

IPACS Benchmark Guidelines

Updated 1 February 2022

IPACS Benchmark B9 – The governing body of the organisation has committed to a policy of zero tolerance for unethical behaviour

Definitions

- Unethical behaviour – behaviour that violates accepted moral norms, which may be defined or described in the organisation's Code of Ethics (see Recommendation B1) and/or Anti-Corruption Code of conduct or policy (Recommendation B10)
- Policy of zero tolerance – a commitment that no conduct which falls below accepted standards will be tolerated, implying that action will always be taken

Introduction to this Benchmark and its significance

- Making a commitment to zero tolerance for unethical behaviour demonstrates to stakeholders, both internally and externally, that the organisation is taking a strong stand and serious about the importance of values and their consistent application at all levels
- Having the commitment in place helps people involved with the organisation to understand the standard of behaviour expected from them and that they should expect from others

Commentary on the action to be taken

- The governing body develops and formally adopts a policy of zero tolerance for unethical behaviour
- The organisation's policy should be published alongside other relevant regulations (refer to IPACS Recommendation A1)
- The policy may be included within the organisation's Code of Ethics/Conduct or equivalent
- Members of the governing body should set the tone from the top in their ethical behaviour
- See also B2 (anti-doping rules), B3 (competition manipulation rules) and B7 (safeguarding)

Investment requirement – the costs of putting in place appropriate rules are low; beyond that, the level of investment should be proportionate to the specific nature of the organisation and the sport(s)

Guidance according to stage of organisation

Early stage

- The organisation's Code of Ethics includes references to expected behaviour that aligns with moral norms, clearly endorsed by the governing body and applicable at all levels (see also Recommendation B1 – Code of Ethics and C8 – Conflicts of Interest)
- The governing body has formally adopted a policy of zero tolerance for unethical behaviour
- Members of the governing body and senior management set an example in their ethical behaviour

Developing

- The organisation has appropriate rules and procedures to take action in the event of an incident of alleged unethical behaviour (such as a Code of Ethics – see Recommendation B1)
- The governing body allocates appropriate resources to the implementation of anti-corruption measures, proportionate to the organisation's risk profile

Advanced

- The organisation can demonstrate that effective action has been taken following allegations of unethical behaviour (see Recommendation B6 – publication of disciplinary decisions). The governing body is personally responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring the organisation's anti-corruption policy; any staff member with delegated authority is able to report directly to the governing body
- The governing body or senior management communicates about its anti-corruption policy, both internally and externally, and highlights its own unwavering commitment to ethics and integrity

Good practice examples

International Federations

- FIA: [Code of Ethics](#) sets a zero tolerance policy for unethical behaviour (article 1.3)
- FIFA: [Code of Ethics 2020 Edition](#)
 - Preamble: “FIFA is constantly striving to protect the image of football, and especially that of FIFA, from jeopardy or harm as a result of illegal, immoral or unethical methods and practices. In this connection, the following Code reflects the principles of the FIFA Code of Conduct, which defines the most important core values for behaviour and conduct within FIFA as well as with external parties”
 - Scope of applicability: “This Code shall apply to any conduct, other than those specifically provided by other regulations and connected to the field of play that damages the integrity and reputation of football and in particular to illegal, immoral and unethical behaviour of the persons covered under art. 2 of this Code”[Compliance Pocket Guide – Anti-Bribery and Corruption](#): reference to FIFA’s zero tolerance policy for corruption and bribery
- ICC: [Code of Ethics](#) – Article 1.1 Introduction, Article 2 Obligations

Overall standard among International Federations:

- Not included directly in the ASOIF study

Continental Bodies

- None seen

National Olympic Committees

- None seen

National Federation

- French Athletics Federation (FFA): [Code of Ethics](#) with clauses on anti-corruption

Selected references

- [SIGGS](#): Principle 1, Indicators 1, 2 and 5
- [SIGGS](#): See Roadmap Principle 1 Headline 1, Personal Integrity
- Geeraert, A. (2018). [Sports Governance Observer 2018](#). An assessment of good governance in five international sports federations
 - Principle 26: The board establishes procedures regarding the premature resignation of board members
 - Principle 30: The organisation has an internal financial or audit committee
 - Principle 31: The organisation regularly conducts a corruption risks assessment
 - Principle 32: The organisation implements a financial control system
 - Principle 37: The organisation has or recognises a code of conduct applicable to the members of the board, management, and personnel
 - Principle 38: The organisation establishes clear conflict of interest procedures that apply to the members of the board
 - Principle 39: The organisation takes steps to ensure that applicable rules of conduct are adequately checked and that transgressors face consequences
 - Principle 40: The organisation establishes procedures for the processing of complaints about violations of applicable rules of conduct
 - Principle 41: The organisation establishes procedures that ensure whistle-blower protection
- Agence Française Anticorruption – [Guidelines](#)