

SSI PRESS RELEASE

Safe Sport International Calls for International Framework on Athlete Representation Following Abuse-Related Convictions, and/or Safeguarding Investigations

New discussion paper addresses gap in guidance for sports organisations

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Safe Sport International (SSI) today released a groundbreaking discussion paper calling for the development of an international framework to guide sports organisations in making decisions about representation by individuals with criminal, civil or disciplinary records related to the abuse of others.

The paper, titled *"Safeguarding in sport: Towards an international framework for representation following criminal, civil or disciplinary records related to the abuse of others,"* addresses a critical gap in current guidance for sports bodies. It comes in response to recent high-profile cases that have highlighted the need for clear, consistent standards in this area.

"Our goal is to initiate a crucial conversation within the sports community about how we handle these complex situations and to assist them in their decision-making processes," said Anne Tiivas, Chair of Safe Sport International.

Key recommendations from the paper include:

- Developing an international framework on athlete representation following abuse-related convictions, and/or safeguarding investigations.
- Prioritising the profound impact on victims/survivors, their families, the wider public and other affected persons in decision making.
- Establishing clear protocols and risk assessment and management procedures across all regulatory and sports event bodies.
- Involving specialists in public protection, safeguarding, and effective risk management in decision-making processes.

SSI calls for international collaboration not only among athletes (particularly victims/survivors and other affected persons), sports organisations, policy makers, and researchers but also inter-governmental bodies, legislators, human and child rights organisations to assist in developing comprehensive guidance which will be applicable at all levels of sport, from local to international competition.

SSI is calling for sports bodies and event organisers to demonstrate institutional courage in their handling of complex situations - there are some situations where individual participation in an event as an athlete, coach or other role should be deemed unacceptable.

"We believe that representation in sport, especially at elite levels, is a privilege that comes with responsibilities," Tiivas added. "This framework will help ensure that decisions about participation are made thoughtfully and consistently, with the welfare of all in mind."

The full discussion paper is available on the Safe Sport International website.

SSI invites feedback and engagement from all interested parties as it works towards establishing an international framework and guidance in this area.

About Safe Sport International:

Safe Sport International (SSI) is a leading non-profit and UK based charity committed to ending all forms of inter-personal violence, abuse and harassment in sports environments globally. SSI works to develop standards, guidance, and best practices for safeguarding in sport worldwide.

Contact:

media@safesportinternational.com