

Communication Policy of The South African Rugby Referees' Association

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Communication Policy of the South African Rugby Referees' Association

1. Scope

This policy applies to all persons' registered as a member to a referee society, including all persons registered to an Associated Member affiliated to a referee society and or to the South African Rugby Referees' Association (SARRA).

2. Purpose

To regulate written and spoken communication with and between internal and external stakeholders, ensuring the highest standards of professionalism and alignment with South African Rugby Union (SARU), Union, SARRA and Referee Society corporate identity.

This policy has been drafted to protect the reputation of both SARU and their stakeholders, Union and their stakeholders, SARRA and it's Ordinary members, Referee Society and their members/stakeholders.

Due to the high profile nature of the business, breaches of this policy, including SARU Communications Policy – Policy Number 46, will be viewed in a serious light.

3. Definitions

Media: Any print, broadcast or digital publisher that disseminates publicly available information. For clarity, this includes blogs and websites as well as mainstream print and electronic media.

Posts: The upload of text or images to a website, blog, or social media platform for public or community consumption.

Social Media: Any digital platform where an individual shares his or hers activities in a publicly accessible forum. This would include but not be limited to: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and YouTube or similar.

Union: Shall mean a rugby province as defined in the constitution of SARU.

SARU: Shall mean the South African Rugby Union and its relevant departments.

SARRA: Shall mean the chairperson of it's ordinary members and executive committee.

4. Regulations

a. MEDIA COMMUNICATION

- i. Any persons' registered as a member to a referee society may not speak or approach the media "on the record" or "off the record". This includes the SARRA executive, society executive and local society referee manager/administrator.

- ii. All media requests for information or interviews regarding a member on any SARU referee panel or squad must be referred to the SARU: Referees Department without discussion.
- iii. All media requests for information or interviews regarding a member not on any SARU referee panels or squads must be referred to the Union Communication Department without discussion.
- iv. Non-compliance with this media policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

b. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

- i. Communication to any or all of the e-mail groups from SARU, Union and SARRA may only be made from their respective offices.
- ii. Communication with National or Provincial Government is only to take place through the office of the President or the CEO of SARU/Union.
- iii. Communication with SARU is only to take place through the chairperson of SARRA.
- iv. Communication with SARU: Referees Department is only to take place through the referee society chairperson or delegate, except if the enquiry is operational of nature.
- v. Communication with a local Union is only to take place through the referee society chairperson or delegate.
- vi. Communication with SARRA executive is only to take place through the referee society chairperson or delegate.
- vii. Communication with SARU/Union/Referee society sponsors is only to take place through the office authorised to do so.

c. SOCIAL MEDIA

SARRA respects the right of members' to engage in social media but recognises that it also has the potential to cause significant damage to the reputation of its Ordinary Members, World Rugby and its affiliates', SARU and its affiliates', and South African rugby in general if it is carelessly or negligently used.

Media and other stakeholders 'follow' social media and seeming harmless posts can be potentially damaging. Therefore:

- i. Do not engage on the social media platform with regards to World Rugby and their affiliates, SARU and their affiliates, Union and their affiliates, SARRA and its Ordinary Members, local society and its members.
- ii. Do not post comments, pictures, links or any material relating to refereeing that could damage the reputation of SARU and their affiliates, Union and their affiliates, SARRA and its Ordinary Members, Referee Society and its members in the eyes of stakeholders such as colleagues, members of the public, sponsors and suppliers, media, players, provincial unions, SA Rugby competitions, PRO14, SANZAAR, World Rugby, Government or other stakeholders.
- iii. Do not post images of SARU, Union, and Referee Society work environment including the environment of national and provincial teams.

- iv. Do not use obscenities, racial slurs, and personal insults or engage in any conduct that would damage the reputation of SARU and its stakeholders, Union and its stakeholders, SARRA and its Ordinary Members, Referee Society and its members/stakeholders.
- v. Non-compliance with this social media policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

5. Communications and Documents Protocol

SARRA and its affiliates are expected to adhere as closely as possible to the following standards of communications etiquette and to expressly follow the rules on fonts and document design and usage.

a. RESPONDING TO COMMUNICATION

- i. Email requests from SARU should be acknowledged timeously on the date it was sent and answered as soon as possible thereafter (within the constraints of meeting and travel schedules and any research that may have to be undertaken).
- ii. Email requests from known external stakeholders are to be acknowledged timeously on the date it was sent and answered as soon as possible thereafter (within the constraints of meeting and travel schedules and any research that may have to be undertaken).
- iii. Email requests from unknown external stakeholders are to be answered within 24 hours of receipt, or within the constraints of meeting and travel schedules and any research that may have to be undertaken.
- iv. Mobiles and Handsets are to be answered as soon as possible.
- v. Respond to voicemail messages left on your Mobiles and Handsets immediately.
- vi. Do not shout, swear at or abuse callers or correspondents, no matter how unreasonable and provocative they may become.
- vii. If you receive an email from external stakeholders relating to matters of policy or of complaint that cannot be handled by you, refer them to the appropriate person authorised to deal with the matter.
- viii. Be sensitive when copying (Cc...)/reply to all colleagues - only do so when knowledge of the information is important in the performance of their function.

b. FONTS AND DOCUMENT DESIGN

- i. Proposed font to be used in e-mail messages - the default Calibri 11pt plain of Windows Outlook – or as prescribed by the Union.
- ii. The proposed standard font for text in all correspondence is to be Calibri 11pt plain or as prescribed by the Union.
- iii. 'Inspirational' quotes, watermarks and notepaper designs may not be added.
- iv. The forwarding of chain e-mails and the creation and distribution of company-wide e-mails on non-SARRA related business is forbidden.

6. Compliance with SARRA Policies

All affiliates and their members are required to comply with SARRA policies and procedures.

Non-compliance may lead to disciplinary action. For further information or advice regarding this policy, please contact SARU: Referees Department.