

# **VICTORIAN AGRICULTURAL SHOWS LTD**



## **HORSE COMPETITION EXHIBITORS HANDBOOK**



## HORSE EXHIBITOR HANDBOOK

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## **VICTORIAN AGRICULTURAL SHOWS LTD**



### **JUDGES, STEWARDS AND COMPETITORS**

#### **RULES & GUIDELINES**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

The Rules & Guidelines herein are the basis of all activities conducted by Victorian Agricultural Shows Ltd (hereinafter referred to as VAS Ltd).

Members and affiliated organisations of VAS Ltd are urged to adopt similar rules & guidelines for their own use to uphold the high standards VAS Ltd expects of its Members. Should any conflict arise in the application of the rules & guidelines of VAS Ltd and those of a Member or affiliated organisation, the rules & guidelines applicable to the organisation hosting the particular show will prevail.

These Rules & Guidelines cannot be reproduced in whole, or part, without the permission of VAS Ltd.

These Rules & Guidelines cannot be used, in whole, or in part, for the judging of agricultural type competitions unless the organising committee or body is a Member of VAS Ltd.

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## **JUDGES AND COMPETITION RULES INTRODUCTION**

This section contains the VAS Ltd rules for judges, stewards, competitors, exhibitors and owners. The basis of a “good day” at a Show is all about competitors, judges, stewards and administrators working together from a fair and clear set of rules that are applied equally to everyone. When showing, we all have similar expectations.

**We expect competitors to compete from a level base of honesty and fair play and to observe the Rules and Guidelines at all times.**

**We expect Judges to judge positively and to show no breed or exhibitor prejudice or favouritism.**

**We expect the best Exhibit on the day, regardless of breeding and ownership, to be declared the winner.**

**We expect Judges to judge based upon observance of the overall work of the competitor or conformation of the exhibit, and consequently select the winning competitor, animal or exhibit as presented on the day.**

**We expect Stewards to act knowledgeably and professionally in their role and to treat competitors politely when managing the events for which they are responsible.**

**We expect Stewards, both before and during events to refrain from any discussion with their Judge/s regarding the competitors, animals or exhibits being judged.**

**We expect Stewards and show officials to refrain from influencing or attempting to influence Judges in any way, regarding the outcome of any event/s.**

**We expect all involved to be good sportspersons – this means such things as fairness, courteous relations to others and graceful acceptance of results.**

With co-operation from all those involved, we can ensure everyone has a ‘good day’ at the Show!

### **Members, Competitors, Judges and Stewards Please Note:**

All Members of VAS Ltd, members of the Member and affiliated organisations, other organisations holding events and functions sanctioned by VAS Ltd, and competitors at Shows and events are expected to abide by the Rules and Guidelines. As Members, they are bound by the Constitution, Rules and Guidelines of VAS Ltd and those of the host Member or host affiliated Member.

Attention is drawn to the disciplinary provisions of VAS Ltd herein, whereby VAS Ltd has wide powers to discipline Members, competitors, exhibitors, stand-holders, stewards, judges, voluntary helpers and other persons involved in Shows in the event of failure to observe any provision of these Rules and Guidelines and/or any other Rules and Regulations of VAS Ltd. Any confirmed breach of these Rules & Guidelines may be subject to a penalty.

Exhibitors, Competitors, Stewards and Judges are asked to read these Rules and Guidelines carefully and to ensure that they are upheld.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

The following definitions apply unless the context requires otherwise.

### **Business Partner**

A person who is a party to contractual and/or verbal agreement between two or more persons carrying on a business or hobby venture.

### **Class**

This is a particular competition advertised on an organisation/Member's program or schedule for the exhibition of animals or exhibits or the performance of competitors. This may be an individual event or a team event or any other combination.

### **Competitor**

Includes an exhibitor, a person and a person riding/leading an animal in competition, at an official or non-official event, run specifically for the presentation of exhibits or the performance of individuals under a Judge for the purpose of competition.

### **Constitution**

Constitution means the Constitution of VAS Ltd.

### **District**

District Group as defined by VAS Ltd.'s Constitution.

### **Employer**

A person employing/hiring another in a business.

### **Exhibit**

Includes an exhibit and the combination of animal and competitor. The competitor may be the owner, lessee, or the representative of the said owner. Both animal and competitor must be eligible to compete in the particular class.

### **Exhibitor**

The person or persons owning the animal or exhibit which may include a lessee or representative of the said owner.

### **Family**

Brother, sister, child, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, parents, grandparents, grandchildren. (Including in-law, step and defacto relationships.)

### **Knowingly**

Acquainted with and/or aware of the truth and/or having been informed of the facts. Where this situation exists, it shall be presumed that any breach is intentional.

### **Lessee**

Where in possession of an animal or exhibit, but the ownership is not transferred to another person. Only leases registered with a Breed Society and/or Equestrian Organisation are recognized or, in the case of breed classes, leases registered with a Breed Society and copied to VAS Ltd.

### **Member**

Member means a body admitted to membership under the VAS Ltd Constitution.

**Minutes**

Minutes are the documented and approved true and correct record of all meetings of any Board of Management, Executive, Council, Committee, Sub-Committee, Show or Affiliated Organisation.

**Owner**

Owner/s are the person/s named as the owner on Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited height or performance certificates and/or registration papers issued by a recognised Breed Society.

**Representative**

A person not being the owner or lessee, showing the animal or exhibit on behalf of the owner or lessee.

**Rules and Guidelines**

Rules and Guidelines means rules and guidelines made by the VAS Ltd Board of Management as amended from time to time.

**Sale**

An exhibit shall be deemed to have been sold or leased when the appropriate transfer of the registration papers has been processed by the appropriate registration authority or recognized Breed Society or when, after delivery of the exhibit to new owners, a receipt for payment in full has been issued. A sale is only recognized as fully complete when all the necessary paper work has been completed.

**Show**

An event held by VAS Ltd, a Member or affiliated organisation involving traditional agricultural and/or horticultural type activities.

**Steward**

A person assisting VAS Ltd, a Member or affiliated organisation to manage exhibits or exhibitors at a Show.

**Time Allotment**

Months are calendar months.

**Trainer/Instructor/Tutor**

A person who trains and/or prepares animals and/or riders and/or handlers. A trainer may not necessarily receive reward for training and training may take place anywhere including Showground facilities.

**Tuition**

Instruction of animals and/or a rider and/or a handler as an individual in a group of two (2) or more persons in a clinic situation. The rider and/or animal and/or handler cannot compete under competition conditions under that instructor within three (3) months from the date of the last tuition or vice versa.

**VAS Ltd**

Victorian Agricultural Shows Ltd.

## RULES

### Note:

- a) **Rule changes. All Members of VAS Ltd will be notified in writing of any rule changes from time to time. Public notification will be undertaken through Show schedules and the media where necessary.**
- b) **These Rules & Guidelines are to be considered in conjunction with the rules for showing of any affiliated organisation or Breed Society as they may affect the management of and competition within classes and sections of Agricultural, Horticultural and/or Pastoral Shows.**
- c) **It is the responsibility of exhibitors, competitors, Judges, Stewards and Officials to make themselves familiar with the rules. Ignorance of the rules is no excuse.**

### 1. Method of Implementation

It is envisaged that the policing of these Rules & Guidelines will be self-regulatory. Members, exhibitors, competitors, judges, stewards and show officials have the right to lodge a protest alleging infringement of the rules. See Show schedules for any local requirements in regard to the procedure of a particular Show on Show day.

- a) Any protest should be in writing and lodged with the organising body within fourteen (14) days of the date of the event giving rise to the protest;

### **PLUS, where possible,**

A separate letter, in writing, should be provided to the organising body from an unrelated member of a different family attesting to the validity of the protest within fourteen (14) days of the date of the event giving rise to the same protest.

- b) The 'Disputes or Protest' committee will decide in accordance with the rules if there is a case to answer.
- c) Once the organising body has been notified of a protest, the competitor/exhibitor is asked not to transfer ownership under VAS Ltd.'s rules of any animal owned or leased by that person until determination of the protest, or completing of any suspension, whichever is the later. In any event, the purchaser of an animal must be notified of any pending action.
- d) Any penalties resulting from a protest lodged with VAS Ltd or any other organising body, apply to the competitor, exhibitor and animal. This is irrespective of who owns the animal or exhibit during the period of the penalty.
- e) On hearing a case the 'Disputes or Protest' committee's decision will be final; no appeal will be entered into.

### 2. Disputes or Protests Committee

- a) Every Show shall have a Disputes or Protest Committee, which shall be appointed prior to the Show, made up of people who will be available on the day. Reserve Members should be named so that in the event of absence the process is able to continue.
- b) Only members of the Board of VAS Ltd or in the case of a dispute arising at a local Show the Office Bearers of that local Show and where necessary, independent advisors selected for their expertise in the particular area of concern, may hear and adjudicate on disputes concerning judges, stewards and show officials. No matter the make-up of the Hearing Committee, the rules of VAS Ltd shall be the base of any decision.



The Board of VAS Ltd may make such inquiry as it considers appropriate in the circumstances and may in exercise of its judgment either reprimand such person or inflict upon such person such fine or penalty as the Board may think proper in the circumstances or may require such person to tender their resignation from the Member or any affiliated organisation provided always that upon such inquiry, the person shall be informed in writing by registered post of an alleged breach and shall be given at least twenty-one (21) days to answer any charge that may be laid against them and to provide any explanation or evidence that they may consider desirable and an opportunity shall be afforded them of appearing before the Board to answer any charge and to furnish such evidence or explanation as the circumstances may warrant.

### **3 Penalties**

#### **Member, Owner, Lessee, Competitor and/or Exhibitor**

- a) Every person who commits a breach of these Rules & Guidelines shall be liable to the following penalties:
- b) A first offence may incur a fine not exceeding \$500 or disqualification for a period of up to one year for the animal and/or owner;
- c) A second offence may incur a disqualification for a period for a maximum of two (2) years with a minimum of one (1) year;
- d) Third Offence - suspension for a period from two (2) years to ten (10) years; and
- e) The Disputes or Protest Committee may impose costs against the defendant.

**Note:** The action dates of these penalties are at the discretion of the Board of Management of VAS Ltd. Any removal or suspension is also applicable to an animal, exhibit or person involved in the offence.

#### **Judges**

- a) First Offence - removal of name from Judges List for a maximum of one (1) year;
- b) Second Offence - removal of name from Judges List for a maximum period of two (2) years with a minimum of (1) year; or
- c) Third Offence - suspension for a period from two (2) years to ten (10) years.

**Note:** The action dates of these penalties are at the discretion of the Board of Management of VAS Ltd. Any removal or suspension is also applicable to an animal, exhibit or person involved in the offence.

#### **Stewards**

- a) First Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should not be allowed to Steward for a maximum period of one (1) year;
- b) Second Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should not be allowed to Steward for a maximum period of two (2) years with a minimum of one (1) year; or
- c) Third Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should be suspended from stewarding for a period from two (2) years to ten (10) years.

**Note:** The action dates of these penalties are at the discretion of the Board of Management of VAS Ltd. Any suspension is also applicable to any animal, exhibit or person involved in the offence.

## **Show Officials**

- a) First Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should not be allowed to act in the capacity of a Show Official for a maximum period of one (1) year;
- b) Second Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should not be allowed to act in the capacity of a Show Official for a maximum period of two (2) years with a minimum of one (1) year; or
- c) Third Offence - all Member organisations advised that the person should not be allowed to act in the capacity of a Show Official for a period from two (2) years to ten (10) years.

**Note:** The action dates of these penalties are at the discretion of the Board of Management of VAS Ltd. Any suspension is also applicable to any animal involved in the offence.

## **4. Appeals**

Any questions or dispute arising shall be open to appeal. An appeal may be submitted to a meeting of the Board of Management of VAS Ltd and the Board shall consider all reports, statements and information submitted to it by the parties to the question or dispute and shall be at liberty to make such further investigation and inquiry as it may think fit regardless of the ordinary rules of evidence and its determination shall be final and binding on all parties to or affected by the question or dispute and they shall have no recourse to law therefrom.

For the purpose of this clause the determination must be supported by at least a majority of members of the Board present and voting at the relative meeting.

Provided that:

- i) If any person desires any such question or dispute to be submitted to the Board of VAS Ltd such person shall notify the Secretary in writing accordingly;
- ii) Every notification shall be accompanied by a payment of one hundred dollars \$100;
- iii) Each party to any such question or dispute and every person affected thereby shall furnish to the Board in writing such information and such evidence as the Board by its Secretary shall require; and
- iv) Upon determination of the question or dispute the Board may at its discretion direct the one hundred dollars (\$100) payable as aforesaid to be refunded to the person paying the same or may declare the same to be forfeited where in the opinion of the Board the question or dispute submitted is trivial, frivolous or vexatious.

## **CONDUCT**

### **GENERAL**

1. Each Member, owner, lessee, competitor and/or exhibitor shall strictly observe and act in conformity with and not otherwise than in accordance with the Constitution and the Rules and Guidelines for the time being of VAS Ltd.
2. No Member, owner, lessee, competitor and/or exhibitor shall conduct themselves or be guilty of such conduct as to bring VAS Ltd or any Member or affiliated society into discredit or bring themselves as an exhibitor or breeder or as a member into discredit.

## JUDGES

- 3.** A Judge is ineligible to judge a competitor and/or an animal if:
- a) The Judge is a member of the competitor's family, competitor's business partner, competitor's employee or employee of the competitor.
  - b) The competitor has leased an animal to that Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer within the six (6) months period preceding the day of competition.
  - c) The competitor and/or the animal have been accommodated by the Judge, Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer two (2) weeks prior to the day of competition.
  - d) The competitor has been a Representative under competition conditions for the Judge, Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer and his animal or any part of the combination within the six (6) months period preceding the day of competition.

The animal may not necessarily have been owned by that Judge at the time of representation by the competitor.

- e) The Judge has been employed by the competitor, competitor's family, competitor's business partner in the six (6) months period preceding the day of competition.
  - f) Either the animal being exhibited on that day or the competitor or the combination has been under tuition by the Judge, Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer within the six (6) months period preceding the day of competition.
- 4.** Judges may not adjudicate more than once within 100km and 30 days of a show.
- 5.** A Judge may direct a Steward to order any person or animal from the ring and the competition for bad conduct of one or both.
- 6.** When an exhibitor or a competitor makes a request through a Show Official for the Judge's opinion concerning an animal, it is urged that the Judge will give an opinion courteously and sincerely. The Judge should ensure that the Show Official making the request to the Judge for an interview between Judge and the exhibitor or competitor remains present during all discussions with the exhibitor or competitor. However, there should be no fraternization between the exhibitor or competitor and the Judge until the Judge has finished officiating.
- 7.** A Judge at a show shall not transport or accompany animals or competitors to the Show in the section that they are appointed to Judge.
- 8.** A Judge shall be required to be familiar with the current VAS Ltd Rules and Guidelines.
- 9.** A Judge may not visit the lines of animals, parking areas or stables or the owners in any social situation or inspect or discuss any animal entered in the Show until after they have finished officiating.
- 10.** A competitor or exhibitor shall not exhibit under a Judge, nor shall a Judge adjudicate when the competitor or exhibit is ineligible under the rules.
- 11.** A Show Official who is also a competitor or exhibitor shall not participate in any discussion on or selection of a Judge in any event in which he or she competes.

12. If a Judge judges or an exhibitor or competitor competes knowing an animal is ineligible one or all may be held in breach of the rules.
13. The Judge's decision as to the winners and place getters in a class shall be final. Only if an infringement of the rules is proved can the Show Officials change the places.
14. No competitor or exhibitor or member of their family shall approach a Judge with regard to a decision unless they first obtain the permission of the Show President or Secretary, Show Manager, Ring Master or Ring Steward the most senior of whom shall carry the decision on the day.
15. A judging panel for a championship shall be drawn from amongst the judge/s who judged the qualifying classes for that championship.
16. If one Judge is unavailable, the Chief or Senior Steward must agree that judging may commence without a full panel.

### **EXHIBITORS, OWNERS, LESSEES, COMPETITORS**

17. A competitor is ineligible to compete under a Judge if:
  - a) The competitor is a member of the Judge's family;
  - b) The animal or exhibit is owned or has been owned by the Judge or Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer or employee within the twelve (12) months preceding the day of competition;
  - c) Any animal or exhibit has been leased by the competitor from the Judge or Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer within the twelve (12) months preceding the day of competition or the duration of the lease whichever is the longer;
  - d) That Judge or Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer has owned the animal or exhibit being competed with, under that Judge, on that day, within the twelve (12) months preceding the day of competition;
  - e) The animal or exhibit being competed with was bred or created by the Judge or Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer and was sold within the twelve (12) months preceding the day of competition, not necessarily by the competitor;
  - f) The Judge has been accommodated within two (2) weeks prior to the event at the competitor's residence, the competitor's family residence, the competitor's business partner's residence or the competitor's employer's residence;
  - g) Either the animal or exhibit being exhibited on that day, under that Judge or the competitor himself or herself, or any part of the combination have been involved in tuition by the Judge or Judge's family, Judge's business partner or Judge's employer, within the six (6) months preceding the day of competition;
  - h) If the Judge has been a representative under competition conditions for the competitor, competitor's family, competitor's business partner or competitor's employer and his/her animal or exhibit or any part of the combination within the six (6) months preceding the day of competition. The animal or exhibit may not necessarily have been owned by the competitor at the time of representation of the Judge;
  - i) The Judge or Judge's family or Judge's business partner has not employed the competitor within the twelve (12) months preceding the day of competition;
  - j) The competitor's animal or exhibit is in the incorrect class or height group, or if that competitor cannot produce the relevant evidence on that day; or

- k) The competitor has not entered the animal or exhibit under its correct registered name or markings and/or brands differ from those on the animals registration papers and official registration papers cannot be presented on the day or within fourteen (14) days of the event.

**NOTE:** Inevitably, circumstances will arise which are not precisely covered. In such circumstances, wherever possible the spirit of the Rules & Guidelines will be applied and followed to produce the fairest results for all.

**18. Ownership**

All animals or exhibits entered in competitive classes or ring events or parading (whether by invitation or entry) must be entered in the name of the bona fide owner or lessee. All animals must be named at the time of entry.

**19. Records**

No exhibitor or registered owner shall exhibit any animal recorded by any organisation or any affiliated breed society in any show or exhibition or advertise any animal in any paper, schedule, periodical or pamphlet under any but its registered or recorded name or as having attained any wins not recorded in the results of affiliated shows.

**20. Leases**

A lease presented to VAS Ltd must cover each leased animal competing at any Show. Evidence of a lease or partnership must be presented on request from VAS Ltd. All benefits and penalties relating to a leased animal shall be attributed to the lessee. If the animal is registered with an affiliated Breed Society the lease must also be registered with that Society.

- 21.** Leases or partnerships must be for no less than a six (6) month period and a copy shall be lodged with Show Officials whenever an animal is entered for competition.

- 22.** No competitor or exhibitor shall deface or alter registration papers, height certificates or performance cards. Damaged cards, certificates or registration papers are not acceptable and should be replaced.

- 23.** Animals must be shown in their respective height category as per the most recently dated height certificate as the accepted current height. This is provided it is on a recognised organisations height certificate and carried out by an authorised measurer within the last 12 months of the respective event by a recognised organisation. eg: VAS Ltd, Melbourne Royal, Show Horse Council, or Equestrian Victoria

- 24.** Exhibitors must carry a current performance card for every novice horse and make this available in the ring upon request.

- 25.** It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to ensure that the animal, exhibit and/or competitor are entered and shown only in the correct classes, and that the animal, exhibit and/or competitor is entered and shown under its full registered name where applicable.

## GENERAL

### 26. Hats and Safety Helmets

- a) A hard hat is generally described as a hunting cap, a bowler, protective headwear or a safety helmet.
- b) Wearing a hard hat is compulsory for everyone competing on, working in or schooling or riding for any other reason a horse at a Show or in any area considered to be for whatever reason a part of the Showgrounds.
- c) All riders must wear protective headgear, which includes a retaining harness secured to the shell at more than two points. Such headwear must be worn with the chinstrap properly adjusted and fastened when in the arena or ring, the practice area collecting rings or anywhere else within a Showgrounds.

It is strongly recommended that all riders particularly those jumping horses wear protective headwear conforming to the current Australian Standard or an equivalent standard and that the headwear be secured by a retention harness.

### 27. Animal Abuse

Any alleged acts of animal abuse are reportable during the event to the organising body, supported by at least two other witnesses, or after the event to VAS Ltd in writing. Two separate letters must be received in writing by VAS Ltd from unrelated members or different families within fourteen (14) days of the date of the event, giving rise to the incident.

**NOTE:** Abuse can be defined as intentionally acting in a way that may cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to an animal. As examples, an act of abuse can be any of the following:

To whip or beat an animal excessively

To subject an animal to any kind of electric shock device to use spurs, or to jab an animal in the mouth with a bit or any other instrument, excessively or persistently

To remount, or attempt to remount, an obviously exhausted, lame or injured animal

To 'Rap' a horse anywhere in or outside the grounds of the event To hyper sensitize any part of an animal

To leave an animal without adequate food, drink or exercise

## QUALIFICATIONS

28. A competitor **must choose** to enter in classes as either a Show Hunter or a Show horse, **but not enter both**. Once a horse has competed as a Show Horse or a Show Hunter at its first VAS event in a calendar year it must remain as a Show Horse or a Show Hunter at VAS Competitions for that calendar year.

Once a horse has successfully won a Champion in its first open ring it cannot continue to compete in that equivalent section in other rings during the show.

First place getters are eligible to compete in multiple open rings until successful as Champion.

## ENTRIES, ENTRY FORMS, SCHEDULES

29. The following text should appear in every Show Schedule:  
The use of tranquillisers, stimulants, or any drugs capable of affecting the performance or behaviour of animals is forbidden.  
Competitors are advised that tests for forbidden substances may be carried out during the Show and that testing of all animals is at the owner's risk. Testing for forbidden substances will be carried out under veterinary supervision.

**30.** The following text should appear on every Show Entry Form:

The attention of exhibitors is particularly drawn to the conditions relating to the misuse of drugs, and the Committee may undertake random testing for forbidden substances.

**EXHIBITORS DECLARATION**

I accept the Association's conditions of entry and agree to comply with the Rules, Regulations and/or Guidelines of the Association.

Signed:.....

**31. Arrears**

No person who is in arrears with regard to entry fees, subscriptions, or any other Show charge is eligible to compete at any Show held by or affiliated with VAS Ltd. Proof of payment will be required before any restriction will be lifted.

**Note:** Not only is the above a rule of VAS Ltd but is expected that this policy will be followed by every Member and affiliated organisation and that the text of Rule 31. (above) will be included in all schedules.

**32.** All entries must be made on the official entry form of VAS Ltd or any Member or affiliated association. These forms are to be completed and signed by the exhibitor, or by some person authorised to sign on their behalf and must be deposited with the Secretary or appointed official on or before the closing date set down in the particular schedule. Entries are subject to the terms and conditions set down in the schedule and may be declined.

**33.** No entry will be considered valid unless the entry form has been completed and signed. Entry in the Show entitles the Association to publish an Exhibitor's name in results reports subject to statutory privacy legislation.

**34.** All entries are made subject to the rules, regulations, guidelines and/or by-laws of VAS Ltd, Members and affiliated organisations.

**35.** Substitution of any entry can only be made by application to and at the discretion of the Show Manager.

**36.** The host Show Committee reserves the right to refuse or cancel any entry without adducing any reason for doing so.

**VICTORIAN AGRICULTURAL SHOWS LTD**  
**VAS RULES FOR DISCIPLINE IN HORSE SECTIONS AT SHOWS**

**(Rules to be followed when VAS assists Shows with management of this issue.)**

**PRELIMINARY**

1. For the purpose of these rules, except in so far as the context or subject matter otherwise indicates or requires:

**VAS** - means Victorian Agricultural Shows Ltd;

**Attendant** - means any person apparently in charge of a horse at any show conducted by a Show Society;

**Award** - means any item awarded in recognition of achieving a certain standard at a Show and includes a certificate, prize, cash prize, trophy, medal, ribbon and rosette.

**Board** - means those persons from time to time comprising the Directors and the Chairman of VAS;

**Committee** - means the VAS Disciplinary Committee;

**Competitor** - means the person who rides or handles, or who intends to ride or handle, a horse in any competition;

**Event** - means the Show in which it is intended that a horse will compete;

**Group** - means the organizations identified as comprising each of Groups 1 to 15 in the VAS's then current publication providing the dates for Agricultural Shows (Shows Booklet);

**Inquiry** - includes an investigation or other proceeding;

**Misconduct** - includes any conduct that is inimical to the interests of VAS, a Show Society or a Group, or which is, or may be, prejudicial to the health or wellbeing of a horse, and also includes:

- (a) any breach of these rules;
- (b) any conduct considered by the Committee to be unsportsmanlike, or to be contrary to the manner in which a person ought to behave;
- (c) any conduct that induces, or may induce a breach of the peace or which is, or may be, a nuisance;
- (d) any conduct which does, or might, prejudice the smooth running, or interfere with the conduct of, any meeting of VAS (or any committee of the VAS) or of any Show;

**Owner** - means the person in whose name the horse is registered with any organisation, or the person whose proprietary rights to the horse are otherwise evident;

**Prohibited Substance** - means any substance referred to in the Schedule to these rules;

**Show** - means any event conducted by a Show Society at which horses compete or are intended to compete;

**Show Official** - means any person who, with the authority of the relevant Show Society, is involved in conducting, directing or running a Show or any part of a Show;

**Show Society** - means an organisation (whether or not incorporated) that is affiliated with VAS Ltd.



**Suspension** - means a specified period of disqualification of the animal and/or the person or persons concerned from any form of participation other than as a spectator in the Horse Section at any agricultural show in Victoria.

**The singular includes the plural and vice versa.**

2. Subject to Rule 3, all inquiries, investigations and appeals shall be conducted in accordance with these rules.
3. Any person who is or whose actions are the subject of an inquiry (referred to in these rules as the “person concerned”) may agree to the procedures provided for herein being varied in any respect and any such agreement shall be binding on the person concerned for all purposes connected with the inquiry or arising therefrom.

#### **BODIES THAT MAY CONDUCT INQUIRIES**

4. All inquiries shall be conducted by the VAS Disciplinary Committee with a panel of at least 3 members of the committee arranged, actually to sit in each inquiry.
5. The Committee, which shall not include the Chairperson, shall comprise such persons (being not less than 3 nor more than 7) as the Board may from time to time appoint (one of whom shall be nominated by the Chairperson as chairman), but no more than 2 members of the Committee shall be members of the same Group.

#### **HOW INQUIRIES ARE INITIATED**

6. An inquiry may be initiated by the Committee:
  - (a) Upon receipt by the VAS Office of a written complaint that a person may have committed misconduct;
  - (b) Upon resolution of the Committee on its own motion;
  - (c) A decision of the Committee pursuant to (a) or (b) may be by means of electronic communication.
7. An inquiry may not be initiated in respect of any matter that the Committee considers:
  - (a) is of a domestic nature relating only to the internal affairs of a Show Society or a Group, or
  - (b) is principally concerned with legal rights between members of a Show Society where the courts are a more appropriate venue.

#### **CONDUCT OF INQUIRIES**

8. The Committee may require that any matter the subject of an inquiry be, so far as possible, reduced to writing.
9. The person concerned shall be informed in writing of any complaint and be provided with a copy of all documents in possession of the Committee necessary to enable the person to understand the nature of the complaint and of any case he/she may have to answer.
10. (a) The Committee shall conduct a hearing at such time and place as it considers appropriate provided that at least 21 days’ written notice thereof is given to the

person concerned and to the person or persons (if any) who made the complaint the subject of the inquiry and to any witnesses of the events in question and all such persons shall be entitled to appear and be heard at the inquiry and to give such evidence as shall be relevant in the circumstances.

- (b) Where the person concerned or a witness in relation to the matter the subject of an inquiry resides more than 100 kilometres by road from the place at which the inquiry hearing is to be conducted and that witness has presented a written statement to the Committee, the Committee may (but need not) permit the person concerned and the witness to give evidence and be cross examined by means of a telephone conference.
11. (a) Subject to (b), all persons who constitute the Committee panel for the purpose of an inquiry must be present at the inquiry or hearing at all times.
- (b) Despite (a), with the consent of the person concerned, the Committee may conduct an inquiry or hearing, or part of an inquiry or hearing, by teleconference.
12. The Committee may conduct the inquiry notwithstanding that any person (including the person concerned and a witness) who has been given notice fails to appear at the inquiry.
13. (a) The Committee may from time to time on its own motion adjourn the conduct of the inquiry to such time and place as it considers fit but notice of such adjournment shall not be required to be given to persons not present at the inquiry when the adjournment is announced.
- (b) The Committee shall only grant an application for an adjournment by a person concerned in circumstances where to fail to do so would in the Committee's opinion constitute a denial of natural justice.
14. The Committee is not bound by rules of evidence and shall conduct the inquiry with the minimum of formality and in such manner as it sees fit.
15. (a) The Committee may require any person to attend a hearing before the Committee and to furnish such information and evidence and to produce such documents relevant to the matter the subject of the inquiry as the Committee sees fit.
- (b) The Committee may of its own motion call evidence from experts.
16. (a) No person shall be legally represented before the Committee.
- (b) The Committee may, at the expense of VAS, obtain legal advice concerning any matter or thing relevant to the inquiry but any such advice shall, unless the Committee otherwise resolves, be and remain confidential to the Committee.
17. All deliberations of the Committee are and must remain confidential to the Committee. Any breach of this rule may be deemed by the Board to be conduct that is prejudicial to the interests of VAS and thus constitute an Expulsion Event within the meaning of the VAS Constitution

## **DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE & CERTAIN PENALTY GUIDELINES**

18. (a) The Committee may announce its decision orally or in writing. A decision that is announced orally shall have effect in accordance with its terms.
  - (b) The Committee may, but is not obliged to, publish a written report on the facts as found by the inquiry and the penalty (if any) the Committee considers appropriate to impose in the circumstances.
  - (c) If the opinion of the members of the Committee is not unanimous, the decision of the majority shall prevail. If the members of the Committee are equally divided on any question concerning the guilt or innocence of a person concerned, the question shall be resolved in the person's favour.
19. If the Committee considers that the imposition of a penalty may be appropriate, the Committee:
  - (a) must have regard to any submission on penalty that the person concerned may wish to make;
  - (b) may have regard to any previous instance in which the person concerned has been found guilty by any Organisation of a breach of the rules, or of misconduct, provided that the Committee shall not be made aware of any such previous instance until after the Committee has reached the decision that the person concerned is guilty in respect of the matter then before the Committee. For the purpose of this paragraph (b), "Organisation" includes VAS, any Show Society, the Show Horse Council, the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria and any other kindred body.
20. It shall be the duty of the VAS Office to cause to be provided to the Chairman of the Committee, prior to the Committee's consideration of the question of penalty, an envelope in which shall be contained a paper on which shall be written either information concerning any such previous instance or a statement to the effect that there has been no previous instance. The information shall not refer to any occasion when the complaint was dismissed or not found proved.
21. If the Committee considers that the imposition of a penalty is appropriate, the following table of suspensions and monetary penalties shall apply as non-mandatory guidelines applicable to matters that do not involve or include the presence of a Prohibited Substance:
  - (a) Excessive discipline of horse – 3 to 12mths and/or \$150 to \$1000
  - (b) Causing hurt to a horse or undue stress – 12 to 24mths and/or \$500 to \$1000
  - (c) Causing injury to a horse - 24mths to life \$1000 to \$3000
  - (d) Denigration of an exhibitor, an exhibit, a judge, a Show Official or a spectator during a Show – 3 to 12mths and/or \$150 to \$1000
  - (e) Abuse of an exhibitor - 12 to 24mths and/or \$500 to \$1500
  - (f) Abuse of a judge - 24mths to life and/or \$1000 to \$3000

In the case where the person concerned has not previously been found guilty of misconduct or a breach of the rules, the Committee should consider whether or not a reprimand is an appropriate penalty.

22. If the Committee, having conducted any inquiry, is of the opinion that any complaint or allegation which led to the institution of the inquiry was made:

- (a) frivolously,
- (b) without sufficient evidence to justify the making of the complaint or allegation, or
- (c) out of ill will, spite or in bad faith,

the Committee may decide that:

- (i) financial compensation be provided to the person concerned in respect of expenses actually incurred in dealing with the matter,
- (ii) there be a penalty imposed on the person considered by the Committee to have acted in any manner described in (a) to (c) of this rule, and VAS shall take all such action as may be necessary to give effect to such a decision of the Committee.

23. Decisions of the Committee are final and there is no right of appeal.

### **PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES**

24. The Committee shall arrange for any test for a Prohibited Substance to be carried out in accordance with such procedures as the Committee may from time to time determine.

a) (a) A person must not enter at a show any horse to which a Prohibited Substance has been administered, or permit a horse to which a Prohibited Substance has been administered to compete.

(b) The Competitor, the Owner and an Attendant of any horse in which a Prohibited Substance is detected is deemed to be in breach of these rules.

(b) (a) Subject to (b), a horse to which a Prohibited Substance has been administered may not compete, and is not eligible to compete.

(b) Despite (a), if a horse has had a Prohibited Substance administered to it and:

- (i) prior to the horse competing, the Competitor discloses that fact (such disclosure to be in such form as VAS may from time to time require) and
- (ii) satisfactory evidence is provided that the performance of the horse will not be affected by the presence of the prohibited Substance, then at the entire discretion of the Show Society conducting the Show, the horse may be permitted to compete.

25. The Board may in its discretion appoint person(s) (who is/are practising veterinary surgeon(s)) to cause an examination to be made at any time of any horse at any Show conducted by a Show Society. In the course of such examination, the person(s) may

(a) take such samples (including, without limitation, urine, blood, saliva and faeces) from such horse as are considered by that person necessary or advisable;

(b) examine, test, trot up and flex the horse.

26. The opinion of any such person(s) as to whether a Prohibited Substance would not, or could, affect the performance of the horse at the time of competition, shall be final.

27. Any horse that is found to have a limb, or any part thereof, desensitised is deemed to have had a Prohibited Substance administered to it.
28. Any person who fails to permit, or seeks to prevent or hinder, an examination of a horse is deemed to have acted in breach of these rules and at the discretion of the Board and without the need for inquiry by the Committee, may be:
- (a) banned from participating in any Show conducted by a Show Society for a period not exceeding 2 years; and/or
  - (b) fined an amount not exceeding \$1,000.

There is no appeal from a decision of the Board pursuant to this rule.

#### **MINIMUM PENALTIES FOR PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE OFFENCES**

**29. Level 1 – Use of a Prohibited Substance which would not have affected the performance of the horse at time of competition.**

1<sup>st</sup> offence – Warning – Award not affected – Official position not affected

2<sup>nd</sup> offence - \$200 fine – Loss of Award – Loss of position

3<sup>rd</sup> offence - \$500 fine – Loss of Award – Loss of position

Further Level 1 offence – Proceed to Level 2 – 2<sup>nd</sup> offence

**Level 2 – Use of a Prohibited Substance which could have affected the performance of the horse at the time of competition**

1<sup>st</sup> Offence - \$500 fine – 12mths suspension-Loss of Award – Loss of Official Position.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offence - \$1000 fine – 12mths suspension-Loss of Award - Loss of Official Position.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offence - \$1000 fine - 24mths suspension-loss of Award - Loss of Official Position.

In addition, and in respect of both Level 1 and level 2, a person who has been found guilty of a breach of Rule 25 (a) may be required to reimburse VAS all costs incurred by VAS in relation to the detection of the Prohibited Substance in question.

In respect of a Level 2 offence, the suspension may be of the horse concerned and/or the Competitor and/or the Attendant and/or the Owner, as the Committee may in the particular case determine.

30. (a) Where a penalty comprises, or includes the payment of a monetary penalty, that amount must be paid no later than the date nominated by the Committee as the date for payment. Except with the express permission of the Committee, a horse to which the penalty relates is deemed not eligible for and may not be competed in any Show until the monetary penalty has been paid.
- (b) Where a penalty comprises both a suspension of a person and a monetary penalty and return of awards (with or without reimbursement of VAS costs), the suspension will continue beyond its specified completion until all the other penalty requirements have been completed.

## **PUBLICATION OF RESULTS AND CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES.**

31. (a) The Committee may, in its entire discretion, publish any decision of the Committee, including any penalty imposed, to the members of VAS, Show Societies and Royal Show Societies throughout Australia, Equestrian Australia, the Show Horse Council of Australasia Inc. and to such other organizations conducting horse shows as show a clear interest in supporting VAS penalties. Where appropriate such publication may strongly recommend that relevant bodies support VAS penalties by extending any VAS suspension to include the shows held during that time by those relevant bodies.
- No action shall lie against VAS, the Board or any member of a Committee in respect of any such publication.
- (b) The Committee may determine by resolution that, when notified by another body of the suspension of a horse and/or a person (or persons) under the rules applicable to that body's showing rules, the suspension will be extended to include VAS agricultural shows, and the societies will be notified accordingly.

Random Drug Testing is now carried out at major shows throughout Australia. The rationale is that horses are expected to compete on their merits and free from the presence of any Prohibited &/or Banned substance.

It is difficult to carry out Drug Testing at smaller shows due to the costs involved, the necessary amenities not always being available and documentation requirements not in place at this level. VAS Ltd. has adopted Drug Testing Competition Rules that are constructed as "Absolute Liability", meaning that there is no defence if in offence is proven as a result of detection of the presence of any Prohibited &/or Banned substance. Set Penalties apply to a breach of these Rules which have proved effective in all but eliminating this type of offence.

A Treatment Sheet is required at major events conducted by VAS for any horse receiving any substance or Treatment from 30 days prior to or during the Event. Veterinary advice will be sought by the Ground Jury, it will be dependent on the Veterinary advice as to whether the horse will be allowed to compete.

The selection process of horses for testing is usually laid out by the Committee prior to the Event. VAS Ltd. favours an automatically tested section winners or other horses by a predetermined selection method.

The Official Drug Testing Steward will accompany the selected horse and the Responsible Officer/Witness to the designated swab area. A Drug Testing Information Sheet is available, this will inform him/her of the Sampling & Testing process followed.

The Testing is carried out by a qualified Veterinarian who follows the Laboratory Protocol during the entire process and the forwarding of samples to the Testing Laboratory. Samples taken are labelled A and B. If Sample A returns an irregularity the Reserve Sample will then be tested to obtain a confirmatory analysis. The result of this test will determine if there has been a breach of Rules

### **SCHEDULE**

**PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES** are categorised as follows:

**'Banned Substances'** are substances identified as such under the FEI Equine Prohibited Substances List, they have no legitimate use in the competition horse and/or have a high potential for abuse. They are not permitted for use in the competition horse at any time.

**'Controlled Medications'** are substances identified as such on the FEI Equine Prohibited Substances List and are recognised to have therapeutic value and/or be commonly used in equine medicine. Controlled Medication have the potential to affect performance and/or be a welfare risk to the horse.

**'Foreign substances'** are those which are generally accepted to have no performance modifying effect but **may** be detectable. Examples: omeprazole, ranitidine, pentosane, hyaluronic acid, bromhexine, vitamins and essential trace nutrients.

**"Exhibitors and their support teams are strongly encouraged to work closely with their veterinarian when administering any treatment &/or substances to horses"**.

A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE is any substance or drug originating externally to a horse (and whether or not it is endogenous to the horse) capable of affecting the performance or behaviour of a horse including without limitation:

- Drugs acting on the central nervous system
- Drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system
- Drugs acting on the cardiovascular system
- Drugs affecting the gastro-intestinal function
- Drugs affecting the immune system and its response
- Antibiotics, synthetic anti-bacterial and anti-viral drugs
- Antihistamines
- Anti-malarial and anti-parasitic agents
- Antipyretics, analgesics and anti-inflammatory drugs
- Diuretics
- Local anaesthetics
- Muscle relaxants
- Respiratory stimulants
- Sex hormones, anabolic agents and corticosteroids
- Endocrine secretions and their synthetic counterparts
- Substances affecting blood coagulation
- Cytotoxic substances
- Any substance other than a normal nutrient which by its nature may affect the performance of the horse as a whole.

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**Victorian Agricultural Shows Limited  
(VAS Ltd)**

**Policy on Bullying**

Bullying is an issue in many sports today.  
VAS Ltd wants members, organisers and officials to know that bullying is not acceptable at any VAS Ltd events.

**RESPECT**

Every official, competitor & helper has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. VAS Ltd has a responsibility to ensure this occurs at our events. VAS Ltd 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 VAS Ltd:

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 VAS Ltd.

**WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is an 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  
Public criticism  
Verbal Abuse  
Written abuse  
Threats  
Shouting  
Sarcasm  
Belittling

Name-Calling  
Smirking  
Harassment  
Swearing  
Socially excluding people  
Spreading rumours & innuendo  
Throwing papers etc down/around

None of this is ever acceptable. Please report it to a VAS Ltd 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.

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1 in 3 quit work because of bullying (UK data)

Bullying may make officials, competitors and sponsors leave our shows

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Without our volunteer judges, organisers, there would be no competition.

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## **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 VAS Ltd MAY TAKE**

Every time a bully gets away with this behaviour, it is signal to he or she that the organisation thinks it is acceptable. When unacceptable behaviour is reported to VAS Ltd, the committee can:

- 2 Send a letter to the bully to arrange a meeting with representatives from VAS Ltd.
- 3 Issue the bully with a written warning, which will remain on file.
- 4 Suspend the bully from competing at VAS Ltd affiliated events for a period of time if in the judgement of VAS Ltd or the committee, the incident merits it, and 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 show official with you (walk away if you have to).
  2. Stay polite. Inform the intimidator that VAS Ltd wishes people at events to report inappropriate behaviour.
  3. Make a note of the following details as soon as possible:
    - a) Name or Exhibitor 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 VAS Ltd so the matter can be handled formally.
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We need the knowledge & experience of our volunteers.  
We cannot afford to lose good people through bad behaviour.

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## 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 class 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 VAS Ltd guidelines, I am making a note of your daughter's exhibit number, the time, what was said and those other riders' exhibit 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 and 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.