communication and social media plays an important role in communicating to its members and potential members. Social Media reaches far and wide and provides an excellent promotional tool for dog powered sports and it is important it is used in a positive manner.

This policy provides ASSA and its members with guidance on using electronic communication tools and social media so people can participate with confidence, engage appropriately, and support ASSA when online.

2. TERMS OF USE

This policy applies to all ASSA members, affiliates and followers of the ASSA Facebook Groups.

1. EMAIL

Not all ASSA members are users of Social media tools such as Facebook. Furthermore, there are many non ASSA members who follow the ASSA Facebook Group for general information but do not need to know nor should be aware of all of ASSA's internal affairs.

Therefore, where most appropriate, Email will be used as/for:

- a. The primary means of communication to members on formal matters. Formal matters will include things such as distribution of Meeting Minutes and agendas, calling for nominations, voting procedures, consultation on rule changes etc.
- b. A forum to debate ideas and provide feedback on ASSA achievements.
- c. Members and affiliates to raise formal correspondence to the ASSA National committee.
- d. If a member does not have an email address then that member will be communicated to in writing.

2. Social Media (namely Facebook)

ASSA has 2 Facebook Pages / Groups, these being the "ASSA – Australian Sleddog Sports Association" Facebook Page and the "ASSA Discussion" Facebook Group.

The ASSA – Australian Sleddog Sports Association Facebook Page:

Is a closed group but open to Non Members of ASSA. (It is closed group so that trollers and spruikers can be excluded. Posts will need to be approved by the Page Admin. ASSA – Australian Sleddog Sports Association Facebook Page will be the main Page for ASSA and be used as a forum to/for:

- a. Promote membership for ASSA and its affiliates.



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- b. The ASSA committee to provide *general* updates on ASSA initiatives.
- c. The ASSA committee to *promote* any aspect of the sport once any formal / consultative element is completed.
 - i. ASSA will not engage in debate on issues via social media forums as this should have been completed during more formal communication processes as defined above.
- d. ASSA affiliates to promote, their races, training opportunities etc.
- e. ASSA members to seek advice from other members, share ideas, stories and pictures.
- f. ASSA members / non-members to ask questions of ASSA. However, it should be noted that some questions may not be easy or appropriate to answer as may require the ASSA Committee to vote upon a proposal etc.
 - i. As such ASSA members and non-members should forward relevant questions and or proposals to the ASSA Secretary where they can be raised as official correspondence at Executive Committee meetings.
- g. Non ASSA members to seek advice and learn more about dog powered sports in Australia.

The ASSA Discussion Facebook Group:

Is a closed group for financial members of ASSA only. It is the responsibility of the ASSA Secretary to admit and delete members to this group based upon their membership status of ASSA. Paid ASSA members may be deleted from the group if they do not abide by this policy.

The role of this Group is to provide members an easy to access forum to discuss general items in relation to rules and regulations pertaining to ASSA, membership benefits and suggestions for improvements.

However, ASSA will not actively monitor this site nor act upon the suggestions contained within this Group as ASSA members will be required to submit formal submissions via email or post to the ASSA Executive committee for discussion and actioning as per point 2.f. above.

In simple terms this means ASSA will not conduct business via Social media but this group serves as a forum for ASSA members to discuss collective opinions:

3. Advertising

- a. Individual ASSA members - can use the ASSA Facebook Group to buy, swap and sell items they may be seeking or looking to sell.
- b. Registered / Profit Making Businesses – will not be permitted to use the ASSA Facebook Group as means of advertising unless they are an approved advertiser by the ASSA national committee. (Refer to ASSA Advertising Schedule) Registered Businesses who are not approved advertisers and attempt to advertise will be removed from the ASSA Facebook Group.



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- c. Rehoming / Rescue Dogs – will be permitted to be flagged on the ASSA Facebook Group. ASSA supports dog rescue but cannot warrant that any dog obtained from any dog rescue organisation will be suitable for the lifestyle and/or purpose for which the dog was obtained. Any person obtaining a dog from a dog rescue organisation must make their own enquires and decision as to its suitability.
- d. Puppy / Litter Advertising – will not be permitted on the ASSA Facebook Group in any circumstances by any individual.
- e. Fund Me – “Please fund me” posts or equivalent posts will not be permitted on either ASSA Group page.

3. STANDARDS

1. When posting material to social media forums (including your own Facebook Group or the ASSA Facebook Group) or responding to emails your comments and actions must not impair the reputation of ASSA.
2. Think before you post, particularly regarding negative comments that may offend other ASSA members and or non-members, ASSA affiliates or ASSA / affiliate sponsors.
3. Show respect for others and respect their privacy and confidentiality.
4. Consider where you are posting and ensure you know your audience.
5. Be sure your tone (e.g. humour, sarcasm) is appropriate and is coming through clearly. Readers can only assess your tone by your words and how you present them so consider how you will come across in how you write (e.g. all CAPS, grammar).
6. It’s fine to disagree but stick to the facts and check them first.
7. Remember that you can’t take it back. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don’t shrug it off and post anyway. Try to figure out what's bothering you and then fix it.
8. Facebook posts which are or are perceived to be condescending, inflammatory or misinformed will either be responded to privately as to avoid further negativity (for both ASSA and the author) or simply ignored.
9. **Administrator Privileges**
 - a. The ASSA Executive who is current at the time will be the only authorised administrators for both ASSA Facebook Pages/Groups.
 - b. The outgoing ASSA Executive must hand over Administrative control to the incoming committee within 14 days of the completion of the AGM. This includes the Creator of the initial page.
 - i. Failure to do this will result in disciplinary action.



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- c. Administrators may delete or not approve posts based on the content or if the post breaches the standards of this policy. When deleting or not approving the post the Administrator must:
 - i. Notify the author; or
 - ii. Notify on the post (if the post had already started).
 - iii. In some circumstances the action may be deleting a post and then redirecting it to another page/group. I.e. from the ASSA – Australian Sleddog Sports Association Facebook Page to the ASSA Discussion Group.

4. BREACH OF STANDARDS

As an ASSA member you may either receive a warning or have your membership revoked if you make comments either via social media or electronic communication (namely but not limited to email) that:

- Offends, humiliates or intimidates (bullying/harassment) an ASSA member, non-member associate or an ASSA sponsor or affiliate's sponsor.
- Behave in a way which is viewed as discriminatory (as defined by the Australian Human Rights Commission) <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints-information>
- Impairs the reputation of ASSA and or brings the sport into disrepute.

5. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING SUSPECTED BREACHES

1. Reporting

- ASSA members should report an alleged breach of this policy to their State Rep who will raise the allegation with the ASSA National Council.
- The complaint must be made in writing and supported with any other evidence. (This may include a screen shot of the breach and witness statements.)

2. Investigating

- ASSA will investigate the issue and make a determination based on the balance of probabilities.
- Subject to the degree of the breach it will generally issue a warning in the first instance but may revoke a membership.