

FISA Policy

Safeguarding Participants in Rowing from Harassment and Abuse

1. Policy Statement

The Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d’Aviron (FISA) believes that it is a fundamental right of all individuals involved with FISA, whether they are an athlete, staff, or a volunteer, to be able to participate in a non-violent, safe and respectful environment.

In that spirit, FISA acknowledges its duty of care in this regard and is committed to creating and supporting an environment and a culture free from harassment and abuse. The welfare of all individuals involved with FISA is paramount. Behaviour and actions that constitute harassment and abuse will not be tolerated.

All forms of harassment and abuse constitute a violation of the FISA Code of Ethics and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Code of Ethics.

FISA member federations, volunteers and staff are bound by the principles of this Policy and are deemed to have agreed to comply with this Policy.

2. Definition of Harassment and Abuse

FISA has adopted the definitions of harassment and abuse as set out in the IOC Consensus Statement 2016 (www.olympic.org/athlete365/library/safe-sport/):

“Harassment and abuse can be expressed in five forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include i) psychological abuse, ii) physical abuse, iii) sexual harassment, iv) sexual abuse, and v) neglect.

These forms of abuse are defined here as:

— **Psychological abuse** — means any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth.

— **Physical abuse** — means any deliberate and unwelcome act – such as for example punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning – that causes physical trauma or injury. Such act can also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (e.g., age-, or physique-inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or forced doping practices.

— **Sexual harassment** — any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical. Sexual harassment can take the form of sexual abuse.

— **Sexual abuse** — any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is coerced/manipulated or is not or cannot be given.

— **Neglect** — within the meaning of this document means the failure of a coach or another person with a duty of care towards the athlete to provide a minimum level of care to the athlete, which is causing harm, allowing harm to be caused, or creating an imminent danger of harm.

Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online (*or by other means*). Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.

The IOC Consensus Statement 2008, considers that harassment and abuse are on a continuum; and therefore, should not be separated.”

There are a further five types of abuse. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/news/safeguarding/2018/04/ten-types-of-abuse-you-should-be-aware-of>

3. Purpose of the Policy

The FISA Policy on Safeguarding Participants in Rowing from Harassment and Abuse aims to:

- a) Provide a framework for promoting the prevention of harassment and abuse
- b) Raise awareness of, and provide clarity on, what constitutes harassment and abuse
- c) Outline the process for reporting incidents and case management of harassment and abuse

Thereby promoting a safe environment for all involved in the sport of rowing.

4. Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all individuals involved with FISA, namely “any party that deals with FISA, is a member of FISA or shares in its activities” (see Art.57), including:

- a) Athletes
- b) Coaches, medical personnel and athlete entourage
- c) FISA Staff & Consultants
- d) FISA Council & Commission members
- e) All persons participating in FISA activities including representatives of Member Federations, recognised Continental Rowing Confederations, recognised Member Groupings, Organising Committees for FISA events, subcontractors and volunteers.

Some athletes or individuals may have particular vulnerabilities, such as juniors, para athletes, minorities.

The above individuals shall be referred to as ‘Participants’.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 FISA is responsible for:

- a) Implementing this Policy.
- b) Raising awareness of this Policy and the procedure for reporting an incident of harassment and abuse, across all Participants of FISA activities.
- c) Ensuring that reports of harassment and abuse that are brought to its attention are managed in a timely manner, fairly and responsibly.
- d) Providing appropriate support to concerned Participants of an alleged incident of harassment or abuse.
- e) Imposing appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when there has been a violation of this Policy.
- f) Ensuring that there is a safeguarding plan and reporting procedure in place at all FISA events.
- g) Providing and raising awareness of suitable educational resources and training opportunities for Participants.
- h) Updating the Policy and related procedures from time to time.

5.2 Member Federations are responsible for:

- a) Defining and implementing their own policies and procedures to protect their athletes, staff and volunteers from harassment and abuse, *adapted to their own national legal framework* and consistent with the FISA Policy. It is recommended to use the IOC Safeguarding Toolkit referenced in section 7 of this Policy when developing local national policies and procedures.
- b) Managing reports of alleged incidents of harassment and abuse relating to persons that are members of their national federation, through their regional bodies or clubs, including athletes, staff and volunteers.
- c) Ensuring all Participants representing their federation in a FISA activity, are aware of and understand the FISA Policy on Safeguarding Participants in Rowing from Harassment and Abuse.
- d) Advising FISA of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse imposed by the member federation, and of any suspensions where the individual may present a risk to FISA Participants at that time or in the future.

5.3 Participants are responsible for:

- a) Taking action to safeguard others against harassment and abuse in rowing and for taking immediate action once it has been identified, whether or not a complaint has been made.
- b) Reporting their concerns to the Safeguarding Officer or appropriate Designated Person where they have reason to believe that another Participant has experienced or is experiencing harassment and abuse. Information should be shared on a 'needs to know'

basis only. The person making a report should keep a confidential note of the information they have passed on and to whom.

- c) Advising FISA of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse that they have received.

6. Reporting, Investigation and Disciplinary Procedures

The procedures relating to this Policy are outlined in the annexed 'FISA Procedures - Safeguarding Participants in Rowing from Harassment and Abuse'.

7. Educational & Related Resources

The IOC Safeguarding Toolkit has been created to assist the Olympic Movement to develop and implement athlete-safeguarding policies and procedures

(www.olympic.org/athlete365/safeguarding/).

To complement the toolkit and ensure that athletes, their entourage and other individuals understand the core components of this sensitive topic, a free bite-size IOC Athlete Safeguarding e-learning course has been developed and launched on the IOC Athlete Learning Gateway (<http://onlinecourse.olympic.org/course/baseview.php?id=39>).

Additional resources:

- a) [FISA Code of Ethics](#)
- b) [IOC Code of Ethics](#)
- c) [IOC Consensus Statement 2016: Harassment and Abuse in Sport](#)
- d) [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- e) [International Safeguarding Children in Sport guidelines](#) (in several languages)
- f) [The Council of Europe](#): Article 1. (ii) of the European Sports Charter (version dated 2001)
- g) [UNESCO](#): Article 10.1 of the Revised International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (version dated 2015)
- h) [UN Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- i) [Safe Sport International](#)

8. Glossary

Abuse - Abuse is defined as any action that intentionally harms or injures another person. Abuse is sometimes also referred to as non-accidental violence.

Child - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". Early childhood relates to those below 8 years of age. Juvenile or young person and adolescents are 10–19 years of age.

Child Protection - UNICEF uses the term 'child protection' to refer to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home.

Designated Person – A Designated Person is an appropriately trained person who oversees safeguarding responsibilities at a FISA event and reports to the Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding – Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of vulnerable adults or children and protect them from harm, including protecting them from harassment and abuse.

Safeguarding Officer – The Safeguarding Officer is the principle person in the organisation that receives reports concerning the welfare of Participants, that coordinates the management of the reports and responds to queries in relation to this Policy.

9. Acknowledgements

FISA acknowledges the significant contribution of the FISA Athletes Commission and FISA Sports Medicine Commission in raising awareness of this important issue and championing the needs of the Athletes. Both Commissions have been instrumental in the development and implementation of this Policy.