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PURPOSE

The Division Association Management Committee (DAMC) of Victorian Endurance Riders Association Inc (VERA) is committed to the promotion of the Victorian State Championships as the premier event on the VERA ride calendar. This policy has been developed to provide a framework for Ride Organisers proposing to host the VERA Inc. State Championship events.

POLICY

Without taking anything away from other Endurance events conducted in Victoria each year the **Victorian State Championship** shall be maintained as the **premier endurance event** in Victoria. Principles and ideals shall be inherent in the conduct of the Victorian State Championship.

- The motto 'to complete is to win' must be recognised by awarding all successful competitors with a quality trophy.
- The highest level of integrity in endurance riding shall be maintained.
- Competitors and teams from other states are to be encouraged to compete in this event.
- The spirit of challenge to horse and rider shall be maintained.
- The opportunity to be the host for the Victorian State Championship is to be available to all experienced Victorian Ride Organisers in any part of the state.

The VERA MC is responsible for bringing this policy to the attention of prospective Victorian State Championship Ride Organisers.

PROCEDURES:

1. THE RIDE:

1.1 The VERA State Championship is to be held annually over a distance of not less than 160 kms each calendar year.

1.2 Expressions of Interest advertising is to be initiated on the VERA Inc. Website, Facebook page and via email by October of the previous year.

1.3 The location of the Victorian State Championship will be decided at the December meeting of the VERA MC following consideration of expressions of interest, or as soon as possible.

1.4 In the event the VERA MC does not receive what it considers to be a suitable expression of interest, or in extenuating circumstances, the MC will form the State Championship Committee and conduct the event in accordance with these rules and conditions.

1.5 The State Championship Ride will be 'stand alone' event of at least 160kms with no provision for elevation or alteration of any kind. The ride is to be completed in a time not exceeding 24 hours from the time of commencement.

1.6 The VERA State Championship Committee may also run, in combination with the 160km event, the following events:

(a) An endurance ride of not more than 90km

(b) an intermediate ride

2. THE COMMITTEE:

2.1 The VERA MC shall appoint a State Championship Ride Organiser who shall be responsible for the overall management of the event.

2.2 The Ride Organiser must have a comprehensive knowledge of the course, risk management and emergency plans, radio points, facilities and must be conversant with Riding Rules, Procedures and VGIH Standards.

2.3 The State Championship Committee is financially responsible for the event.

3. RIDING RULES, AFFILIATION AND DISPUTES:

3.1 The AERA Rulebook current at the time of the ride shall apply as well as any current applicable VERA Inc. rules and regulations.

3.2 There shall be a Disputes Committee consisting of at least 3 people, who are not part of the State Championship Committee. They must have a comprehensive knowledge of all aspects relating to the rules and conduct of the event. It is mandatory that the DC includes at least one member of the VERA MC, who is not competing or assisting a competitor in the ride.

3.3 Disputes shall be dealt with as set out in the VERA Inc. constitution.

3.4 Any appeal to the dispute shall be dealt with as set out in the VERA Inc. Constitution, Rule 24 Appeal Rights.

4. VETTING:

4.1 The AERA Inc. Veterinarian Rules applying at the time of the ride shall be adopted. To reflect the standards of the National Championship, the VERA Inc. State championship shall use Vet Gate into Hold veterinary control.

4.2 The Head Veterinarian for the ride should be one of the VERA Honorary Veterinarians and shall be appointed and paid by VERA Inc. up to the amount currently recommended by the AERA vet panel.

4.3 The Chief Steward will also be appointed by VERA MC in consultation with the Ride Organiser.

4.4 There shall be sufficient veterinarians to provide for the AERA recommended level of care of competitors and AERA requirements for vet to horse ratio.

4.5 It is recommended that a veterinarian panel carry out the trot out assessment for the final vetting for all State Championship competitors.

4.6 Swabbing of horses shall be undertaken as determined by the VERA State Championship Medications Control and Swabbing Policies. Random swabbing may also be conducted.

5. THE COURSE:

5.1 The course shall meet the standards and recommendations of the AERA Rulebook for 160km endurance rides.

5.2 The course shall be marked in accordance with the AERA course marking recommendations, using the AERA course arrows.

5.3 Any unavoidable hazards shall be clearly marked by visible hazard signage and other visual assistive devices, such as flashing lights or glow tubes.

5.4 As per AERA recommendations for VGIH the course shall be no less than 5 legs with veterinary checks at the end of each leg.

6. SAFETY AND COMMUNICATIONS :

6.1 There shall be stewards at key locations along the course who are in contact by radio or electronic means with other check points, veterinary check points and the ride base.

6.2 The stewards shall record the number of each passing competitor and when required relay this information to the ride base to inform the ride organisers and where possible, strappers of the progress of competitors and any on-course requirements.

6.3 Where possible that the progress of competitors through checkpoints may be displayed in a manner readily accessible to strappers and spectators

6.4 A minimum of two vehicles with a horse float fit for purpose shall be available during the time competitors are on the course to enable recovery of any horses and riders withdrawing from the event on-course.

6.5 There must be access to all tracks for treatment of horses and riders.

7. COMPETITORS:

7.1 All endurance competitors shall be current financial members of a Division Association of AERA.

7.2 All intermediate competitors may be required to pay the applicable day membership fee.

7.3 Qualifications for entry shall be determined by AERA Rulebook horse and rider rules.

7.4 The State Championship ride shall have four divisions for competitors as defined in the AERA Riding Rules and shall include Heavyweight, Middleweight, Lightweight and Junior.

8. TROPHIES AND AWARDS:

8.1 All trophies and awards shall be of a quality befitting a Championship ride.

8.2 1st to 3rd 160km placings in each weight division will receive a trophy stating placement.

8.3 Best conditioned for the 160km event shall be run for each weight division with a woollen rug awarded for each weight division winner.

8.4 For other endurance ride distances, AERA Inc. rules regarding distance, placing and Best Conditioned apply. The Ride Organiser may opt to provide awards for placings in the competition divisions.

8.5 Intermediate rides will receive completion awards.

8.6 All successful State Championship competitors shall receive a Completion award supplied by the State Championship Committee and in conjunction, VERA will award each successful competitor with a '100 mile' buckle.

8.7 The VERA MC will provide woollen rugs to be awarded to the first five horses across all divisions to successfully complete the ride. These rugs shall be of good quality and shall state "Victorian State Championship 160km Top Five" and the year.

8.8 A Ride Organiser may choose to source sponsorship for further rugs.

9. SPONSORSHIP:

9.1 The State Championship Committee is encouraged to seek sponsorship and other financial support with the aim of keeping entry fees at an acceptable level to the VERA MC.

9.2 The State Championship Committee shall not enter into an agreement with a sponsor of any other body that compromises, in any way, the guidelines and principles stated in this document, those of VERA Inc. or the sport in general.

10. MERCHANDISE:

The State Championship Committee may organize their own merchandise for the event, however, they must ensure the VERA Inc Colors consisting of navy blue and white and the VERA Inc Logo are utilised.

11. ENTRY FEES

The State Championship Committee will collaborate with the VERA Inc MC on the overall cost of each individual event that will be held at the State Championships. This is aimed at keeping entry fees at an acceptable level.