



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Name: Social Media Policy

Date of Approval: FEB 2025

Policy Coverage: Social Media Use

Versions: 1.0 OCT 2024

Policy overview and purpose

Social media is changing the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our Surfing community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimising potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to Surfing Australia.

This policy contains Surfing Australia guidelines for the Surfing Australia community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

In circumstances where guidance about social media issues has not been given in this policy, we suggest you use common sense or seek out advice from those who have approved this policy.

Underlying principles

This policy complements Surfing Australia's core values:

- **REAL:** We live the surfing lifestyle, and we invite everyone to share the stoke.
- **RESPECTFUL:** We are appreciative of our community and celebrate our surfing history and culture.
- **PROGRESSIVE:** We embrace change and innovation.
- **PROTECT:** We proactively protect our playgrounds for future generations.

Surfing Australia's Board is responsible for all matters related to this policy.

Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of Surfing Australia, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity, including:

- members, including life members, of Surfing Australia;
- persons appointed or elected to Surfing Australia boards, committees and sub-committees;
- employees of Surfing Australia;
- members of the Surfing Australia Executive;
- support personnel, including managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers and others;

- coaches and assistant coaches;
- athletes;
- head judges, judges, and other officials;
- member associations; and
- Affiliated clubs and organisations.

Scope

Social media refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This Social Media Policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Yammer, etc)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc)
- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, Wordpress, Blogger, etc)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Mentions, etc)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud, etc)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)
- Online voting or polls
- Public and private online forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. an officially designated individual representing Surfing Australia on social media; and
2. if you are posting content on social media in relation to Surfing Australia that might affect Surfing Australia's business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to Surfing Australia or its business, competitions, teams, participants, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation. However, any misuse by you of social media in a manner that does not directly refer

to Surfing Australia may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of Surfing Australia.

Using social media in an official capacity

You must be authorised by the Head of Production, Media and Channels; Chief of Sport, or Communications Manager before engaging in social media as a representative of Surfing Australia.

To become authorised to represent Surfing Australia in an official capacity, you must have:

- Read and agreed to the Surfing Australia [HR-08 PO Social Media Policy](#)
- Read and agreed to **Surfing Australia Media and Content Distribution Policy**
- Watched or participated in an E-Safety “Online safety for sports clubs” course

As a part of Surfing Australia’s community, you are an extension of the Surfing Australia’s brand.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing Surfing Australia can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within Surfing Australia. Therefore, it is important that you always represent both yourself and Surfing Australia appropriately online.

Guidelines

Every person covered by this policy must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to Surfing Australia or its business, products, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

Use common sense

Whenever you are unsure as to whether the content you wish to share is appropriate, seek advice from others before doing so or refrain from sharing the content to be on the safe side.

When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, you are an ambassador for Surfing Australia.

Protecting your privacy

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual would never see it.

Where possible, privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to limit access. You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

Honesty

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. Surfing Australia recommends erring on the side of caution – if in doubt, do not post or upload.

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts.

Use of disclaimers

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you work for or are affiliated with (e.g. member of Surfing Australia) and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble -- it may not have legal effect.

Reasonable use

If you are an employee of Surfing Australia, you must ensure that your personal use of social media does not interfere with your work commitments or productivity.

Avoiding controversial issues

Within the scope of your authorisation by Surfing Australia, if you see misrepresentations made about Surfing Australia in the media, you may point that out to the relevant authority in Surfing Australia. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

Dealing with mistakes

If you make an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences

Keep in mind that what you write is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your membership or employment at risk.

You should always follow the terms and conditions for any third-party sites in which you participate.

Prohibited Conduct

Every person covered by this policy must meet the following requirements in relation to your behaviour or conduct when using social media related to Surfing Australia or its business, products, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

Respect confidentiality and sensitivity

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of Surfing Australia's confidential information. This includes information that is not publicly accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of Surfing Australia.

Remember, if you are online, you are on the record—much of the content posted online is public and searchable.

Within the scope of your authorisation by Surfing Australia, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about Surfing Australia and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of Surfing Australia. Confidential information includes things such as details about litigation, unreleased product information and unpublished details about our operations: e.g. team, coaching practices, financial information and trade secrets.

When using social media, you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This could include accidents, incidents or controversial behaviour.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

Complying with applicable laws

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying or misleading and deceptive content.

Abiding by copyright laws

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and Surfing Australia's own copyrights and brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying

The public in general, and Surfing Australia's employees and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

When using social media, you may also be bound by Surfing Australia's values, National Integrity Framework, Code of Conduct and other similar policies.

Branding and intellectual property of Surfing Australia

You must not use any of Surfing Australia's intellectual property, imagery or footage on your personal social media without prior approval from Surfing Australia.

Surfing Australia's intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- trademarks
- logos
- slogans
- imagery which has been posted on Surfing Australia's official social media sites or website
- Images, audio or video that have been created as part of your role at Surfing Australia

You must not create either an official or unofficial Surfing Australia presence using the organisation's trademarks or name without prior approval from Surfing Australia.

You must not imply that you are authorised to speak on behalf of Surfing Australia unless you have been given official authorisation to do so by Surfing Australia.

Where permission has been granted to create or administer an official social media presence for Surfing Australia, you must adhere to the Surfing Australia Branding Guidelines.

Prohibited Conduct - Policy breaches

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using Surfing Australia's name, motto, crest and/or logo online or on social media (including in public or private forums) in a way that would result in a negative impact for the organisation, clubs and/or its members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.
- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content, which if said in person during competition or participation would result in a breach of the rules of the Surfing Australia event.
- Posting or sharing any content in breach of Surfing Australia's National Integrity Framework, Code of Conduct or other similar policies.
- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any state or Commonwealth law.
- Knowingly posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing Surfing Australia, its affiliates, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organisation into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organisation in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.
- Conduct or activity on social media that is prohibited under the 'Prohibited Conduct' sections of this policy.

The Surfing Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy applies to any alleged breach or Prohibited Conduct under this Social Media Policy.

Reporting a breach

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to Surfing Australia or any of its members, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately.

Where it is considered necessary, Surfing Australia may report a breach of this Social Media Policy to police.

Employees of Surfing Australia who breach this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Related policies

- [Code of Conduct](#)

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- National Integrity Framework, including:
 - [Member Protection Policy](#)
 - [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#)
 - [Improper Use of Drugs & Medicine Policy](#)
 - [Competition Manipulation & Sport Gambling Policy](#)
 - [Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy](#)
- Related Surfing Australia staff policies, including:
 - [HR-08 PO Social Media Policy](#)
 - [HR-06-PO IT and Communication Policy](#)
 - Surfing Australia Media and Content Distribution Policy

Other legal considerations that may be applicable include but are not limited to:

- Defamation
- Intellectual property laws, including copyright and trademark laws, privacy, confidentiality and information security laws
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Employment laws
- Advertising standards
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Equal opportunity laws
- Contempt of Court
- Gaming laws