



**This is official notice of actions taken by the United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. Hearing Committee on April 30, 2015.**

**RANDALL S. CATES**, of Edmond, OK, violated Chapter 7, GR702.1n; GR702.1d and the Athlete Protection Policy of the Federation's Safe Sport Policy Handbook, in that as a result of witness testimony, a recorded conversation, text message transcripts from 2012, 2013, and 2014, and other relevant materials, as an active Federation member and Licensed Official he groomed a minor student which ultimately resulted in a sexual relationship between the two. In addition, while in a position of power and trust over the minor student, he abused the imbalance of power and engaged in voluminous sexualized text messages with the minor in violation of the Athlete Protection Policy. Finally, Mr. Cates refused to cooperate with the investigation of this matter, which the Federation notified him about in October, 2014.

The Federation conducted a two day hearing at which Mr. Cates chose not to testify but was represented by legal counsel. As a result of the evidence presented at the hearing and for these violations of the rules and the Athlete Protection Policy in the Safe Sport Policy Handbook, the Hearing Committee members present unanimously ruled that effective immediately, **RANDALL S. CATES** be permanently expelled from membership with the Federation and be denied all the privileges of membership including the ability to hold or exercise office in the Federation, attend or participate in Federation meetings, hold license(s) as a USEF or FEI official, or compete in international competitions pursuant to Chapter 7, GR703.1f. Mr. Cates is also permanently suspended from competing or taking any part whatsoever in Licensed Competitions as an exhibitor, participant or spectator pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 7, GR703.1b, and any horse or horses, completely or in part owned, leased, or of any partnership, corporation or stable of his, or shown in his name or for his reputation, whether such interest was held at the time of the alleged violation or acquired thereafter, is also permanently suspended pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 7, GR703.1c.

The Hearing Committee has not previously imposed a lifetime ban on a member. But given the serious nature of the violation, Mr. Cates's stature at the time as a trainer of many minor athletes, his systematic and insidious grooming of the minor victim over a multi-year period for his sexual benefit, and his consummation of sexual relations with the victim while she was a minor, the Hearing Committee determined that a lifetime ban is appropriate here for Mr. Cates's violations of the Athlete Protection Policy in the Federation's Safe Sport Policy.