



INDEPENDENT JUDGES NETWORK

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

This association shall be known as the Independent Judges Network (hereinafter referred to as “The Panel”).

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To establish criteria for candidate judges.
- 2.2 To train candidate judges.
- 2.3 To educate judges to maintain a high standard of judging skills.
- 2.4 To determine weaknesses based on interaction and communication with:
 - Judges (local and international)
 - Exhibitors
 - Breeders
 - Breed Groups
 - Show Managers
 - Stewardsand endeavour to improve same.
- 2.5 To uphold at all times the integrity and dignity of its members and the dignity and prestige and honour of judging.
- 2.6 To promote a knowledge of cats and breed standards and to assist breeders.
- 2.7 To promote and strive for the efficient co-existence with all other Judges Panels.

3. LEGAL STATUS

- 3.1 The Panel shall be a voluntary association, with an independent Legal Persona.
- 3.2 All property and assets shall vest in the Panel.
- 3.3 Any obligations or liabilities incurred by or on behalf of the Panel are for itself and to the exclusion of its members.
- 3.4 The power to decide whether to enter litigation shall vest in the management of the Panel.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 The Panel shall be an autonomous body formally recognized by the Southern Africa Cat Council's Governing Council (clubs) and shall consist of judges domiciled in the Republic of South Africa and student judges accepted in terms of Point 5 below.
- 4.2 Qualified judges may apply for membership by email, submitting such application to the secretary of the Panel.
- 4.3 Each member shall pay an annual membership fee on or before the 28th February of a calendar year. The membership fee will be decided upon by the Panel from time to time.
- 4.4 Upon receipt of an application for membership the Panel will vote via email, whether to accept or not to accept such applicant as a member.
- 4.5 Voting shall be unanimous.
- 4.6 Members not having paid their annual membership fee by April will lose their membership privileges (to vote and to judge) until such time that their membership fee is paid in full. If membership is not paid by June then the member will forfeit their membership. The Secretary will keep the Clubs informed.
- 4.7 Any member who does not meet the criteria to be recognised as a qualified judge in terms of the Constitution of the Southern Africa Cat Council and the constitution of the Southern African Cat Council of Judges shall not be permitted to be a Member of the Panel.

5. STUDENT JUDGES

- 5.1 Any person who wishes to become a student judge, shall apply via email to the Panel Secretary.
- 5.2 Upon receipt of an application for membership as a Student Judge, the Panel will vote whether to accept or not to accept such applicant as a member and Student Judge.
- 5.3 Voting shall be unanimous.
- 5.4 The Panel will decide which courses will be run, and which Panel member will be the Tutor for that course.
- 5.5 Each Tutor shall report to the panel on the following:
 - (a) the progress and status of the lectures
 - (b) the progress of the students
- 5.6 Upon the successful completion of the written examination, the Tutor and Panel shall arrange for the practical examination to take place.
- 5.7 Upon the successful completion of the practical exam, the Secretary shall be informed of the names of the probationers. The Tutor shall be responsible for:

- (a) keeping the judges reports on the progress of the probationers;
 - (b) reporting back to the Panel regarding the progress of the probationers.
- 5.8 In the event of the Panel being of the opinion that any one, or more, probationer has completed the required number of cats, the Secretary shall place such on email for discussion and subsequent voting (if students' reports are satisfactory to the Panel).

6. VOTING

- 6.1 Members may record their votes on any matter via email.
- 6.2 Unless otherwise laid down in the Constitution, matters requiring a vote shall be decided by a simple majority.
- 6.3 In all cases, should there be an equal number of votes, no person shall have a casting vote.
- 6.4 Voting rights of officers, not being qualified judges are regulated by paragraph 9.7 to 9.9

7. MEETINGS

- 7.1 When required, the Panel shall hold meetings to decide on matters of importance to the Panel. Meetings will be held via Skype or teleconference.
- 7.2 Members will be informed of the business of the Panel by email.
- 7.3 A quorum shall consist of 50% of the membership, calculated in the event of a fraction, to the next highest whole number.
- 7.4 An Annual General Meeting of the Panel shall be conducted once a year via Skype or teleconference, no later than 31st May each year.
- 7.5 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given by the Secretary to all members not less than 14 days prior to such meeting.
- 7.6 The Secretary of the Panel shall forward the agenda of the Annual General Meeting to all members at least 7 days prior to such meeting taking place.

8. MANAGEMENT OF THE PANEL

- 8.1 The day to day management of the Panel shall be conducted by the Officers of the Panel.
- 8.2 The Officers of the Panel shall be a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 8.3 Officers of the Panel may serve in more than one function, but no more than two functions.
- 8.4 The term of all Officers shall be for a period of two years, calculated from the date of election.

- 8.5 The Officers of the Panel must be elected from the existing members who are qualified judges.
- 8.6 In the absence of the Chairman, another member of the Panel shall be elected to perform the duties of the Chairman.
- 8.7 All of the Members of the Panel, who are qualified judges, shall have a vote on matters concerning breed standards, the Standard of Points, changes to the Standard of Points or any matter requiring the vote of a qualified judge.
- 8.8 Student Judges shall not have a vote on matters concerning breed standards, the Standard of Points, changes to the Standard of Points or any matter requiring a qualification of a judge in the particular breed section for which the student judge is not qualified to judge.
- 8.9 Members not being fully qualified judges, will not have voting rights on disciplinary matters.
- 8.10 All Panel members shall be required to attend the Symposium of the Southern African Council of Cat Judges and will furthermore, where qualified, partake in the training or examination of candidate judges.
- 8.11 Members will only be excused if their reason for non-attendance is acceptable by fellow Panel Members.

9. DISCIPLINE

In the event of a complaint against a member of the Panel the under mentioned procedure shall be adopted:

- 9.1 All complaints must be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Panel.
- 9.2 The complaint must contain full particulars concerning the complainant, the member in violation and the nature of complaint.
- 9.3 A complaint must be lodged within 30 days of the complainant becoming aware of the alleged misconduct, violation or cause.
- 9.4 The Chairman of the Panel will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and inform the member concerned and all other Members of the Panel of the complaint.
- 9.5 The Member concerned has the right to answer in writing to the allegations within 30 days.
- 9.6 If the matter cannot be resolved via email then a physical meeting must be held in order to resolve the matter.
- 9.7 At the meeting of the Panel, the complaint and answer thereto will be discussed and the Panel shall decide upon the merit of the complaint.
- 9.8 The Panel will thereafter vote on whether a formal hearing must be held. A two-thirds majority is required.
- 9.9 Upon the outcome of the vote referred to in 10.7, the venue, date and time of the hearing will be determined.

- 9.10 Parties have the right to be represented by an attorney and may call witnesses.
- 9.11 The complainant and member concerned shall have no vote at the hearing.
- 9.12 The meeting will be presided upon by an external qualified person who is acceptable to both parties.
- 9.13 After hearing all the evidence, the Members shall vote, by secret ballot and the Chairman shall inform all parties of the outcome thereof. A two-thirds majority shall determine the result.
- 9.14 The outcome will be decided upon by the Panel Members.
- 9.15 An appeal against the outcome and/or penalty may be filed with the Southern Africa Cat Council, within 30 days of the date of the decision.
- 9.16 The Rules of the Southern Africa Cat Council are applicable in the event of an appeal.

10. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 10.1 Members of the Panel may apply for leave of absence for a period not exceeding 12 months.
- 10.2 If the leave of absence is longer than 12 months, some form of refresher course should be undertaken. The extent and duration to be decided by the Panel.
- 10.3 If a Panel member has been granted a leave of absence, they may not vote on any Panel matters.
- 10.4 Members may attend the AGM and Symposium during this period.

11. ANNUAL REPORT

The Treasurer shall by 31 May of each year submit a report showing an exact accounting of all assets, liabilities and monies received and paid out.

12. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at an Annual General Meeting, provided that the proposed amendments, together with the notice of time and place of the meeting has been emailed to all Members. A copy of the proposed amendment shall be included in the agenda. The consent of two-thirds of the Members, calculated in the event of a fraction to the next highest whole number, will give effect to an amendment as proposed.

13. RATIFICATION

In the event of a decision taken at the AGM or at a Special Meeting being procedurally not in accordance with the Constitution, the Panel may ratify that decision, by a simple majority vote.

14. DISSOLUTION

- 14.1 A dissolution shall only be effective if passed at a meeting of the Panel by a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote.
- 14.2 Upon dissolution, the Panel shall give or transfer its assets to some other society, association or body having similar objectives.