

## MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY INFORMATION

Member protection is a term used by the Australian sports industry to describe the practices and procedures that protect an organisation's members – both individual members such as players, coaches and officials, and the member organisations such as clubs, state associations, other affiliated associations and the national body. Member protection involves:

- protecting members from harassment, abuse, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate behaviour
- adopting appropriate measures to ensure the right people are involved in an organisation, particularly in relation to those involved with juniors
- providing education
- promoting and modelling positive behaviour

Sporting organisations have legal obligations in relation to harassment, discrimination and child protection. They also have moral obligations in relation to establishing standards of appropriate behaviour and in providing safe, respectful and appropriate sporting environments.

The issue of safe, respectful sporting environments is so important that the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) introduced a mandatory requirement for funding for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 financial years to address these issues. This funding criteria requires national sporting organisations to develop and implement policies and procedures to promote positive and respectful behaviours and to meet obligations relating to harassment, discrimination and child protection.

The ASC's Member Protection Policy framework template may be adapted by organisations as a first step towards meeting these obligations. The template is a generic document for guidance only. It is designed to assist organisations to write their own member protection policy. It includes:

- policy position statements on child protection, harassment and sexual relationships
- organisational and individual responsibilities
- code of conduct

The template also includes several attachments that provide guidelines on state/territory child protection legislative requirements, processes such as complaint handling, tribunals and investigations and reporting documents.

The template, originally developed in 2001, was substantially revised in October 2004. The template will be continually reviewed and revised so that it remains a relevant and practical tool.

On 1 June 2005 the ASC Member Protection Policy Template was updated to reflect changes in child protection legislation in Queensland and Western Australia. Minor changes have been made to the front cover, contents and flow diagram of the Member Protection Policy Template and to Attachment B to reflect new child protection requirements

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