



Prevention of Harassment and Abuse in Sport (PHAS) Policy

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I. POLICY

A. Introduction

The International Canoe Federation (ICF) is the world governing body for canoeing and paddling activities.

Its vision is to inspire people to pursue a lifelong passion for paddling and as such, is committed to provide a safe environment to everyone who embraces paddling activities.

Harassment and abuse in sport affects athletes physically and emotionally, as well as the trustworthiness of sport organisations.

There is no sport free of harassment and abuse. The ICF, concerned about the welfare of the paddling family, considers that prevention and good care is essential for its athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, medical and technical personnel and staff. This especially includes people that belong to the most vulnerable groups, including children, women and athletes with disabilities.

The ICF strongly condemns harassment and abuse in all forms at any time and is committed to preventing this conduct by acting diligently to avoid its occurrence, and inappropriate situations that may give rise to their happening.

B. ICF Policy

This document sets forth the ICF policy regarding harassment and abuse in all its forms. All stakeholders are expected to endorse this policy throughout the year. It includes definitions and identifies the group of people to whom it applies.

The definitions of harassment and abuse in all its forms must be known by all the paddling stakeholders, particularly by the athletes. This will help to identify if the non-desired situations that might occur are within this framework and must be reported in order to prevent major harm.

The ICF strongly recommends that continental associations and their affiliated national federations shall observe the ICF PHAS policies. With all the paddling community actively contributing to disseminate the best practices of PHAS it will help prevention of harassment and abuse.

C. Definitions

The ICF adopts The IOC Consensus Statement 2008 (the consensus statement): harassment and abuse (non-accidental violence) in sport.

We recommend an in depth reading of the consensus statement which contains definitions and examples for a better understanding of safe sport. Please refer to Appendix B.

Definitions adopted in the consensus statement, endorsed by the ICF:

Athletes with disabilities: Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with certain barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Bullying: Bullying (or cyberbullying if conducted online) is unwanted, repeated and intentional, aggressive behaviour, usually among peers, and can involve a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying can include actions such as making threats, spreading rumours or falsehoods, attacking someone physically or verbally and deliberately excluding someone.

Child and adolescent: Every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. Early childhood relates to those below 8 years of age. Juvenile or young person and adolescents are 10–19 years of age.

Hazing: An organised, usually team-based, form of bullying in sport, involving degrading and hazardous initiation of new team members by veteran team members.

Homophobia: Antipathy, contempt, prejudice, aversion or hatred towards lesbian, gay or bisexual individuals/ LGBTI Community.

Neglect: The failure of parents or care givers to meet a child's physical and emotional needs or failure to protect a child from exposure to danger. This definition equally applies to coaches and athlete entourages.

Negligence: Acts of omission regarding athlete safety. For example, depriving an athlete of food/or drink; insufficient rest and recovery; failure to provide a safe physical training environment; or developmental age-inappropriate or physique-inappropriate training methods.

Physical abuse: Non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming an athlete in a physical manor. This could include forced or mandated inappropriate physical activity (I.e.: age-inappropriate or physique-inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain); forced alcohol consumption; or systematic doping practices.

Psychological abuse: A pattern of deliberate, prolonged, repeated non-contact behaviours within a power differentiated relationship. This form of abuse is at the core of all other forms. Some definitions refer to emotional or psychological abuse interchangeably. In this document, we refer to psychological abuse in recognition that the psyche consists of more than emotions. It also consists of cognitions, values and beliefs about oneself, and the world. The behaviours that constitute psychological abuse target a person's inner life in all its profound scope.

Safe sport: An athletic environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence to athletes.

Sexual abuse: Any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is coerced/manipulated or is not or cannot be given.

Sexual harassment: Any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical.

Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability.

It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online.

Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited or coercive.

Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.

The IOC Consensus Statement 2008, considers that harassment and abuse are on a continuum; and therefore, should not be separated.

All participants are susceptible to being a target of the various forms of harassment and abuse.

D. Purpose of the ICF Safeguarding Policy

The safeguarding policy is formulated with the purpose of protecting the physical and psychological integrity of the athletes and of any other person related to the paddling community, described below, in point H.

The continental associations recognised by the ICF and the affiliated national federations are strongly recommended to replicate the actions condemning the harassment and sexual abuse in paddling, considering also the legal frame of their countries and the regulations of the sport organisations that regulate their existence.

Any other existing paddling association is expected to proceed in the same manner.

The safeguarding policy is needed to secure the most appropriate environment for the development in sport of the athletes from their childhood onwards.

The ICF assumes the responsibility of producing policies and procedures that will prevent non-accidental violence from occurring and the ICF will investigate within its capabilities any cases that are brought to its attention and take appropriate steps to safeguard the individuals at risk.

E. The ICF working group and consulted documents

The ICF has integrated a working group which represents areas where opinion is essential to this work, athletes, medical, legal, diversity and inclusion.

The consultation process included the current available works on the internet;

- IOC PHAS Toolkit

- International Paralympic Committee (IPC), IPF safe sport: Non-accidental violence and abuse webpage
- International Triathlon Union (ITU)
- Safe Sport Policy Manual, Canoe Kayak Canada (CKC)
- GB Boxing
- UK Sport, A Code for Sports Governance
- Safe sport Code for the US Olympic and Paralympic Sport
- International Tennis Federation, Player Welfare Policy
- United Nations Women, UN women toolkit. Prevention of violence against women and girls
- DRAFT Safeguard Athletes from Harassment and Abuse in Sport Policy. Australian Olympic Committee

F. National and international regulatory frame

Where there is any report to the relevant local authorities, the applicable law will be the national law of the country where the incident happened. First and foremost local authorities and laws will take precedent over ICF PHAS regulations.

The ICF does not have the power to conduct criminal investigations but will undertake its own review of alleged offences or breaches of conduct should the matter be warranted.

The ICF Ethics Commission will decide on any course of action in a case, that is appropriate and that concerns the ICF.

G. Safeguarding policies location

The ICF will include the safeguarding policies as part of the governance documents.

H. The Safeguarding policy will apply to:

- Athletes without restrictions of age, gender or abilities
- Athletes entourage
- Coaches
- Medical and para medical personnel
- Paracanoeing classifiers
- ExCo and BoD members of the ICF and the NFs
- Administrative staff
- Officials
- Volunteers
- Sponsors
- Suppliers and providers
- All personnel accredited by the ICF and the host organising committee
- Continental Associations
- National Federations

I. ICF Competition Policy and Communication

For ICF competitions the safeguarding policy should be replicated by the continental associations and the affiliated national federations at their level of competition.

This policy will indicate how to receive and manage reports under the ICF scope and to ensure confidentiality.

At any ICF and continental event the safeguarding policy will be outlined at the team leaders meeting and upon arrival to any ICF training camps

J. Reporting an incident

Suspected harassment and abuse must be immediately reported.

The reporting of an incident or lodging of a complaint form is available in Appendix A of this document and on the Safeguarding page of the ICF website (www.canoeicf.com/safeguarding).

The ICF manages an active email address dedicated for receiving reports/complaints of incidents related to harassment and abuse: icfethics@canoeicf.com

1. Confidentiality

The ICF ensures that it will act with impartiality and any report/complaint will be treated confidentially. The personal data (name, date of birth, nationality national federation) of the complainant will not be disclosed unless the complainant gives written consent or the disclosure is needed to avoid harm for any of the involved parties.

Confidentiality will also be given to the accused until such time any investigation or hearing has been concluded. However, confidentiality can be waived in the instance that the accused may be a serious risk to individuals or groups. In this case, the local authorities will be informed and asked to intervene.

The ICF reserves the right in any specific case to give all information including personal information to law enforcement agencies should it feel the matter is serious enough for criminal investigation.

2. Anonymity

The ICF accepts that the ability to report/complain anonymously plays an important role in ensuring that incidents of harassment or abuse are reported.

Reports/complaints received anonymously will require sufficient detail for the ICF to review. It is strongly recommended to complete the reporting/complaint form available in Appendix A of this document.

If the report/complaint is received in person or by telephone, the details contained on the report shall be requested. The ICF can investigate an issue without a completed reporting/complaint form.

3. Reporting Management

If for any reason, the reporting/complaint form available in Appendix A or on the website, could not be completed; at least the following information of the victim will be required:

- Name and gender
- Date of birth
- Nationality
- E-mail address and telephone number (where possible)

4. Mandatory reporting

When a national federation implements safeguarding policies and procedures, they should research what their obligations are in relation to mandatory reporting to public authorities or duty to disclose within their country/region.

5. In Competition

The reporting/complaint form will be handed to the appointed ICF Safeguarding officer. The ICF Safeguarding officer will be announced and published for each ICF event/training camp.

6. Out of Competition

The reports or complaints received out of competition will be reviewed by the ICF Ethics Commission Chair and/or the Medical Chair.

The reports often contain sensitive information and must be treated in a timely and appropriate manner.

K. Investigation Procedure

The Chairperson of the ICF Ethics Commission will conduct an evaluation of the case together with the appointed members of the Ethics Commission, which should include one woman as a minimum. There will be no more than 3 (three) members.

The ICF Ethics Commission will decide on possible actions and sanctions on any case brought to their attention. The ICF Ethics Commission will have the final decision within the ICF.

L. Disciplinary Procedure

The ICF will ensure impartial treatment of the case and the individuals involved respecting the confidentiality rules outlined in the PHAS policies. Each party will be treated with respect and equally during the discipline procedure.

The ICF will ensure procedural fairness in the case of an allegation, a notice with mention of rights of the individuals and the hearing procedures should be provided to the concerned individuals.

The ICF Ethics Commission can make a decision based on written submissions from all parties and/or a fair impartial hearing of those involved in the complaint.

The ICF Ethics Commission has the authority to recommend sanctions and suitable actions as appropriate for the case in question. No appeal to the ICF is possible once the ICF Ethics commission has made its decision known.

Measures and sanctions must respect the principle of proportionality.

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).

The ICF Ethics Commission will determine what details of the case are appropriate to disclose in any decision made.

M. Information

The ICF will prioritise the communication and publication of the ICF PHAS policies and procedures to its staff, Board of Directors, athletes and coaches, event organisers, continental associations and affiliated national federations.

The role of the athletes committee is crucial in ensuring that the prevention of harassment and abuse in sport policy will be known and understood by all the athletes.

Special emphasis shall be put on the most vulnerable groups including disabled athletes, children, girls, women and minority groups in all communication.

N. Education

The ICF is committed to raise awareness and create an educational programme to be delivered at ICF training camps and at continental championships.

It will also be available on the ICF website as a reference resource.

O. Preventive measures

The ICF has a formal Code of Conduct for all stakeholders and individuals in place and an independent Ethics Commission to deal with any issues relating to the sport or organisation to uphold the best safeguarding practices available.

Criminal record checks of employees are a regular practise according with the laws of many countries and mandatory for some National Federations. For federations that are not legally obliged to request the records, the ICF encourages them to undertake good practices that can provide a safe environment to the athletes.

II. APPENDIX A: REPORT FORM

REPORTING FORM	
Please provide as much information as you feel comfortable.	
Reporter personal information	
Full name	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Address	
E-mail address	
Telephone number	
Relationship with the alleged victim	
What is your connection with the incident	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness <input type="checkbox"/> Someone reported to you <input type="checkbox"/> Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)
Victim's information	
Full Name	

Date of birth	
Nationality	
Address	
e-mail address	
Telephone number	
The victim is	<input type="checkbox"/> Athlete <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete with disability <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Child (age) <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Official <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
Details of the harassment and/or abuse facts	
Date, Time, place and Country where the incident happened	

Information regarding the perpetrator (identity and contact if possible)	
Accurate incident explanation	
Actions taken before producing this report. Report to authorities (eg.: police)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other information	
All the information contained on this document is strictly confidential.	

III. APPENDIX B: IOC PUBLISHED CONSENSUS STATEMENT

Mountjoy M, Brackenridge C, Arrington M, Blauwet C, Carska-Sheppard A, Fasting K, Kirby S, Leahy T, Marks S, Martin K, Starr K, Tiivas A, Budgett R. International Olympic Committee consensus statement; harassment and abuse (non-accidental violence) in sport.

Br J Sports Med. 2016 Sep;50(17):1019-29. doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2016-096121. Epub 2016 Apr 26.