

# Association of Air Ambulances Member Code of Conduct

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**Members of the Association hereby affirm in writing annually to the following statements:**

This Code is a central point of reference through which all members and prospective member organisations involved in emergency air medical responses can agree to cooperate and work together. It places patients, survivors and casualties at the centre of its lines of reasoning. A vital component of this Code of Conduct encourages the adoption of principles, behaviour and procedures in the best interests of anyone involved in providing emergency assistance.

**The Associations Vision and Mission Statement are:**

## **Vision Statement**

'The AAA's vision is to improve patient outcomes through the provision of outstanding services to its members'

## **Mission Statement**

"The Association will provide a platform of representation as the authoritative voice for the UK air ambulance community to governments, legislators, supporters and the general public. It delivers services that will aid the operation of each full member, ensuring the unique characteristic of each member can benefit from the association and bring tangible returns on the members' subscription."

**Association Members must adhere to the following standards:**

- 1. All Air Ambulance Charity Members must follow the Code of Fundraising Practise.**  
<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/code-of-fundraising-practice>
- 2. All Air Ambulance Charities will be registered with the Charity Commission and comply with the Charities Act.** [http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Charity\\_requirements\\_guidance/default.aspx](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Charity_requirements_guidance/default.aspx)
- 3. All Ambulance Service Members must comply with Care Quality Commission registration.**
- 4. All Air Ambulance Charity Members must comply and operate under Civil Aviation Authority / European Aviation Safety Agency regulations, this can be delegated through contractual arrangement with a third party.**
- 5. Members must comply with the membership rules.**
- 6. All members must not bring the Association into disrepute be this by inattention or consciously.**
- 7. All members must not deliberately enter conflict with another member. If inadvertently conflict arises both parties will resolve the dispute privately within 6 months. After that point the dispute is a breach of this Code.**

## **Interpretation**

The Board of Directors of the Association of Air Ambulances Ltd has absolute discretion over the interpretation of the above Code and potential infringements. Infringement of the Code can constitute a breach of the code which may result in requested corrective action, suspension or removal from membership.

# Procedures and Rules for the Full Member Code of Conduct

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## Definitions

1. Association of Air Ambulances is herein after known as the AAA or Association.
2. "Full Member" is a member as recognised by the Articles of Association of the AAA whose subscriptions are fully paid.
3. "Membership Benefits" are products and services made available to both Members and Associate Members.
4. "The Board" is the duly appointed directors of the AAA under the Articles of Association.
5. "Full Board" all directors as defined by the articles of association.
6. "Third Party Authority" are the following organisations or such organisations that replace them Care Quality Commission, Charity Commission, Companies House, Fund Raising Standards Board, Press Complaints Commission, Advertising Standards Agency, Civil Aviation Authority, Department of Health, Health and Safety Executive, Department of Transport and any Judicial Court of the UK
7. "Board Meeting" is where the Board meets to conduct its regular business and pass resolutions via voting.
8. "Annual General Meeting" or "Extra Ordinary General Meeting" are meetings called by full Board to carry out the formal business of the AAA.
9. "Sub –Committee" are appointed committees of the Board that meet to carryout detailed work as defined by the Board.
10. "Members Meetings" are general meetings where speakers or general debate takes place.
11. "Representation" is information of a written form (electronic or paper) presented formally to the Chairman or National Director.
12. "Representative" is an individual who represents a member or non-member.
13. "Commercial Acts" are activities where an Associate Member coheres, drives or steers the debate for commercial reasons that are not aligned to that of the majority of full members.
14. "Conflicts of Interest" are where an individual's or members position to act is compromised by a duty to another organisation or entity be it financial, contractual or duty of care as an officer.
15. "Vote" is where a full member uses their democratic right to pass a resolution.
16. "Chairman of the Association" is the appointed Chairperson of the board of directors as defined by the articles of association.
17. "Chairman of the Meeting" is the person who has called and then managed the flow of the meeting. The Chairman will always be a representative of a full member of the AAA and appointed by the AAA Board.
18. "Vice Chairman" is the person who has assumed the responsibilities of the Chairman of the meeting by authority of the Board or the meeting. The Vice Chairman will always be a representative of a full member and have the support of the other committee members in the absence of the Chairman.
19. "Director" is a director of the association as defined by the approved articles of association.
20. "National Director" is the Executive Officer of the Association.
21. "Tribunal Panel" is three Directors of the Association as defined by clause 2.2 of the Code of Conduct.
22. "The AAA Logo Policy" is a policy approved by the board of directs outlining the appropriate use of the AAA logo.

# Procedures

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1. A Full Member of the association agrees to uphold the Code of Conduct while that member is in membership of the Association.
2. A new member is required to agree formally in writing to uphold the Code of Conduct.
3. Each year on the 1<sup>st</sup> October all Full Members will be required to affirm the Code of Conduct.
4. If a non-member wishes to join the association the Code of Conduct will come into force at the point the membership is approved and the member is accepted into membership by the Board of Directors.
5. A non-member while being a non-member cannot be held to account for breaches of the Code of Conduct, but will not be admitted to the Association Membership until such time as the non-member can demonstrate that they meet the Code.
6. Representations will only be accepted pertaining organisations or entities that operate within the Air Ambulance Community in Europe.
7. Any representations pertaining a member or applicant of the association which questions that member or future members conduct in relation to the Code, must be made to the Chairman or National Director and the following actions will result:
  - 7.1. The Chairman or National Director with the knowledge of the full board may dismiss such representation if it has no substance or is not covered by the Code of Conduct.
  - 7.2. The representation will be presented to the board of directors to establish an independent panel to investigate the representation. The Tribunal Panel will be made of a minimum of 3 independent directors that are not associated with any element of the representation being made. The Chairman and National Director will not be eligible to sit on this panel.
  - 7.3. The panel will investigate the contents of the representation by:
    - 7.3.1. Meeting the member / proposed member.
    - 7.3.2. Meeting the individual or organisation that has made the representation.
    - 7.3.3. Reviewing the provided information both in the representation and through meetings.
    - 7.3.4. Take advice from such secondary authority as the Tribunal Panel sees fit (e.g. Fundraising Standards Board, CQC) to support any conclusion.
    - 7.3.5. Holding formal meetings where detailed records are taken with any party.
8. The Tribunal Panel once formed will within approximately three months aim to publish their verdict of the Representation and if it is to be “upheld” or “declined.” The Tribunal Panel is not obliged to publish its conclusions to the general public only parties involved in the Representation. The conclusions can take the following forms:
  - 8.1. Disciplinary Action including:
    - 8.1.1. Constructive feedback.
    - 8.1.2. Suspension or removal from a Sub Committee.
    - 8.1.3. Suspension from membership until corrective action is taken.
    - 8.1.4. Removal from membership.
    - 8.1.5. Reporting formally to authorities.
    - 8.1.6. Taking such action as the Tribunal Panel consider appropriate.
9. If any party wishes to appeal the Tribunal Panels decision formal written objection should be made to the Chairman or National Director within 21 days of the Tribunal Panels Conclusion being published with any further information in support of the appeal. The Chairman, National Director or both parties will review the Representation and Conclusion and any new information provided. The Chairman and National Directors conclusions are final.

# Rules

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## Public relations

10. Full members of the association must when publishing information of any form (e.g. Press Release, Marketing Material, Blogs) ensure accuracy of the content of their materials, ensuring facts and statements are substantiated, transparent and not confusing or defamatory. Any statement about specific performance of any organisation should have factual evidence to support any claim.

## Membership Conduct

11. Members, their staff, trustees and volunteers should ensure that all of their representatives conduct their affairs openly and professionally. A healthy debate is acceptable, however if a Representative feels threatened, has inappropriate language used at them, or personal integrity is questioned either publically or privately this will be treated as a breach of the code by the individual/s who act in that way. The Tribunal Panel will judge such matters on the balance of probability.
12. A Member is obligated to act as fairly as possible with other Members, Non-Members, other organisations, volunteers, trustees, staff or public. If a Member has a sustained dispute with any party (e.g. another member, non-member (over 18 months) that remains unresolved over 18 months the dispute is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Tribunal Panel can conclude that a Member or Non-Member is in breach of this clause however disciplinary action will be commensurate to the level of the dispute.

## Charity Law / Commercial Stability / Operational Cohesion

13. The Association establishes and guides best practice. It expects all Full Members to endeavour to achieve best practice in their charity fundraising, administration, air operations, tasking and clinical performance. If a flagrant and repeated breach of the law or best practice is observed it will be considered a breach of this Code of Conduct.
14. To deliver a service to their patient that is in line with standard operating procedures (SOP's) for the service being provided.
15. Commercial or Financial conflicts will not be discussed through the association. Any dispute or issue pertaining a charity or ambulance service of a financial matter will be considered a private matter to be resolved between the relevant parties. If under clause 7 a sustained dispute has arisen where parties are unable to or unwilling to resolve the commercial / financial dispute the associations Tribunal Panel will not have jurisdiction and the Chairman or National Director under clause 2.1 will dismiss such representations. Parties are encouraged to resolve their conflicts without resorting to litigation; this code actively encourages mutual working practices. The Association and the Code of Conduct supports competition.

## Benefits, Resources and Logo

16. The Association actively encourages members to use the association's benefits; however the misuse of such benefits by a member for commercial gain of that member or bringing the association or its members into disrepute is a breach of the Code of Conduct. This includes the sharing of membership benefits, information or resources with a non-member.
17. Benefits and AAA resources remain the property of the Association and its members. Those benefits and resources should not be offered or provided to any other third parties without the express permission of the AAA in writing. All Benefits and Resources are copyrighted and intellectual property of the association. Any misuse of such benefits or resources is a breach of this Code of Conduct.
18. The AAA logo is open to be used by Members showing their commitment to the Air Ambulance Community and desire to support the advancement of air ambulance charities, ambulance services and their supply chain.
  - 18.1. The logo or any logo issued by the association remains the property of the association and its members.
  - 18.2. Its unauthorised use in any circumstance other than that detailed in the AAA logo policy is a breach of this Code of Conduct.
  - 18.3. The logo or any mark issued by the association should not be used in any way that could discredit the AAA or its members, this includes and is not exhaustive, the endorsement of products, next to statements or facts that are inaccurate or false, in images or with other resources indicating AAA support where it is not given.