



ATHLETE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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<i>One</i>	<i>Created - 1 October, 2019</i>	<i>30 October, 2019</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Original version</i>

1. Introduction and Purpose

- a. The PNG Olympic Committee (PNGOC) is the recognised National Olympic Committee (NOC), Commonwealth Games Association (CGA) and Pacific Games Association (PGA) for Papua New Guinea; as such we are responsible for sending Team PNG to the Olympic Games, Olympic Youth Games, Commonwealth Games, Commonwealth Youth Games, Pacific Games and Pacific Mini-Games (Games). We are a non-government not-for-profit organisation with membership from the National Sports Federations (NFs) of Papua New Guinea.
- b. The Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee ('PNGOC') is committed to delivering services to Members, Affiliates, partners and all stakeholders in a fair, accountable and impartial manner. It is committed to sustaining an ethical work place free of conflicts of interest.
- c. The purpose of this Athlete Safeguarding Policy ('Policy') is to assist the organisation and those engaged by and associated with it to identify, disclose, manage and monitor issues related to the safeguarding of athletes and officials from harassment and abuse.
- d. The policy is intended to help safeguard Athletes and other Participants from harassment and abuse in sport during all games and competitions locally and internationally.
- e. PNGOC has a "**no tolerance**" policy and will investigate vigorously any allegations of harassment, abuse and bullying regardless of whether the matter has been raised formally or informally.
- f. PNGOC promotes a safe and healthy environment in which all athletes are treated fairly and with respect. Athletes and those involved in sport must not encounter harassment, intimidation or discrimination on the basis of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, offending background or any other personal characteristic.
- g. Everyone involved in organised sport shares the responsibility to adhere to the principles of safe sport, through best practice and the implementation and adherence of safeguarding policies. Everyone carries a personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that their conduct is in accordance with the principles set out in this policy. In addition, each person has a responsibility to report any instance of harassment, abuse or bullying which they witness or which comes to their attention. Administrators, team managers and coaches have a responsibility to act as role models to pro-actively address instances of harassment, abuse and bullying on and off the field.
- h. This Policy will assist to:
 - i. Safeguard all athletes including para-athletes and minors;
 - ii. Protect the integrity of sport and sports organisations;
 - iii. Protect those working within sport; and
 - iv. Promote the values of safe sport.

2. Scope

- a. This Policy applies to all Directors, employees, contractors, members of Committees and Commissions and volunteers of the PNGOC ('Officers or Agents'), Team PNG members including athletes, officials and coaches and member and affiliate National Federations of PNGOC.

3. Guidelines and Definitions

a. **Unacceptable Conduct**

To help safeguard Athletes and other participants, Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse are considered unacceptable behaviour. All Persons found to have engaged in such conduct might be counselled, warned and/ or disciplined according to consequences set out in the team agreement and/or other relevant PNGOC policies, factoring in the severity and history of incidents.

b. Article 1.4 of the IOC Code of Ethics states:

“Respect for international conventions on protecting human rights insofar as they apply to the Olympic Games’ activities and which ensure in particular (a) Respect for human dignity and; (b) Rejection of discrimination of any kind on whatever grounds, be it race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Rejection of all forms of harassment and abuse be it physical, professional or sexual, and any physical or mental injuries.”

c. The following defines what constitutes Discrimination, Harassment and Abuse:

i. **Discrimination** is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by the law, such as sex, age, race or disability.

1. Discrimination can occur:

a. **Directly**: when a person or group is treated less favourably than another person or group in a similar situation because of a personal characteristic (see list below).

b. **Indirectly**: when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice is imposed that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging people with a personal characteristic (see list below).

c. Personal characteristics include:

- i. a disability, disease or injury, including work-related injury
- ii. parental status or status as a carer, for example, because they are responsible for caring for children or other family members
- iii. race, colour, descent, national origin, or ethnic background
- iv. age, whether young or old, or because of age in general
- v. sex
- vi. religion
- vii. pregnancy and breastfeeding
- viii. sexual orientation, intersex status or gender identity, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer and heterosexual
- ix. marital status, whether married, divorced, unmarried or in a de facto relationship or same sex relationship
- x. political opinion
- xi. social origin
- xii. medical record
- xiii. an association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these characteristics, such as being the parent of a child with a disability.

d. Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse could also be based on physical attributes, socioeconomic status and athletic ability.

ii. **Harassment** as stated in Article 1.4 of the IOC Code of Ethics or **Harassment and Abuse** includes psychological abuse, sexual harassment and neglect. These forms of harassment and abuse may occur in combination or in isolation. Harassment can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online. Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

1. Harassment and abuse may result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.
- iii. **Psychological Abuse** means any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or other treatment, which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity and self-worth.
- iv. **Physical abuse** means any deliberate and unwelcome act- such as for example punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning – that causes physical trauma or injury. Such act can also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (e.g., age-, or physique – inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or forced doping practices.
- v. **Sexual Harassment** means any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is unwelcome, or where consent is coerced, manipulated or cannot be given. Sexual Harassment can take the form of sexual abuse.
- vi. **Neglect** within the meaning of these definitions means that failure of a coach or another person with a duty of care towards the athlete to provide a minimum level of care to the athlete, which is causing harm, allowing harm to be caused, or creating an imminent danger of harm.
- d. Further details and examples of what can constitute harassment and abuse can be found in the IOC Consensus Statement: Harassment and Abuse in Sport (2016).

4. Reporting and Responding

- a. All persons within the scope of the Policy are required to report any instance (witnessed, suspected or alleged) of harassment or abuse.
- b. The PNGOC Board will establish an Ad-Hoc Committee to deal with reports. The Ad-Hoc Committee shall include the legal advisor as a compulsory member, and/or in his or her absence, any member of the board with a legal background.
- c. To the best of its ability and within its capacity, the PNGOC will follow a reporting and responding procedure similar to the process outlined in Annex 1 of this Policy.
- d. A variety of reporting mechanisms may be used including a report in writing, a report via email, a report via phone call and a report in person.
- e. In taking a report of concern, or of an incident our staff and volunteers must not assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations or concerns to the nominated person or persons within our organisation as described in this guideline (the validity of an allegation will then be assessed in the manner described in this guideline); and to disregard factors such as the authority or position of the persons involved and any pre-existing views about the good character, or otherwise, of any person involved or under investigation.
- f. In situations where an individual is making an allegation, our staff and volunteers are required to:
 - i. Listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute;
 - ii. Clarify the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions;
 - iii. Record what was said (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation);
 - iv. Date and sign the record;
 - v. Explain to the individual (if present) that other people may need to be told, to stop what is happening;

- vi. Provide reassurance that our organisation will take immediate action in response to the allegation; and
- vii. Report the matter as per organisational policy requirements (as stated earlier).

5. Disciplinary Procedure

- a. A case is brought to the Board with recommendations on corrective action to undertake and sanctions to impose. Measures and sanctions must respect the principle of proportionality and be consistent with applicable laws. The following factors should be taken into consideration when determining proportionality: the nature and severity of the violations, the number of violations any other relevant circumstances (e.g. when the abused or harassed person is a minor).
- b. *Fair Process and Natural Justice*
 - i. PNGOC provides sufficient opportunity to the other party to respond and to be heard. Such a process highlights the importance of providing the responding party with fair process. In practical terms, this means that if an allegation is made against someone, the following procedure is followed:
 - 1. Notice is provided to the individual/ individuals concerned; and
 - 2. The right and or opportunity to be heard should be offered, before any measure or sanction is applied.
 - 3. A matter may be referred to Police should the case be deemed to have a criminal nature.

6. Confidentiality

- a. Reports of harassment and abuse often contain extremely sensitive information. Often, athletes are reluctant to officially make reports, and therefore it is very important that reports are followed up in a timely and appropriate manner.
- b. All reports of harassment, abuse and bullying will be treated with strict confidentiality. It is essential that the athletes' voices and opinions are taken into account.
- c. The confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator) should be maintained, except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the individual person and/or investigation of the allegation.

7. Corrective Action and Lessons Learned

- a. The other party will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review or investigation verifying or refuting the allegations made against that person.
- b. If the allegations are deemed true, the Board will decide and deliver its decision right there, and if the matter is referred to Police then the Board will leave it to the justice system.
- c. If the allegations are deemed false, both parties to the matter will be called for a meeting conducted by the one of the Disciplinary Committee members and complete/close the matter.
- d. A report of the matter will be kept by the PNGOC and will be recorded in the Athlete Complaint Register. There is provision for mediations and counseling available to all athletes should the matter excel to affecting the athletes mental state.

8. Training and Education

- a. It is recommended that member National Federations, employees and board members

complete safeguarding awareness and education training program at least every two years.

- b. To the extent possible, the required education and training will be based on materials and information available from the PNGOC.

9. Review and amendment

- a. The Executive Board of the PNGOC may, in its absolute discretion, review and amend this Policy document at any time.
- b. A copy of this Policy will be available to an interested party upon written request to Secretary General of the PNGOC.

Adopted by the Executive Board of the PNGOC on: October 30, 2019

Amended

Annex 1: Flowchart demonstrating harassment and abuse report response (*IOC Toolkit for safeguarding athletes from harassment and abuse in sport*)



