

The Arab Horse Society Complaint Procedure

1.0 Purpose

This procedure is to be followed when:

- An individual or party wishes to make a complaint about any activity or other matters e.g. behaviour or activity involving misconduct, by the AHS or its' members
- A complaint remains unresolved under the AHS Rules for Showing.
- NB Complaints made under the ECAHO rules will proceed through the ECAHO process in its entirety and will not be considered under this procedure.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 In this document the following definitions apply:

- "The Society" is The Arab Horse Society.
- "The Committee" is the committee designated to deal with the complaint.
- "The Investigation Committee" is the nominated group of officials appointed by the Chairman of Council when a Committee fails to conclude an investigation.
- "The Appeal Committee" is the nominated group of officials appointed by the Chairman of Council when an appeal is received.

3.0 Submission of a complaint.

3.1 Written complaints should be addressed to the Chairman of Council and sent by registered post to the Arab Horse Society, Agriculture House, Charnham Lane, Hungerford, Berks. RG17 0EY within 14 days of the occurrence to which exception has been taken. Written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint will be provided by return.

3.2 The Chairman or named delegated authority, appointed by the Chairman, will speak to the complainant to ascertain the context of their complaint, its' validity and what they deem to be a suitable outcome. If this outcome is not possible or is inappropriate the Chairman may suggest one that is proportionate to the complaint.

At this time it should be established if there were witnesses to the incident and details taken so that, if appropriate at this stage, the Chairman may speak to them and shall assess whether the complaint is valid and whether it should proceed to the next stage.

Written confirmation will be sent to the complainant within 14 days, as to how the complaint is to be dealt with.

- 3.3 If the complaint is to proceed the Chairman or his/her delegated authority will determine which committee will deal with the complaint. Depending on the circumstances it may be an existing Committee or a specially appointed one.
- 3.4 If, during the course of the complaint hearing process, Solicitor's letters are received that compromise the on-going procedure then the investigation will be suspended until the legal issue is resolved. It may be that it is never resolved by the AHS, but completed through legal procedures.

4.0 Committee Procedure

- 4.1 In performing their duties Committee Members will fully comply with all aspects of the Code of Conduct and will pay particular regard to Conflicts of Interest and Personal Interest.
- 4.2 On receipt of a complaint the Committee shall communicate the allegations in writing to the person or body against whom they are made and will afford that person or body the opportunity of making reply in writing. In the interest of fairness the complainant may have sight of that reply.
- 4.3 Witnesses should be asked to submit written statements within 28 days and the Chairman of the Committee may speak to them to confirm their submissions and ask any further appropriate questions if deemed necessary. The Committee shall consider all submissions from all parties and obtain further written submissions if necessary. All submissions shall be acknowledged in writing and if they are not to be used in the investigation the reason shall be given.
- 4.4 The Committee shall decide without undue delay whether the complaint is upheld. The Chairman of the Committee shall communicate its decision to each party by registered post to the last known address within 21 days of the decision being made.
- 4.5 If the complaint is upheld the person or body against whom the allegation has been made shall have the right of appeal against the decision of the Committee. Such an appeal shall be made in writing and addressed to the Chairman of Council within 14 days of receipt of the decision of the Committee.
- 4.6 If the matter cannot be concluded by the Committee then it should be referred to the Chairman of Council, who in consultation with Council members, will appoint an Investigation Committee.

5.0 Investigation Committee

- 5.1 On receipt of any notice of a Committee's inability to conclude a matter, the Chairman of Council in consultation with Council members will appoint an Investigation Committee to deal with the it. The Investigation Committee will be made up of suitable Society Officials and may include one or more independent representatives.

If it is more appropriate the Investigation Committee appointees may all be wholly independent.

- 5.2 The Investigation Committee shall review the investigation and where necessary re-contact all parties including witnesses before concluding their findings.
- 5.3 The Investigation Committee shall decide without undue delay whether the complaint is upheld. The Chairman of the Investigation Committee shall communicate its decision to each party by registered post to the last known address within 21 days of the decision being made.
- 5.4 If the complaint is upheld the person or body against whom the allegation has been made shall have the right of appeal against the decision of the Investigation Committee. Such appeal shall be made in writing and addressed to the Chairman of Council within 14 days of receipt of the decision of the Investigation Committee.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 On receipt of an appeal, the Chairman of Council in consultation with Council members will appoint an Appeal Committee to deal with the matter. The Appeal Committee will be made up of suitable Society Officials and may include one or more independent representatives. If it is more appropriate the Appeal Committee appointees may all be wholly independent.
- 6.2 The Appeal Committee shall review the investigation and where necessary re-contact all parties including witnesses before concluding their findings and making any decision.

The Appeal Committee shall give reasonable notification to the person or body concerned of the date, place and time of any hearing. At the hearing an appellant is entitled to address the Appeal Committee in person and to be accompanied by a supporter (not a legal representative) who will not be heard. If the appellant decides not to attend, he or she may send a written statement to the Appeal Committee and the matter will be dealt with in his or her absence.

- 6.3 The Investigation Committee shall decide without undue delay whether the decision of the Committee or Investigation Committee is upheld. The Chairman of the Appeal Committee shall communicate its decision to each party by registered post to the last known address within 21 days of the decision being made.
- 6.4 An unsuccessful appellant may be ordered by the Appeal Committee to pay the Society's costs in respect of the appeal as it thinks fit.

7. Penalties

- 7.1 Save where any Rule specifically provides otherwise, penalties or fines may be imposed when a complaint is upheld.

7.2 Whilst any part of monies relating to The Arab Horse Society Complaint Procedure remains unpaid the Society may suspend any membership benefits until the whole of the sum is paid.

8.0 Appointment of Independent Investigation Committee or Appeal Committee members

8.1 If the society deems that independent parties are required to ensure a fair and objective investigation then it will appoint individuals that are not involved with the Arab Horse Society but are familiar with the equine world.

Examples of parties that might be requested to assist are:

The British Horse Society

The British Horse Racing Authority

The World Health Welfare Charity