

Victorian Integrity in Sport Action Plan

Introduction

Maintaining integrity within the sports sector is a multi-layered and complex issue requiring a collaborative approach across sport, State and Commonwealth governments, law enforcement and the commercial sector.

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

Commonwealth bodies such as the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA), National Integrity in Sport Unit (NISU), Australian Border Force (ABF) and other law enforcement agencies interact at a national level in order to create a regulatory network for the sports sector. They also work with National Sports Organisations and state-based agencies such as Victoria Police.

Sport and athletes competing at a national and international level are exposed to increased regulatory oversight, enhanced public and media scrutiny and performance pressure which may give rise to specific threats to integrity. Athletes, coaches and administrators are also supported within this system with better education, awareness raising and other support to protect the industry from internal and external threats.

A small number of instances of match fixing, along with the findings from research into international betting activity on sporting competitions at the state and community sport level, serve as a valuable reminder that the sports system needs to be vigilant about integrity threats, regardless of the context in which they arise. A robust and refined approach to addressing sports integrity at a state and community sport level is therefore also required in order to meet the specific needs of this sector and complement national regulatory arrangements.

This Action Plan sets out practical steps the Government will be taking to strengthen integrity arrangements in Victoria. It focuses on building the capability of sports to identify and address integrity issues. This Action Plan will put the power back in the hands of state and community level sports, ensuring they have the support they need to tackle big issues like illegal drugs and alcohol, corruption arising from international betting activity, violence and poor behaviour from players and spectators and governance, when they need it most.

Key Actions

The *Victorian Integrity in Sport Action Plan* has been updated to continue to build the capability of sports to identify and address integrity issues. Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) will lead the implementation of these four actions, working closely with sector partners.

Action 1 – 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 sector responses to integrity issues.

SRV will convene and manage the Network, including coordinating meetings to be held three times per year. SRV will report to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events on the Network's recommendations on key issues and responses to sport integrity developments. Leveraging the expertise of the Network will be essential in delivering the next wave of reforms that support integrity at all levels of Victorian sport.

Action 2 – Holding an annual integrity in sport symposium

SRV will work with key stakeholders to facilitate the holding of an annual integrity in sport symposium to:

- bring together stakeholders including the Victorian Sport Integrity Network, National Integrity of Sport Unit, Sport Australia, Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority, Victoria Police and the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation
- help build connections and improve the knowledge of integrity risk across the sector.

Action 3 – Embed an integrity culture in sport

SRV will work closely with experts to facilitate 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:

- implementing the *Fair Play Code* of conduct for sport and recreation to encourage Code compliance, underpinned by the five guiding principles of integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness and safety
- highlighting the implications of legislative and policy frameworks for integrity issues such as match-fixing, illegal gambling and doping
- supporting Member Protection Information Officers, complaint handling and dispute resolution.

Action 4 – Provision of sport integrity advice and referrals

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

- analysing Victorian and Commonwealth Government sport integrity legislation and policies and proposals for reform including the *Review of Australia's Sport Integrity Arrangements*
- 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.



Authorised by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

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