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## REVISED PCA MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY – IMPLEMENTATION ADVICE

This is an important Policy document and PCA and all State and Territory Pony Club Associations have legal and moral obligations to provide safe environments. This Member Protection Policy (policy) assists us to adequately meet these obligations and to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making within Pony Club. The policy outlines Pony Club's commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. It informs everyone of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our sport's activities.

The policy applies to employees, board members, committee members, and sub-committee members, administrators, coaches, officials, support personnel and riders and volunteers life members; parents, spectators and sponsors; and all PCA member associations and affiliated clubs.

The PCA Member Protection Policy has been revised to include the following additional policies:

- 6.7 Alcohol Policy
- 6.8 Smoking Policy
- 6.9 Cyber Bullying/Safety
- 6.10 Social Networking Policy
- 6.11 Bullying, Victimisation and Intimidation.

The revised policy has been approved by the Australian Sports Commission and by Pony Club Australia 13 May 2012.

**It is important that this revised policy is adapted by all PCA states and territory associations and that it is well publicised so everyone involved in Pony Club is aware of their responsibilities.**

States and Territory Associations are required to have a Member Protection Policy, it is not sufficient just to refer to the PCA Policy. A State or Territory specific, policy must be adapted using the PCA Policy as a template and replacing PCA specific references with references to the State or Territory and replacing in Part B the PCA Codes of Behaviour with the Codes of Behaviour for each State or Territory association and in Part C, Attachment C3 to include the information relevant to the particular State or Territory.

The Policy also deals with complaint handling and the PCA takes all complaints about inappropriate behaviour, both "on and off-field" seriously. A range of steps have been set out in the policy for dealing with groups or individuals who engage in any of the behaviour prohibited by the policy. It provides guidance for those with a complaint or concern, those who have had a complaint made against them and, those who have responsibility for handling a complaint.

All complaints will be handled based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- confidentially will be maintained;



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- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
  - irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
  - decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
  - any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

Member Protection Information Officers (MPIO). In part 10 of the Policy the MPIO is described as “a person trained to be the first point of contact for a person reporting a complaint under, or a breach of, this Policy”.

It is important that all States and Territory Associations appoint persons to be MPIO's but these persons must have completed either Industry Training (lots of people are trained as MPIO's or Contact Officers in the workplace) or they must have attended the MPIO training courses run by the State or Territory Sport and Recreation Department or other relevant training.

All States and Territory associations need to have at least one State MPIO and at least one for each member Zone. These people don't necessarily have to be members of Pony Club so long as they have done the appropriate training and are willing to assist.

In a situation where a complaint has been made against a person or a body of persons both the person making the complaint and the accused are entitled to receive assistance from a trained MPIO but the one MPIO is not able to advise both the complainant and the accused, assistance must be requested from another MPIO. MPIO's are not restricted to the Zone or area that they are appointed in.