

IPACS Benchmark Guidelines

Updated 1 February 2022

IPACS Benchmark B7 – The organisation has programmes in place regarding safeguarding all persons in, or dealing with the organisation, from harassment and abuse

Definitions

- Safeguarding – action to prevent persons involved in the activities of the organisation suffering from all forms of harm, harassment, bullying, abuse and neglect

Introduction to this Benchmark and its significance

- People involved in sports organisations have a right to be safe and to feel safe
- The organisation has a duty of care towards people involved in its activities
- Abuse impedes the protection and promotion of human rights
- It is important that stakeholders both inside and outside the organisation have confidence that there is appropriate protection for people involved, whether as participants, volunteers, staff, coaches, referees, parents or in other roles. It should be possible for victims to seek remedy
- High-profile and tragic cases in sport across the world in recent years have demonstrated that sports organisations face safeguarding risks, as do organisations of many other types
- There has been an increase in the number of cases of harassment and abuse being reported in sport as in other sectors, perhaps partly linked to changes in societal attitudes and increased availability of reporting mechanisms

Commentary on the action to be taken

- The organisation should have rules and procedures in place to protect against the risk of harassment and abuse
- Rules and procedures should be aligned to relevant national legislation/guidelines and international standards, such as the [IOC Safeguarding Toolkit](#)
- The organisation should co-operate with public authorities, when necessary
- The organisation should allow for victims to seek remedy
- The organisation's rules should be published alongside other relevant regulations (refer to IPACS Recommendation A1)

Investment requirement – limited resources are required to put appropriate rules in place, using guidance available from multiple sources; implementing procedures will require some investment

Guidance according to stage of organisation

Early stage

- The organisation formally adopts appropriate standards, such as national guidelines or the IOC Toolkit for IFs and NOCs
- The organisation respects the rights of the victim
- The organisation co-operates with public authorities, where necessary

Developing

- The organisation has its own safeguarding policy aligned to appropriate standards
- The organisation has a designated and suitably qualified individual or group who leads on safeguarding issues
- The investigation process is handled independently, meaning by an individual or group who is free from any close connection to the organisation and from holding any interest that could interfere with their duties
- The organisation can demonstrate that action has been taken on safeguarding matters
- The organisation communicates publicly about safeguarding issues, while respecting the rights of victims, including their confidentiality

- The organisation allows for victims to seek remedy

Advanced

- The organisation provides mandatory education on safeguarding for people involved with its activities
- The organisation can demonstrate that action has been taken in an effective and timely manner
- The organisation, led by the governing body, updates the safeguarding policy based on lessons learned from experience, consulting with victims where applicable
- The organisation offers appropriate support for any individual who suffers harassment or abuse while involved in the organisation or dealing with it
- The governing body takes account of safeguarding in its decision-making

Good practice examples

International Federations (from June 2020)

- FIE: There is a detailed safeguarding policy in place - see [chapter 13 of statutes](#) and [chapter 14 of administrative rules](#)
- FEI: There is a Safeguarding Policy against Harassment and Abuse - see appendix I of the [FEI General Regulations Reporting form](#) published
Also see [article 2.3 of Statutes](#)
An external supplier conducts safeguarding training for FEI staff, the legal department and FEI Tribunal
- FISA: There is a [safeguarding policy](#) and detailed information on the website
There is an [incident reporting form](#) and a list of event safeguarding officers at events

Overall standard among International Federations:

- 26 out of 31 ASOIF members had a safeguarding policy in place or linked to the IOC Guidelines, with the remaining 5 IFs in the process of developing a policy

Continental Bodies

- None seen

National Olympic Committees

- Brazilian Olympic Committee: [Preventive course and education activity](#)
- Swiss Olympic: [Guidance document on reducing risks of abuse](#)
- South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC): [Safeguarding Policy](#)

National Federation

- Centre for Ethics in Sport, Flanders, Belgium: [Guidance on risk of abuse](#)

Selected references

- [ASOIF GTF Questionnaire 2019-20](#), Indicator 3.9
- [SIGGS](#): Principle 1, Indicator 4: How does your organisation deal with integrity issues related to harassment?
- [SIGGS](#): See Roadmap Principle 1 Headline 1.1: Personal Integrity (refer to section on Safeguarding Policy)
- [UNODC Global Report on Corruption in Sport, Chapter 7: Corruption and Abuse in Sport](#)
- Geeraert, A. (2018). [Sports Governance Observer 2018](#). An assessment of good governance in five international sports federations. Principle 46: The organisation implements a policy on combating sexual harassment in sport.
- IOC's "Consolidated Minimum requirements for Implementation of the Basic Principles of Good Governance for NOCs":
 - *Theme 6.2 "Protection of athletes",*
 - *"It is the responsibility of each NOC to establish and govern safeguarding policies and to implement procedures and mechanisms to ensure a safe and supportive*

environment for athletes to practise their sport in the best conditions. It is recommended that such a safeguarding policy address the following:

- *Specification of what constitutes harassment and abuse in sport*
- *Reporting procedure in response to an alleged incident*
- *Investigation procedure in response to an alleged incident*
- *Mechanisms for decision-making*
- Council of Europe [“Start to Talk” project](#)
- NSPCC – [Child Protection in Sport Unit \(UK\)](#)
- World Players Association: [Declaration on Safeguarding the Rights of Child Athletes](#)

ASOIF indicator 3.9 – scoring definitions used in the 2019-20 assessment

- 0 – No
- 1 – Some evidence of activity
- 2 – Policies in place which includes reference to “IOC Guidelines for IFs and NOCs related to creating and implementing a policy to safeguard athletes from harassment and abuse in sport”
- 3 – Policies in place consistent with IOC Guidelines, appropriate resources dedicated (including providing resources for members), plus evidence of implementation
- 4 – State of the art policies and procedures in place, evidence of implementation, outcomes published