

# VICTORIAN INTEGRITY IN SPORT ACTION PLAN

## Introduction

The Sport Integrity Australia Act 2020 (Commonwealth) defines sports integrity as the manifestation of the ethics and values that promote community confidence in sport. The 2018 Review of Australia's Sports Integrity Arrangements (Wood Review) notes that sports integrity can be identified across a broad spectrum of activities from minor issues of ethics and behavioural values to those involving serious and organised crime. It can include criminal offences relating to competition manipulation, the supply and use of prohibited substances, breaches of codes of conduct, participant welfare, protection, and discrimination issues. It also outlines the impact that these issues can have on participation rates in attracting substantial media exposure, and the potentially severe reputational, commercial, and other repercussions for individuals and sporting bodies. These repercussions can also flow on to government, where government or governmental statutory bodies are the sport's regulator.

The establishment of Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) in 2020 provided the sport sector with streamlined systems and processes and increased support relating to integrity issues. The National Integrity Framework (NIF) first introduced in 2021, underpins best practice policy standards and provides a single system across the national sporting landscape to manage integrity threats for those sports who opt to sign up.

## Integrity in Victorian Sport

Maintaining integrity within the sport sector is multi-layered and complex. It requires a collaborative approach across sport, government, law enforcement, regulatory bodies and the private sector.

Match fixing, performance enhancing drugs and other forms of corruption pose a challenge to the integrity of sporting competitions, their reputation, and ability to attract participants and commercial opportunities. Governance challenges, misuse of alcohol, violence, and inappropriate behaviour, by both spectators and participants, also undermine the reputation of sport and its value to the community.

Victoria must support both national and state integrity regulatory bodies, systems, and processes to ensure that all Victorian athletes and community sport participants feel safe and the sport they participate in is fair, ethical, and free from corruption. A robust and refined approach to addressing sport integrity at a state and community sport level is also required to meet the specific needs of the sector and to complement national regulatory arrangements.

This Action Plan sets out the practical steps the Victorian Government is taking to strengthen integrity arrangements in Victorian sport. It focuses on education and building the capability of sports to identify and address integrity issues.

## Key Actions

Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) will lead the implementation of the Plan's 5 Actions and will work closely with sector partners on the delivery of its outcomes.

### Action 1 – Embed an integrity culture in sport

SRV will work closely with experts to facilitate and support web-based and face-to-face education and processes to embed an integrity culture within sporting organisations at all levels. This Action will focus on:

- overseeing implementation of the *Fair Play Code* of conduct for sport and active recreation organisations across the sector, while encouraging Code adoption and adherence through promotion of the 5 guiding principles of Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness and Safety
- highlighting the implications of legislative and policy frameworks for integrity issues such as anti-doping, match-fixing, sports corruption, and illegal gambling
- supporting the Victorian Member Protection Information Officer program to broaden complaint handling and dispute resolution knowledge through no-cost training
- advocating on behalf of Victoria at national forums
- supporting, promoting, and encouraging completion of SIA and Australian Sports Commission (ASC) educational training and resources.

### **Action 2 – Develop and maintain key integrity partnerships with state and Commonwealth organisations to promote best practice integrity systems, policies, and processes**

SRV will continue to prioritise relationships with organisations such as SIA, Victoria Police, the Commission for Children and Young People, and Victoria-based national sporting organisations and state sporting associations to safeguard the integrity of sport and the health and welfare of participants

### **Action 3 – Leverage the expertise of the Victorian Sport Integrity Network**

The Victorian Government established the Victorian Sport Integrity Network in 2017. The Network provides the opportunity to share sport integrity knowledge and intelligence across the sector and access expertise to consult, develop and implement government policy, training resources and guidelines.

SRV will convene and manage the Network, including coordinating meetings to be held at least three times per year. SRV will report to the Victorian Ministers for Tourism, Sport and Major Events and Community Sport on relevant issues and opportunities presented by the Network.

### **Action 4 – Deliver an annual Sporting Integrity Symposium**

SRV will work in partnership with Victoria Police to facilitate an annual sporting integrity symposium to:

- connect key sport integrity stakeholders including national and state sporting organisations, SIA, the ASC, international sport regulators, racing industry experts, gambling and liquor controllers and leading university academics
- educate and share knowledge on integrity developments across state, national and international sport sectors
- build industry connections and improve the knowledge of integrity risks across sport.

### **Action 5 – Provision of sport integrity advice and referrals**

SRV will continue to provide sport integrity advice and referrals to government and the sector including:

- reviewing and aligning Victorian and Commonwealth Government sport integrity legislation, policies and processes to support synergy with the *Commonwealth Sport Integrity Australia Act 2020* and recommendations of the *Review of Australia's Sport Integrity Arrangements 2018*
- researching and reviewing integrity developments in Australian and international jurisdictions
- analysing and providing guidance on governance and integrity arrangements and challenges facing Victorian sporting organisations
- representing Victoria at meetings of the Commonwealth Government's Jurisdictional Sport Integrity Network.