

The Royal Agricultural Society Of Tasmania

Policy Title: Code of Conduct	
Division: Administration	
Approved By: CEO	
Originated: (Drafted Board member P Edwards) (Review drafted CEO 2020)	Revision Date: 21-May-20

FINAL POLICY - CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to outline the Society's position on ethical behaviour and proper practice and to document the standards expected in providing a service to the community.

Scope:

This Policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Board and Council.

Referenced and Related Documents:

Governance policy
Financial delegation to staff
OH&S policy
Privacy policy
Conflict of interest policy

Review:

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Personnel:

The Society's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing and reviewing this policy.

All Board members, Councillors, casual, permanent and contract staff and volunteers are responsible for adhering to all clauses.

Policy:

The Board, Councillors and staff of RAST have a legal and moral responsibility to manage the Society in the best interests of the community they serve. Board and staff will demonstrate professional ethical behaviour at all times in their responsibilities to the Society, in their professional relationships with each other and in their professional services to the community, and are required to adhere to this code of ethics.

General Principles:

The Board, Chairmen of Show Committees and Council (except where noted) shall:

- Be diligent, attend meetings and devote sufficient time to preparation for meetings to allow for full and appropriate participation in decision-making;
- Observe confidentiality relating to non-public information acquired by them in their roles and not disclose such information to any other person;
- Ensure that the independent views of members are given due respect, consideration and weight.
- Keep the lines of communication wide open with the CEO, Managers and staff, including items of concern, matters requiring attention and those that may have been missed.

Board only:

- Meet regularly to monitor the performance of management and the Society as a whole. To do this the Board will ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting systems are in place and that these are maintained and utilised to provide accurate and timely information to the Board. [Refer to Governance Policy for more information;
- Ensure there is an appropriate separation of duties and responsibilities between itself and senior management and that no individual has unfettered powers of decision-making. [Refer to Governance Policy and Financial Delegations to Staff for related information;]
- Ensure that stakeholders are provided with an accurate and balanced view of the Society's performance, including both financial and service provision;
- Regularly review its own performance as the basis for its own development and quality assurance. Individual Board members should also review their own performance with a view to ensuring a suitable contribution to Board deliberations and decision-making and, if found lacking, should pursue training or assistance to improve their performance;
- Carry out its meetings in such a manner as to ensure fair and full participation of all Board members;
- Show due respect to other Directors and executive management, their opinions and input and refrain from making disparaging remarks that reflect upon other Directors opinions and input in an unnecessary and unhelpful manner.
- Ensure that the Society's assets are protected via a suitable risk management strategy;
- Ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with the duty to the organisation. [Refer to Conflict of Interest for more information.]

Staff and Volunteers:

- Publicly and privately support the Society and each other, acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of others and acting with courtesy and respect;
- Act honestly and in good faith at all times in the interests of the Society and Objects, ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly those who are recipients of services (public) are treated fairly according to their rights;
- Perform their duties as best they can, taking into account their skills, experience, qualifications and position. They shall act in a safe, responsible and effective manner. Where a skills gap is identified, individuals are responsible for seeking assistance in the form of training and development or mentoring;
- Be punctual and reliable in their attendance and adhere to their prescribed and authorised hours of duty;
- Comply with the prescribed terms and conditions of their employment/engagement;
- Record their attendance for duty in the manner prescribed;
- Notify the organisation of any inability to attend duty as early as possible so as not to inconvenience others or delay the work of the organisation;
- Carry out their duties in a lawful manner and ensure the Society carries out its business in accordance with the law, and recognise both legal and moral duties of their role;
- Respect and safeguard the property of the Society, the public and colleagues; and observe safe work practices so as not to endanger themselves or others. [Refer to Occupation Health and Safety Policies for more information;]
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any information gained through their work and not divulge personal information or the address, email address or phone numbers of Board members, RAST Members, staff, volunteers, service providers or service users. (Refer to Privacy Policy for additional information;]
- Ensure that all transactions, agreements and records that flow from relationships with the Society's stakeholders will be accurately and openly recorded in the organisation's books and records, and make no entries which would obscure the true nature of a transaction;
- Ensure that the Society will market its services with integrity and accuracy;
- Ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with the duty to the Society;
- Undertake no personal or business activities for personal gain while at the Society or while conducting business of the Society: procedures associated with such activities will not be carried out on the Society's computers without open and express permission of a higher authority;

- Work within the Society's Constitution, policies and principles;
- Discuss issues where appropriate with other staff, volunteers and Board members to determine whether or not a contemplated action is ethical.

Responsibilities:

- The CEO, for approving and reviewing this policy after management team input and advice;
- Managers, for providing input to the policy, advising the CEO on approval, and for ensuring their staff are aware of this policy;
- All staff, Directors, Councillors, volunteers and contractors for being aware of, complying with and being bound by the policy, their responsibilities and legal obligations.

Breaches of the code:

- Anybody may make a complaint to the CEO if they believe those bound by this code have breached it in some way.
- If the complaint involves the CEO then it should be made to the President.
- The CEO or President will ensure the complaint is fully documented noting the complaint, the complainant, the person subject to the complaint and any other relevant information.
- The CEO or President will then determine if it appears that a breach has occurred and notify the Board at the next available meeting of the Board of his or her assessment.
- The Board will then determine if any further action is required which may include, but is not limited to:-
 - Dismissal of the complaint.
 - Reference to the RAST Disciplinary Committee for assessment and action.
 - Removal of the accused from their role(s).
 - The application of a relevant, just and applicable penalty.
- Any decision taken under the above will be communicated to the complainant, the accused and any other relevant parties in writing by the CEO or President at the first available opportunity.
- Any decision taken under this policy may be appealed, within 21 days of notification of that decision, in writing addressed to the Chairman of the Appeals Committee. The appeal should outline the grounds for appeal and any arguments considered relevant.

- The Appeals Committee may call for and hear evidence from any person or source deemed relevant to the appeal.
- An appeal can only be upheld if the decision was found to be unjust, not warranted having regard to contemporary management practices and relevant legislation, or manifestly excessive in the opinion of the appeals committee.
- The Chair of the Appeals Committee must convene a meeting as soon as practical upon receiving an appeal under this policy and deal with it forthwith. Any decision must be communicated to all parties in writing within 14 days of deliberations.

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