

CHOREOGRAPHY - POLITICAL CORRECTNESS POINTS

This list has been put together as a result of a research paper prepared by Shirley Pettitt ASCA (Vic); it is only some of the issues that could be viewed in a Calisthenic competition that may cause concern on a Political Correctness theme. According to time and events, this list will be added to.

- Respect of our National Anthem: The Australian National Anthem is a national symbol of Australia and should be used with respect and dignity. To modify our National Anthem for commercial reasons, permission should be sought. The Commonwealth allows non-commercial use by the public without case-by-case permissions. As adjudicators we must “assume” that this is the case. However, at all times, the words (and actions presented) should not be disrespectful.
- Use of our National Flag: Our National Flag should not be used to drape over a dais or prop and should NEVER touch the ground. Projection by DLP of the flag should not be overlaid by other artwork/pictures.

Dignity of the Flag:

- *The Australian National Flag should be displayed only in a manner befitting the national emblem. It should not be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign. The Flag normally takes precedence over all other national flags when flown in Australia. It should always be flown aloft and free and should not be allowed to fall or lie upon the ground.*
The Australian National Flag should not be used as a covering of a statue, monument or plaque; as a table or seat cover, or as a masking for boxes, barriers or intervening space between floor and ground level on a dais or platform.

Defacement:

- *A flag is said to be 'defaced' when a 'badge of office' or any other object is superimposed upon an authorised flag. Convention is not to deface the Australian National Flag.*
- Last Post: Protocol stipulates that it is used at commemorative services and funerals. Any other use would be considered disrespectful (quoted from RSL). However, the RSL is not able to say that you can't use it as it does not have copyright. In a sign of respect to all people who have either served in the Australian Armed Forces and their families, dancing to the Last Post, while not forbidden, must be done with respect.
- Mental Health: Portrayal of any issues relating to people suffering from mental illness should be discouraged at all times.
- International and National Disasters – natural or otherwise. Events that cause personal tragedy and trauma (such as public shootings, terrorism, fire etc.) which members of the audience, other team members, theatre staff and officials could find offensive or upsetting should be refrained from being depicted on stage for a reasonable length of time, e.g. 10 years.
- In consideration of recent tragedies, the use and/or display of guns could be deemed socially unacceptable. The use of guns is also mentioned in some individual Theatre Rules - pointing and “shooting” at, whether imaginary or implied at others on the stage or in the audience should not be encouraged.
- Respecting other cultures. As adjudicators, we should not comment on the differences in the colour of stockings, tan etc. as it may be due to the skin tones of the competitor. This also needs to be considered carefully by Coaches as the covering of skin in some cultures is extremely important and may affect the uniformity of costumes.

- Anything that is illegal or socially unaccepted should not be glamourised or humoured on stage in any way. This includes such things as drugs, prostitution, murder or killing others. It would also include the indulgence in alcohol and depicting “large/fat” people as funny.
- Excessive use of skin tone material in costumes giving the effect of nudity should be discouraged. It is important to portray our competitors in a very respectful manner, including visually.
- The recognition is given that some issues become “topical” from time to time and are deemed to be acceptable on our Calisthenic Stage. e.g. blackening of faces on the Red Faces show several years ago has always been part of our Black & White Minstrel items. The banning of Enid Blyton’s characters in several of her children’s books would greatly deplete our choices of Tinies & Sub-Junior Action Songs. Common sense should prevail.
- Further, portrayal of crudeness or vulgarity in items may be offensive or degrading to the competitors and/or the audience, and is not necessary in Calisthenic items.
- As there is no specific rule/penalty for the Political Correctness issues, at the Adjudicator’s discretion, the choreography mark may be reduced if a choice/theme/movement is inappropriate or offensive. The underlying rule should be: ***If in doubt – leave it out!***