



## **Terms of Use of the Forum and Moderation.**

It is a condition of your use of the Forum that you agree to be bound by the Forum Rules and Moderation Policy as detailed below.

### **What is the Forum?**

The Forum is a specific area for member comment and discussion on relevant topics.

The Forum is designed to offer members a medium for the open exchange of opinions, comments, and ideas and for the Management Committee to communicate with members. Content published in this Forum is NOT sanctioned, reviewed, or endorsed by Kimberley Karavan Owners Group Inc. (KKOG).

### **The Forum Rules**

KKOG has a very clear set of Forum Rules. These rules govern your use of the KKOG Forum. These rules apply to post contents, quoting of post contents, thread titles, screen names, links you insert, and any text or image you enter either as avatars, links, signatures or posted content. See Forum Rules starting at page 2 of this document.

### **What Is Moderation?**

Moderation is simply a mechanism to ensure that someone is available to respond to Forum issues in as timely a manner as possible.

It is not solely the role of Moderators to identify Rule Breaches – they rely on member reports as much as they do their own observations. A “Report To Moderator” link is provided at the bottom of each post to enable anyone to send a message to the Moderation Team for attention.

Moderation should be seen more as a support role to keep the forum tidy, searchable and relevant, than a "policing" role.

### **Who are the Moderators?**

Moderators are individuals who are passionate Forum users who have been provided with tools to facilitate day to day management of the Forum activity. They are keen to ensure it maintains a friendly tone and remains a functional, useful venue for relevant discussion.

Moderators may work as a team or as individuals. If a matter is a clear-cut breach of a Forum Rule an individual moderator may take moderating action. Where there is any doubt about the content of any post, other Moderators may be consulted.

Forum Moderators are not required to provide fulltime monitoring or public support. They are, however, the sole decision makers in regards to the execution of moderation and they are the sole recipients of Report to Moderator feedback.

## **What to do if you are moderated**

The first thing is don't panic - having a post moderated is certainly not meant to be a personal insult! Generally, you are not put in the sin-bin nor will you be banned for having a post moderated.

The most common issue is a post that causes following posters to drift off the original topic. Most times moderators will split the topic allowing the original discussion to continue, while the series of off-topic posts will be moved to a new topic to allow that discussion to continue separately. The forum software automatically posts advice when that happens.

If the issue is the content of your post you will receive a Personal Message advising details of the issue, and you have the option to send back a Personal Message (this will reach all Forum Moderators) with a re-worded version of your post. Often, the reason you are moderated is for a section of what you've written - check the rule, re-read what you wrote and see if you can find another way to put it that doesn't breach the rules. Send it off to the moderators for review and take a breath!

We don't tolerate public debates regarding moderation complaints. However if you wish to take up your issue please send a Personal Message back to the moderators.

Never has any member ever been "banned" from using the Forum, but if it happens it will most likely be due to an ongoing provocation showing total disregard for the rules, which has given the Moderators no other choice but to totally block the member's access to the site in the interest of self-protection. Obviously extreme behaviour of this nature is not acceptable.

## **Operational Transparency**

The Forum Moderation system is designed to ensure operational transparency for both users and moderators. This means that moderation actions are publicly exposed. The purpose of visible moderation is to temporarily halt activity on a post whilst the moderators seek a resolution with the poster who has infringed a rule.

There are two slightly different instances to moderation. This first is when a reply requires moderation. Under normal circumstances the moderators try to maintain the integrity of the thread by leaving the moderated message in view, which clearly shows readers that something has been removed. The second instance occurs in extreme circumstances, when the moderator may be required to remove the message immediately.

## **Forum Rules**

To minimise misunderstandings and to maintain a polite and professional atmosphere we have a set of Forum Rules to govern and control the manner in which the Forum is used by all. Some rules address technical issues. There are also legal ramifications that can arise from Forum posts so these rules serve to protect you. Your use of the Forum assumes you have read and agree to these rules. You also accept to have your post(s) moderated for any breach of these rules.

### **1. The Real Name Rule**

KKOG's forum is a social forum where conversations are held on-line. It is difficult to address, relate to and converse with a person whose only apparent ID is an obscure log-on name. We require all posters to show their real names and preferably location under their username and avatar. This can be done by entering or editing those details in the "Custom title" field in your Forum Profile.

### **2. The Defamation and "Slagging Off" Rule.**

Although this is a closed Group (ie, not open to the public) members are warned to be mindful of the way in which they may wish to criticise persons or businesses outside this Group.

Members are not discouraged or prevented from raising on this forum a technical, mechanical or any other issue to do with their KK or ownership.

This rule is about how that discussion is conducted.

A discussion based on facts, one that seeks to explore other members experience, advice, help and how to resolve an issue is a key tenet of the Forum.

What is not acceptable is the discussion becoming based on emotive generalisation and descending into disparaging or denigrating commentary about the Kimberley Brand, the manufacturer, a State dealer or the product.

Any generic statement that "slags off" or denigrates a person or business is not acceptable.

### **3. The Off-Topic Rule**

We have a number of Boards, each covering its own Topic. Keeping all boards ON TOPIC is a great help for others searching for information at a later date.

By having an Off Topic rule, we are simply saying that each board is not an open medium for anyone to create posts that stray away from the core theme of the particular board. This means unrelated jokes, political comment, religion, football, work, personal computer problems, home life issues etc are all "off topic". It is also considered "off topic" if you provide a link to another website without giving clarification as to the relevance of the information to be found there, however linking is fine if you discuss the issue within your post.

For people who have something to share that appears to be "off topic" in any of the available boards then we provide another avenue for you – the General Discussion board.

### **4. The Licensed Tradesman Rule**

Posts that provide specific DIY advice on how to do a task that should be done by a licensed trades person will be moderated. This is in the interests of safety for members and in minimising liability for KKOG should something go wrong. Subjects most likely to be caught by this rule would be specific DIY advice on 240 volt wiring and non-standard plumbing of gas, so when discussing those subjects keep suggestions for modifications general and refer your audience to licensed trades people to carry out the work.

### **5. The Splitting Rule**

Posts that move 'off topic' i.e. diverge from the original thread of a topic may be split off into a new thread. This thread may be placed in any board that a moderator deems to be a more suitable location and may be given a new name.

### **6. The Picture Rule**

Pictures make a useful addition to any post. The forum admins do not delete older posts but keep them as a resource for future members. This includes the images attached a post.

Please use the attach image facility (click the small '+' symbol or "Attachments and other options" at the bottom of the Reply or Modify window) or your post may be moderated.

Pictures should be resized so that the long side is about 1200 pixels. Large pictures that require vertical and horizontal scrolling may be deleted by the moderators.

Posts that use 'links' to pictures posted elsewhere e.g. Picasa, Photobucket, etc so that the picture appears as part of the text, while they look nice, are not acceptable because these pictures are held on another server and may disappear from their original source location, possibly making the post irrelevant.

Pictures posted that way also cause annoyance as they take up a lot of screen 'real estate' and have to be loaded and scrolled through each time a thread is accessed.

## **6a The Video Rule**

Due to typical file sizes, the forum software does not allow video files to be attached to posts as per the Picture Rule above. Therefore it **IS** permissible to link to a video within a post. However, be aware that the owner of the video or relevant account on the hosting service or the hosting service itself may remove the video or close the account, rendering your link ineffective and possibly making your post irrelevant or out of context.

## **7. For Sale/Wanted to Buy Rule**

This site offers a board for Members to post For Sale, Wanted to Buy, Swap, etc. This facility is not for members who own a business to advertise their business wares. It is for personal use only.

## **8. The Advertising/Self-Promotion Rule**

Blatant and subtle self-promotion and advertising within the Forum is not allowed. This means, no person can create a post in the Forum to directly promote their own business, nor can they post a link to their website directly from the Forum, nor can they contact members directly via the Personal Message system to promote their business or products. This is not meant to exclude products produced by a member specifically for the improvement of the function and safety of Kimberley Karavans and Kruisers. This type of post would not breach the 'rule', provided it was specific to Karavans and Kruisers.

The forum provides Profile and Signature facilities where members may include a graphic, a business name and a link to their website if they wish. Advertising specific products and "specials" in the Signature or Profile text would be a breach of this rule.

### **8a Special Conditions of Forum Use for Business Owners**

There is one condition under which we will allow a certain level of business-consumer interaction in the Forum. If an existing "active" post on the Forum specifically mentions your business or product you sell/manufacture/distribute you may respond to the post.

## **9. The Chit Chat Rule**

Forum Users are respectfully asked to refrain from having covert conversations in the Forum that only mean something to a few in the know. Users should also refrain from having prolonged "to and fro" reply exchanges in forum threads. These types of conversations often detract from the intent of the post and result in a barrage of unwanted noise in threads. Alternatively, we provide our Members with a private messaging service in the My Messages tab. This is a quite comprehensive text-message service but for longer, private conversations you should probably swap email addresses or phone numbers!

## **10. The Foul Language Rule**

The moderators strongly oppose the use of all swear words (heavy & common) including words with letter substitutions such as abbreviations, asterisks, dashes or other symbols. Posts containing such items will potentially be subject to moderation. The moderators, however, may exercise restraint in some instances taking into account the context, generally accepted vernacular and where the potential to offend others is minimal.

## **11. The Personal Attack Rule**

Abuse, insults and personal attacks directed at other people, particularly other site users, or Forum moderators, are unacceptable. Personal attacks include calling someone an idiot (or worse), telling them to get a life or any other such personal insults. Personal attacks do not include pointing out the humorous side of things except where these comments are continually directed against one member.

This rule applies to accusations, for example that someone is trolling or that they are involved in viral marketing. Use the Report To Moderator link at the bottom of the post to send your comment/complaint to a

moderator to investigate and SAY NOTHING in public. If you disagree with someone on a point, do not resort to name calling or personal attacks, rather argue the merits of their points.

The rule also applies to any person, company, club, or organisation/group outside of this website that implicates KKOG in any way that could put us in legal trouble. See the Defamation Rule.

## **12. The Trolling Rule**

Trolling is the activity of a person who repeatedly posts in a manner such as to incite controversy, conflict, cause annoyance or offence. Trolling is unacceptable on this Forum.

## **13. The Inappropriate Rule**

Posts that are unnecessarily repeated, new posts created on the same topic as an existing active post, new topics created to say thank you, suggestions to openly debate issues that should be dealt with directly by forum Admin, the Moderators or the MC, or any such instance where the moderators decide that the post interrupts the normal flow of the Forum shall be deemed "inappropriate".

The determination of what constitutes an "inappropriate" post lies with the moderators. External and subjective factors may alter individual views and the moderators' decision is final.

Furthermore, it is a condition of your use of the site that you will not post or transmit any unlawful, obscene, vulgar, pornographic, profane or indecent information or material of any kind, including without limitation any transmissions constituting or encouraging conduct that would constitute a criminal offence, give rise to civil liability or otherwise violate any applicable law. This means you are also restricted from posting or transmitting any material of any kind which violates or infringes upon the rights of any other person, including material which is an invasion of any privacy or publicity rights or which is protected by copyright, trademark or any other proprietary right, or derivative works with respect thereto, without first obtaining permission from the owner or relevant right holder.

## **14. The Spamming Rule**

Spam abuses electronic messaging systems to indiscriminately send/transmit unsolicited messages. Spamming on this Forum is unacceptable.

## **15. The Moderation Complaints Rule**

Quite simply, if your post has been moderated, or you disagree with the fact that someone else's post was moderated, don't retaliate. Check the email you were sent, which explains why the post was removed. If you are upset over the handling of a moderated post, do not post your disagreement on the forum. Instead, respond to the moderator using My Messages with a message to username "moderators", or by email to [moderators@kkog.org.au](mailto:moderators@kkog.org.au) and state your case politely. If you retaliate with threats, you will simply be ignored or banned for a period of time.

## **16. The Continual Offender Rule**

Members who continually ignore or break these rules, may (at the discretion of the moderators) have their access to the forum suspended. This is called 'banning'.

This suspension may mean:

- Access to the Forum Denied, or
- Ability to Post Denied

## **Other Reasons for Post Removal**

- The Forum Moderators (Modsquad) also remove posts for administration reasons that are not related to breaches of the above Forum Rules. These are as follows:
- Post Removed by Request
- Duplicate Post Removed
- Modsquad have removed a post due to an identified duplicate. This often occurs unwittingly by the original poster, and is usually due to the poster clicking Submit post more than once when loading the post to the Forum.