

## Policy on Bullying

Bullying is an issue in many sports today. The Show Horse Victoria Committee wants members, organisers and officials to know that bullying is not acceptable at any Show Horse Victoria events.

Respect

Every official, competitor and helper has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. The Show Horse Victoria Committee has a responsibility to ensure this occurs at our events. The Show Horse Victoria

Committee 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 Show Horse Victoria Committee:

- Reports will be handled promptly and confidentially
- Disciplinary action will be taken against those who have bullied others at events run under the auspices of the Show Horse Victoria Committee

What is Bullying?

Bullying is any inappropriate behaviour using force or power. Bullying undermines another person's self-esteem and confidence. It may be a one-off or may be repeated incidents:

Disparaging remarks Name-calling

Public criticism Smirking

Verbal abuse Harassment

Written abuse Swearing

Threats Socially excluding people

Shouting Spreading rumours and innuendo

Sarcasm Throwing papers etc down/around

Belittling

None of this is ever acceptable. Please report it to an Show Horse Victoria Committee official.

Being uptight at a competition is no excuse for bad behaviour.

What is the cost of Bullying?

Bullying is not confined to the school yard. It costs Australians an estimated \$12 billion a year.

- 1 in 3 people quit work because of bullying (UK data)
- Bullying may make officials, competitors and sponsors leave our sport

WITHOUT OUR VOLUNTEER JUDGES, ORGANISERS, AND OFFICIALS, THERE WOULD BE NO COMPETITIONS.

Why do people Bully?

Those who can, do .... Those who can't bully.

The more inadequate the person, the more they bully

- Bullies blame others for their problems
- Some bully when they are overloaded and not coping
- Some are just socially inept

Steps the Show Horse Victoria Committee may take

Every time a bully gets away with this behaviour, it is a signal to him or her that the organisation thinks it is acceptable. When unacceptable behaviour is reported to the Show Horse Victoria Committee,

the committee can:

1. Send a letter to the bully to arrange a meeting with representatives from the Show Horse Victoria Committee
2. Issue the bully with a written warning, which will remain on file
3. Suspend the bully from competing at Show Horse Victoria Committee events for a period of time if in the judgement of the Show Horse Victoria Committee the incident merits it, or if further incidents occur.

How do I handle a bully?

1. Stay calm. If necessary, tell the intimidator that you will not continue the conversation until you have a second official with you (walk away if you have to).
2. Stay polite. Inform the intimidator that the Show Horse Victoria Committee wishes people at events to report inappropriate behaviour.
3. Make a note of the following details as soon as possible.
  - a) Name or bridle number, (ask them to provide their name if you don't know it)
  - b) Time and date
  - c) Others present
4. Put a brief written report in to the Show Horse Victoria Committee so the matter can be handled formally

We need the knowledge & experience of our volunteers.

We cannot afford to lose good people through bad behaviour.

Here's how it might go:

Spectator: "You haven't got a clue how to marshal this event, my daughter should have been called 10 minutes ago. You're a bloody idiot".

Marshal: "If you wish to continue this conversation, you will need to come to the club house / scorer's caravan/ canteen so another official is present while we discuss this issue".

Spectator: "What the hell do you mean? She's riding in a test right now. I'm not going anywhere".

Marshal: "Officials have been asked to submit written reports on inappropriate behaviour at competitions. When you say "You're a bloody idiot" I feel intimidated.

Spectator: "How ridiculous, get a life!"

Marshal: "In accordance with Show Horse Victoria Committee guidelines, I am making a note of your daughter's bridle number, the time, what was said, and these other riders' bridle numbers so the incident can be properly reported".

Who are bullies?

People in authority can victimize people with less power. They are often charming to those they are not bullying, which can make it even more difficult for their victims to complain. Some are clever, competent sophisticated manipulators who enjoy dominating and humiliating others. They like to see their victims squirm.

Who do bullies target?

- Bullies often target people who have made a mistake. We all occasionally make mistakes.

Riders do, officials do, judges do.

- Bullies often attack people who are victims – the 'blame the victim' syndrome
- For example, an organiser gets abused when a computer, P.A., printer or photocopier

breaks down, or weather conditions damage a riding surface or blow arenas down.

How do bullies respond when challenged?

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

How do we eliminate bullying?

- Have a clear policy – bullying is unacceptable
- Define what is bullying and why it is unacceptable
- Encourage riders or officials who are being bullied to report it – providing support and confidentiality
- Appoint committee members to discipline bullies

Did you know?

In Criminal Law:

- Assault = threatening behaviour, intimidation, bullying
- Battery = physical attack