

# VICTORIAN ENDURANCE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11.00 AM SATURDAY 17TH JANUARY 2026

VICTORIA HOTEL, WOODEND

## MINUTES

### WELCOME - 11AM

The President and VERA SMC welcome all members and visitors to the VERA Annual General Meeting. Thank you for making the effort to travel to the meeting.

### Attendance

Please see attached.

### APOLOGIES

Jo-anne Frances, Renee Henry, Erin Stienbacher, Trish Van Donk, Sherre Court, Ashley Van Leeuwen.

### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM – 17TH JANUARY 2025

Amendments to the Minutes: None

Adoption of the Minutes

**Motion (1) Jan 26 AGM The minutes from the meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 be adopted.**

**Moved: Sandy Little**

**Seconded: Linda Walkingshaw**

**Carried: Yes**

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Good morning everyone,

What a great year 2025 was for endurance here in Victoria.

Our hard working ROs in Victoria conducted many successful events that I hope you all enjoyed. I would like to thank all our committee members for their efforts this year.

As always the committee has been very busy behind the scenes. We've continued to work on incentives for ride organisers, we have been looking at ways to improve membership as well as many other things with a focus on VERA's financial longevity.

A couple of important things being worked on this year, that, hopefully the new committee will continue pursuing were,

1. AERA'S billing system. It is very confusing. We requested that AERA itemise our invoices to allow us to better understand what we are paying for but were advised that this is too much work for their paid bookkeeper. We cannot continue to pay invoices that do not clearly specify what they are for.
2. Insurance. This is a major contributor to the confusion of AERA's bills. We are charged 4 or 5 different liability insurances to cover the entire policy that AERA HOLD.

We (VERA) have paid AERA somewhere in the order of \$20k just for insurance. This includes our portion of the shortfall \$3.5k billed to us at the end of the year.

We have asked what portion of the insurance policy HELD by AERA do they pay?  
The answer was ZERO as they don't have an income.

I encourage all VERA members to look closely at AERA'S financials and also their budget. The honorarium they pay to a few of their portfolio holders, committee members etc are being increased this year by 3.2% to follow CPI, and yet they have no income? The AERAspace database costs over the last couple of years are also something we have tried unsuccessfully to scrutinise. As an example, last year alone \$50k was spent on upgrading and maintenance. For small states like Victoria, south Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia the constant increase in costs from AERA are in my opinion going to kill the sport because of the fees we will need to charge you to be a member and also to compete in events.

Having said that, without people taking out membership in Victoria and in turn attending events that our hard-working ride organisers put on, we will continue losing money each year until there is no more to lose.

For example , Dergholm and Toongabbie rides both were not well attended events and as a result cost both RO's money and after incentives paid to officials VERA left to pick up the cost from AERA.

At least if we have members we can have a voice and push for change.

**PLEASE NOTE** we have had to increase our membership fees for this year to try to make sure we don't fall victim to the rising costs of AERA.

As a full riding member about \$100 of your membership fee goes to AERA

Next I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our wonderful registrars who work hard behind the scenes,

**Bronwyn Cuthbertson – Logbooks**  
**Wendy Riha - Memberships**  
**Rebecca Williamson - Point Score**  
**Kasey Thomas - Grievance**  
**Mark Gabb - Webmaster**  
**Jennifer Green Social Media**  
**Angela Lee - Social Media**  
**Sioux Reid – AERA Delegate**  
**Narelle Cribb - Honorary Vet**  
**Helen Spencer - Honorary vet**  
**Kerrie Gabb - Bookkeeper**

A huge thank you to the ride organisers for 2025. Without you we would not be able to do what we love. It is quite an arduous task and often thankless, so again we thank you. Please support our RO'S by attending their rides, because when attendance is small and they lose money, it is totally understandable when they don't run a ride again. It's usually at that point when people start pointing the finger at both the RO and the committee saying why aren't there any rides on the calendar, or why are most of the rides on one side of the state.

We have amazing people putting on rides in their part of the state, offering us all an opportunity to see what a great state we live in.

Please support them not only by riding but also offering to help in some way.

To the many volunteers who are the backbone of a ride, thank you to you also.

I would like to congratulate those who travelled to Tasmania to attend the Quilty, a massive effort, well done.

Moving forward we need more of our members to put their hand up and help in one form or another, be that volunteering at a ride (foregoing a ride for that weekend) running a ride or getting on the committee.

By all working together we can keep Victorian Endurance going for many years to come, We just can't keep leaving it up to the same people to do everything.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful and successful 2026 season, kicking off in a few of weeks at Eldorado.

Hope to see you all soon.

Paul Nugent  
President  
VERA

## TREASURER'S REPORT

At the time this report was written it was based off the draft financials, as we have not received the audited financials back off the auditor as of yet.

Explanation of why there are difference in income, expenses and balance sheet items compared to last year (please remember our financial years run from 1/10/2024 to 30/9/2025, and not as per a calendar year like our memberships).

- A. The following Incomes and expenses vary greatly depending on how many rides are held each year, how many members we have and how many horses either get transferred or qualified, you will notice they bounce around a lot year to year:
  - Logbook fees Income
  - Membership fees Income
  - Ride fees Income
  - All AERA fees
- B. AGM meals income – Decreased, as the last AGM was a lunch time event rather than an evening event and attendees got their own lunches, if they wished.
- C. Merchandise income & expenses, this will be constantly changing depending on the demand for merch.
- D. No Medallions were used this year by RO's, so there are no sales
- E. The old western trailer was sold, therefore there is the profit on sale of an asset.
- F. Sponsorship, decreased as a smaller donation was made to the TQ

- G. Tom Quilty Competition expenses, increased as some expenses from 2024 have fallen into the 2025 financial year.
- H. Venue hire has decreased, as the SMC did all the meetings online.
- I. Swabbing fees increase greatly as all the invoices for swabbing in 2024 have come in the 2025 financial year.
- J. Legal and Professional fees decreased, due last year, the change in the constitution, meant that CAV charged extra for this.
- K. Repairs and maintenance increased, due to the need to cover the costs for the replacement ETS components.
- L. Equipment small items increased due to various items needed to stock the trailers
- M. The increase in the MV registration and insurance is due to the 2024 FY amount for insurance was paid in the 2025 FY and so was the 2025 amount.
- N. Accounts payable at at 30/9/2025 included AERA and Swabbing fees.

With AERA increasing their fees to VERA for the 2026 riding year, VERA will be increasing membership fees, and Ride application fees for RO's, horses and day members will remain the same.

The trailers are still awaiting sponsorship on them and there are still 2 old trailers for sale.

With rides on the calendar for 2026, I hope everyone enjoys their year.

Kerrie Gabb - Bookkeeper

**Motion No: (2) Jan 26 AGM That the treasurers report be received.**

**Moved: Helen Spencer**

**Seconded: Kerrie Gabb**

**Carried: Yes**

A lot of discussion was had re finding sponsorship and grants. It was decided the SMC would look into this further, weather that is that they were to appoint someone or they were to do the work.

**Motion No: (3) Paul Nugent is thanked for his work with VERA**

**Moved: Virginia Reichenbach**

**Seconded: Sue Reed**

**Motion No: (4) Donna Nicholas is thanked for her work with VERA**

**Moved: Virginia Reichenbach**

**Seconded: Sue Reed**

## ELECTIONS

### Appointment of Scrutineers (2)

Nominations will be sought from the floor for 2 members to act as scrutineers in the collection and counting of votes for positions.

**Scrutineers:**

Mezcal Manners and Damien Little

### Stand Down of 2025 SMC Members at end of Term

The following DAMC positions are now declared vacant:

- Paul Nugent – President
- Donna Nicholas – Secretary

After Paul stood down, Shannon Decker (Vice President) took chair of the meeting

### President

No nominations from the floor

### Interim Secretary

<b>Member</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>
Kerrie Gabb	<b>Virginia Reichenbach</b>	Sandy Little

After Kerrie was elected Donna left the secretary role and handed it over.

## DIVISIONAL ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

Nominations have been received from the following VERA members for the position of Committee Member, via email pre AGM.

Our 2026 State Management General Committee as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>
<b>Donna Nicholas</b>	<b>Virginia Reichenbach</b>	<b>Paul Nugent</b>
<b>Martin Mizzi</b>	<b>Donna Nicholas</b>	<b>Sue Reed</b>

<b>Jess Francis</b>	<b>Erin Steinbacher</b>	<b>Ashleigh Van Leeuwen</b>
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**From the floor**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>
<b>Linda Walkingshaw</b>	<b>Helen Spencer</b>	<b>Donna Nicholas</b>

**Disciplinary Panel**

5 positions are to be nominated and elected from those present at the AGM. The role is for a period of 1 year.

<b>Disciplinary Panel</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>
Mezcal Manners	Kerrie Gabb	<b>Virginia Reichenbach</b>
Jane McLaughlin	Sarah McLaughlin	Nicola Robinson
Sarah McLaughlin	Nicola Robinson	Jane McLaughlin
Nicola Robinson	Sarah McLaughlin	Jane McLaughlin
Heather Stuchbree	Russell Robinson	Linda Walkingshaw

**Grievance Officer**

1 position is to be nominated and elected from those present at the AGM. The role is for a period of 1 year.

<b>Rebecca Williamson</b>	<b>Nicole Porter</b>	<b>Kasey Thomas</b>
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MOTIONS: None

SPECIAL RESOLUTION: None

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

## 10.1 AERA Rule Changes for 2026.

**Please keep yourself informed.**

AERA RULEBOOK ©

Amendments to AERA RULEBOOK applicable from 1 January 2026

[NOTE: where part of a rule is amended, the full rule is included with changes identified in blue]

### SECTION 1 - GENERAL RULES

#### CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION, DEFINITIONS AND COMPLIANCE

##### 2. DEFINITIONS

###### *Table 2 Definitions*

	As defined in Clause <del>67.3</del> . <b>68.3</b>
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Voting Panel

##### 3. COMPLIANCE, JURISDICITON & MANAGEMENT OF DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

###### ~~Table 3 Minimum penalties for serious infringements~~

<del>Violation of the Code of Conduct Ensuring the</del>	<del>Persons responsible ineligible</del>
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~~to participate for~~

~~42.242.3~~

Welfare of the Horse. 12 months.

#### INTERACTION BETWEEN THE AERA AND A DA IN THE CASE OF A SERIOUS INFRINGEMENT BY A DA MEMBER

3.13 Should the AERA review a matter pursuant to Clause 3.13 3.11, and the AERA considers there was an inadequacy in the process or that the penalty imposed is disproportionate to the breach, the AERA may request the DA to either:

- review and remedy the processes of the disciplinary hearing(s), and/or
- review the penalty imposed to consider whether the penalty is proportionate to the offence, and/or
- recommend the DA nullify the original decision and the DA instigate a new hearing, and/or
- appoint an AERA approved independent person to participate and facilitate any review requested above.

## CHAPTER 2. DEFINITIONS & RIDE CONTROLS

### 11. DUAL AFFILIATED AERA AND FEI RIDE CONTROLS

11.7 All horses currently registered with the FEI on the day of a ride must adhere to Article 815.3 839.3.2 of the FEI Endurance Rules relating to the Mandatory Rest for Horses. The rest period applies to both FEI and AERA affiliated rides. It shall be the responsibility of the rider to ensure that the horse will not violate Article 815.3.839.3.2. Failure to comply with FEI Endurance Article 815.3 839.3.2 whether intentionally or unintentionally, shall result in the horse and rider being eliminated retrospectively

## CHAPTER 3. RIDE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

*No changes*

## CHAPTER 4. RIDE OFFICIALS

*No changes*

## CHAPTER 5. RIDER RULES

*No changes*

## CHAPTER 6. HORSE RULES

### 46. HORSE STATUS

46.5 The application shall not be processed by the DA unless and until:

- a) the requirements of Clause 46.3 have been satisfied, and
  - b) the application is accompanied by the appropriate novice horse *logbook*, and
  - c) a minimum of 90 days has elapsed from the date of the horses first successfully completed *endurance ride*, and
  - d) the horse has been identified by a microchip implant, and
  - e) a complete veterinary identification (including any legible brands at the time of the veterinary inspection) has been completed and lodged with the DA.
- e) a complete identification (including any legible brands at the time of the inspection) has been completed, by the applicant or a vet, verified by an AERA Chief Steward and lodged with the DA registrar.

## CHAPTER 7. VETERINARY CONTROLS & PROCEDURES

64.6 Every horse in every *ride*, shall be required to undergo a pre-ride veterinary inspection and a veterinary inspection at the completion of each and every leg, utilising the nominated ride control in clause 63.5.64.5.

## SECTION 2 – COMPLEMENTARY COMPETITION RULES

### 3. RIDE & TIE

#### 3.1 A Ride & Tie event:

- a) is a competitive event consisting of two persons (who are current full riding members of a Division Association) and one horse, with riders taking turns in riding.
- b) is a separate event and not part of a ride as defined in Table 2 of the General Rules.
- c) is conducted only if there is a suitable and safe track available that can accommodate tied horses.
- d) is conducted at the discretion of the ROC and must be approved by the DA pursuant to Clause 12 of the AERA General Rules.

#### Ride & Tie Definitions

3.2 Ride & Ties are defined pursuant to Table 4 of the AERA General Rules with the exception that they shall be known as a 'Ride & Tie' rather than a 'ride'. There are no riding divisions within a Ride & Tie event.

3.3 An artificial tie is anything that does not exist along the course for all participants to tie to.

For example, a participant cannot carry a metal stake and hammer with them and create an "artificial tie" as they go. Trees, fences, roots, bushes etc. are all allowable ties since all participants can use them.

3.4 A "hand tie" is when support personnel hold the horse for the team. Some rides may allow hand ties along the course near the start due to excited horses or unsafe tie conditions. Usually the support personnel are not allowed to go beyond a certain point on the course.

#### Ride & Tie Controls

3.5 All Ride & Ties are subject to the same ride control requirements pursuant to Chapter 2 of the AERA General Rules with the exception that they will be known as 'ride & tie controls' rather than 'ride controls'. Ride & Tie Horse Rules

3.6 All horses are subject to the Horse requirements pursuant to Chapter 6 (where applicable) of the AERA General Rules.

3.7 Artificial ties are illegal. Hand ties may be allowed at the chief steward's discretion. Any decision to allow hand ties will be announced at the pre-ride briefing.

3.8 Each team must tie its horse and switch from rider to runner and runner to rider at least two (2) times during the event. Teams may tie as many times as they desire anywhere along the course as long as the ties do not obstruct the course or are not made in designated "No Tie Areas." A required tie will occur at each veterinary inspection. The horse must be presented for veterinary inspection within 30 minutes of arrival off the course irrespective of whether or not both team members have arrived.

3.9 With the exception of securing a loose horse, no person other than the team members and designated ride officials may handle a team's horse on the course during the ride. Designated team support personnel may work with the horse at a

designated veterinary inspection. Only a team member may present a horse at each veterinary inspection.

3.10 It is not permissible for both members of a team to use their horse at the same time for forward movement. "Tailing" (meaning the rider dismounts, grips the horse's tail and allows the horse to pull him/her) is allowed but it is not permissible for one team member to ride while another tails.

3.11 No pacing by an un-entered horse or runner is allowed.

3.12 Teams must pass and report to all checkpoints positioned on the marked course. Competitors inadvertently off course must return to the point at which they left the marked course and complete the course correctly.

3.13 The riding time for the team will cease when both human team mates and their horse have crossed the finish line.

3.14 Stallions are not permitted to be used in Ride and Tie events.

## SECTION 3 – VETERINARY RULES

### 4.5 HEART RATE

The heart rate must be taken before any other measurement or observation. Heart rate is the major essential criterion to accurately assess the horse's recovery and fitness to continue and every effort should be directed towards its accurate determination. Always attempt to identify the cause of a high heart rate. At endurance events an increased heart rate may be due to a number of factors.

### 5.5 RESPIRATION

Although highly variable depending on the environment, nature of the horse and stage of the ride - it can be an indicator of distress. A respiratory rate - heart rate inversion may be an early clinical indicator of heat stroke / impending metabolic collapse. In this case other metabolic parameters need careful examination. Up to 25% of body heat is dissipated via respiration, this becomes very important once evaporative cooling limits are reached.

The veterinarian will assess the respiration rate as either Normal and Abnormal . An unsatisfactory respiration may be grounds for elimination of the horse for metabolic concerns.

### 5.6 TEMPERATURE

This cardinal sign has significance related to infection, heart rate, respiratory rate, ambient temperature, recent physical exertion including floating and humidity and needs to be interpreted in this context.

Normal range is from 37.0° C - 38.5° C. An elevated rectal temperature above 38.5° C should be related to the condition of the horse. At the pre-ride examination a high temperature may indicate a febrile response to infection and therefore be evidence leading to elimination of the horse.

During the ride, rectal temperature may be significantly elevated above 40° C, depending upon the exertion and environmental conditions.

The temperature should always be taken at the pre-ride inspection to detect any febrile response indicative of infection.

The temperature may be taken during the ride if other metabolic signs are deteriorating, but even then the relationship between core and rectal temperature may be tenuous, especially if the anus is dilated. In hot humid climatic conditions it is useful to take it at every inspection to ensure adequate heat loss is occurring.

#### SECTION 4 – SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT RULES

*No changes*

#### SECTION 5 – EQUINE ANTI-DOPING & CONTROLLED MEDICATION RULES

##### 13.4 Appellant Body

A decision listed in Rule 13.3 may be appealed to the relevant DA which shall appoint an Appeals Committee of a minimum of 2 persons pursuant to the relevant DA Constitution to hear the appeal or may be referred to the National Sports Tribunal if both parties agree.

##### 29.4 Appellant Body

A decision listed in Rule 29.3 may be appealed to the relevant DA which shall appoint an Appeals Committee of a minimum of 2 persons pursuant to the relevant DA Constitution to hear the appeal or may be referred to the National Sports Tribunal if both parties agree.

14.2.1 Neither the AERA or its Affiliates shall publicly identify horses or persons responsible whose horses' samples have resulted in Adverse Analytical Findings, or persons responsible and/or members of the support personnel who were alleged to have otherwise violated these Rules, until the earlier of completion of the administrative review and Notification described in Clauses 8.1.2 and 8.1.3 above or the start of the provisional suspension of the person alleged to have violated the EAD Rule. Once a violation of these EAD Rules has been established, it shall be publicly reported in an expeditious manner on the AERA website unless another mechanism for publicly reporting the information is warranted at the discretion of the AERA. Public reporting shall be for a period of 12 3 months from the date of notification. If the person responsible and/or member of the support personnel or the AERA makes information concerning an EAD Rule violation or alleged EAD Rule violation public prior to release of this information on the AERA website, the AERA may comment on such public information or otherwise publicly report the matter.

30.2.1 Neither the AERA or its Affiliates shall publicly identify horses or persons responsible whose horses' Samples have resulted in Adverse Analytical Findings, or persons responsible and/or members of the support personnel who were alleged to have otherwise violated these Rules, until the earlier of completion of the

administrative review and Notification described in Clauses 24.1.2 and 24.1.3 or the start of the provisional suspension of the person alleged to have violated the ECM Rule. Once a violation of these ECM Rules has been established, it shall be publicly reported in an expeditious manner on the AERA website unless another mechanism for publicly reporting the information is warranted at the discretion of the AERA. Public reporting shall be for a period of 12 3 months from the date of notification. With regards to the Administrative Procedure set forth in Clause 25.3 above, publication shall occur on the acceptance of the Administrative Sanction. If the person responsible and/or member of the support personnel or an AERA affiliate or any such person makes information concerning a Rule violation or alleged ECM Rule violation public prior to release of this information on the AERA website, the AERA may comment on such public information or otherwise publicly report the matter.

#### **SECTION 6 – RISK MANAGEMENT RULES**

*No changes*

#### **10.2 Volunteering & Membership incentives**

**In an effort to encourage more members to volunteer, we are looking at Incentivising people to help more. Such as**

**Membership Fees Reduction  
Premium parking at rides  
Free Camping  
Less entry fees**

**Discussion was had re reimbursement incentives (monetary and non monetary) and fines for not having been a volunteer. This information was taken on board by the SMC and they will discuss it more.**

#### **10.3 TO QUALIFY FOR THE BIG 3 AWARD WHICH INCLUDES THE QUILTY, STATE CHAMPS, SHAZADA OR MIL LEL MARATHON**

**What prizes would you like to see?**

**Trophy**

**Rug**

**Or both**

**These prizes would be sponsored by VERA**

**Discussion was had re the prizes in depth. It was decided the committee needs to discuss this further.**

**Sandy Little offered to do the sponsorship for the 2025 prize.  
Jane McLaughlin has sponsored the next 3 years.**

**10.4 AERA have asked us to consider changing our Tom Quilty form 2029 to 2030.**

Discussion was had to why we were being asked to be bumped, but there was no clear answer. We already have a team considering hosting the TQ, so we decided NO to this.

**10.5 Incorporating pensioner discounts to our membership fees?**

Discussion was had around this and the overall response was No.

MEETING CLOSURE: 12.28 pm