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***ACT GOLF ASSOCIATION***

[www.actgolfassociation.com](http://www.actgolfassociation.com)

[actgolfassociation@outlook.com](mailto:actgolfassociation@outlook.com)



20 October 2021

**Bylaws**

**for**

**ACT GOLF ASSOCIATION**

As amended at the Annual General Meeting on 20 October 2021.

**NAME AND AUTHORITY**

1. The Association is known as the Allied Command Transformation Golf Association (AGA).

2. The AGA is established as a Virginia State Golf Association (VSGA) Recreational Golfer’s Club, and considers the Sewell’s Point Golf Course in Norfolk, Virginia as its ‘Home Club’.

**AIM**

3. The aim of the AGA is to promote golf, and the social aspects of golf, in the international community of Allied Command Transformation (ACT), and to develop friendly relations with the local military and civilian golfing communities in the Hampton Roads area while encouraging conformance to the Rules of Golf.

**MEMBERSHIP**

4. The membership criteria of AGA build on the wish to promote openness and inclusiveness. Therefore, the AGA welcomes any military, civilian or retired member, and/or their immediate family, of ACT or other NATO entities who wish to join as a member. It is, however, a requirement to be a member to participate in AGA activities or events unless expressively stated in the propositions for a specific event.

Categories

5. Membership categories are as follows:

1. Active Members. The following persons serving at Headquarters, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (HQ SACT), persons associated with or posted in support of HQ SACT (e.g., national liaison representatives, support staff) or with NATO commands, Agencies or affiliated entities in the Hampton Roads Area are eligible as active members:
   * All military personnel;
   * NATO International Civilians, Consultants or Interns;
   * Contractors while working under contract at HQ SACT or affiliated entity;
   * The spouses, partners, and dependent children who reside in the Member’s household. Dependent children must be at least 18 years of age to vote at an Annual General Meeting.
   * Previous members of ACT or other NATO bodies who reside in the Hampton Roads area, and their spouses and partners. Such persons may be requested to document their former affiliation with ACT/NATO.
2. Honorary Members. Current SACT, DSACT, and HQ SACT COS are invited to be honorary members. Honorary membership does not include VSGA membership.
3. Long Distance Members. This category is open to military and civilian persons and their dependents, from the ACT entities – Joint Warfare Center, Joint Forces Training Center, and the Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Center as well as HQ SACT Staff Element Europe and SACT’s Representative in Europe (SACTREPEUR). Further, Active Members and Associate Members who depart the Hampton Roads area upon completion of a tour of duty may continue their membership as Long Distance Members. Long Distance Members may not hold offices in the AGA or vote at Annual General Meetings. Long distance membership does not include VSGA membership.
4. Associate Members. Military personnel serving in the Hampton Roads area pursuant to a NATO Visa / NATO Travel Order. Associate Members may not be elected as members of the Board of Directors or vote at Annual General Meetings.
5. Affiliate Members. The Board of Directors may grant membership to individuals, proposed by Active AGA members, who do not meet the criteria listed above but who have otherwise demonstrated a strong link or relationship to NATO, if the Board finds that such membership would meet the aim and general intent of the AGA. Affiliate Members may not be elected as members of the Board of Directors or vote at Annual General Meetings.
6. Guests. AGA members may invite guests to participate in AGA matches; however, such guests will play outside of the competition unless otherwise stated in the propositions for the specific match.

Terms of membership

6. The membership year begins 01 October and extends until 30 September the following year. The AGA membership is automatically renewed from year to year. The membership fee will be pro-rated the first and last year of membership but will be paid in one annual payment. All funds collected shall accrue for the benefit of membership, and there shall be no refunds for termination of membership mid-year except if termination is due to unforeseen changes to end-of-tour date.

Termination of membership

7. Membership is automatically terminated upon a member’s departure from the ACT or NATO community, unless the membership eligibility can – and is desired to - be retained under the provisions of Paragraph 5 above. AGA Members should inform the Membership Secretary of their end-of-tour date, or if they intend to discontinue their membership for any other reason.

8. In the event any member commits any act which reflects discredit or disrepute on the AGA or refuses or fails to comply with the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Directors or any appointed or elected AGA official, such member shall be subject to suspension or expulsion after written notice and the right to be heard, by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors at any regular meeting or special meeting called for such purpose.

Conduct

9. AGA members are required to comply with the etiquette of golf, any specific rules at clubs/facilities where AGA events are conducted, and with the provisions of the AGA Members’ Guide.

Fees

10. Details of current AGA fees and what they cover are explained in the AGA Members’ Guide. The annual fees may only be changed if authorized by a General Meeting of Members. Members must pay their annual membership fees to participate in AGA events.

**HANDICAPPING**

General

11. The AGA will comply with the World Handicap System, Rules of Handicapping effective January 2020 in calculating and adjusting playing handicaps and use the Golf Handicap and Information Network (GHIN) used by the USGA for posting scores and keeping track of members’ Handicap Indexes. The Handicap Director will keep copies of these rules and will provide further information to members in the AGA Members’ Guide.

12. Members must have an established Handicap Index (HCP) to participate in AGA golf matches and tournaments. Members who have no HCP should initiate the required qualification described in paragraphs 14-15 below. Participation in ‘AGA Social Golf Events’ does not require an HCP Index.

13. The highest Handicap Index permitted in AGA matches/competitions is 54 in accordance with the World Handicap System.

New members.

14. New members who have a recognized handicap certificate from a Federation or former club will, on presentation of the certificate to the Membership Secretary or the Handicap Director, have that handicap recognized at face value.

15. Members who are unable to present a valid proof of handicap must submit acceptable scores from a minimum of 54 holes to get an Initial Handicap Index. Until this has been achieved, the new member may only play in AGA ‘Social Golf’, or in AGA sponsored matches/tournaments against a “0” handicap, or outside the competition.

**STRUCTURE**

Annual General Meeting

16. The Annual General Meeting shall be held during the month of October under the chairmanship of the President of the AGA (or, in his absence, the Vice-President).

17. Extraordinary General Meetings may be held at the decision of the Board of Directors or if requested by 25% of members with voting rights.

18. At least five weeks prior to the meeting, the Board of Directors shall call the meeting and inform members of the agenda and of the Board’s suggested candidates for AGA offices. Other members may be nominated to the Board at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. At least one week prior to the Annual Meeting, a list of all candidates nominated shall be sent by email to each member and a copy of the list shall be posted on the AGA’s website/blog.

19. A legal quorum of at least 10% of the Active Members by person or by proxy is required to convene an Annual General Meeting. If the required quorum is not present at the beginning of the meeting, the meeting shall be postponed for 30 minutes at which time the meeting shall commence and be conducted with the active members by person or proxy.

20. Agenda items for decision may be voted upon by show of hands or by secret ballot. Decisions, other than changes to the Bylaws, shall be determined by majority of the votes cast by active members in person or by proxy.

Officials

21. Management of the AGA is carried out by elected officials. The Board of Directors will strive to ensure that positions of management within the AGA committees are filled by volunteers and that as many nationalities, ranks, and categories of personnel as possible are represented in the various committees.

22. The officials of the AGA and their principal duties are as follows:

1. President. The President has overall responsibility for matters of policy affecting the Association and ensures that the interests of the AGA are represented as appropriate at the highest levels of ACT, with the Virginia State Golf Association, and with the local military and civil community. The President is responsible for the day-to-day running of the activities of the AGA, the provision of an AGA Members’ Guide, and will normally represent AGA at AGA hosted events, prize-giving etc.
2. Vice-President. The Vice-President deputizes in the absence of the President and is a member of the Board of Directors and of the Handicap Committee.
3. Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining proper accounts of all financial aspects of AGA activities, including matches/competitions, social, and property related matters. He/she is to present accounts for audit when requested by the President. He/she is to present audited accounts for approval at the Annual General Meeting, and to develop, in close coordination with the Board of Directors a financial plan for each season.

1. Membership Secretary. The Membership Secretary is responsible for the maintenance of the AGA membership scheme and records database. He/she is normally the first point of contact for prospective AGA members and thus introduces them to the membership of AGA. He/she maintains the membership roll and collects fees from members annually and will coordinate closely with the President and the Handicap Director.
2. Handicap Director. The Handicap Director is responsible for ensuring that the AGA complies with the World Handicapping System as publicized in the Rules of Handicapping. These rules are to be promulgated (and explained as necessary) in the AGA Members’ Guide. He/she is to liaise with the Tournament Directors and with the Membership Secretary with respect to stipulating, publicizing, and enforcing necessary handicap qualifications to allow both current and new members to take part in AGA competitions at the appropriate playing level.
3. Tournament Directors. The Tournament Directors are responsible for developing the annual program of matches and events, and for the detailed planning and execution of the matches, tournaments, and events. They will liaise with the Handicap Director regarding handicap indexes and playing handicaps. A Lead Tournament Director is appointed by the Board of Directors, and provides general oversight and management of the program. The Lead Tournament Director will coordinate with the other AGA officials to develop a roster of organizers for running the planned events.
4. Novice Coordinator. The Novice Coordinator is responsible, in close coordination with the Handicap Director and the Membership Secretary, for the development, coordination and implementation of an AGA novice program with the aim to provide information and assistance to help newcomers to golf in respect of available training opportunities, obtaining qualifications, and for providing advice regarding opportunities to play.
5. Dual Office. Elected Officials may hold more than one position - on an as-required basis - to assist with the management of AGA matters or activities.

Prerequisites

23. AGA officials are to be active members of the Association.

24. AGA officials are elected or re-elected at the Annual General Meeting and will serve for a period of one year without compensation.

Committees

25. The business of the AGA is conducted through standing committees as described below:

1. The Board of Directors is chaired by the President and comprises the elected and appointed officials of the AGA. The Board addresses matters of policy affecting the AGA and is responsible for the management of the activities of the AGA. A minimum of three members of the Board, one of whom must be the President or the Vice-President, will constitute a quorum for the Board. The Board will normally meet four to five times per year.
2. The Tournament Committee is chaired by the Lead Tournament Director and comprises the Tournament Directors, and the Handicap Director. The Committee develops the annual program of matches and events and presents it to the Board of Directors for approval. The Committee supervises the execution of AGA matches and tournaments and adjudicates in matters of dispute.
3. The Handicap Committee is chaired by the Handicap Director and comprises the Vice President, the Lead Tournament Director, and the Membership Secretary. The Committee ensures the proper application of the Rules of Handicapping, supervises the allocation of handicaps indexes and playing handicaps to AGA members and conducts an annual review of members’ handicap indexes. It may assess and adjust current handicaps of players if perceived necessary and will adjudicate in disputes.

d. General

* AGA officials are normally nominated and elected at the AGA General Meeting. In nomination of candidates, the international nature of ACT should be reflected as far as possible in the composition of the Board of Directors.
* Election is by ballot of the Active Members present at the meeting, with the result being decided by majority vote. If there are more than two candidates for a post, and no one candidate receives more than 50% of the vote cast, the candidate with the least number of votes is to be eliminated and a further ballot is held until such time as one candidate receives more than 50 % of the votes cast.
* The Board of Directors may nominate replacements to fill interim vacancies, subject to approval by a majority vote of the AGA members present at the next general meeting.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | President | Vice-President |  | Treasurer | Membership  Secretary | Handicap  Director | Lead Tournament Director | Tournament Directors | Novice Coordinator |
| Board of Directors | X | X |  | X | X | X | X |  | X |
| Tournament  Committee |  |  |  |  |  | X | X | X |  |
| Handicap  Committee |  | X |  |  | X | X | X |  |  |

**FINANCE**

Membership fees

26. The annual membership fee will be approved by the Annual General Meeting after recommendation by the Board of Directors.

Annual Budget

27.       The Treasurer will present an Annual Budget Proposal for approval at the Annual General Meeting. Outside of the Approved Budget the Board of Directors may decide by majority vote on the disbursement of funds not exceeding $1500 and on the disposal of assets worth less than $150.

Cash Holdings and Disbursements

28.       The Treasurer will manage the finances in a cash-based system and is authorized to make disbursements in accordance with the approved budget or as authorized by the Board of Directors.

29.       Designated Tournament Directors are authorized to collect modest tournament fees towards tournament prizes. Excess cash is to be remitted to the Treasurer.

30. The Treasurer is responsible for the financial instruments of the AGA.

Accounting and audit

31. The Treasurer will maintain current accounting records including all cash operations, inventory and property values, and shall inform the Board of Directors of the status at their meetings.

32. The President will be responsible for ensuring that the funds of the AGA (i.e. all monies, negotiable documents, equipment, supplies and other valuables) are being properly maintained and audited. He/she will ensure that the funds of the AGA are audited every year prior to the Annual General Meeting by an audit board comprising of two members of the AGA, appointed by the previous General Meeting, who do not participate in fund keeping or treasurer functions.

33. When the Treasurer of the AGA is about to change, the President will direct a handover of all AGA financial instruments and their verification by the appointed auditors prior to the handover.

Financial statement

34. Copies of financial statements will be distributed to the members of the AGA and will be discussed in detail at the Annual General Meeting.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

35. Amendments to the Bylaws, which represent more than routine updating, may be made at any General Meeting provided due notice is given by publication at least five weeks in advance of the meeting, and the amendment is approved by 66% of the active members present and voting.

36. Amendments may be made in an emergency by the Board of Directors and subsequently confirmed at the next Annual General Meeting.