



United States Olympic Committee

United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit of USA Water Ski

October 2017

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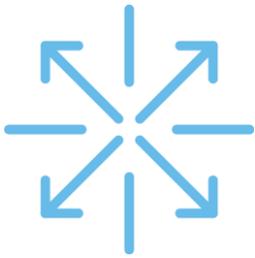
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USOC SafeSport Audit of USA Water Ski

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¹ To consider the report in its entirety, please refer also to the detailed management response that will appear here [[Governance Documents](#)] within 90 days of the date of this report.



Executive Summary

Summary Observations

It shall be the policy of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) that each National Governing Body (NGBs) adopt a Minimum Standards Policy for Athlete Safety Programs (Athlete Safety Standards) by December 31, 2013².

We noted the following opportunities to enhance the design of USA Water Ski's (USA-WS) compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards:

- > **Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing** – Requiring criminal background checks and education and training is not consistently enforced by USA-WS. The following exceptions were identified during our testing:
 - Three individuals selected for testing (30% of the selected individuals) did not have criminal background checks conducted during the testing period (i.e., May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017); however, evidence was provided that the criminal background checks were completed prior to issuing the audit report.
 - Four individuals selected for testing (40% of the selected individuals) did not complete education and training requirements during the testing period (i.e., May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017); however, evidence was provided that one of the individuals had completed the education and training requirements prior to issuing the audit report.
- > **Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Policy Requirements** – Requiring education and training requirements are not explicitly required in USA Water Ski's SafeSport-related documentation and administrative material for individuals in a position of authority. The policy indicates "It is also strongly encouraged that USA Water Ski members in position of influence and authority familiarize themselves with the USA Water Ski SafeSport Program."

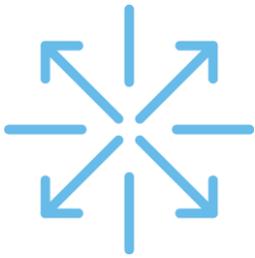
Background and Approach

USOC engaged Baker Tilly Virchow Krause (Baker Tilly), to assist the USOC in the completion of SafeSport audits, to assess compliance with SafeSport policies and procedures at the USOC and all of its NGBs and High Performance Management Organizations (HPMOs).

Baker Tilly performed a review of USA Water Ski to evaluate compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards. The following activities were performed for this review of USA-WS:

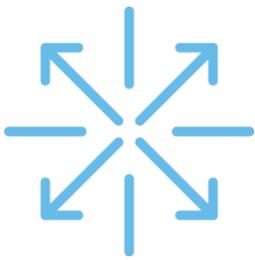
- > Developed and executed an audit program that included:

² Effective June 20, 2017 the USOC replaced the Athlete Safety Standards with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy. Due to the timing of this audit, fieldwork was performed in accordance with the Athlete Safety Standards.



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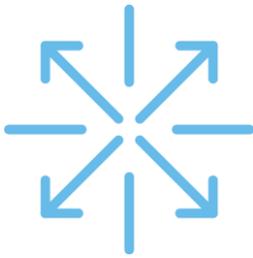
- Holding a virtual entrance meeting to discuss and document USA-WS' SafeSport program and processes.
 - Selecting a sample of 10 from the required individuals to ensure a background check was performed and education and training was completed. See **Appendix A** for a list of documents reviewed.
 - Reviewing USA-WS' athlete safety policy and determining whether the following was addressed:
 - Required misconduct is prohibited and defined;
 - Reporting procedures are documented; and
 - The grievance process is documented and complies with Athlete Safety Standards
 - Identifying which individuals are required to undergo a criminal background check and complete education and training.
- > Conducted a virtual exit meeting, if requested, following delivery of the draft report, to discuss audit findings and recommendation(s) with USA-WS. See **Appendix B** for a list of individuals interviewed.
- > Identified specific observations and recommendations regarding opportunities to enhance compliance with Athlete Safety Standards. Observations include the following attributes: criteria, condition, cause, effect and recommendation, as set out in the International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) Standards and Practice Advisory 2410-1.



Detailed Report

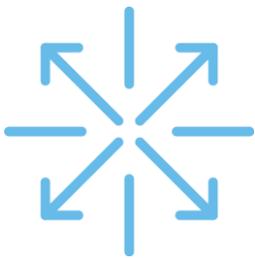
The tables below represent opportunities to enhance the design and effectiveness of USA-WS' compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards.

1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing	
Criteria	The Athlete Safety Standards state each NGB/HPMO shall require criminal background checks and education and training for those individuals it formally authorizes, approves, or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes.
Condition	<p>Requiring criminal background checks and education and training is not consistently enforced by USA-WS. The following exceptions were identified during our testing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three individuals selected for testing (30% of the selected individuals) did not have criminal background checks conducted during the testing period (i.e., May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017); however, evidence was provided that the criminal background checks were completed prior to issuing the audit report. 2. Four individuals selected for testing (40% of the selected individuals) did not complete education and training requirements during the testing period (i.e., May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017); however, evidence was provided that one of the individuals completed the education and training requirements prior to issuing the audit report.
Cause	USA-WS may not be consistently tracking and monitoring compliance with the criminal background checks and education and training requirements of the Athlete Safety Standards.
Effect	<p>Individuals the USA-WS formally authorizes, approves or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes may not be in compliance with the SafeSport program because they have not completed criminal background checks and/or education and training prior to having contact with athletes. USA-WS must be in compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards to be a member in good standing. Noncompliance with the Athlete Safety Standards can result in disciplinary action by the USOC including withdrawal of high performance funding.</p> <p>Also, athletes may have contact with individuals who are unaware of SafeSport misconduct and the potential impact to athletes' well-being and/or have contact with individuals who have a criminal history, which could put athletes at SafeSport-</p>

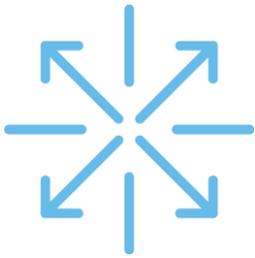


1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing	
	related misconduct risk.
Recommendation	<p>USA-WS must require that individuals it formally authorizes, approves, or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes complete criminal background checks and education and training requirements in a timely manner and before they have contact with athletes to provide assurance that they are educated on the requirements of the Athlete Safety Standards. USA-WS must consistently track and verify criminal background checks and education and training requirements are met for all Required Individuals. Compliance with these requirements must be completed within 90 days of receipt of the final audit report.</p> <p>USA-WS should review the testing results and require all necessary individuals to complete the necessary requirements (i.e., criminal background check and/or education and training).</p>
Management response	<p>We agree with the condition and recommendation and will respond to the USOC with a detailed plan to ensure compliance with the current NGB Athlete Safety Policy. Our plan will be submitted to the USOC within the 90 day timeline referenced above.</p>

2. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Policy Requirements	
Criteria	<p>The Athlete Safety Standards state each NGB/HPMO shall require criminal background checks and education and training for those individuals it formally authorizes, approves, or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes.</p>
Condition	<p>Requiring education and training requirements are not explicitly required in USA Water Ski's SafeSport-related documentation and administrative material for individuals in a position of authority. The policy indicates "It is also strongly encouraged that USA Water Ski members in position of influence and authority familiarize themselves with the USA Water Ski SafeSport Program."</p>
Cause	<p>USA-WS may not have updated its SafeSport-related documentation and administrative materials to align with requirements in the Athlete Safety Standards.</p>

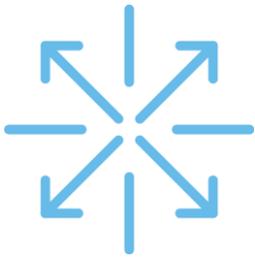


2. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Policy Requirements	
Effect	<p>USA-WS may not be in compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards. USA-WS must be in compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards to be a member in good standing. Noncompliance with the Athlete Safety Standards can result in disciplinary action by the USOC including withdrawal of high performance funding.</p> <p>Additionally, stakeholders (e.g., coaches, staff, officials, volunteers, etc.) may not know that criminal background checks and education and training requirements apply to them or be informed of SafeSport initiatives and the related misconduct areas. Also, athletes may have contact with individuals who are unaware of SafeSport misconduct and the potential impact to athletes' well-being and/or have contact with individuals who have a criminal history, which could put athletes at SafeSport-related misconduct risk.</p>
Recommendation	<p>USA-WS SafeSport Policy must require that individuals it formally authorizes, approves, or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes complete criminal background checks and education and training requirements in a timely manner and before they have contact with athletes to provide assurance that they are educated on the requirements of the Athlete Safety Standards. Compliance with these requirements must be completed within 90 days of receipt of the final audit report.</p>
Management response	<p>We agree with the condition and recommendation and will respond to the USOC with a detailed plan to ensure compliance with the current NGB Athlete Safety Policy. Our plan will be submitted to the USOC within the 90 day timeline referenced above.</p>



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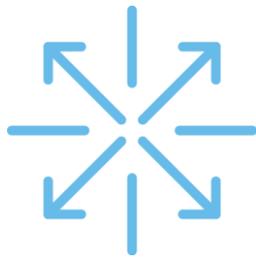
Report Appendices



Appendix A: Documents Reviewed

We reviewed the following documents:

- > Athlete Safety Standards Program Questionnaire
- > Population listing of “required individuals” (i.e., covered individuals required to undergo background check and training)
- > USA Water Ski SafeSport Program Handbook
- > USA Water Ski Bylaws
- > USA Water Ski Code of Ethics 2016



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Appendix B: Personnel Interviewed

We interviewed the following personnel:

- > Bob Crowley, Executive Director
- > Melanie Hansen, Member Services Director