

Radical Accountability Council Charter

Draft ratified: 28 Mar 18

Purpose

The Radical Accountability Council (RAC) is established by Northwest “Burner” community members to respond to reported violations of agreed and expected conduct within our community which have not been adequately resolved by other means. Recommendations of the Council will take account of the severity of any violation(s) and the restorative needs of the person or entity violated.

The RAC is not a substitute for the involvement of event staff or appropriate authorities when warranted. Participants should report emergent issues in accordance with event policies and applicable law.

Mission

To increase the safety and security of our community members by providing an evolving yet consistent method of accountability process and response across events;

To review and conduct inquiry into reports of misconduct and recommend appropriate action and response;

To help facilitate support for community members that have experienced and reported harm from the misconduct of others.

Principles

In accordance with the [10 Principles of Burning Man](#), we aim to enable and encourage individuals to take responsibility for and modify behaviors that cause harm to our direct and connected communities. Radical Accountability is Principle 0.

Influence and Agreements

The RAC is an independent, self-organizing and self-governing body supported by Ignition Northwest and other community organizations and event planners according to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in which participating entities agree to follow recommendations of the RAC relating to community members with reported conduct violations. If a reported individual is unwilling to participate in the accountability process, does not adequately fulfill the requests made by the RAC, or continues to demonstrate a pattern of transgressive behavior, the individual will likely be barred from events held by MOU participants.

If an organization or event planner subscribes to the RAC MOU, and upholds the outlined expectations, they are empowered to make this known to their participants in promotional materials or otherwise. This enables community members to make informed decisions about which events they attend.

The RAC will handle issues that are highly sensitive and also of great concern to our community as a whole. Wherever possible, *processes* will be made transparent, while the *personal information* of the involved parties will remain confidential.

Membership

The RAC is comprised of experienced “Burner” community members with active involvement in Pacific Northwest regional events. The Council shall consist of a minimum of 5 members. The size of the Council may expand or contract based on necessity and effectiveness.

Member Selection

Potential committee members may be solicited or recommended by any community member, or self-nominated. Eligibility will be reviewed, vetted, and approved by existing members* of the RAC and the community at large to ensure they are as trustworthy and impartial as possible. The RAC Co-Leads will make the formal invitation to become a provisional member.

Provisional members will receive specialized training and support to ensure they have the information and tools necessary to perform the invaluable community service for which they have volunteered. Once a provisional member has established meaningful participation over the course of two meetings in any three month period, the RAC will extend tenure (voting membership) unless provided cause to delay or deny.

*At inception, membership applications will be reviewed by engaged members of the Radical Accountability Working Group and proposed to the community for confirmation/denial vote along with safe methods to raise any concerns.

RAC Member Tenure

Tenure = voting membership

Once confirmed on the RAC, the tenure of a council member will continue until the member steps down or is removed. Members may chose to step down at any time. A member who has stepped down may return so long as they departed in good standing. They *may* be extended tenure without the normal provisionary period by agreement of the Council.

A member may be removed by majority vote of the RAC for any cause upon notice to the member and opportunity to respond prior to a vote. Missing multiple meetings without notifying the Co-Leads of extenuating circumstances will be cause for membership review and likely removal.

RAC Member Expectations

All RAC members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with formal (e.g. [Ignition NW Code of Conduct](#)) and informal community standards. They understand and willingly accept that they are subject to increased scrutiny as community leaders and decision-makers. Should any grievance with an RAC member be brought to the attention of another Council

member, the Ignition NW Board, or to any other partnering entity, this information will be shared with the rest of the RAC immediately so action can be taken to address the situation.

RAC members agree to hold information related to report inquiries or discussions in strict confidence.

RAC members will attend all meetings and will notify the Co-Leads if they must be absent. They will be responsive to group communications and any specific responsibilities assumed or assigned. All RAC members are expected to remain active and engaged for at least one year. Habitual lack of attendance or accountability will result in a call for loss of tenured status.

RAC members will treat each other with respect and will refrain from abusive or harassing behaviour of any kind. Should any member of the committee behave in a less than civil manner, they will be provided a warning by Co-Leads. After the first warning, persistence in offending behaviour will be grounds for dismissal.

It is the responsibility of all RAC members to keep the business and activities of the RAC aligned with this Charter and with the ethics and principles of the community at large.

Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in removal from the RAC and could be grounds for an accountability inquiry.

Leadership (Co-Leads)

The RAC is led by two internally appointed members of the RAC. Any tenured RAC member is eligible to serve as a Co-Lead and may self-nominate for the position. The Co-Leads are responsible for maintaining the Council, coordinating activity, and reporting recommendations and rationale to the Ignition NW Board and any other partnering organizations. The Co-Leads will engage new members who wish to participate while ensuring tenured members remain active and engaged.

Unless otherwise specified, the appointed Co-Leads will serve a 1 year term. A Co-Lead may relinquish this position if they feel they are no longer able to fulfill their commitment and still remain a tenured member of the RAC. Any tenured RAC member may call for removal of a Co-Lead for cause. Co-Leads may be removed by simple majority of the RAC, but will nonetheless remain a tenured member unless additional removal procedures are followed (see above). Co-Leads may not serve for more than one consecutive 1 year term, but there is no limit to how many total terms a member may serve as a Co-Lead.

Decision Making

Wherever possible, the RAC will make decisions by consensus. Consensus does not necessarily mean agreement of all members, but that all members can agree to accept the decision of the group.

A quorum of at least five members and at least three fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the total sitting RAC must be in attendance for consensus on formal consequence decisions and recommendations on an inquiry. Members who are not yet tenured may be counted for purposes of a quorum so long as the decision is made by consensus.

If consensus cannot be reached after a reasonable period of discussion, the decision may be

- a) called to a vote by at least 5 tenured members,
- b) tabled until the next meeting, or
- c) conducted via email or other electronic communications. Business conducted by email will not include any personal identifying information about parties involved in the inquiry. If any member does not respond to an electronic vote within 5 days that member will be considered an abstention.

Conflicts of Interest

No member of the RAC shall participate in any vote or consensus on a matter in which they have direct involvement or any personal conflict. Members are responsible for disclosing their own potential conflicts and recusing themselves from any formal RAC action on the matter. Depending on the nature of the conflict and the confidentiality issues presented, a conflicted member may be present and participate in discussion at the discretion of the Co-Leads. If such a conflict appears to exist and the RAC member has not made it known, the Co-Leads are expected to discuss the concern with the member and determine if recusal is necessary.

Meetings

The full RAC will meet monthly and may schedule additional meetings as necessary to achieve its objectives. Meetings are closed to the public to preserve the confidentiality and candor of the proceedings.

Notice of meeting time/location should be provided at least 1 week in advance to all active members regardless of tenure. Where adequate notice is not provided, a tenured member may object to discussion or decision of a particular case at that meeting.

Minutes will be kept and preserved on a shared file system accessible only to RAC members. At the discretion of the RAC, minutes may be made available (with personal identifying information redacted) upon request to community members or partner organizations where the purpose and use of the information is clearly stated and recipient agrees in writing to prevent use or disclosure beyond explicit authorization.

Accountability Process

Recognizing that every situation is unique, the requests and recommendations of the RAC for each inquiry will depend on many factors including the severity of the reported violation, the safety and needs of the reporter, the resources available to the RAC, the level of involvement of all parties central to the report, previous or current related reports, etc.

Overview of the RAC process

1. The RAC receives a report in which the person reporting requests RAC action.
2. The RAC reviews the report and two RAC members are assigned to lead an inquiry. These two Inquiry Leads are charged with gathering the stories and context from all relevant parties involved in the report.
3. The Inquiry Leads speak with the individual who filed the report and seek to clarify their needs.
4. The Inquiry Leads speak with the person named in the report, and with all other relevant parties.
5. All relevant details discovered in the inquiry process are brought to the RAC at large by the Inquiry Leads. After review and discussion of the report and the relevant details, the RAC attempts to reach consensus on a recommended action.
6. The recommendation is communicated to all RAC subscribers.

Inquiry Procedure

The RAC will receive violation reports through the <*established reporting process*>.

Upon initial review of a report, all RAC members will disclose any personal experience or biases regarding any individual connected to the report. In instances where personal bias may create a conflict of interest, or may undermine the community's trust in the procedure, an RAC member may recuse themselves from the inquiry, or other RAC members may request that they abstain from participation in the inquiry in accordance with the procedures described in "*Conflicts of Interest*" above.

Upon receipt of a report that warrants inquiry, the RAC will assign at least two members to begin an inquiry into the report. Consequence decisions are made based on information presented by the inquiry team, and discussion among the Council.

The RAC will develop and maintain access to trained professional entities and resources for support and escalation when necessary.

Characterization

Violations may be categorized as Severe, Serious, or Moderate. The following are provided as examples and are not definitive or intended to encompass all possibilities - any violation could be considered more or less serious depending on context.

- Severe violations include: physical assault, sexual assault, vandalism resulting in property damage, abuse of a minor, non-consensual intoxication (i.e. dosing).
- Serious violations include: verbal abuse, consent violations, aggressive trespassing, intimidating or threatening behavior, harassment, misuse of position, lighting fires or using flame effects in an un-approved area or manner at an event, over intoxication resulting in endangering self or others, possession of fireworks, or possession of any prohibited weapons.

- Moderate violations include: vandalism that does not have monetary impact, non-aggressive trespass, taking photos/video without permission, disregard of Leave No Trace policy, misappropriation of artistic or intellectual property, etc.

Recommendations

The RAC will provide recommendations to MOU subscribers in the form of a list of “Flagged” individuals which will be updated upon completion of an inquiry or change in status.

- **Red Flag** (Temporary or Permanent): severe violations or repeated misconduct - Recommended bar from events.
- **Orange Flag** (Temporary or Permanent): serious violations or repeated misconduct - organizers should bar from high-risk events (e.g. events that will have secluded spaces, excessive alcohol/drug use likely, limited security, etc.)
- **Yellow Flag** (Temporary or Permanent): event organizers should be aware of the individual and immediately address any inappropriate behavior.
- **Permanent flags** generally mean that the member has either refused, or shown an inability to complete, the accountability activities recommended by the RAC
- **Temporary flags** generally mean that the member is currently participating in an accountability process.

Communication

Reporter: Notified that an inquiry has been received and requested to provide any additional information necessary to complete the inquiry. Where the reporter is an individual directly harmed by the conduct at issue, they will be requested to provide input on appropriate consequences and resolution and notified when an inquiry is concluded and recommendation is made before RAC reports it to MOU subscribers. Third party reporters and witnesses will be notified that an inquiry has been concluded, but cannot necessarily expect additional input or information.

Reportee: Notified that an inquiry is being conducted and they have been accused of misconduct. Invited to participate in an interview and provide any information which may be useful to the Inquiry team in making its recommendation to the Council. Notified when an inquiry is concluded and recommendation is made before RAC reports it to MOU subscribers.

MOU Subscribers: Notified of flag levels and updates.

Example of RAC recommendation:

After completing an inquiry, the RAC has assigned [name] an 18-month Orange Flag for multiple moderate violations. We recommend organizers of increased risk events (secluded spaces, excessive alcohol/drug use likely, limited security) bar the member from attending.

Community at Large: If warranted due to severity, frequency, or accountability refusal, a red flag violator may be made publicized to the general community.

Amendment of Process

This process will continue to evolve as we discover the needs and limitations of the RAC and the community we serve. Any significant changes to this process will require consensus of the full RAC as well as notice and opportunity for input by Ignition NW and other subscribed organizations and event planners.

A yearly review of processes will be conducted by the RAC. The review will include sufficient opportunity for feedback by the greater NW Burner community.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORY

APPENDIX 2: MOU SUBSCRIBING ENTITIES

APPENDIX 3: RANGERS

APPENDIX 4: MEDICAL

APPENDIX 5: PRODUCERS