



# United States Olympic Committee

## United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit of American Canoe Association

August 2018

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# 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 (NGB Athlete Safety Policy) by December 31, 2013<sup>1</sup>.

We noted the following opportunities to enhance the design of American Canoe Association's (ACA) compliance with the 2017 NGB Athlete Safety Policy:

- > **NGB Athlete Safety Policy - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing** - Requiring criminal background checks, at least every two years, and education and training is not consistently enforced by ACA. The following exceptions were identified during our testing:
  - Eight individuals selected for testing (80% of the selected individuals) did not have criminal background checks conducted during the testing period (i.e., April 1, 2017 through March 30, 2018).
  - Five individuals selected for testing (50% of the selected individuals) did not complete education and training requirements during the testing period (i.e., April 1, 2017 through March 30, 2018).

During our review, we also tested compliance with the new NGB Athlete Safety Policy requirements that must be included in each NGB's SafeSport Policy by September, 2018. ACA's policies and procedures met the requirements of the new NGB Athlete Safety Policy. Therefore, no other observations were noted during this audit.

## 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 ACA to evaluate compliance with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy. The following activities were performed for this review of ACA:

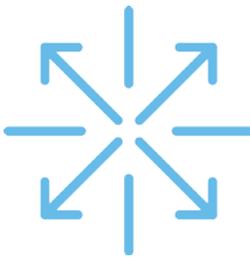
- > Developed and executed an audit program that included:

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<sup>1</sup> 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 NGB Athlete Safety Policy.



- Holding a virtual entrance meeting to discuss and document ACA's SafeSport program and processes.
  - Selecting a sample of 10 from the required individuals to determine whether a background check was performed and education and training was completed. See **Appendix A** for a list of documents reviewed.
  - Reviewing ACA'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 the NGB Athlete Safety Policy.
  - 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 ACA. See **Appendix B** for a list of individuals interviewed.
- > Identified specific observations and recommendations regarding opportunities to enhance compliance with NGB Athlete Safety Policy. 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 ACA's compliance with the 2017 NGB Athlete Safety Policy.

<b>1. NGB Athlete Safety Policy – Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	The 2017 NGB Athlete Safety Policy states each NGB/HPMO shall require criminal background checks, at least every two years, 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.
<b>Condition</b>	Requiring criminal background checks, at least every two years, and education and training is not consistently enforced by ACA. The following exceptions were identified during our testing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Eight individuals selected for testing (80% of the selected individuals) did not have criminal background checks conducted during the testing period (i.e., April 1, 2017 through March 30, 2018).</li><li>2. Five individuals selected for testing (50% of the selected individuals) did not complete education and training requirements during the testing period (i.e., April 1, 2017 through March 30, 2018).</li></ol>
<b>Cause</b>	ACA may not be consistently tracking and monitoring compliance with the criminal background checks and education and training requirements of the NGB Athlete Safety Policy.
<b>Effect</b>	Individuals ACA 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. ACA must be in compliance with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy to be a member in good standing. Noncompliance with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy can result in disciplinary action by the USOC including withdrawal of high performance funding.  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.



### 1. NGB Athlete Safety Policy – Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing

<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>ACA 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 NGB Athlete Safety Policy. ACA must consistently track and verify criminal background checks and education and training requirements are met for all required individuals.</p> <p>ACA 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). Compliance with these requirements for all individuals ACA formally authorizes, approves or appoints (a) to a position of authority over, or (b) to have frequent contact with athletes must be completed within 90 days of receipt of the final audit report.</p>
<b>Management response</b>	<p>ACA does require background checks and education and training testing. SafeSport Handbook page 14-18 (<a href="https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/competition-documents/safesport/aca_-_safesport_hanbook__8-1.pdf">https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/competition-documents/safesport/aca_-_safesport_hanbook__8-1.pdf</a>) and <a href="https://www.americancanoe.org/page/SafeSport">https://www.americancanoe.org/page/SafeSport</a>. ACA, as a new NGB on October 2017, has added all rules to comply with NGB requirements. ACA keeps up to date lists of those that have passed SafeSport training and those that have taken a background check. Also, those selected in the sample testing for background checks may not be required to have a background check under current rules; thus, the percentage represented in the sample size is not an accurate reflection of the ACA as a whole. ACA monitors background checks and SafeSport training carefully. Management feels ACA is compliant in this area to date.</p>



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## Report Appendices

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## Appendix A: Documents Reviewed

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We reviewed the following documents:

- > 2018 American Canoe Association (ACA) Athlete Code of Conduct
- > Amended and Restated Bylaws of the American Canoe Association, Inc. (Effective October 22, 2017)
- > Athlete Safety Standards Program Questionnaire
- > Population listing of “required individuals” (i.e., covered individuals required to undergo background check and training)



## Appendix B: Personnel Interviewed

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We interviewed the following personnel:

- > Wade Blackwood, Executive Director
- > Chris Stec, Chief Operating Officer