

Athlete Safeguarding Framework

Version 1.0



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DOCUMENT TITLE		Athlete Safeguarding Framework			
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PURPOSE

The Western Australian Institute of Sport (WAIS) is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and high-performance environment for all athletes. Our commitment to Winning Well—where how we win is just as important as when we win—underpins this Athlete Safeguarding Framework.

This framework outlines WAIS’s approach to safeguarding by aligning with our Strategic Plan, the National Integrity Framework (NIF), and recommendations from the KPMG Athlete Safeguarding Governance and Culture Review. It reinforces WAIS’ commitment to athlete wellbeing, psychosocial and physical safety, and empowerment through clear policies, processes, and structures.

GOVERNANCE OF ATHLETE SAFEGUARDING

The WAIS Board is ultimately accountable for athlete safeguarding, providing strategic oversight of safeguarding strategy, policy adoption, and compliance with external requirements such as the National Integrity Framework. The Board monitors safeguarding through regular reporting, review of risk indicators, and receives updates on emerging issues and complaints data.

The **Integrity and Safeguarding Committee** assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities. It oversees the implementation of safeguarding practices, monitors alignment with national policies, and provides informed recommendations to the Board on areas of risk, non-compliance, and continuous improvement.

The **Chief Executive Officer** (CEO) is responsible for implementing the strategic direction set by the Board and for ensuring that safeguarding is embedded operationally across WAIS. The CEO ensures timely, transparent reporting to the Board on risks, trends, and compliance issues related to athlete safeguarding.

The **Senior Leadership Team** (SLT) is responsible for integrating safeguarding into all operational areas. Each SLT member ensures safeguarding measures are implemented, monitored, and regularly reviewed within their portfolios. They contribute to the identification of risks, tracking of issues, and ensure front-line staff are supported and accountable.

The **Corporate Services Director** (CSD) is responsible for executing safeguarding operational plans, reporting on safeguarding metrics, and ensuring continuous improvement.

REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS

Athlete safeguarding is a standing agenda item for both the Integrity and Safeguarding Committee and the WAIS Board. Reporting includes:

- **Lead indicators**, such as staff training completion rates, WWCC compliance, and policy review progress.
- **Lag indicators**, including the number and type of safeguarding complaints or incidents, resolution timeframes, and feedback from athletes or staff.
- **Emerging trends**, systemic risks, or cultural factors that require further review or escalation.

These reports provide the Board with visibility of WAIS’ safeguarding performance and ensure alignment with sector expectations and the Win Well culture.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone at WAIS has a role in safeguarding. Responsibilities are integrated into:

- Position Descriptions (PDs)
- Codes of Conduct
- Athlete agreements, and
- Third-party provider agreements.

All staff must undergo appropriate screening and induction. Safeguarding responsibilities are embedded into individual performance reviews.

All WAIS staff have a duty to uphold athlete safeguarding and report any concern, suspicion, or disclosure of harm, misconduct, or policy breach. This includes:

- Reporting directly to the Corporate Services Director (CSD), Integrity and Safeguarding Manager (ISM), or a relevant supervisor
- Using the organisation's internal reporting tools or complaint forms
- Cooperating with investigations or follow-up actions

Staff are briefed on reporting expectations during induction and receive ongoing training. Failure to report concerns may be considered a breach of policy and addressed accordingly.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WAIS has adopted the National Integrity Framework, which includes:

- WAIS NIF Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy
- WAIS NIF Participant Protection Policy
- WAIS NIF Competition Manipulation and Sports Gambling Policy
- WAIS NIF Improper Use of Drugs and Medicines Policy
- WAIS NIF Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy

WAIS' internal Complaints and Feedback Policy complements the NIF framework and outlines internal processes for issues not covered under the NIF.

These policies are periodically reviewed as per the WAIS Policy Register.

Additional safeguarding-related staff policies include:

- Recruitment Selection and Onboarding Policy
- Employment Screening Policy
- Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Athlete, Staff and Board Member Codes of Conduct.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Safeguarding risks are embedded in WAIS' broader Risk Management Framework and overseen by the Board. The Integrity and Safeguarding Committee advises on risk identification, assessment, and treatment.

Athlete Safeguarding Risks include:

- Physical environments (venues and travel)
- Digital safety and social media
- Sport culture & psychological safety
- External pressures to perform
- Interpersonal and power dynamics
- Third-party contractors and service providers

All WAIS training sites undergo periodic safeguarding risk assessments. Risk mitigation plans are developed collaboratively by managers and staff.

COMPLAINTS AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

WAIS is committed to managing complaints with sensitivity, respect and understanding of the potential impact of trauma. The Complaints and Feedback Policy outlines:

- Internal and external complaint pathways
- Support mechanisms
- Independent escalation options

All complaints are logged in a central register and tracked to resolution. Reporting tools are available in accessible formats for children and young people.

ESCALATION PATHWAYS AND INFORMATION FLOW

WAIS maintains clear and documented escalation pathways to ensure timely and appropriate response to athlete safeguarding concerns:

- Issues raised at the operational level (e.g. by coaches, support staff, or athletes) are escalated to the CSD or ISM for review and triage.
- The CSD / ISM determines the categorisation of the issue and refers appropriately to the CEO and/or Integrity and Safeguarding Committee and / or Board within the agreed timeframe.
- Category 3 issues involving allegations or criminal behaviours and/or present immediate risk of harm must be reported to the relevant authorities.
- The Board receives regular dashboards summarising safeguarding data, as well as immediate briefings on serious incidents or potential reputational risks.

Escalation flowcharts and decision trees support these pathways and are included in staff training and onboarding.

EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

WAIS integrates safeguarding education into all athlete pathways and staff onboarding processes. The WAIS Athlete Advisory Committee plays an important role in informing safeguarding strategies and ongoing engagement.

WAIS delivers:

- Regular safeguarding education to athletes, staff, and contractors
- Annual refresher training
- Targeted engagement with athlete families
- Awareness programs in recruitment and onboarding

Third-party contracts and athlete agreements include safeguarding expectations and compliance clauses.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

WAIS is committed to ongoing monitoring and review of its safeguarding framework. Metrics, audit results, and athlete feedback inform updates to policies and training content.

Annual reviews will:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of safeguards
- Capture new and emerging risks
- Update policies in line with legislative or sector-wide changes

REVIEW

This framework will be reviewed every three years. If at any time the framework is no longer appropriate in its current form, it will be reviewed immediately.

Any necessary revisions will be made in consultation with stakeholders.

LEGISLATION AND FRAMEWORKS

WAIS Constitution

WAIS Strategic Plan 2025-2032

Risk Management Framework

Australia's High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy

National Integrity Framework

RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following documents support the implementation of this framework:

Integrity and Safeguarding Committee Charter

Athlete, Staff and Board Member Codes of Conduct

WAIS NIF Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

WAIS NIF Participant Protection Policy

WAIS NIF Competition Manipulation and Sports Gambling Policy

WAIS NIF Improper Use of Drugs and Medicines Policy

WAIS NIF Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy

Recruitment Selection and Onboarding Policy

Employment Screening Policy

Workplace Behaviour Policy

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Submitted By	Date	Approved By	Date	Details
1.0	Integrity & Safeguarding Committee	03/11/2025	WAIS Board	03/11/2025	New Framework