



# **United States Olympic Committee**

**United States Olympic Committee SafeSport Audit  
of US Rowing**

September 2017



Candor. Insight. Results.

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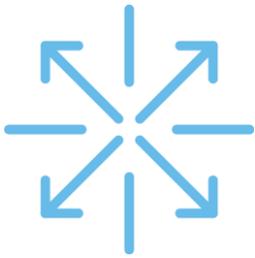
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# Executive Summary

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

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

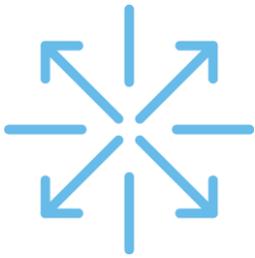
USOC engaged Baker Tilly Virchow Krause (Baker Tilly), to assist the USOC in the completion of SafeSport audits, to assess compliance with SafeSport policies and procedures at the USOC and all of its NGBs and High Performance Management Organizations (HPMOs).

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.

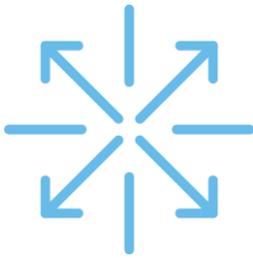
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<sup>1</sup> Effective June 20, 2017 the USOC replaced the Athlete Safety Standards with the NGB Athlete Safety Policy. Due to the timing of this audit, fieldwork was performed in accordance with the Athlete Safety Standards.



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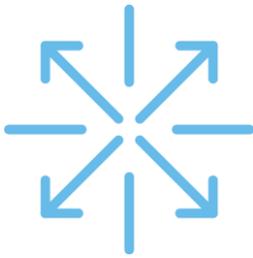
- Reviewing US Rowing's athlete safety policy and determining whether the following was addressed:
    - Required misconduct is prohibited and defined;
    - Reporting procedures are documented; and
    - The grievance process is documented and complies with Athlete Safety Standards.
  - Identifying 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.



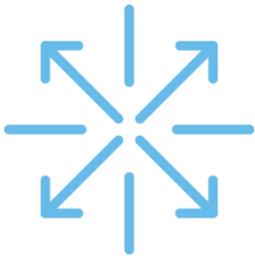
# Detailed Report

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

1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing	
<b>Criteria</b>	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.
<b>Condition</b>	<p>Requiring criminal background checks and education and training is not consistently enforced by US Rowing. The following exceptions were identified during our testing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>
<b>Cause</b>	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.
<b>Effect</b>	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



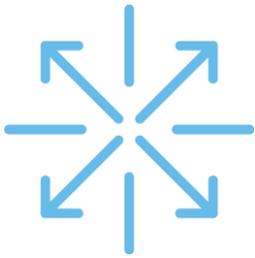
1. Athlete Safety Standards - Criminal Background Checks and Education and Training Testing	
	criminal history, which could put athletes at SafeSport-related misconduct risk.
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>US Rowing must require that individuals it formally authorizes, approves, or appoints (a) to a position 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. US Rowing 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>US Rowing 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>
<b>Management response</b>	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.



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## Report Appendices

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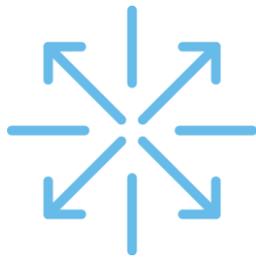


## Appendix A: Documents Reviewed

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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

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We interviewed the following personnel:

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