

# ***RNARS***

## **SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

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**Approved by:** The Committee: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

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**Draft Document for inclusion into the constitution**

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# The RNARS Social Media Engagement Policy

## Introduction

This social media policy presents and explains the rules governing social media use at the RNARS, including those applying to the Committee appointed social media lead and to the Society's members in general. It follows that this policy describes how designated RNARS members must use the Society's social media accounts. It also explains the rules concerning personal social media use and what members may say about the RNARS and Society-related issues on their personal accounts. This social media engagement policy is an integral part of the Society's *Data Protection Policy*.

## Why This Policy Exists

This social media policy exists to ensure members use their social accounts in safe and effective fashions, regardless of their positions within the RNARS. Although social media can benefit the Society — especially in terms of marketing, relationship building and other forms of communication that prospectively represents the RNARS brand image, poorly-judged or poorly timed activity can hurt the Society's reputation.

## Policy Scope

the RNARS's social media policy pertains to all members, as well as to contractors and volunteers, who log onto our social media platforms during work hours or to complete work-related activities outside of standard times. Therefore, it applies to social media activity that relies on RNARS Internet access, occurs on RNARS/RN/MOD premises, happens while travelling and happens while at from home.

## For the purposes of this policy, social media may refer to:

- Popular social networks such as Twitter and Facebook
- Photo-sharing websites such as Pinterest and Instagram
- Professional social networks such as LinkedIn
- Discussion forums such as the ones found on 4chan and Reddit
- Question and answer-based networks such as Quora and Yahoo Answers
- Review systems such as Yelp and Google Reviews

## Legal Considerations

**The Human Rights Act 1998 Article 8**

**The Data Protection Act 1988**

**Criminal Law**

**Naval Regulations/The Military Code**

## Basic Advice and General Guidelines

Whether RNARS members are posting from Society or personal accounts, we encourage them to follow basic best practice rules.

### Adhere to these standards to avoid common social media mistakes:

- **Understand the social network.** Different social media platforms have different purposes. For example, it's common to see more personal status updates on Facebook than LinkedIn. Before posting, become familiar with the network by reading FAQs and quickly researching what is and is not acceptable.
- **Correct your own mistakes.** When you make a factual error in a post, create an update to correct it. Deleting or editing the original post should come at your own discretion, depending on the situation.
- **Beware of potential security threats.** Hackers can use social networks to distribute spam and malware. They can also launch phishing attempts. You should report suspicious activity, including questionable comments and friend requests.
- **Be careful when sharing information about yourself or others.** Hackers can also use personal information to their advantage.
- **Don't escalate issues.** Responding to other social media users, especially concerning a contentious subject, can result in a heated argument. To avoid such arguments, it may be best to avoid commenting if you feel you may spark conflict.
- **Think before posting.** This is the golden social media rule. Not only should you check grammar and spelling, but ensure there won't be any negative effects of posting a status update. These include creating arguments and divulging sensitive information.

### Use of The Society's Social Accounts

The RNARS social media accounts must only be used and created by RNARS authorised individuals for the purpose of meeting defined Society goals.

### Goals and Purposes of The Society's Social Media Accounts

As the social media landscape quickly changes and evolves, we encourage members to think about new ways to use RNARS accounts. However, account activity should not stray from the Society's goals of engaging with other amateur radio organisations and promoting ours. Doing so builds stronger relationships with radio clubs and amateur radio interests while driving traffic to other digital properties.

### Members can typically meet these goals by:

- Distributing original content pieces such as blog posts, infographics and product photos
- Sharing third-party content pieces relevant to the RNARS's target audiences
- Promoting special rallies, contests and RNARS commodity discounts
- Announcing and previewing new initiatives that promote our RNARS brand ID
- Interacting with and including responding to enquiries
- Monitoring the social web for RNARS brand mentions and responding accordingly

## **Approved Users**

Approved users fall into two camps. The social media lead authority and anyone directed to act in loco parentis. Secondly, ordinary members. The social media lead -appointed by the Committee- will grant authorisation. Only approved users acting on behalf of the social media policy lead may access the RNARS social media accounts to perform the aforementioned tasks including maintenance and upkeep of the accounts. The lead role involves creating and executing social media strategies, or researching new and existing target audiences. Approved users as ordinary members will be granted authorisation to log on to and use the RNARS website and social media sites. This will be done when a new member joins or re-joins the Society or as part of the Social Media Policy roll-out. The Society only approves certain members to ensure its social media voice and approach stay consistent, aligning with its online brand ID and member services objectives.

## **Creating Social Media Accounts Under the Society's Name**

As the RNARS must explore the advantages and disadvantages of expanding its social media presence into new networks, the social media lead must approve the creation of RNARS social media accounts ensuring they fall under the RNARS jurisdiction. If members see an opportunity for a new account they should pitch their ideas to the social media lead.

## **Use of Personal Social Media Accounts at Work**

As personal social media use can yield benefits such as expanding amateur radio industry knowledge and connections for the amateur radio hobbyist, the RNARS understands it is advantageous for members to use personal accounts.

### **Below are acceptable uses for accessing social media accounts:**

- Industry research for products related to our hobby
- Monitoring Society reports and published material such as committee minutes, accounts, etc
- Connecting and interacting with users who may benefit from personal development (RN)
- In emergency such as contacting friends and family members who cannot be reached.

### **However, activity should not conflict with the following section:**

#### **Inappropriate Uses**

#### **Regardless of whether the social media account is [personal]\* or under the jurisdiction of the RNARS, members should not:**

- Conduct illegal or criminal activities, as defined by existing legislation
- Distribute material that could be interpreted as libellous or defamatory
- Share updates, images and messages that may tarnish the Society's public image
- Discuss members, and Committee members /the Committee without their express consent
- Harass others by sending them offensive content and messages
- Communicate with Society competitors in disrespectful fashions
- Distribute spam and chain messages

\*For the purposes of clarification there are two personal accounts in existence bearing the name of the RNARS that are not under the jurisdiction of the RNARS. This social media policy will require changes in authorisation as required by the relevant texts contained in this policy document.

## **Policy Enforcement**

Members who violate this social media policy could face disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, this could include termination of membership.

The RNARS reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through Society Internet resources. These include, but are not limited to, computers and mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones that are provided for personal or business uses.

Moreover, the Society maintains official records that contain certain data related to social media activity. These include, but are not limited to, messages sent and received through the Society's computer systems. When appropriate, the RNARS may involve naval-military or civilian law enforcement officials and agencies. In doing so, the Society may be compelled to share stored data.

Acknowledgements Written with expert input from Craig Sharp of Abussi Ltd. ([www.techdonut.co.uk](http://www.techdonut.co.uk))

## **Disciplinary Policy**

The Society has a three-level approach to disciplinary matters based on a 'three strikes and you are out' for repeat offenders who break the rules and guidelines of the RNARS social media engagement policy. This includes the use of other media channels and services outside of the RNAR's jurisdiction where the content is seen to denigrate the members, Officers and Committee members of the Society, or any material that brings the RNARS into disrepute.

### **1. Minor violations**

Minor infractions usually arise out of ignorance or forgetfulness which may require referring individuals to the social media engagement policy document.

### **2. Aggravated or repeated violations**

Where it can be seen that repeated violations are taking place in spite of earlier interventions by the social policy lead, and this includes inappropriate content. The social policy lead has the authority to deny access to any user to the RNARS social media on a pro-rate scale of:

- a. Three months
- b. Six months or
- c. Permanently.

### **3. Serious violations & repeated violations of the social media policy**

Such violations require the immediate suspension of the member or members from the RNARS social media sites. All such incidences are to be reported to the Committee since such violations may require invoking further action against the offender or offenders, or fall under the jurisdiction of either the laws of the military or civilian authorities.

## **Appeals Policy**

Under section 1, it is expected that the social policy lead will issue advice and information that will train 'out' the minor infractions stemming from our social media users, and that the social policy lead will judge and act accordingly. Therefore, no appeal under section 1 is feasible since it involves minor infractions.

An appeal may be made under sections 2 or 3 - where violation has led to a permanent ban. In the first instance an appeal should be made to the social media policy lead in writing. If the member is still not satisfied then a further appeal may be made to the RNARS Committee.

It must be made clear that appeals must be properly presented without abuse, improper or inflammatory language. It may take a little time for the Committee to convene to discuss the merits of an appeal and appellants should not use that time to harass or abuse other members or Committee members using alternative public or private media channels.

Where serious breaches of the social media policy have been seen as breaking the law; i.e. the Data Protection Act or under military or criminal law, the Society's only option is to uphold a suspension issued by the social media policy lead, to inform the relevant authorities and hold an internal enquiry.

## **Unacceptable conduct**

Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the RNARS and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant member of the RNARS Committee, and escalated where appropriate. The RNARS will take appropriate action when necessary. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the RNARS will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the RNARS will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the Disciplinary Policy.

## ***Reporting abuse and misuse***

Report abuse and misuse to the moderator of the RNARS by email to the following email address:

**abuse@RNARS-security.NNN**

Stating whether the abuse was received at the RNARS HQ or externally, and as much detail as possible about the abuse; who, where, when and content.

## **Moderation**

Many social networks offer an opportunity for members of the public to comment on content that have been posted on behalf of the RNARS. We would advise against letting this go un-checked, and indeed ideally members should follow and implement a moderation policy among themselves in the first instance. The moderation policy we use to manage our social media pages is given below:

The RNARS welcomes the community's contributions to the online discussion environment on its social media page (e.g. comments and photos, etc).

This page provides a place to discuss the RNARS; its interests, activities, events and breaking news. The following guidelines are designed to help provide a quality environment for our members and followers. Members are encouraged to read them and keep them in mind whenever they participate in social media activities.

The RNARS abides by the Terms and Conditions of social media website providers, and the RNARS requires its members, followers and fans to do the same. In particular, not "post unauthorised commercial solicitations (such as spam)"; "bully, intimidate, or harass any user"; "post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic, or that contains nudity or graphic or gratuitous violence"; or "do anything unlawful, misleading, malicious, or discriminatory" on the RNARS's social media pages. It is important to note that all comments and postings by followers on this site ("User Content") do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the RNARS. The RNARS reserves the right to remove any posts that contain commercial solicitations; are factually erroneous/libellous; are wildly off-topic; or that otherwise violate our social media host's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities.

### **Related Documents:**

**[RNARS Data Protection Policy](#)**

**[RNARS Computer Use & Operations Policy](#)**



## **Setting up new accounts**

Members are welcome to ask that new social media accounts be created on behalf of the RNARS providing that:

### **Members have a clear understanding of:**

- ❖ The RNARS's Social Media policy and Guidelines (these guidelines)
- ❖ Who the new account is aimed at
- ❖ The type of content you are going to post via the account and how you are going to produce it
- ❖ The mechanics of the network that you are creating an account on, and the expected behaviour and publishing patterns of people that use it

### **Members agree to:**

Let the RNARS Social Media management know the name of the account, and what you're going to use it for

Conform to the RNARS's brand guidelines. If you need help with creating artwork for the account, the RNARS has provided a set of Social media templates

The RNARS will set up the account up in such a way that multiple people within the Society can share the load of running it, or that if an authorised member/social media manager who setup the account leaves, access to the account is still possible. This could be done by:

- ❖ Using a role rather than email address to sign up for the account (providing all those that have access to the address have read this guidance and can help run the account responsibly)
- ❖ Setting the account up with a backup email address using a role address

## **Ownership Rights of Social Media Websites Bearing the RNARS Brand**

Ownership rights of RNARS websites and social media sites will fall directly to the RNARS

The Society will authorise the social media manger/lead to create social media accounts under the brand name/ID of the RNARS thereby, giving the RNARS ownership of such accounts.

Where feasible the ownership will be either a suitable descriptor that clearly identifies the RNARS as the owner of such accounts.

## Acknowledgement form

Please read policy documents carefully to ensure that you understand what is required of you before signing this document.

I confirm that I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the following RNARS Policy Documents:

RNARS Data Protection Policy

RNARS Computer User & Operation Policy

RNARS Social Media Engagement Policy

I agree to abide by the rules and guidelines contained in each of these RNARS policies as a condition of my continuing membership of the RNARS.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the rules and guidelines of these policies, I will consult with the social media policy manager.

I understand that when my membership of the RNARS ceases, access to the RNARS website and social media will be discontinued and all personal data will be removed.

I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the RNARS of identity theft, and that my access to RNARS online sites will be closed as a measure of protection to myself and to the Society's online operations until I have reported that I have established a new identity.

Member Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Joined: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

Received By:\* \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*To be signed off by the Data Protection Manager or by a Committee member.