



# Communication Policy

This Communications Policy covers internal and external communication including, verbal, written, emails, website, print media, social media, live or recorded streaming, lectures, presentations, audio-visual, handouts and advertising which are essential for effective communication amongst Australian Sahaja Yogis to keep everyone fully informed.

For the purpose of this policy the following descriptions are used:

**LETA Directors** = Trustee Directors of Life Eternal Trust Australia referred to as “Trustees”.

**Sahaja Yoga volunteers** = as it relates to the LETA Deed those who volunteer to support the work of Sahaja Yoga such as the Finance, Bookkeeping, WWCC, and Legal teams.

**Council** = Sahaja Yoga Council and Councillors.

**Sahaja Yoga practitioners** = all those who practice Sahaja Yoga and as a group are referred to as the "Sahaja Yoga Collective" or “Collective”.

## THIS POLICY AIMS TO ACHIEVE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness in the wider community about the LETA/LEPA’s and Sahaja Yoga Meditation Australia’s mission, objectives, activities, training, events and benefits of Sahaja Yoga and meditation, medical research and other areas, in a positive, inclusive manner supporting Sahaja Yoga’s effectiveness in management of stress;
- Engage effectively with Trustees, Councillors, Volunteer Representatives and Administration Assistants and the Sahaja Yoga Collective active within the Sahaja Yoga community, including parents of children (attending LETA/LEPA’s training, events, and overnight camps) by providing clear and timely communication and acting on feedback where appropriate.
- Be sensitive to the desires of our community and respond to appropriate changes when necessary
- Recognise and express appreciation for achievements and the outstanding work done by volunteers.

## COMMUNICATION SHOULD

- Be relevant, accurate, sensitive, and timely.
- Enable meaningful engagement with the intended audience.
- Recognise the importance of core values of Sahaja Yoga.

- Not breach copyrights in any form; and
- Have prior consent from any person(s) appearing in any audio or visual media.

Faces of persons under 18 years of age will not be included in any medium to be shared within the community or able to be viewed by the general public.

## MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Council representatives, Sahaja Yoga Volunteers and members of the Sahaja Yoga Collective **are not authorised** to respond to enquiries or spot interview by any press/media organisations and will immediately refer all inquiries to the Legal Compliance Coordinator [national-compliance@sahajayoga.com.au](mailto:national-compliance@sahajayoga.com.au) who will confirm the inquiry and respond to it in due course and may need to obtain legal advice before providing a response.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES and EMAIL POLICY

Our commitment:

Email communication is essential for sharing news and information with Councillors, Volunteers and the Collective.

Our communication will be timely, appropriate, and related to Sahaja Yoga.

This policy encourages positive, productive communications between LETA Directors and Sahaja Yoga Councillors, Volunteers and Collective while protecting all parties and LETA from legal liability and reputation damage.

LETA communication policies, rules and expectations are tailored to fit the needs within which we operate as a volunteer organisation.

The following guidelines comprise the LETA email policy as a volunteer organisation covering communications between Directors and volunteers working with the Trust. It does not cover Emails shared between Sahaja Yoga practitioners.

## WHAT WE ASK YOU TO DO

We expect our Trustees, Councillors, Volunteers and Practitioners to conduct themselves appropriately when using email communication to share information with others or posting material on public websites connected to Sahaj Yoga.

- All emails written are to be composed with respectful language.
- Both authors and recipients must be open to understanding and attempt to understand the contents of emails in an unbiased manner.
- Emails should respect and maintain the privacy of yogis.

- Emails must not bring Sahaja Yoga into disrepute.
- Foul language in any form is prohibited.
- Yogis who work with children and young people under 18 years of age must direct electronic communication through the child's parents only.

#### WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

Certain types of communications are considered unacceptable under this policy, primarily in the interest of heading off inappropriate or illegal behaviour and protecting LETA, Councillors, Volunteers and Practitioners from liability and as a duty of care to Directors and Volunteers working with the Trust.

Email communications should not be bullying or disruptive in nature, make personal unproven allegations or distribute unsubstantiated claims about Trustees, Councillors, Volunteers, Practitioners, and their families.

Emails of this nature are considered against Sahaja Yoga values and the recipient has every right not to respond.

#### RECEIPT OF INAPPROPRIATE EMAIL

Trustee-Directors, Councillors, Sahaja Yoga volunteers and practitioners are encouraged to report any inappropriate email as outlined to the Legal Compliance Team at [national-compliance@sahajayoga.com.au](mailto:national-compliance@sahajayoga.com.au) who will investigate and address any reports of inappropriate email in a timely manner.

#### CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

The Legal Compliance Team is responsible for compliance with this policy as a duty of care to all Sahaja Yoga volunteers and practitioners.

Those involved in non-compliance should be aware there may be consequences for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another person or persons, as outlined in our LETA BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY.

Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying (e.g. bullying that is carried out through an internet service such as email, a chat room, discussion group, instant messaging or website) is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police.

In addition, those who publish or pass on false or misleading comments about another person within the Sahaja Yoga community public domain (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Twitter or Email groups) may be liable for defamation.

## ANONYMOUS EMAILS

It is also standard practice to indicate that anonymous complaints, social media posts and other communications are not accepted and are deleted upon receipt.

This is in line with Human Rights provisions that anyone receiving accusations must be able to address what has been communicated with the author of the communication.

## STATE COMMUNICATION

A team of suitably qualified volunteers will operate at a State level to create and share local State related messages and announcements to the State Collective by various media, and produce advertisements and literature for the public in conjunction with State Councillors.

State Council representatives will keep the State Collective advised about meetings, relevant announcements and general information relating to Sahaja Yoga and the Collective.

Any paid advertising at a State level will require prior budget approval and approval of any content by the State Councillor/s.

## NATIONAL COMMUNICATION

A team of suitably qualified volunteers will produce and share National Collective related messages and announcements to the National Collective and produce advertisements and literature for the public domain via state or national printed or electronic media in conjunction and with the approval of all National Councillors.

Any public announcements or advertisements involving substantial funds or important aspects relating to Sahaja Yoga will be shared with the LETA/LEPA Trustees before publication as a liability protocol and for input"

Any paid advertising at a National level will require prior budget approval and approval of the content and expenditure by National Councillors and LETA/LEPA Trustees.

## COMMUNICATING WITH TRUSTEES

All communications in relation and addressed to LETA/LEPA Trustee Directors is to be via the official LETA Email address [life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com](mailto:life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com) and not to personal email addresses. This ensures all Trustees receive messages, can respond accordingly and an easily accessed record is kept.

It is requested that messages relating to or referencing LETA/LEPA include a CC to the Trustees email: [life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com](mailto:life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com)

## CONTACTING LIFE ETERNAL TRUST AUSTRALIA

The communication channel to engage with Life Eternal Trust Australia is to send an email to [life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com](mailto:life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com) which will reach all the Trustees.

This is the preferential method for all people to contact NGOs which has also been put in place by other Sahaja NGOs such as the World Foundation and the Central Committee.

The Trustees email ids are for their personal use only. Life Eternal Trust Australia is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information that the organisation collects, holds and administers. Personal information is information which directly or indirectly identifies a person..

Life Eternal Trust Australia complies with the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the **Privacy Act 1988** in handling personal information of its volunteers. Use and disclose personal information such as the Trustees personal Email id is through the person's consent. Without their consent accessing their Email id for matters related to Life Eternal Trust Australia is unauthorised access.

The Trust provides volunteers and stakeholders with the right to seek access to information by contacting [life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com](mailto:life.eternal.trust.australia@gmail.com)

Emails sent to the personal email id of the Trustees with respect to matters related to Life Eternal Trust Australia will not be responded to.

## INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

To respect the structural operations of all international Trusts and Councils, Communication with International Councils is usually managed by Australian National Councillors and Communication between International Trusts is usually managed by Life Eternal Trust Australia.

Sahaja Yoga Australia works with, supports, participates with, and enjoys our wider international family during international events and tours and warmly welcomes brothers and sisters from around the world.

## LETA / LEPA WEBSITES

The official website [www.leta.org.au](http://www.leta.org.au) has been produced and published to display the Sahaja Yoga Australia structure and operations for the benefit of government agencies, banks, insurance companies etc.

A less formal news style website [www.syletanews.com](http://www.syletanews.com) has been produced and published for the benefit of Sahaja Yogis who wish to have a deeper understanding of Sahaja Yoga Australia operations and structure.

LETA/LEPA provide and manage both websites directly.

LETA/LEPA will provide communication relating to its role and responsibilities directly to the Sahaja Yoga Collective via its own message service.



Signed.

Director / Trustee LETA/LEPA. Date: 30/6/2019