



MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

December 2013

As Adopted by December AFF Mail Ballot

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PREFACE

This policy has been developed to provide guidelines for the protection of the health, safety and well-being of all Australian Fencing Federation (AFF) members and those who participate in the activities of Australian Fencing Federation, Member Associations and Affiliated Clubs.

The AFF is committed to providing an environment safe for children that is free from harassment and abuse for everyone, and promotes respectful and positive behaviour and values. This policy will provide a code of conduct forming the basis of appropriate and ethical conduct which everyone must abide by. This policy is an essential part of the AFF's proactive and preventative approach to tackling inappropriate behaviour.

As President of the AFF I will work to ensure that everyone in the Australian Fencing community is committed to complying with the policy.

Andrew Ius
AFF President
October 2013

PART A: NATIONAL MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

The purposes of the Australian Fencing Federation (AFF) are to:

1. promote, encourage and control Fencing as a sport in Australia;
2. ensure the proper and adequate representation of and participation by Australian fencers at Olympic and Commonwealth Sports, World, Commonwealth and Oceania Championships and other international Fencing events subject to the rules and statutes of the Federation Internationale d'Esgrime;
3. ensure the proper and adequate representation of the Federation at such meetings where the Federation deems it necessary;
4. govern the conduct and control of Australian Fencing Championships and other tournaments under control of the Federation;
5. affiliate and or maintain affiliation with Federation Internationale d'Esgrime, Australian Olympic Committee and other appropriate sporting bodies and to represent the interests of Australian Fencing thereon;
6. maintain and improve the standard of Fencing in Australia;
7. determine questions relating to Fencing submitted to it by State Associations with regard to international and/or interstate competition;
8. make such rules and by-laws as the Federation may consider necessary to further any one or more of the above objects.

2. Purpose of this policy

This AFF Member Protection Policy (“policy”) aims to assist the AFF to uphold its core values and create a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone associated with our sport. It sets out our commitment to ensure that every person involved in our sport is treated with respect and dignity and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. It also ensures that everyone involved in our sport is aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities, as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them.

The policy attachments describe the practical steps we will take to eliminate discrimination, harassment, child abuse and other forms of inappropriate behaviour from our sport. As part of this commitment, the AFF will take disciplinary action against any person or organisation bound by this policy if they breach it.

This policy has been endorsed by the AFF through the November 2013 Workshop and subsequent mail ballot. The policy starts on 13 January 2014 and will operate until replaced.

The current policy and its attachments can be obtained from our website at: www.ausfencing.org

This policy is supported by Member Protection Policies that have been adopted and implemented by our member associations and affiliated clubs.

3 Who is bound by this policy

This policy applies to the following people operating at or representing the national level, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary:

- 3.1 Persons appointed or elected to national boards, committees and sub-committees;
- 3.2 Employees and/or contractors of AFF;
- 3.3 Members of the AFF Executive;
- 3.4 Support personnel appointed or elected to national teams and squads (e.g. managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers);

- 3.5 National coaches and assistant coaches;
- 3.6 National representative athletes;
- 3.7 National referees, umpires and other officials involved in the regulation of the sport;
- 3.8 Members, including life members of the AFF;
- 3.9 Athletes, coaches, officials and other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions, held or sanctioned the AFF;
- 3.10 Any other person including spectators, parents/guardians and sponsors, who or which agrees in writing (whether on a ticket, entry form or otherwise) to be bound by this policy].

This policy will continue to apply to a person even after he or she has stopped their association or employment with the AFF if disciplinary action against that person has begun.

This policy also applies to the following associations:

- 3.12 Member associations;
- 3.13 Affiliated clubs and associated organisations.

4. Organisational responsibilities

The AFF and its member bodies must:

- 4.1 adopt, implement and comply with this policy
- 4.2 ensure that the Constitution, By-laws or other rules and policies include the necessary clauses for this policy to be enforceable
- 4.3 publish, distribute and promote this policy and the consequences of any breaches
- 4.4 promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times
- 4.5 deal with any breaches or complaints made under this policy in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner
- 4.6 apply this policy consistently
- 4.7 recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy
- 4.8 ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to all people and organisations to whom this policy applies
- 4.9 use appropriately trained people to receive and manage complaints and allegations of inappropriate behavior [e.g. Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs)]
- 4.10 monitor and review this policy at least annually.

5. Individual responsibilities

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:

- 5.1 making themselves aware of the policy and complying with the codes of behaviour it sets out
- 5.2 consenting to our screening requirements and any state/territory Working with Children Checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18
- 5.3 placing the safety and welfare of children above other considerations
- 5.4 being accountable for their behaviour
- 5.5 following the steps outlined in this policy for making a complaint or reporting possible child abuse
- 5.6 complying with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy.

6. Position statements

6.1 Child protection

The AFF is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people who participate in our sport or access our services. We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child-safe environment is maintained.

We acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participation in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all participants.

6.1.1 Identify and analyse risk of harm

We will develop and implement a risk management strategy, including a review of our existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe our organisation is and to identify any additional steps we can take to minimise and prevent the risk of harm to children because of the actions of an employee, volunteer or another person.

6.1.2 Develop codes of behaviour

We will develop and promote a code of behaviour that sets out the conduct we expect of adults when they deal and interact with children involved in our sport, especially those in our care. We will also implement a code of behaviour to promote appropriate conduct between children.

These codes will clearly describe professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behavior. (Refer to the attachments in Part B of this policy.)

6.1.3 Choose suitable employees and volunteers

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our organisation engages suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with children. This will include using a range of screening measures.

We will ensure that Working with Children Checks are conducted for all employees and volunteers who work with children, where an assessment is required by law. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, we will handle this information confidentially and in accordance with the relevant legal requirements. (Refer to the attachments in Part C of this policy.)

6.1.4 Support, train, supervise and enhance performance

We will ensure that all our employees and volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training. Our goal is develop their skills and capacity and to enhance their performance so we can maintain a child-safe environment.

6.1.5: Empower and promote the participation of children

We will encourage children and young people to be involved in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment for our sport.

6.1.6: Report and respond appropriately to suspected abuse and neglect

We will ensure that all our employees and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to children at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected. (Refer to the attachments in Part E of this policy.)

Further, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child, or is in breach of this policy, he or she may make an internal complaint. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

6.2 Taking images of children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. The AFF requires that individuals and associations, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an

image of a child that is not their own. They should also make sure the parent/guardian understands how the image will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

When using a photo of a child, we will not name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the parent/guardian. We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school or the like, as this can be used by paedophiles or other persons to "groom" a child.

We will only use images of children that are relevant to our sport and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes participation in the sport. We will seek permission from the parents/guardians of the children before using the images. We require our member associations and clubs to do likewise.

6.3 Anti-discrimination and harassment

The AFF aims to provide an environment where all those involved in our activities and events are treated with respect.

We recognise that people cannot participate, enjoy themselves or perform at their best if they are treated unfairly, discriminated against or harassed.

We prohibit all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying based on the personal characteristics listed in the "Definitions" set out in our Dictionary of Terms [see clause 10]. In most circumstances, this behaviour is against the law.

If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this policy, they may make an internal complaint. In some circumstances, they may also be able to make a complaint to an external organisation. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

6.4 Sexual relationships

The AFF takes the position that consensual sexual relationships between coaches or officials and the adult athletes they coach should be avoided as they can have harmful effects on the athlete involved, on other athletes and coaches and on the sport's public image.

These relationships can also be perceived to be exploitative due to the differences in authority, power, maturity, status, influence and dependence between the coach and the athlete.

If a sexual relationship exists between an athlete and a coach, we will consider whether disciplinary action is necessary. Factors that will be taken into account include the relative age and maturity of the athlete to the coach, the financial or emotional dependence of the athlete on the coach and the likelihood of the relationship having an adverse impact on the athlete and/or other athletes.

If we determine that the sexual relationship is inappropriate, action may be taken to stop the coaching relationship with the athlete. This could include a transfer, a request for resignation or dismissal from coaching duties.

If an athlete attempts to initiate an intimate sexual relationship with a coach, it is the coach's responsibility to discourage the approach and to explain why such a relationship is not appropriate.

The coach or athlete may wish to seek advice or support from the Member Protection Information Officer, Complaints Manager or other official if they feel harassed. Our complaints procedure is outlined in Part D of this policy.

6.5 Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be treated with respect and any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in our sport should be removed. We will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women.

The AFF will take reasonable care to ensure the safety, health and well-being of pregnant women and their unborn children. We will advise pregnant women that there may be risks involved and encourage them to obtain medical advice about those risks. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and well-being, and that of their unborn children, are of utmost importance in their decision-making about the extent they choose to participate in our sport.

We encourage all pregnant women to talk with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport and ensure that they make informed decisions about their participation in our sport. We will only require pregnant women to sign a disclaimer if all other participants are required to sign one in similar circumstances. We will not require women to undertake a pregnancy test.

If a pregnant woman feels she has been harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, she may make a complaint. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

6.6 Gender identity

The AFF is committed to providing a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment where people of all backgrounds can contribute and participate. People who identify as transgender or transsexual should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect at all times. This includes acting with sensitivity when a person is undergoing gender transition.

We will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of a person who identifies as transgender or transsexual or who is thought to be transgender or transsexual. If a transgender or transsexual person feels he or she has been harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this policy, he or she may make a complaint. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

The AFF recognises that excluding transgender and transsexual people from participating in sporting events and activities has significant implications for their health, well-being and involvement in community life. In general, we will support their participation in our sport on the basis of the gender with which they identify.

We also recognise that there is debate over whether a male-to-female transgender person obtains any physical advantage over other female participants. This debate is reflected in the divergent discrimination laws across the country. If issues of performance advantage arise, we will seek advice on the application of those laws in the particular circumstances.

The AFF is aware that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has established criteria for selection and participation in the Olympic Sports. Where a transgender person intends to compete at an elite level, we will encourage them to obtain advice about the IOC's criteria, which may differ from the position we have taken.

Drug testing procedures and prohibitions also apply to people who identify as transgender. A person receiving treatment involving a Prohibited Substance or Method, as described on the World Anti-Doping Agency's Prohibited List, should apply for a standard Therapeutic Use Exemption.

6.7 Responsible service and consumption of alcohol

The AFF is committed to conducting sporting and social events in a manner that promotes the responsible service and consumption of alcohol. We also recommend that state associations and member clubs follow strict guidelines regarding the service and consumption of alcohol.

In general, our policy is that:

- alcohol should not be available or consumed at sporting events involving children and young people under the age of 18
- alcohol-free social events will be provided for young people and families
- food and low-alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks will be available at events we hold or endorse where alcohol is served
- a committee member will be present at events we hold or endorse where alcohol is served to ensure appropriate practices are followed
- safe transport options will be promoted as part of any event we hold or endorse where alcohol is served.

Further guidance on developing an Alcohol Policy is available at: www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/club-toolkit.

6.8 Smoke-free environment

The AFF recommends that the following policies be applied to all sporting and social events that we hold or endorse.

- No smoking shall occur at or near sporting events involving children and young people under the age of 18. This policy shall apply to coaches, participants, trainers, officials and volunteers.
- Social events shall be smoke-free, with smoking permitted at designated outdoor smoking areas.
- Coaches, officials, trainers, volunteers and participants will refrain from smoking and remain smoke-free while they are involved in an official capacity in our sport, both on and off the field.

6.9 Cyber-bullying

The AFF regards bullying and harassment in all forms as unacceptable in our sport. Bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and distress to the person targeted by hurtful or derogatory comments or statements.

New technologies and communication tools, such as smart phones and social networking websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments.

The AFF will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online. In some cases, bullying is a criminal offence punishable.

Frustration at a referee, teammate, coach or sporting body should never be communicated on social networking websites. These issues should instead be addressed – in a written or verbal statement or a complaint – to the relevant controlling club, league or peak sporting body.

6.10 Social networking websites

The AFF acknowledges the enormous value of social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in our sport.

We expect all people bound by this policy to conduct themselves appropriately when using social networking sites to share information related to our sport.

Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets:

- must not use offensive, provocative or hateful language
- must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- should respect and maintain the privacy of others
- should promote the sport in a positive way.

Further guidance on developing a Communications Policy is available at: www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/club-toolkit.

7. Complaints procedures

7.1 Handling complaints

The AFF aims to provide a simple, confidential and trustworthy procedure for resolving complaints based on the principles of natural justice.

Any person (a complainant) may report a complaint about a person, people or organisation bound by this policy (respondent) if they feel they have been harassed, bullied or discriminated against or there has been a breach of this policy.

In the first instance, complaints should be reported to the AFF President.

If a complaint relates to behaviour or an incident that occurred at the:

- state level, or involves people operating at the state level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant state association in the first instance
- club level, or involves people operating at the club level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant club in the first instance.

Only matters that relate to, or which occurred at, the national level, as well as serious cases referred from the state and club level, should be dealt with by the national body.

A complaint may be handled informally or formally. The complainant will usually indicate his or her preferred option unless the AFF President considers that the complaint falls outside this policy and should be handled another way. For example, the law may require that the complaint/allegation be reported to an appropriate authority.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. Our procedures for handling and resolving complaints are outlined in Attachment [D1].

Individuals and organisations may also seek to have their complaint handled by an external agency under anti-discrimination, child protection, criminal or other relevant legislation.

7.2 Improper complaints and victimisation

The AFF aims to ensure that our complaints procedure has integrity and is free of unfair repercussions or victimisation against the person making the complaint.

We will take all necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised. Disciplinary measures can be imposed on anyone who harasses or victimises another person for making a complaint or supporting another person's complaint.

If at any point in the complaint handling process the AFF President considers that a complainant has knowingly made an untrue complaint, or the complaint is malicious or intended to cause distress to the respondent, the matter may be referred to the AFF Disciplinary Tribunal for review and appropriate action, including possible disciplinary action against the complainant.

7.3 Mediation

The AFF aims to resolve complaints quickly and fairly. Complaints may be resolved by agreement between the people involved with no need for disciplinary action.

Mediation is a confidential process that allows those involved in a complaint to discuss the issues or incident in question and come up with mutually agreed solutions. It may occur before or after the investigation of a complaint.

If a complainant wishes to resolve the complaint with the help of a mediator, the AFF President will, in consultation with the complainant, arrange for an independent mediator where possible. We will not allow lawyers to negotiate on behalf of the complainant and/or the respondent.

More information on the mediation process is outlined in Attachment [D2].

7.4 Tribunals

A Tribunal may be convened to hear a formal complaint:

- referred to it by AFF President
- referred to it or escalated by a state association where because of the serious nature of the complaint, because it was unable to be resolved at the state level or because the policy of the state association directs it to be
- for an alleged breach of this policy.

Our Tribunal procedure is outlined in Attachment [D4].

A respondent may only lodge an appeal to the Appeal Tribunal in respect of a Tribunal decision. The decision of the Appeal Tribunal is final and binding on the people involved. Our appeals process is outlined in Attachment [D4].

Every organisation bound by this policy will recognise and enforce any decision of a Tribunal or Appeal Tribunal under this policy.

8. What is a breach of this policy?

It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation bound by this policy to do anything contrary to this policy, including but not limited to:

- 8.1 breaching the codes of behaviour (see Part B of this policy)
- 8.2 bringing the AFF into disrepute, or acting in a manner likely to bring the Fencing and/or the AFF into disrepute
- 8.3 failing to follow the AFF policies (including this policy) and our procedures for the protection, safety and well-being of children
- 8.4 discriminating against, harassing or bullying (including cyber-bullying) any person
- 8.5 victimising another person for making or supporting a complaint
- 8.6 engaging in a sexually inappropriate relationship with a person that he or she supervises, or has influence, authority or power over
- 8.7 verbally or physically assaulting another person, intimidating another person or creating a hostile environment within the sport
- 8.8 disclosing to any unauthorised person or organisation any AFF information that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature
- 8.9 making a complaint that they know to be untrue, vexatious, malicious or improper
- 8.10 failing to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual or organisation has breached this policy
- 8.11 failing to comply with a direction given to the individual or organisation as part of a disciplinary process.

9. Disciplinary measures

The AFF may impose disciplinary measures on an individual or organisation for a breach of this policy.

Any disciplinary measure imposed will be:

- fair and reasonable
- applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements
- be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach

- be determined in accordance with our Constitution, By-laws, this policy and/or the rules of the sport.

9.1 Individual

Subject to contractual and employment requirements, if a finding is made by a Tribunal that an individual has breached this policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed.

- 9.1.1 A direction that the individual make a verbal and/or written apology;
- 9.1.2 A written warning;
- 9.1.3 A direction that the individual attend counselling to address their behaviour;
- 9.1.4 A withdrawal of any awards, scholarships, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by the AFF;
- 9.1.5 A demotion or transfer of the individual to another location, role or activity;
- 9.1.6 A suspension of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- 9.1.7 Termination of the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- 9.1.8 A recommendation that the AFF terminate the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- 9.1.9 In the case of a coach or official, a direction that the relevant organisation de-register the accreditation of the coach or official for a period of time or permanently;
- 9.1.10 A fine;
- 9.1.11 Any other form of discipline that the AFF considers appropriate.

9.2 Organisation

If a finding is made that an AFF member or affiliated organisation has breached its own or this Member Protection Policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed by the AFF

- 9.2.1 A written warning;
- 9.2.2 A fine;
- 9.2.3 A direction that any rights, privileges and benefits provided to that organisation by the national body or other peak association be suspended for a specified period;
- 9.2.4 A direction that any funding granted or given to it by the AFF cease from a specified date;
- 9.2.5 A direction that the AFF cease to sanction events held by or under the auspices of that organisation;
- 9.2.6 A recommendation to the AFF that its membership of the AFF be suspended or terminated in accordance with the relevant constitution or rules;
- 9.2.7 Any other form of discipline that the national body or peak organisation considers reasonable and appropriate.

9.3 Factors to consider

The form of discipline to be imposed on an individual or organisation will depend on factors, such as:

- the nature and seriousness of the breach
- if the person knew, or should have known, that the behaviour was a breach of the policy
- the person's level of contrition
- the effect of the proposed disciplinary measures on the person, including any personal, professional or financial consequences
- if there have been any relevant prior warnings or disciplinary action
- the ability to enforce disciplinary measures if the person is a parent or spectator (even if they are bound by the policy)
- any other mitigating circumstances.

10. Dictionary of terms

This Dictionary sets out the meaning of words used in this policy and its attachments, without limiting the ordinary and natural meaning of the words. Further detail or definitions that are specific to different states and territories can be sourced from the relevant child protection authorities or equal opportunity and anti-discrimination commissions.

Abuse is a form of harassment and includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and abuse of power. Examples of abusive behaviour include bullying, humiliation, verbal abuse and insults.

Affiliated club means those clubs or organisations (howsoever described), which are a member of, or affiliated to an affiliated State/Territory Association.

Child means a person who is under the age of 18.

Child abuse involves conduct which puts a child at risk of harm and may include:

- **physical abuse**, by hurting a child or a child's development (e.g. hitting, shaking or other physical harm; giving a child alcohol or drugs; or training that exceeds the child's development or maturity)
- **sexual abuse** by adults or other children, where a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in sexual activity or where a child is subject to any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, pornography, including child pornography, or inappropriate touching or conversations)
- **emotional abuse**, by ill-treating a child (e.g. humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, name-calling, ignoring or placing unrealistic expectations on a child)
- **neglect** (e.g. failing to give a child food, water, shelter or clothing or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

Complaint means a complaint made under clause 7 of this policy

Complainant means the person making a complaint.

Complaint handler/manager means the person appointed under this policy to investigate a complaint.

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances because of a particular personal characteristic. This is known as direct discrimination. Indirect discrimination occurs when a rule, policy or practice disadvantages one group of people in comparison with others, even though it appears to treat all people the same.

In Australia, it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:

- age
- disability
- family/carer responsibilities
- gender identity/transgender status
- homosexuality and sexual orientation
- irrelevant medical record
- irrelevant criminal record
- political belief/activity
- pregnancy and breastfeeding
- race
- religious belief/activity
- sex or gender
- social origin;
- trade union membership/activity.

Some states and territories include additional protected characteristics, such as physical features or association with a person with one or more of the characteristics listed above.

Examples of discrimination are available on the Play by the Rules website:
www.playbytherules.net.au/legal-stuff/discrimination

Some exceptions to state and federal anti-discrimination law apply, such as:

- holding a competitive sporting activity for boys and girls only who are under the age of 12, or of any age where strength, stamina or physique is relevant
- not selecting a participant if the person's disability means he or she is not reasonably capable of performing the actions reasonably required for that particular activity.

Harassment is any type of behaviour that the other person does not want and is likely to make the person feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated. Unlawful harassment can target a person because of their race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or some other personal characteristic protected by law (see the list under "Discrimination").

Public acts of racial hatred which are reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate are also prohibited. This applies to spectators, participants or any other person who engages in such an act in public. Some states and territories also prohibit public acts that vilify people on other grounds such as homosexuality, gender identity, HIV/AIDS, religion and disability (see also "Vilification").

Mediator means an impartial person appointed to help those people involved in a complaint to talk through the issues and resolve the matter on mutually agreeable terms.

Member means individuals or organisations as defined by the AFF Constitution.

Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) means a person trained to be the first point of contact for a person reporting a complaint under, or a breach of, this policy. He or she provides impartial and confidential support to the person making the complaint.

Natural justice (or procedural fairness) requires that:

- both the complainant and the respondent must know the full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond
- all relevant submissions must be considered
- no person may judge their own case
- the decision-maker(s) must be unbiased, fair and just
- the penalties imposed must be fair.

Police check means a national criminal history record check conducted as a pre-employment, pre-engagement or current employment background check on a person.

Policy, policy and this policy means this Member Protection Policy.

Respondent means the person whose behaviour is the subject of the complaint.

Role-specific codes of conduct (or behaviour) means standards of conduct required of people holding certain roles in our organisation (e.g. coaches, officials, umpires).

Sexual harassment means unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which could reasonably be anticipated to make a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include unwanted physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, displays of pornographic or offensive material or other behaviour that creates a sexually hostile environment.

Sexual harassment is not behaviour based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect. If the interaction is between consenting adults, it is not sexual harassment.

Sexual offence means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency. Because of differences under state and territory laws, this can include but is not limited to:

- rape
- indecent assault
- sexual assault

- assault with intent to have sexual intercourse
- incest
- sexual penetration of child under the age of 16
- indecent act with child under the age of 16
- sexual relationship with child under the age of 16
- sexual offences against people with impaired mental functioning
- abduction and detention
- procuring sexual penetration by threats or fraud
- procuring sexual penetration of child under the age of 16
- bestiality
- soliciting acts of sexual penetration or indecent acts
- promoting or engaging in acts of child prostitution
- obtaining benefits from child prostitution
- possession of child pornography
- publishing child pornography and indecent articles.

Transgender is a general term applied to individuals and behaviours that differ from the gender role commonly, but not always, assigned at birth. It does not imply any specific form of sexual orientation.

Victimisation means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any unfair treatment because that person has or intends to pursue their right to make any complaint, including a complaint under government legislation (e.g. anti-discrimination) or under this policy, or for supporting another person to make complaint.

Vilification involves a person or an organisation doing public acts to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of people having any of the characteristics listed under the definition of "Discrimination".

The above dictionary of terms us supplemented the dictionary provided at:

http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/nso/member_protection

PART B: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

We seek to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our organisation and in our sport.

To achieve this, we require certain standards of behavior of participants/athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, parents/guardians (of child participants) and spectators.

Our codes of behaviour are underpinned by the following core values.

- To act within the rules and spirit of our sport.
- To display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved in our sport and prevent discrimination and harassment.
- To prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people involved in our sport.
- To encourage and support opportunities for participation in all aspects of our sport.

Our codes of behavior are detailed in the following attachments:

Attachment B1: General Code of Conduct

Attachment B2: Coach Code of Conduct

Attachment B3: Official Code of Conduct

Attachment B4: Participant/Athlete Code of Conduct

Attachment B5: Administrator (Volunteer) Code of Conduct

Attachment B6: Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

Attachment B7: Spectator Code of Conduct

Attachment B1: General Code of Conduct

As a member of Australian Fencing Federation (AFF), a member association or an affiliated club or a person required to comply with AFF's member protection policy, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by AFF, a member association or an affiliated club and in any role you hold within AFF, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others.
2. Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealing with others.
3. Be professional in, and accept responsibility for, your actions.
4. Make a commitment to providing quality service.
5. Be aware of, and maintain an uncompromising adherence to, AFF's standards, rules, regulations and policies.
6. Operate within the rules of the sport including national and international guidelines which govern *AFF*, the member associations and the affiliated clubs.
7. Do not use your involvement with AFF, a member association or an affiliated club to promote your own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are inconsistent with those of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club.
8. Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example.
9. Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons under 18 years of age, wherever possible.
10. Refrain from any form of harassment of others.
11. Refrain from any behaviour that may bring AFF, a member association or an affiliated club into disrepute.
12. Provide a safe environment for the conduct of the activity.
13. Show concern and caution towards others who may be sick or injured.
14. Be a positive role model.
15. Understand the repercussions if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of, this code of behaviour.

Attachment B2: Coach Code of Conduct

In addition to AFF's General Code of Behaviour, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by AFF, a member association or an affiliated club and in your role as a coach appointed by AFF, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
2. Provide feedback to participants and other participants in a manner sensitive to their needs. Avoid overly negative feedback.
3. Recognise participants' rights to consult with other coaches and advisers. Cooperate fully with other specialists (for example, sports scientists, doctors and physiotherapists).
4. Treat all participants fairly within the context of their sporting activities, regardless of gender, race, place of origin, athletic potential, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status and other conditions.
5. Encourage and facilitate participants' independence and responsibility for their own behaviour, performance, decisions and actions.
6. Involve the participants in decisions that affect them.
7. Encourage participants to respect one another and to expect respect for their worth as individuals regardless of their level of play.
8. Ensure that the tasks and/or training set are suitable for age, experience, ability, and physical and psychological conditions of the participants.
9. Ensure any physical contact with participants is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the participant's skill development.
10. Be acutely aware of the power that you as a coach develop with your participants in the coaching relationship and avoid any sexual intimacy with participants that could develop as a result.
11. Avoid situations with your participants that could be construed as compromising.
12. Actively discourage the use of performance enhancing drugs, and the use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances.
13. Do not exploit any coaching relationship to further personal, political or business interests at the expense of the best interest of your participants.
14. Accept and respect the role of officials in ensuring that competitions are conducted fairly and according to established rules.
15. Know and abide by rules, regulations and standards, and encourage participants to do likewise. Accept both the letter and the spirit of the rules.
16. Be honest and ensure that qualifications are not misrepresented.

Attachment B3: Official Code of Conduct

In addition to AFF's General Code of Behaviour, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by AFF, a member association or an affiliated club and in your role as an official appointed by *AFF*, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Place the safety and welfare of the participants/participants above all else.
2. Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
3. Be impartial.
4. Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest.
5. Be courteous, respectful and open to discussion and interaction.
6. Value the individual in sport.

Attachment B4: Participant/Athlete Code of Conduct

In addition to AFF's General Code of Behaviour, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by AFF, a member association or an affiliated club and in your role as a participant/participant in any activity held by or under the auspices of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow participants, coaches, officials and spectators.
2. Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
3. Respect the talent, potential and development of fellow participants and competitors.
4. Care for and respect the equipment provided to you as part of your program.
5. Be frank and honest with your coach concerning illness and injury and your ability to train fully within the program requirements.
6. At all times avoid intimate relationships with your coach.
7. Conduct yourself in a professional manner relating to language, temper and punctuality.
8. Maintain high personal behaviour standards at all times.
9. Abide by the rules and respect the decision of the official, making all appeals through the formal process and respecting the final decision.
10. Be honest in your attitude and preparation to training. Work equally hard for yourself and your team.
11. Cooperate with coaches and staff in development of programs to adequately prepare you for competition at the highest level.

Attachment B5: Administrator (Volunteer) Code of Conduct

In addition to AFF's General Code of Behaviour, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held by or under the auspices of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club and in your role as an administrator of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly through established procedures.
2. Maintain strict impartiality.
3. Be aware of your legal responsibilities.

Attachment B6: Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

As a parent/guardian of a participant/participant in any activity held by or under the auspices of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others.
2. Remember that your child participates in sport for their own enjoyment, not yours.
3. Focus on your child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.
4. Never ridicule or yell at your child and other children for making a mistake or losing a competition.
5. Show appreciation for good performance and skilful plays by all participants (including opposing participants).
6. Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with or in the vicinity of persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example.
7. Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do likewise.
8. Do not physically or verbally abuse or harass anyone associated with the sport (participant, coach, umpire and so on).
9. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
10. Be a positive role model.
11. Understand the repercussions if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of, this code of behaviour.

Attachment B7: Spectator Code of Conduct

As a spectator in any activity held by or under the auspices of AFF, a member association or an affiliated club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event:

1. Respect the decisions of officials and teach young people to do the same.
2. Never ridicule or scold a young participant for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational.
3. Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by other spectators, coaches, officials or participants.
4. Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would be no sport.
5. Do not use violence, harassment or abuse in any form (that is, do not use foul language, sledge or harass participants, coaches, officials or other spectators).
6. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

PART C: EMPLOYMENT SCREENING / WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

We are committed to providing a child-safe environment. As part of this, we will recruit staff and volunteers who do not pose a risk to children.

Employment screening and Working with Children Checks can involve criminal history checks, signed declarations, referee checks and other appropriate checks that assess a person's suitability to work with children and young people.

Working with Children Check laws are currently in place in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria, the Northern Territory and South Australia.

The AFF, including our state associations and clubs, will meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory Working with Children Check laws.

Employment screening requirements will also be followed in the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

Individuals travelling with children and young people to another state or territory in a work-related capacity must comply with the screening requirements of that particular state or territory.

The following attachments are relevant to the above.

Attachment C1: Screening requirements (for the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania)

Attachment C2: Member Protection Declaration

Attachment C3: Working with Children Check requirements

Attachment C1: EMPLOYMENT SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

for states/territories without Working With Children Checks: ACT and Tasmania

This attachment explains the process we will use to screen the people associated with our organisation who work, coach or have regular unsupervised contact with children and young people under the age of 18. We require our state associations and clubs to do the same.

1. We will identify all positions where people work, coach or have regular unsupervised contact with children and young people under the age of 18.
2. Before a person is offered such a position, we will ask him or her to complete a Member Protection Declaration ("MPD") (see Attachment C2).
3. If a person is unable to provide a MPD, or if he or she cannot satisfactorily answer the questions in the MPD, we will ask for an explanation. We will then make an assessment about the person's suitability to work with children and young people. If we are not fully satisfied, we will not appoint him or her to the position.
4. Where possible, we will check a person's referees (verbal or written) about his or her suitability for the position.
5. We will ask each person to sign a consent form for a national police check and explain why our policy requires a check to be undertaken.
6. If a person does not agree to a national police check, we will make an assessment about his or her suitability to work with children and young people.
7. If the national police check indicates that a "relevant offence" has been recorded, we will ask the person to provide an explanation. We will then make an assessment about the person's suitability to work with children and young people. If we are not fully satisfied, we will not appoint him or her to the position.
8. If it is not practical to complete the national police check prior to the person starting in the position, we will complete the check as soon as possible. We will act immediately if the results of the check highlight any issues of concern.
9. We will protect the privacy of each person who undertakes the screening process and keep all information we obtain strictly confidential.
10. We will return all the information collected as part of the screening process (e.g. completed MPD forms, national police checks and referee reports) to the relevant person if he or she is not appointed to the position. Alternatively, all records will be destroyed within 28 days of the date of the decision or the expiry of any appeal period unless, within that time, the person requests the documents to be returned to him or her. The records of all people appointed to our organisation will be kept on file in a secure location.

Attachment C2: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

The AFF has a duty of care to all those associated with our organisation and our sport. It is a requirement of our AFF Member Protection Policy that we check the background of each person who works, coaches or has regular unsupervised contact with children and young people under the age of 18.

I (name) of

..... (address) born/...../.....

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offences, offences related to children or acts of violence.
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence.
4. I am not currently serving a sanction for an anti-doping rule violation under an Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) approved anti-doping policy applicable to me.
5. I will not participate in, facilitate or encourage any practice prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency Code or any other ASADA approved anti-doping policy applicable to me.
6. To my knowledge, there is no other matter that the AFF may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
7. I will notify the AFF President of the organisation/s engaging me immediately upon becoming aware that any matter set out above has changed.

Declared in the state/territory of

on/...../.....(date) Signature

Consent of parent/guardian (on behalf of a person under the age of 18)

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Attachment C3: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

Working with Children Checks aim to create a child-safe environment and to protect children and young people involved in our sport from physical and sexual harm.

They assess the suitability of people to work with children and young people and can involve:

- criminal history checks
- signed declarations
- referee checks, and
- other relevant background checks to assess a person's suitability to work with children and young people.

Working with Children Check requirements vary across Australia. [Fact Sheets](#) for each state and territory are available on the Play by the Rules website: www.playbytherules.net.

Detailed information, including the forms required to complete a Working with Children Check, are available from the relevant agencies in each state and territory.

New South Wales

Contact the Commission for Children and Young People

Website: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 02 9286 7276

Northern Territory

Contact the Northern Territory Screening Authority

Website: www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au

Phone: 1800 SAFE NT (1800 723 368)

Queensland

Contact the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian about the "Blue Card" system.

Website: www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

Phone: 1800 113 611

South Australia

Contact the Department for Education and Child Development

Website: www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafe

Phone: 08 84 636 468

Victoria

Contact the Department of Justice

Website: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren

Phone: 1300 652 879

Western Australia

Contact the Department for Child Protection

Website: www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au

Phone: 1800 883 979

Travelling to other states or territories

It is important to remember that when travelling to other states or territories, representatives of sporting organisations must comply with the legislative requirements of that particular state or territory.

In October 2011 at the Standing Council on Community, Housing and Disability Services, Commonwealth, state and territory ministers agreed to introduce, by late 2012, national exemptions to Working with Children Checks for paid employees and volunteers who are required to cross state or territory borders for work related purposes.

These exemptions will be for up to 30 days in any 12 month period and will enable workers to participate in national and inter-jurisdictional activities on a short-term basis. This means that volunteers and workers with a valid check in their home state or territory will be able to participate in short-term activities across state and territory borders without the need for additional checks.

The Australian Sports Commission will provide more information as soon as it becomes available.

PART D: COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES

We will deal with all complaints in a fair, timely and transparent manner. All complaints will be treated seriously.

We will provide individuals with an informal and informal process to resolve the matter, along with access to an external complaint handling body, based on their preferences and the nature of the complaint.

We also provide an appeals process for those matters where it is required.

We will maintain confidentiality as far as possible and ensure that no one is victimised for making, supporting or providing information about a complaint.

The following attachments are relevant to the above.

Attachment D1: Complaints procedure

Attachment D2: Mediation

Attachment D3: Investigation procedure

Attachment D4: Tribunal procedure

Attachment D1: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The AFF aims to support people associated with our sport to make and resolve any complaints they may have in a fair, timely and effective way.

We will keep all complaints confidential. We will not provide information about the complaint to another person without the complainant's consent, except if the law requires us disclose this information or if it is necessary to properly resolve the complaint.

To ensure **fairness for everyone involved**, we will provide the full details of the complaint to the person or people against whom the complaint has been made and ask for their response. As a result, it may be difficult for us to resolve complaints made anonymously.

We will provide **informal and formal procedures** to resolve complaints. Individuals and organisations can also **complain to external organisations** under anti-discrimination, child protection and other relevant laws.

Informal approaches

Step 1: Talk with the other person (if safe, reasonable and appropriate)

If you feel confident to do so, you can approach the other person to discuss the issues and try and resolve the problem directly.

Step 2: Contact a Member Protection Information Officer

We encourage you to talk with one of our Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs if:

- the first step is not possible or reasonable
- you are not sure how to handle the problem by yourself
- you want to talk confidentially with someone and find out what options are available to resolve the problem, or
- the problem continues after you approached the other person.

The names and contact details for our MPIOs are available at the AFF website.

The MPIO will:

- take confidential notes about your complaint
- try to find out the facts of your complaint
- ask how you would like the problem to be resolved and if you need support
- provide different options for you to resolve the problem
- act as a support person, if you wish
- refer you to an appropriate person (e.g. a mediator) to help you resolve the problem, if necessary
- inform the relevant government authorities and/or police, if required by law to do so
- maintain confidentiality.

Step 3: Decide how to resolve the problem

After talking with the MPIO, you may decide:

- there is no problem
- the problem is minor and you do not wish to take the matter forward
- to try and resolve the problem yourself, with or without a support person
- to resolve the problem with the help of someone impartial, such as a mediator
- to resolve the matter through a formal process.

Formal approaches

Step 4: Making a formal complaint

If it is not possible or appropriate to resolve your complaint through an informal process, you may:

- make a formal complaint in writing to the AFF President, or
- approach a relevant external agency, such as an anti-discrimination or equal opportunity commission, for advice.

After receiving a formal complaint, and based on the material you provide, the AFF President will decide whether:

- he or she is the most appropriate person to receive and handle the complaint
- the nature and seriousness of the complaint requires a formal resolution procedure
- to refer the complaint to **mediation**
- to appoint a person to **investigate** the complaint
- to refer the complaint to a **tribunal hearing**
- to refer the matter to the **police or other appropriate authority**, and/or
- to implement any interim arrangements that will apply until the complaint process is completed.

In making this decision, the AFF President will take into account:

- whether he or she has had any personal involvement in the circumstances and if someone else should handle the complaint
- your wishes, and the wishes of the respondent, regarding how the complaint should be handled
- the relationship between you and the respondent (e.g. an actual or perceived power imbalance between you and the respondent)
- whether the facts of the complaint are in dispute
- the urgency of the complaint, including the possibility that you might face further unacceptable behaviour while the complaint process is underway.

If the AFF President is the appropriate person to handle the complaint, he or she will, if these steps are necessary:

- provide the information received from you to the other person(s) involved and ask for their side of the story
- decide if there is enough information to determine whether the matter alleged in your complaint did or didn't happen, and/or
- determine what, if any, further action to take, including disciplinary action in accordance with this policy.

Step 5: Investigating the complaint

In some cases, an investigation may be required to determine the facts surrounding the complaint. Our investigations procedure is outlined in Attachment D3.

Following the investigation, a written report will be provided to the AFF President who will determine what further action to take.

- If the complaint is referred to **mediation**, we will follow the steps outlined in Attachment D2 or as agreed by you, the respondent and the mediator.
- If the complaint is referred to a **tribunal hearing**, the hearing will be conducted according to the steps outlined in Attachment D4.
- If the complaint is referred to the **police or another external agency**, we will endeavour to provide all reasonable assistance required by the police or the agency.

Any costs relating to the complaint process set out in this policy (e.g. investigation, mediation and/or a tribunal hearing) are to be met by the AFF, unless otherwise stated.

Step 6: Reconsidering a complaint or appealing a decision

If mediation is unable to resolve the matter, you may request that the AFF President reconsider the complaint in accordance with Step 3.

You or the respondent(s) may also appeal a decision made by at a tribunal hearing. The grounds and process for appeals are set out in Attachment D4.

Step 7: Documenting the resolution

The AFF President will record the complaint, the steps taken to resolve it and the final outcome. This information will be stored in a confidential and secure place. If the complaint was dealt with at the state/district level, the information will be stored by the state association. If the matter is of a serious nature, or if it was dealt with at the national level, the original document will be stored by the AFF and a copy stored by the state association.

Approaching external organisations

If you feel that you have been harassed or discriminated against, you can seek advice from your state or territory anti-discrimination or equal opportunity commission. There is no obligation to make a formal complaint. However, if the commission advises you that the issues appear to be within its jurisdiction, you may choose to lodge a formal complaint with the commission.

Once a complaint is received by the commission, it will investigate the matter. If it appears that unlawful harassment or discrimination has occurred, the commission will attempt to conciliate the complaint on a confidential basis. If this fails, or if it is not appropriate, the complaint may go to a formal hearing. The tribunal will make a finding and decide what action, if any, will be taken. This could include an apology or financial compensation for distress, lost earnings or medical and counselling expenses incurred.

If you do lodge a complaint with the commission, an appropriate person from our organisation (e.g. an MPIO) will be available to support you during the process. It is also common to have a legal representation, particularly if the complaint goes to a formal hearing.

Contact details for the state and territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity commissions are available on the Play by the Rules website:

<http://www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/quick-reference-guide>.

Serious incidents, such as assault or sexual assault, should be reported to the police.

Attachment D2: MEDIATION

Mediation is a process that allows the people involved in a complaint to talk through the issues with an impartial person – the mediator – and work out a mutually agreeable solution.

The mediator does not decide who is right or wrong and does not tell either side what they must do. Instead, he or she helps those involved to talk through the issues and makes sure that the process is as fair as possible for all concerned.

Our approach to mediation follows the steps set out below.

1. The AFF President will appoint a mediator to help resolve the complaint. This will be done in consultation with the complainant and the respondent(s).
2. The mediator will talk with the complainant and respondent(s) about how the mediation will take place and who will participate. At a minimum, the mediator will prepare an agenda of issues to be discussed.
3. All issues raised during mediation will be treated confidentially. We also respect the rights of the complainant and the respondent(s) to pursue an alternative process if the complaint is not resolved.
4. If the complaint is resolved by mediation, the mediator will prepare a document that sets out the agreement that has been reached. This agreement will be signed by the complainant and the respondent(s). We expect the parties involved to respect the terms of the agreement.
5. If the complaint is not resolved by mediation, the complainant may:
 - write to AFF President to request that the AFF President reconsider the complaint in accordance with **Step 3**
 - approach an external agency, such as an anti-discrimination or equal opportunity commission, to resolve the matter.

We recognise that there are some **situations where mediation will not be appropriate**, including:

- when the people involved have completely different versions of the incident
- when one or both parties are unwilling to attempt mediation
- when the issues raised are sensitive in nature
- when there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the people involved
- matters that involve serious, proven allegations.

Attachment D3: INVESTIGATION PROCESS

There will be times when a complaint will need to be investigated and evidence gathered.

An investigation helps determine the facts relating to the incident, as well as possible findings and recommendations.

Any investigation that we conduct will be fair to all people involved.

If we decide that a complaint should be investigated, we will follow the steps outlined below.

1. We will provide a written brief to the investigator that sets out the terms of engagement and his or her roles and responsibilities. The investigator will:
 - interview the complainant and record the interview in writing
 - provide full details of the complaint to the respondent(s) so that they can respond
 - interview the respondent(s) to allow them to answer the complaint and record the interview in writing
 - obtain statements from witnesses and collect other relevant evidence, if there is a dispute over the facts
 - make a finding as to whether the complaint is:
 - **substantiated** (there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint)
 - **inconclusive** (there is insufficient evidence either way)
 - **unsubstantiated** (there is sufficient evidence to show that the complaint is unfounded)
 - **mischievous, vexatious or knowingly untrue.**
 - provide a report to AFF President documenting the complaint, the investigation process, the evidence, the finding(s) and, if requested, any recommendations.
2. We will provide a report to the complainant and the respondent(s) documenting the complaint, the investigation process and summarising key points that are substantiated, inconclusive, unsubstantiated and/or mischievous.
3. The complainant and the respondent(s) will be entitled to support throughout this process from their chosen support person or adviser (e.g. MPIO or other person).
4. The complainant and the respondent(s) may have the right to appeal any decision based on the investigation. Information on our appeals process is in Attachment D5.

Attachment D4: TRIBUNAL PROCEDURES

We will follow the steps set out below to hear formal complaints made under our Member Protection Policy.

Preparing for a Tribunal hearing

1. A Tribunal Panel will be constituted following the rules outlined in AFF's Disciplinary Policy, to hear a complaint that has been referred to it by the AFF President. The number of Tribunal members required to be present throughout the hearing will be as per the AFF's Disciplinary Policy.
2. The Tribunal panel members will be provided with a copy of all the relevant correspondence, reports or information received and sent by the AFF President relating to the complaint/allegations.
3. The Tribunal hearing will be held as soon as practicable. However, adequate time must be provided for the respondent(s) to prepare for the hearing.
4. The Tribunal panel will not include any person who has any actual or perceived conflict of interest or bias regarding the complaint/allegations.
5. The AFF President will inform the respondent(s) in writing that a Tribunal hearing will take place. The notice will outline:
 - that the person has a right to appear at the Tribunal hearing to defend the complaint/allegations
 - the details of the complaint and of all allegations, as well as the clause of any policy or rule that has allegedly been breached
 - the date, time and venue of the Tribunal hearing
 - that either verbal or written submissions can be presented at the Tribunal hearing
 - that witnesses may attend the Tribunal hearing to support the position of the respondent/s (statutory declarations of witnesses not available to attend and from character witnesses may also be provided to the Tribunal hearing)
 - an outline of any possible penalties that may be imposed if the complaint is found to be true
 - that legal representation will not be allowed. If the respondent is a minor, he or she should have a parent or guardian present.

A copy of any information/documents that have been given to the Tribunal panel (e.g. investigation report findings) will be provided to the respondent(s).

The respondent(s) will be allowed to participate in all AFF activities and events, pending the decision of the Tribunal, including any available appeal process, unless the AFF President believes it is necessary to exclude the respondent/s from all or some activities and events because of the nature of the complaint.

6. The AFF President will notify the complainant in writing that a Tribunal hearing will take place. The notice will outline:
 - that the person has a right to appear at the Tribunal hearing to support their complaint
 - the details of the complaint, including any relevant rules or regulations the respondent is accused of breaching
 - the date, time and venue of the Tribunal hearing
 - that either verbal or written submissions can be presented at the Tribunal hearing
 - that witnesses may attend the Tribunal hearing to support the complainant's position (statutory declarations of witnesses not available to attend may also be provided to the Tribunal Hearing)
 - that legal representation will not be allowed. If the complainant is a minor, he or she should have a parent or guardian present.

A copy of any information / documents given to the Tribunal (e.g. investigation report findings) will be provided to the complainant.

7. If the complainant believes the details of the complaint are incorrect or insufficient, he or she should inform the AFF President as soon as possible so that the respondent(s) and members of the Tribunal panel can be properly informed of the complaint.
8. If possible, the Tribunal panel should include at least one person with knowledge or experience of the relevant laws/rules (e.g. anti-discrimination).

Tribunal hearing procedure

9. The following people will be allowed to attend the Tribunal hearing:
 - Tribunal panel members
 - the respondent(s)
 - the complainant
 - any witnesses called by the respondent(s)
 - any witnesses called by the complainant
 - any parent/guardian or support person required to support the respondent or the complainant.
10. If the respondent(s) is not present at the set hearing time and the Tribunal chairperson considers that no valid reason has been presented for this absence, the Tribunal hearing will continue subject to the chairperson being satisfied that all Tribunal notification requirements have been met.
11. If the Tribunal chairperson considers that there is a valid reason for the non-attendance of the respondent(s), or the chairperson does not believe the Tribunal notification requirements have been met, then the Tribunal hearing will be rescheduled to a later date.
12. The Tribunal chairperson will inform the AFF President of the need to reschedule the hearing and the AFF President will arrange for the Tribunal to be reconvened.
13. The Tribunal chairperson will read out the complaint, ask each respondent if he or she understands the complaint and if he or she agrees or disagrees with the complaint.
14. If the respondent agrees with the complaint, he or she will be asked to provide any evidence or witnesses that should be considered by the Tribunal when determining any disciplinary measures or penalties.
15. If the respondent disagrees with the complaint, the complainant will be asked to describe the circumstances that lead to the complaint being made.
 - Reference may be made to brief notes.
 - The complainant may call witnesses.
 - The respondent may question the complainant and any witnesses.
16. The respondent will then be asked to respond to the complaint.
 - Reference may be made to brief notes.
 - The respondent may call witnesses.
 - The complainant may ask questions of the respondent and any witnesses.
17. The complainant and respondent(s) may be present when evidence is presented to the Tribunal hearing. Witnesses may be asked to wait outside the hearing until they are required.
18. The Tribunal may:
 - consider any evidence, and in any form, that it deems relevant
 - question any person giving evidence
 - limit the number of witnesses presented to those who provide new evidence
 - require (to the extent it has power to do so) the attendance of any witness it deems relevant
 - act in an inquisitorial manner in order to establish the truth of the issue/complaint before it.
19. Video evidence, if available, may be presented. Arrangements must be made entirely by the person(s) wishing to offer this type of evidence.
20. If the Tribunal panel considers that at any time during the hearing there is any unreasonable or intimidatory behaviour from anyone, the Tribunal chairperson may deny further involvement of that person in the hearing.
21. After all the evidence has been presented, the Tribunal will make its decision in private. It must decide whether the complaint has, on the balance of probabilities, been substantiated. As the seriousness of the allegation increases, so too must the level of satisfaction of the Tribunal that the complaint has been substantiated. The respondent(s) have the opportunity to address the Tribunal on disciplinary measures which may be imposed. Any disciplinary measures imposed must be reasonable in the circumstances.
22. All Tribunal decisions will be by majority vote.

23. The Tribunal chairperson will announce the decision in the presence of all those involved in the hearing and will declare the hearing closed. Alternatively, he or she may advise those present that the decision is reserved and will be handed down in written form at a later time.
24. Within 48 hours, the Tribunal chairperson will:
 - forward a notice of the Tribunal's decision to the AFF President, including any disciplinary measures imposed.
 - forward a letter reconfirming the Tribunal's decision to the respondent(s), including any disciplinary measures imposed. The letter should also outline the process and grounds for an appeal, if allowed. If matter is especially complex or important, the Tribunal chairperson may inform the parties in writing within 48 hours that the decision will be delayed for a further 48 hours.
25. The Tribunal does not need to provide written reasons for its decision.

Appeals procedure

26. If a complainant or a respondent(s) is not satisfied with the outcome of a mediation process or a Tribunal decision, he or she can lodge an appeal to the AFF President on one or more of the following grounds:
 - 26.1 that a denial of natural justice has occurred
 - 26.2 that the disciplinary measure/s imposed is unjust and/or unreasonable
 - 26.3 that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence provided at the mediation or to the Tribunal Hearing
27. A person wanting to appeal must lodge a letter setting out the basis for their appeal with the AFF President within 7 days of the decision being made. An appeal fee of \$500 shall be included with the letter of intention to appeal.
28. If the letter of appeal is not received by the AFF President within this time, the right of appeal will lapse. If the letter of appeal is received but the appeal fee is not received within this time, the appeal will also lapse.
29. The letter of appeal and the notice of the Tribunal's decision (clause 24) will be forwarded to the AFF Executive to review and to decide whether there are sufficient grounds for the appeal to proceed. The AFF Executive may invite any witnesses to the meeting that he or she believes are required to make an informed decision.
30. If the appellant has not shown sufficient grounds for an appeal in accordance with clause 26, then the appeal will be rejected. The appellant will be notified in writing, including the reasons for the decision. The appeal fee will be forfeited.
31. If the appeal is accepted, an Appeal Tribunal with new panel members will be convened to rehear the complaint, and the appeal fee will be refunded.
32. The Tribunal hearing procedure shall be followed for the Appeal Tribunal.
33. The decision of the Appeal Tribunal will be final.

PART E: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DOCUMENTS/FORMS

We will ensure that all the complaints we receive, both formal and informal, are properly documented. This includes recording how the complaint was resolved and the outcome of the complaint.

This information, and any additional records and notes, will be treated confidentially and stored in a secure place.

We will treat any allegation of child abuse or neglect promptly, seriously and with a high degree of sensitivity.

We will ensure that everyone who works with our organisation in a paid or unpaid capacity understands how to appropriately receive and record allegations of child abuse and neglect and how to report those allegations to the relevant authorities in their state or territory.

The following attachments are relevant to the above.

Attachment E1: Confidential record of informal complaint

Attachment E2: Confidential record of formal complaint

Attachment E3: Handling an allegation of child abuse

Attachment E4: Confidential record of child abuse allegation

Attachment E2: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF FORMAL COMPLAINT

Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	Date Formal Complaint Received: / /
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/position	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/participant <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Name of person complained about (respondent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Respondent's role/position	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/participant <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Location/event of alleged incident		
Description of alleged incident		
Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds) Tick more than one box if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimization <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Methods (if any) of attempted informal resolution		

Formal resolution procedures followed (outline)	
If investigated:	Finding
If heard by Tribunal:	Decision Action recommended
If mediated:	Date of mediation: Both/all parties present Agreement Any other action taken
If decision was appealed	Decision Action recommended
Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 3 months to resolve <input type="checkbox"/> Between 3 – 8 months to resolve <input type="checkbox"/> More than 8 months to resolve
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: Date / /
Signed by:	Complainant: Respondent:

This record and any notes must be kept in a confidential and safe place. If the complaint is of a serious nature, or if it is taken to and/or dealt with at the national level, the original record must be provided to the AFF President and a copy kept with the organisation where the complaint was first made.

Attachment E3: PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, contact the Police immediately on 000.

Fact sheets on reporting allegations of child abuse in different states and territories are available at www.playbytherules.net.au.

We will treat any allegation of child abuse or neglect promptly, seriously and with a high degree of sensitivity.

All people working with the AFF in a paid or unpaid capacity have a duty to report any concerns to the appropriate authorities, following the steps outlined below.

Step 1: Receive the allegation

If a child or young person raises with you an allegation of child abuse or neglect that relates to them or to another child, it is important that you listen, stay calm and be supportive.

Do	Don't
Make sure you are clear about what the child has told you	Do not challenge or undermine the child
Reassure the child that what has occurred is not his or her fault	Do not seek detailed information, ask leading questions or offer an opinion.
Explain that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening.	Do not discuss the details with any person other than those detailed in these procedures.
Promptly and accurately record the discussion in writing.	Do not contact the alleged offender.

Step 2: Report the allegation

- Immediately report any allegation of child abuse or neglect, or any situation involving a child at risk of harm, to the police and/or the relevant child protection agency. You may need to make a report to both.
- Contact the relevant child protection agency or police for advice if there is **any** doubt about whether the allegation should be reported.
- If the allegation involves a person to whom this policy applies, then also report the allegation to the President of the AFF so that he or she can manage the situation.

Step 3: Protect the child and manage the situation

- The AFF President will assess the immediate risks to the child and take interim steps to ensure the child's safety and the safety of any other children. This may include redeploying the alleged offender to a position where there is no unsupervised contact with children, supervising the alleged offender or removing/suspending him or her until any investigations have been concluded. Legal advice should be sought before any interim steps are made if the person is in paid employment with the AFF.
- The AFF President will consider what services may be most appropriate to support the child and his or her parent/s.
- The AFF President will consider what support services may be appropriate for the alleged offender.

- The AFF President will put in place measures to protect the child and the alleged offender from possible victimisation and gossip.

Step 4: Take internal action

- Up to three different investigations could be undertaken to examine allegations that are made against a person to whom this policy applies, including:
 - a criminal investigation (conducted by the police)
 - a child protection investigation (conducted by the relevant child protection agency)
 - a disciplinary or misconduct inquiry/investigation (conducted by the AFF).
- Regardless of the findings of the police and/or child protection agency investigations, the AFF will assess the allegations to decide whether the alleged offender should return to his or her position, be dismissed, be banned or face any other disciplinary action.
- The President of the AFF will consider all information relevant to the matter – including any findings made by the police, the child protection authority and/or court – and then set out a finding, recommend actions and the rationale for those actions.
- If disciplinary action is recommended, we will follow the procedures set out in Clause 9 of our Member Protection Policy.
- We will provide the relevant government agency with a report of any disciplinary action we take, where this is required.

Contact details for advice or to report an allegation of child abuse

Australian Capital Territory	
ACT Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.afp.gov.au	Office for Children, Youth and Family Services www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/services/care_and_protection Ph: 1300 556 729
New South Wales	
New South Wales Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.nsw.gov.au	Department of Community Services www.community.nsw.gov.au Ph: 132 111
Northern Territory	
Northern Territory Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.pfes.nt.gov.au	Department of Children and Families www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au Ph: 1800 700 250
Queensland	
Queensland Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.qld.gov.au	Department of Communities www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety Ph: 1800 811 810
South Australia	
South Australia Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.sapolice.sa.gov.au	Department for Education and Child Development www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafes Ph: 131 478
Tasmania	
Tasmania Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.tas.gov.au	Department of Health and Human Services www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children Ph: 1300 737 639
Victoria	
Victoria Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: (03) 9247 6666 www.police.vic.gov.au	Department of Human Services www.dhs.vic.gov.au Ph: 131 278
Western Australia	
Western Australia Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.wa.gov.au	Department for Child Protection www.dcp.wa.gov.au Ph: (08) 9222 2555 or 1800 622 258

Attachment E4: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION

Before completing this form, please ensure that the steps outlined in Attachment D4 have been followed and advice has been sought from the police and/or the relevant child protection agency.

Complainant's name (if other than the child)		Date formal complaint received: / /
Role/status in sport		
Child's name		Age:
Child's address		
Person's reason for suspecting abuse (e.g. observation, injury, disclosure)		
Name of person complained about		
Role/status in sport	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/participant <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official	
Witnesses (if more than three witnesses, attach details to this form)	Name (1): Contact details: Name (2): Contact details: Name (3): Contact details:	
Interim action taken (if any)		
Police contacted	Who: When: Advice provided:	
Child protection agency contacted	Who: When: Advice provided:	

CEO contacted	Who: When:
Police investigation (if any)	Finding:
Child protection agency investigation (if any)	Finding:
Internal investigation (if any)	Finding:
Action taken	
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: / /
Signed by	Complainant (if not a child)

This record and any notes must be kept in a confidential and safe place. If required, they should be provided to the police and/or the relevant child protection agency.