



WHAT IS ATHRA?

ATHRA was formed way back in 1972 to fill a much needed gap for those people who enjoyed horses, our heritage, the outdoors and camaraderie all encompassed within a non competitive leisure horse pursuit.

Today ATHRA boasts over 115 clubs nationally with a membership base of approximately 3500 members. ATHRA is structured to optimise the benefits to its members, it has a National, State and Club based management.

ATHRA is primarily a leisure trail horse riding organisation that provides to its members the ability to ride anywhere that permits horse access and with any ATHRA club. What this means is once you become an ATHRA club member, you belong to a national organisation, which effectively opens up the whole of Australia to our members and wherever they travel with their horse, they're sure to be welcomed by the local club and enjoy the riding and hospitality of that area.

ATHRA provides to its members a comprehensive set of benefits that include but is not limited to:

- A standardised set of forms to help the running of a club;
- A Code of Conduct to ensure all clubs comply to a set of guidelines that minimise risks to its participants and the environment;
- Low cost comprehensive public liability and personal Insurance, most clubs charge less than \$65 per annum;
- Alignment and support to the Australian Horse Alliance, a body setup to lobby local, state and federal government bodies to ensure continued access for horse riders;
- Belonging to a national transparent family oriented organisation where the focus is on enjoyment and care of the environment, riding your horse all with like minded people; and
- Education in horsemanship, care for the environment and how to minimise the risks in conducting horse trail rides.

Clubs normally arrange at least one ride per month sometimes more, this could be a day ride lasting around 3-6 hours, weekend rides covering the entire weekend or longer periods, for example the ATHRA NSW February Snowy Camp lasting anywhere up to 10 days. Of course you don't have to ride the entire time, you can elect to stay in camp and relax around the camp fire!

ATHRA is a way of life for the whole family; it provides access to the most remote and beautiful places most people only dream of!

Join a club today or form your own Club! What's stopping you?



WANT TO FORM A NEW CLUB?

Thank you for your interest in forming a new club and affiliating with the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA).

This section contains quite a lot of information which will provide guidance and inform you on:

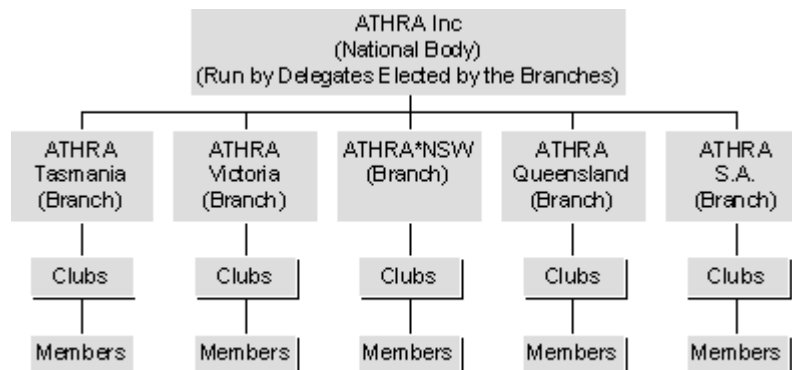
1. How it all began;
2. How ATHRA runs;
3. Benefits of ATHRA membership;
4. Affiliation Guidelines; and
5. Ready to form an ATHRA Trail Riding Club?

The following processes are the recommended steps to form, affiliate and conduct a successful Trail Riding Club:

1. Contact ATHRA and request a new club information pack
2. Advertise proposed meeting to form a trail riding club
3. Form your own club and elect club officials
4. Club becomes an incorporated organisation
5. Affiliate with ATHRA by sending relevant paperwork, including club membership list and fees, to ATHRA
7. Organise and conduct trail rides
8. Send club delegate/s to ATHRA meetings

Much of this can happen concurrently and in parallel to other processes.

As a general guide, the following is the governance model of our organisation;





How it all began

The Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA) was formed in January 1972 at Gatton in south-east Queensland, and has been growing steadily ever since with an increasing interest in recreational horse riding across the country.

Recreational trail horse riding is a non-competitive, relaxing and enjoyable activity that the whole family can enjoy together. People of all ages and professions share the delight of riding leisurely along safe trails, a rare commodity in today's busy world.

Down the track

In the beginning, ATHRA was primarily to be the driving force in planning, developing and establishing the concept of a National Horse Trail.

In 1985 the National Trail committee was formed as a subcommittee of ATHRA, and in 1988 both groups became separate entities when the National Trail became a reality. During the Bicentennial Year (1988), the National Trail was officially opened in three States and had the support of all levels of Government - Local, State and Federal - as well as land owners and the general public.

The Bicentennial National Trail was obligated, under the requirements of Federal and State Bicentennial grants, to be a multi-use trail with an emphasis on heritage and the adventure experience.

Now

ATHRA has gone on to become a comprehensive organisation of trail riding clubs throughout New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania. As of 2005 there were 113 clubs representing over 3200 members nationally. ATHRA has a National body which sets policies, plans strategic direction, pays the insurance premium, and holds an annual National conference on a rotating basis through each of the States. Each State has its own Executive which oversee the activities of its affiliated clubs. ATHRA is a non profit organization and is totally reliant on volunteers.

Trail rides can be either one or two day rides on established tracks in natural bushland, or longer `trek' riding which may or may not include the use of pack horses. Duration can be anything from a few days to several months.

ATHRA does not accept membership from commercial operators.
To demonstrate ATHRA's responsible approach it:

1. provides Public Liability and Personal Accident insurance to its members;



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2. places an emphasis on safe practices;
 3. has input and adheres to the National Park and Wildlife Service 'Code of Ethics for Horse Riding in National Parks';
 4. actively supports the Bicentennial National Trail and the Australian Horse Alliance;
 5. supports the establishment of urban trails in developing areas to provide a locally based recreation activity.

How ATHRA runs

Club delegates form the Management Committee of their State Branch from which a State Executive is elected.

State Branches send delegates to the annual National Council Meeting to form the National Council from which a National Executive is elected (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Insurance Coordinator and National Accreditation Coordinator).

Finances

The financial year of the Association is from 1 January to 31st December.

Affiliations

Members should affiliate with the club prior to 31st December.

New members affiliated after 1st October are current for the following year.

Clubs should affiliate with the State Branches prior to 31st December.

State Branches should affiliate with the National body prior to 31st March.

Annual General Meetings

Clubs should hold their AGM by February.

State Branches should hold their AGM by March.

National AGM should be held in April.



ATHRA National

The National body consists of affiliated State Branches. The Council of the National body consists of appointed State Branch delegates from whom an Executive is elected consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Insurance Coordinator and National Accreditation Coordinator. Sub-committees may be formed to address specific issues.

The National Executive is responsible for

- Organising the best insurance cover available
- Attending the National Council Meetings
- Assisting State Branches to become established, and provide ongoing support and advice
- Directing enquiries to the appropriate State Branches
- Ensuring policies and constitutional rules are adhered to
- Strategic planning
- Ensuring efficient, effective and regular communication with affiliated clubs
- Promoting ATHRA

ATHRA State Branches

The State Branches (NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and TAS) each have their own Management Committee consisting of the delegates appointed by their affiliated clubs. The Executive of the State Branch is elected from this Management Committee.

The State Branches are responsible for:

- Transfer of affiliation fees to ATHRA National
- Maintaining an up to date register of members and clubs
- Distributing membership cards
- Ensuring policies and constitutional rules are adhered to
- Holding general meetings where the business of ATHRA is discussed and disseminating information to affiliated clubs
- Ensuring efficient, effective and regular communication with affiliated clubs
- Answering membership enquiries and assist in the establishment of new clubs
- Promoting ATHRA

ATHRA Affiliated Clubs

The clubs each have their own Executive and Management Committee.

The clubs are responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate membership lists
- Forwarding affiliation fees to the State Branch on a regular basis
- Disseminating information from ATHRA to its members



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- Organising rides for its members
 - Promoting ATHRA

All members are bound by ATHRA's Code of Conduct and at each level responsibility is autonomous, provided that ATHRA's Code of Conduct and objectives are adhered to.

Benefits of ATHRA Membership

- Low joining fee.
- Be part of a group non-competitive recreational activity the whole family can enjoy - even non riders can get involved by being in a support crew.
- Inter-club and inter-State club rides are encouraged.
- Apart from helmets which are to be worn by riders 18 years and under, no special equipment or breed of horse is required.
- Affiliation with an ATHRA club automatically makes you a member of the National Association and gives you the protection of our Public Liability and Personal Accident insurance during club sanctioned events and functions.
- Members and clubs have direct representation to the State Branches and the National body through their nominated delegates and benefit through a sharing of resources and a combining of strength.
- It is highly recommended that all clubs incorporate individually to protect their members from being personally liable.
- A membership card is issued to identify you as a member of ATHRA, and entitles you to access information regarding rides with other affiliated clubs.
- The opportunity to get involved in issues regarding trail riding - eg, horse access issues such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service 'lock-out' of horses from designated 'wilderness' areas and Nature Reserves; recommendations to the Road Traffic Act; liaison with local councils to provide for authorized horse trails in your area.
- ATHRA provides reference material to enable your club and members to contact other horse related organisations such as the Bicentennial National Trail, and the Australian Horse Alliance.





Affiliation Guidelines

1. Re-affiliation with ATHRA becomes due on 1st January each year. The affiliation fees should be paid as close as possible to this time of year to ensure that insurance cover is maintained. A new club joining after 1st October is current until the end of the following year.
2. Each club forwards their affiliation return sheet which lists all their financial members, together with payment of the fees applicable to the number of members listed. If this is incorrect the Club Secretary should be advised immediately and a shortfall should be paid by the relevant club as soon as possible. Overpayments should be noted and deducted from the club's next payment. A receipt is issued for the amount paid.
3. If a member is already financial with another affiliated club and has paid their ATHRA membership via the other club, they should produce their yellow ATHRA card for your information. The club needs only to charge their relevant 'in house' membership fees, and no further fee needs to be sent to ATHRA for these 'associate' members.
4. Affiliation return sheets should be sent to the ATHRA State Secretary on a monthly basis, together with a cheque to cover the total fees payable for all members registered that month.
5. On receiving return sheets from clubs, the ATHRA State Secretary will issue a membership card to each member listed on the sheet. Cards are issued to individuals, not to whole families. The cards, receipt and a new return sheet is then returned to the club secretary. The cards require a name, year of expiry and a membership number (a prefix is used - eg, N=NSW, Q=QLD, etc).



Ready to form an ATHRA Trail Riding Club?

1. Advertise a public meeting in the local paper, produce shop or saddlery stating the intention of forming a trail horse riding club. You are welcome to contact a member of the ATHRA State Executive to see if they could attend the meeting (or be available by phone at the time of the meeting to assist with queries).
2. At the meeting, which would be chaired by the convenor, explain the purpose of the meeting and the objectives of ATHRA.
3. Move the following motions:
 - a. "That the Trail Horse Riders Club now be formed by the persons present" *(it doesn't matter how many people are present but ATHRA suggests that a minimum of 10 would be satisfactory. The name of the club can be as the meeting wishes - `Trail Horse Riders Club ' is only a suggestion).*
 - b. "That the objectives of the club are to enjoy, promote and publicise the recreational values of horse riding along nature trails, and in furtherance of this object:
 - To organise trail rides in this or other districts.
 - To encourage family participation in non-competitive horse riding.
 - To foster awareness of the usefulness and abilities of the horse.
 - To encourage horse riders in the protection and conservation of the natural Australian flora and fauna.
 - To co-operate with others in the setting up and maintenance of trails.
 - To foster in horse riders and Australians generally an awareness of road and other safety rules in regards to horse riding.
 - To affiliate with the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA).
 - To assist ATHRA in the realization of its objects, and in particular with the maintenance of the Bicentennial National Trail.
 - To work for the establishment, legislation and preservation of trails in the district, and support organisations such as the Australian Horse Alliance.
 - c. "That the annual membership fees be and that they be inclusive of the annual ATHRA affiliation fee" *(affiliation is based on an annual per capita charge on all club members).*
 - d. "That this club forthwith elect a Steering Committee of persons, comprising a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee members, and that the Steering Committee be responsible for:



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- Preparing a draft constitution for presentation to a subsequent meeting of the club for its consideration and approval (*alternately, the club could decide to adopt the 'Model Rules' developed by the Department of Fair Trading*)
 - Acting as a temporary Management Committee until the club formally elects a Management Committee at a later date" (*it is suggested that the Steering Committee be about 5-6 people who can contact each other easily*).
4. Election of President, Secretary, Treasurer and remaining members of the Steering Committee.
 5. General Business: Matters under this heading can include the preliminary planning of a trail ride (this helps to keep members interested); the club becoming incorporated with the Department of Fair Trading; the acceptance of advance membership fees to give the club some working funds; and the exchange of names and contact details so that interested persons can remain in touch.
 6. As soon as possible after the meeting, the Secretary should advise the Association (via your State ATHRA Branch) of the formation of your club, providing the members' names and addresses, and enclosing the appropriate fees. Upon affiliation, the club is automatically covered by ATHRA's Public Liability insurance policy and Personal Accident insurance policy. This policy covers any official event organized by the club (eg, trail rides, social/fun days, meetings, etc). On receipt of the affiliation fee your club is now affiliated with ATHRA.

Summary:

1. Advertise a public meeting; invite an ATHRA Executive member if required.
2. At the meeting, explain its purpose; explain the objectives of ATHRA.
3. Move:
 - a. "That the objectives of the club be"
 - b. "That the annual membership fees be"
 - c. That the club elect a Steering Committee comprising ..."
4. Election of a Steering Committee.
5. General Business: Plan a trail ride, pay advance membership fees, exchange names and contact details.
6. After the meeting, inform ATHRA of the new club, pay the affiliation fees.

Good luck, and may you enjoy many happy hours on the trail.



WANT TO JOIN A CLUB?

Welcome to ATHRA!

If you go to our map on the home page, click on your State and a list of clubs in your State will come up. Search for the one closest to you and contact the club secretary who will send you all the information you need. Check to see if it isn't already on their club page. For example, if you want to join the Lake Macquarie Pack and Trail Riders, click on NSW, then Lake Macquarie and you will be taken to their page on this site. From there you can download their ride calendar, memberships forms etc. If you would like more information contact the club secretary.

Once you join one ATHRA club and you are able to ride with any other ATHRA affiliated club in the Nation! As mentioned above, you can even join two or more ATHRA clubs and only pay the National (insurance) component of the fee once.