United States Olympic Committee

United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit of US Rowing

September 2017
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United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit of US Rowing
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, 2013.

We noted the following opportunities to enhance the design of US Rowing 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 US Rowing. The following exceptions were identified during our testing:

   > Five individuals selected for testing (50% 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 three individuals had completed the criminal background checks 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 the education and training requirements were completed prior to issuing the audit report.

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

> Developed and executed an audit program that included:

   > Holding a virtual entrance meeting to discuss and document US Rowing’s 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.

1 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.
– Reviewing US Rowing’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 US Rowing. 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.
The table below represents opportunities to enhance the design and effectiveness of US Rowing’s compliance with the Athlete Safety Standards.

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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| 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. | Requiring criminal background checks and education and training is not consistently enforced by US Rowing. The following exceptions were identified during our testing: 1. Five individuals selected for testing (50% 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 three individuals had completed the criminal background checks 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 the education and training requirements were completed prior to issuing the audit report. | US Rowing may not be consistently tracking and monitoring compliance with the criminal background checks and education and training requirements of the Athlete Safety Standards. | Individuals US Rowing 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. US Rowing 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. 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
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<th><strong>1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Management response</strong></td>
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Report Appendices
Appendix A: Documents Reviewed

We reviewed the following documents:

- Athlete Safety Standards Program Questionnaire
- By-laws of the United States Rowing Association
- Population listing of “required individuals” (i.e., covered individuals required to undergo background check and training)
- USRowing Internal Policies and Participant Safety Handbook
- USRowing SafeSport Policy
- USRowingAUDIT Checklist
Appendix B: Personnel Interviewed

We interviewed the following personnel:

- Susan Smith, Acting Chief Executive Officer
- John Wik, Director of Referee Programming and SafeSport Manager