

# PAGB GUIDANCE for using AI ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**Introduction** This guidance amplifies the General Conditions for PAGB Events. It applies directly to all images submitted to PAGB events. This guidance may be adopted by others including Federations and Clubs or may be modified for their own use in any way at their discretion.

**Principles** How an individual creates an image for their own use, and what source material is coopted for image creation, is entirely at the individual's discretion. But, when an image is submitted alongside the images of others into a competition or exhibition, then each participant needs to be assured that the other participants are using only their own original work. The PAGB sets out to give that assurance within its General Conditions (box).

**Images must be entirely the work of the Photographer. In composite images, all component images must meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any other source including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks and clipart are not permitted.**

There is a distinction between the image content, which is controlled by the General Conditions, and image processing and presentation which is at the photographer's discretion. Processing can utilise techniques such as selection, noise reduction, calculated textures, montage, HDR, focus stacking and many others. Presentation may include keylines, print paper types, print mounting and others.

Photographers who enter PAGB events with images which do not meet the General Conditions are liable to sanctions under the PAGB Breach of Rules Procedure. The Breach of Rules Procedure may also apply to other events such as those with PAGB Patronage.

**Image Automation** There are now many image processing methods available in camera, or in processing software or in plug-ins for such software, which have been refined or trained by their developers using the characteristics of many images. The list of methods is extremely long with

examples such as face-detection focussing, raw conversion, monochrome conversion, noise reduction, focus stacking, HDR, panorama stitching and many more.

To the extent that these processes are applied only to the photographer's original image, or to all the photographer's original images in a composite, then they comply with the PAGB General Conditions.

**Image Generation** Banks of individual textures and skies have been available for some time and there are software systems which will overlay an imported texture or substitute a sky.

Increasingly there are image generator systems which draw on, or have been developed or trained on, content from large image banks to create new images, via a user prompt or specification.

Any importation, whether manual or automated, of all or part of a single image or of a generated image which includes or has been developed from the work of others, means that the resulting image content is not entirely the work of the photographer. The resulting image then does not comply with the PAGB General Conditions and is not permitted where those conditions apply.

**Compliance** It is appreciated that the individual photographer may not be fully aware of exactly how individual processing functions act, whether in-camera or in post-processing, However, the PAGB would expect photographers to be aware of when a significant addition has been made to an image which was not part of an original work by the photographer.

**This document was agreed in October 2023 and you should refer to the PAGB website for updates at –**

[http://www.thepagb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/guidance\\_ai.pdf](http://www.thepagb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/guidance_ai.pdf)

The discussion which informed this guidance was published in **e-news 338extra** in August 2023 and you can read it here -

<https://www.pagbnews.co.uk/sites/default/files/newsletters/en338%20extra%20AI%2012%20August%202023>.

## \*only you can know\*

As **e-news** editor, I have received numerous communications, verbally and by e-mail, and I have followed many discussions, sometimes confusing, on social media about how much effort a photographer should put into an image to make it their own.

Many have claimed that they know of instances involving Remote Shooting, Nature Hides, Studio Workshops and Organised Photographic Events where the photographer has had no input at all, except to press the shutter. Many have never been involved in such activities but assume that there must have been lots of help, perhaps because they have not previously seen the same quality of work from that person.

There are also frequently expressed concerns about processing tools and techniques. exacerbated now by the perceived effect of Artificial Intelligence. How much of the final image is down to the work of others writing clever algorithms and how much did the photographer contribute?

The PAGB has no rules to define how much help you can have and, indeed, we accept entries which have been printed by someone else, even into the **Masters of Print**. We take the view that the entrant has ultimate responsibility for the image.

Amateur Photography, as practiced through Camera Clubs, is a social activity and Members are encouraged to learn from each other and to help each other improve their Art and their Craft. Most Club Members have benefitted from assistance in their Club and many, many Members have

been willing to help - from advising on camera settings in the field or in the studio, helping with composition and exposure, helping to process and print images to constructively criticising the final

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product and showing how it could be improved. Such activity is the very essence of most good Clubs!

Most organised events and photoshoot require the full participation of the photographer and, as a well-known organiser once said to me, "I give you the ingredients, but you have to make the cake". If you weren't there, please don't be quick to judge.

It may well be true that some photographers have very little input to the images they have taken and may not do much to process them later. If you haven't made the INPUT, can you claim the OUTPUT? When it comes to post processing the PAGB already requires the entrant to have shot every element of an image and this, whilst more complicated, will not change with AI or other processing tools. In the end, whilst organisers may find it difficult to detect, you will know if you have gone too far.

ONLY YOU CAN KNOW. Do you believe in your heart that you have contributed enough to feel that you own this image? If you don't feel that way, and you are successful in competitions with it, then what have you won?

**Be honest  
with yourself**

You may have won a medal but where is the satisfaction if most of the credit is due to someone else? Your name may be on the medal, but YOU know that it should be someone else being recognised. Be honest with yourself and you will gain much greater satisfaction from your photographic successes. *Rod Wheelans. e-news Editor*