



United States Olympic Committee

United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit of USA Weightlifting

October 2017

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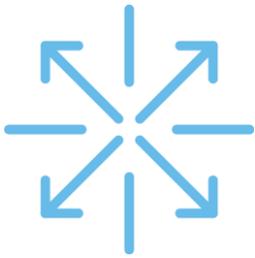
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USOC SafeSport Audit of USA Weightlifting

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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 Weightlifting's (USAW) compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards:

- > **Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing** - 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 the education and training requirements were completed prior to issuing the audit report.
- > **Athlete Safety Standards - Application of the SafeSport Policy (Minors)** - USA Weightlifting's policy states, "USA Weightlifting coaches and administrators who will come into contact with minors are required to undergo a background check every two years," and "USA Weightlifting sanctioned event volunteers and coaches that will have significant exposure to minors will also be required to pass a background check." The USA Weightlifting's application of this policy is inconsistent with the requirements listed in the Athlete Safety Standards and may be focused too narrowly on minors. The Athlete Safety Standards do not limit these activities to include only minors.

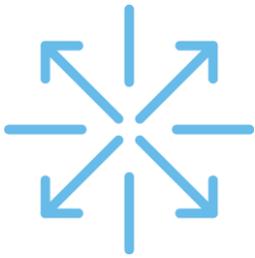
Background and Approach

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 USAW to evaluate compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards. The following activities were performed for this review of USAW:

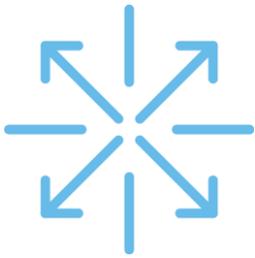
- > Developed and executed an audit program that included:
 - Holding a virtual entrance meeting to discuss and document USAW's SafeSport program and processes.
 - Selecting a sample of ten from the required individuals to ensure a background check was performed and education and training was completed. See **Appendix A** for a list of documents reviewed.

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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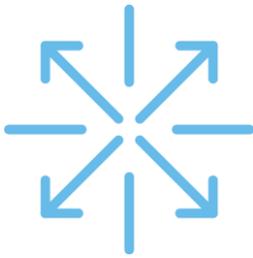
- Reviewing USAW's athlete safety policy and determining whether the following was addressed:
 - Required misconduct is prohibited and defined;
 - Reporting procedures are documented; and
 - The grievance process is documented and complies with Athlete Safety Standards.
 - Identifying which individuals 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 USAW. 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 USAW's 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	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 the education and training requirements were completed prior to issuing the audit report.
Cause	USA Weightlifting did not have sufficient background check and education requirement tools to sufficiently enforce the education requirements.
Effect	<p>Individuals USA Weightlifting 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 USOC's SafeSport program because they have not completed criminal background checks and/or education and training prior to having contact with athletes. USA Weightlifting 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, which could put athletes at SafeSport-related misconduct risk.</p>
Recommendation	USA Weightlifting 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 Weightlifting must consistently track and verify criminal

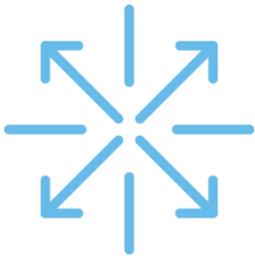


1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing

	<p>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 Weightlifting 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>USA Weightlifting on 25 June 2017 brought in additional stringent measures to widen those who require SafeSport education with immediate effect, though some elements of this require additional IT programming coming into effect on 1 January 2018. USA Weightlifting and its membership were in compliance with the requirements set forth by our organization at the time of this audit report.</p>

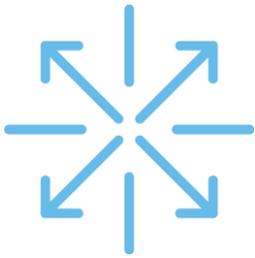
2. Athlete Safety Standards - Application of the SafeSport Policy (Minors)

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>USA Weightlifting's policy states, "USA Weightlifting coaches and administrators who will come into contact with minors are required to undergo a background check every two years," and "USA Weightlifting sanctioned event volunteers and coaches that will have significant exposure to minors will also be required to pass a background check." The USA Weightlifting's application of this policy is inconsistent with the requirements listed in the Athlete Safety Standards and may be focused too narrowly on minors. The Athlete Safety Standards do not limit these activities to include only minors.</p>
Cause	<p>USA Weightlifting focuses heavily on the need to protect minors in its SafeSport requirements. The Athlete Safety Standards, however, require a wider focus on all athletes.</p>
Effect	<p>USA Weightlifting may not be in compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards. USA Weightlifting 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>



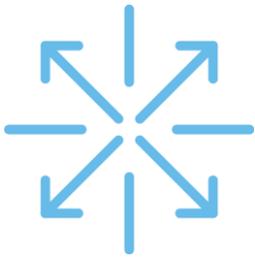
2. Athlete Safety Standards - Application of the SafeSport Policy (Minors)

	<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. By focusing on minors, USA Weightlifting potentially exposes its adult athletes to further risk. 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 Weightlifting 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>On June 27, 2017, USA Weightlifting approved additional measures which were implemented with immediate effect (less some that require IT programming, implemented for 2018 January 1). Those measures address the exclusivity of measures to applying to those overseeing minors and instead require anyone in a position of authority over athletes at particular events inclusive of National team events to have completed the SafeSport training and background checks.</p>



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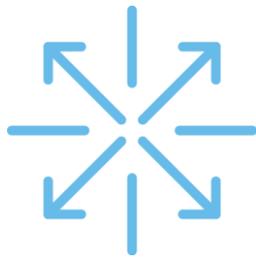
Report Appendices



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 Weightlifting Policies for SafeSport



Appendix B: Personnel Interviewed

We interviewed the following personnel:

- > Phil Andrews, Chief Executive Officer