

In-Line

RAS Resolution Process



Changes to the process

- The intention is to simplify the process yet expand coverage to matters not previously included e.g. bullying, harassment, reputational damage
- Aligns with other processes e.g. measuring appeals
- A “Protest” relates to an incident that occurs at show level (from arrival at the event) and a “Complaint” relates to any other situation
- Deposits must be made before a Complaint is investigated
- With the sanctions, a Yellow Card is a warning, whereas a Red Card has a penalty
- Any appeals occur one level up e.g. protest appeals are heard by the District
- Less Executive and Head Office involvement
- Removal of a “hearing” - replacing it with an investigation and the opportunity for an interview
- Will need to train those undertaking investigations
- Tools will be needed, ideally both online and written versions for all e.g. Complaints Form and investigation template; Protest Report; guidance to those involved (policy)
- Note that Head Office still need information on incidents that result in a Yellow Card, in case of a repeat elsewhere.

Introduction

Our commitment

The Royal Agricultural Society of New Zealand is committed to providing a safe environment for people to enjoy their participation in the showing movement.

What does a safe environment look like

A safe environment is free of inappropriate behaviour. It allows people to feel comfortable and welcome to participate, bringing forward their ideas, and able to enjoy their involvement without fear of the way others will treat or speak to them.

A safe environment is one people want to stay involved with in the future, continuing to enjoy the showing movement over time.

What is inappropriate behaviour?

Inappropriate behaviour (including put downs, dismissive, abusive or aggressive, threatening or intimidating, bullying or harassing) by competitors, volunteers, officials, representatives, their families, their friends, and other participants including the public is not conducive to creating a safe environment.

Some forms of inappropriate behaviour are illegal e.g. harassment, but all forms of inappropriate behaviour are unacceptable in the showing movement.

Inappropriate behaviour includes “old school” behaviours or statements such as:

- Those no longer acceptable in New Zealand society regarding people’s age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or religion.
- Intimidation of others, including preventing others ideas being contributed or heard e.g. speaking to them in a way that is dismissive, derogatory, or intended to put down the person.
- Intended to exclude people based who they are related to or their age, gender etc.

Appropriate behaviour is expected by participants not only on show day, but in all their interactions within the showing movement including at meetings, on social media etc.

Other examples of inappropriate behaviour include:

- Any obnoxious or anti-social behaviour, including using obscene language or gestures.
- Disrespect for competitors, exhibitors, site holders, spectators, officials, committees, and sponsors.
- Any threatening behaviour or physical altercation, or unwanted touching or sexual invitations.

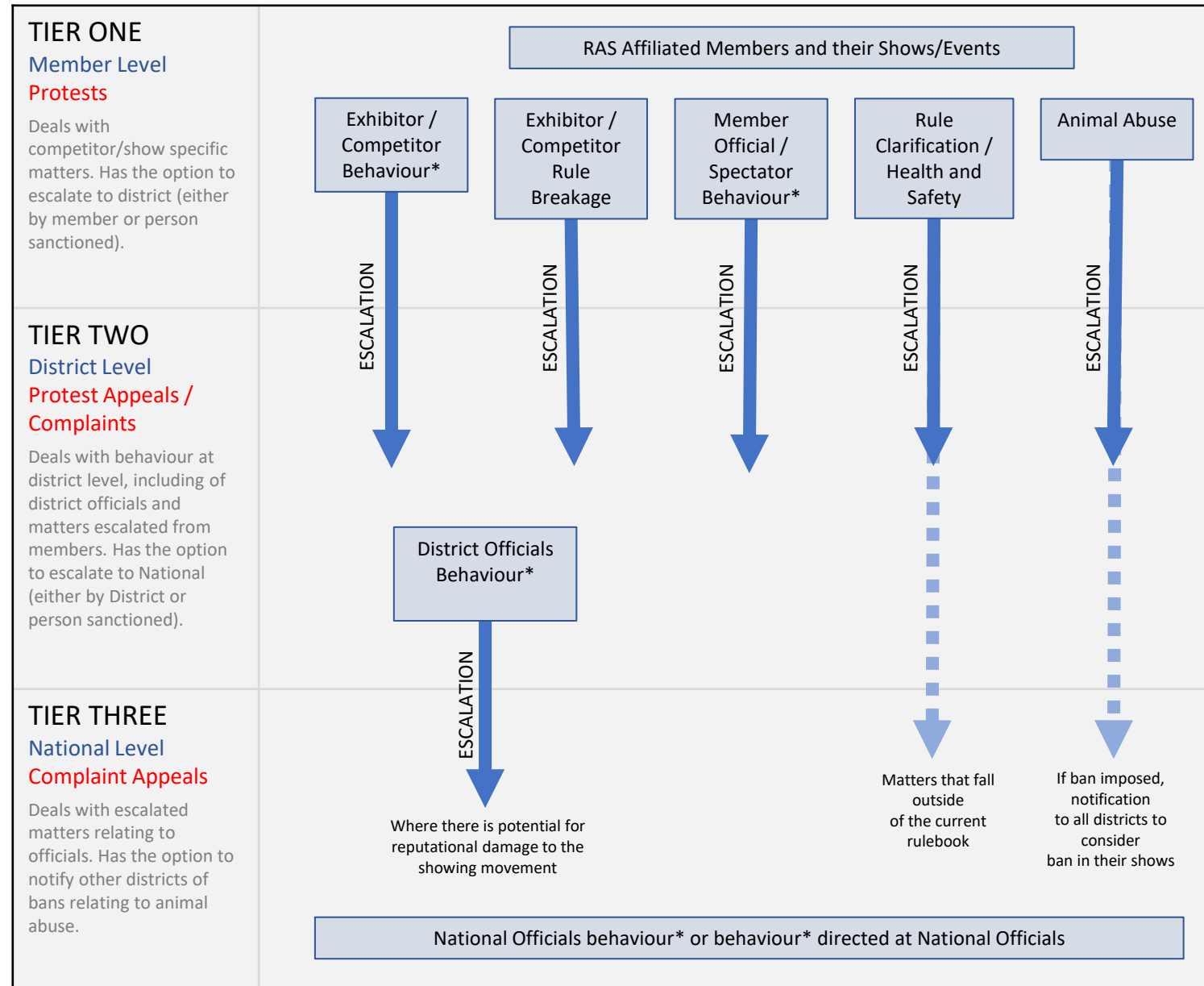
What we ask that you do

- We encourage everyone to create a positive and respectful atmosphere in the showing movement by being polite, helpful and welcoming to others.
- Think of how and what you are going to say or do could make someone else feel before you take that action.
- Encourage new ideas, especially from younger or newer people in the movement.
- **NEVER** try to intimidate, bully, harass, or assault another person to try and get your way or express your frustration. Some of these behaviours are illegal and none of them are acceptable. Allegations of such behaviour will be taken seriously and the Resolution Process will apply.
- Follow the Social Media Policy guidance re social media comments – remember they last in cyberspace forever.
- If you are aware of inappropriate behaviour and you feel confident to do so, speak with the person and ask them to stop. If you are not confident speaking to that person, or doing so has not resulted in a change, then use the Resolution Process if someone's behaviour is not ok and something needs to be done about it.

A tiered approach

A three-tier system that clarifies the initiation of a matter and the escalation point.

This includes actions that can be taken at a national level to warrant a ban across all districts should a matter be sufficiently serious.



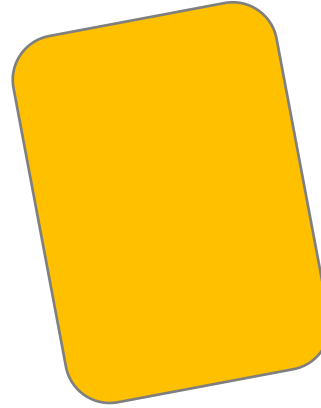


Processes and Sanction

Sanctions

The introduction of a new card now creates a tiered approach to dealing with matters in the moment at an event or a show.

Malicious or vexatious allegations may be subject to sanctions.



YELLOW CARD (Warning)

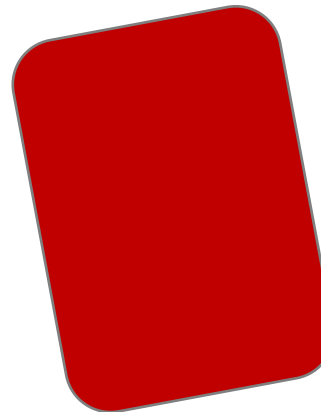
When a competitor or official is issued a Yellow Card, they are given a warning that their actions are either unsportsmanlike or not in the spirit of the RAS or the rules. They will, however be able to continue in the show or their position.

A Yellow Card may be issued when a persons' behaviour does not meet the standard expected of a person attending a show or event, or where a person has inadvertently violated the rules.

A Yellow Card can only be issued after consideration by three impartial officials, with each agreeing to the cause and resulting action of the penalty.

A Yellow Card must be notified to the RAS Head Office within seven days of the card being issued, via the online Card Report form available in the Members Only section of the website.

If a person is sanctioned with a second Yellow Card across any shows, they amy receive a Red Card. Where a third Yellow Card is received, a Red Card will be issued.



RED CARD (Penalty/Expulsion)

When a competitor is issued a Red Card, they are immediately removed from the show or, in the case of an official, is relieved from their position.

A Red Card may be issued when a person deliberately breaks the rules or their behaviour is so egregious that they have brought the RAS into disrepute.

A Red Card can only be issued after consideration by three impartial officials, with each agreeing to the cause and resulting action of the penalty.

A red card must be notified to the RAS Head Office within two days of the card being issued, via the online Card Report form available in the Members Only section of the website.

Officials' intervention

Where an official intervenes in the moment. This can occur either before, during or after an event or show.

A person subject to sanctions may make a complaint as per the escalation approach.

Misconduct seen

- An official may step in if they see or are aware of behaviour or actions that are in breach of the rules or may bring the RAS or the showing movement into disrepute.

Panel assembled

- Panel of 3 people appointed by the Member (usually the President and 2 other officials) to consider the evidence available and consider if the allegation should proceed to further investigation.

Natural justice

- Panel to advise (in private) the person subject to the complaint, asking for their initial response and who could support their view of the incident.
- Panel to investigate further as necessary (noting the need for confidentiality and recording the information in writing) and put the gathered information back to the person if necessary.

Outcome

- Panel confirms their decision and any sanction. Sanctions may include a **Yellow Card** or a **Red Card**, which are handed to the person within 7 days of the panel decision.
- Malicious or vexatious allegations may result in sanctions against the person laying the protest.

Report

- Where an incident results in a **Yellow Card** or a **Red Card**, then a **Card Report** (available on the website) should be sent to the RAS within **seven** calendar days for a Yellow Card or **two** calendar days for a Red Card. This report will include details of the decision, the panel, the participants and all supporting information retained by the Member.
- The provision of a Red Card may be reviewed by the District or the RAS Head Office (Red Cards may be subject to appeal).
- At all times, the expectations of confidentiality is paramount.

Protest

Where a competitor raises a rule violation in the moment. This can occur either before, during or after an event or show.

A person subject to sanctions may make a complaint as per the escalation approach.

Protest lodged

- **Protest lodged with the Member in writing** from the the time of the incident up to the end of the show or event. Note that some shows stipulate a maximum timeframe between the incident and the reporting in their schedules.
- The Protest must include the specific allegation (breach of which policy or rule), what happened, where, when, who was involved or who else witnessed the incident.

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Complaint

Where a person makes a complaint after a situation has occurred. This could be in response to a protest or penalty, or in relation to the behaviour of a person, either at a show or in any RAS related environment e.g. an RAS meeting.

A person who is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint may make an appeal to RAS Head Office.

Complaint received

- **Complaint made to the RAS Head Office in writing**, via the website or using the written form, within seven calendar days of the incident.
- A complaint requires a \$150 deposit to be lodged, to be returned if the complaint is upheld.

Consideration

- RAS Head Office to consider if there is sufficient evidence available for the allegation to proceed to further investigation.
- RAS Head Office identifies the appropriate group to consider the complaint e.g. the relevant District Committee, the United Breed Society Executive, the Horse Stewards Council Executive.

Panel assembled

- A panel of at least 3 people will consider the evidence provided. They will interview the complainant, and where they determine there may be a case to consider, they will interview the person subject to the complaint. Both parties will be offered an opportunity to provide further evidence or witness names.
- The panel will investigate further as appropriate, noting the need for confidentiality and fairness.

Natural justice

- The panel make a preliminary decision, including any proposed sanction, to be put to the person subject to the complaint.
- That person has seven calendar days to make any comment or present any information to the panel for consideration.

Outcome

- The panel will consider any comment or additional information and make their final decision.
- Individuals who are found against may be liable for up to \$500 costs.
- Malicious or vexatious allegations may result in sanctions against the complainant, including costs up to \$500.
- Complaint findings will normally be advised to members but may in some circumstances be withheld at the RAS Executive discretion.
- At all times, the expectations of confidentiality is paramount.