

February 10, 2018

George Redden
Legislative Correspondent
U.S. Senator Jerry Moran, Kansas
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Phone (202) 224-6521 | Fax (202) 228-6966

Dear Mr. Redden,

In response to your correspondence, dated February 2, 2018, regarding the area of athlete protection through the organizational structure of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), National Governing Bodies (NGB) and the Ted Stevens Act is noted below.

First and foremost, USA Roller Sports (USARS) is committed to the structure above, and specifically embraces and utilizes the best practices as suggested by the USOC and SafeSports. The commitment toward health and safety is across all individuals within our membership and beyond to reflect in positive favor for all our athletes, coaches, officials, Executive Board Leadership and professional staff. The commitment is naturally magnified, when those at risk fall into the minor age category.

Requested Questions:

1. What reporting protocols for child and sexual abuse allegations are currently in place to ensure that all reports receive fair, timely, and thorough review by all appropriate parties, including law enforcement?
 - a. Until SafeSport was implemented, all protocols would have gone through our Membership Eligibility Committee, which required a 14-day action period for a reply from USA Roller Sports to the parties involved that the process had begun. Any incident that would have required the reporting directly to law enforcement be it sexual or any type of legal problem would have been required to be directly reported to law enforcement. Incidents that would have stayed with the Membership Eligibility Committee would be such things as a sport protest or perhaps an ethics violation. With the implementation of SafeSport, the guideline reads clear that if an incident were reported, that party being reported to, would serve as a mandatory reporter and as such was bound to move the information and details to the proper authorities of SafeSport, Law Enforcement or anything specific to the state for where the action occurred and was reported from.
2. Are there special accommodations to account for volunteers that are separately employed by non-NGB institutions, like in the case of Dr. Nassar who was employed by MSU, in these reporting practices?
 - a. For USARS this only revolves around our volunteer athletic training staff that helps staff our National Championships or who may travel with one of our teams to world events. Those trainers are treated just as our coaches would be and are criminally background checked through the National Center for Safety Initiatives. They are also moving

forward, required to complete the SafeSport training. To our knowledge there are no other areas where this point would apply with our operations.

3. Has your organization ever utilized a NDA to enforce confidentiality against any athlete, volunteer or employee in the past. To the extent possible, please provide all details regarding the justification and circumstances surrounding every individual NDA used by your organization?
 - a. In the recent past we can attest that this has not occurred, however we are unable account with accuracy if such agreements existed prior to 10 years ago. We keep numerous hard copy files on hand from the past that could have such an agreement in existence, but in speaking with our staff and our attorney USARS has not utilized a Non-Disclosure Agreement. USARS is a decades old organization, with hard copy files that date back to the 1970's housed in our headquarters. For USARS to research all those files on a maybe would not be a proactive approach. What is proactive though, are our steps that we are putting in place to improve our compliance, and to educate our membership on the values of identifying incidents and the mandatory reporting emphasized in the SafeSport training program.

4. Has your organization ever utilized additional binding agreements other than NDA's with athletes under your purview. To the extent possible, please provide all details regarding the justification and circumstances surrounding every individual agreement used by your organization?
 - a. There are several cases over the years where agreements have been put in place to discipline an athlete or coach for example. However again to our knowledge none of these have been specific to sexual abuse. Traditionally these agreements are put in place when an athlete or coach is placed on probation or suspension by the membership eligibility committee for something such as a rules violation, or sport related incident. There have been incidents of altercations, arguments, and threats between athletes, coaches and so forth. In these cases where an agreement may exist to serve a probation or suspension, they have been formulated from our legal counsel.

5. Since the recent lawsuits filed against USOC, USAG, and MSU for organizational failures to investigate, discipline or remove Dr. Nassar after complaints of sexual abuse, has your organization taken any additional steps to improve the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of its criminal misconduct reporting mechanisms?
 - a. Currently USARS has entered into an agreement with the Nebraska State Attorney General's office regarding an organizational failure around financials and accounting. The agreement requires USARS to open a variety of transparency windows that communicate with not only the volunteer executive board leadership and the committees associated, but to in other cases the public as well. The agreement though is based around organization financials and accounting, not sexual abuse. With that said, USARS has completed or is in the process of taking several very positive steps forward in this arena. These steps include:
 - i. The hiring of myself as the new Executive Director. For the past 2 years the organization has operated without an Executive Director, so having the day to day leadership available to our professional staff and membership has been an extremely positive step. Personally, I spent 20 plus years serving as a professional with the Boy Scouts of America, where Youth Protection Training was an everyday reality. I personally believe this puts USARS and myself in a very unique position on how to identify and implement reporting procedures.

- ii. Under the advisement of our legal counsel, USARS will be making bylaw changes this April to assist with the very issues lined out in this document and to be more proactive toward membership eligibility and specifically reporting guidelines.
- iii. Our entire professional staff has completed SafeSport Training.
- iv. We have marketed to our entire membership through website changes, newsletters, social media and direct email communications the importance of SafeSport training. We have reached out to our membership, our executive board, officials, and even our parents.
- v. We are currently working with our membership data base RSpportz and with SafeSport to integrate the data bases and thus gain a more clean and accurate report on just who is and is not trained.
- vi. USARS will have on the agenda at the next Executive Board meeting the topic of SafeSport and the importance of having more than just coaches and officials complete SafeSport, but all of our membership over the age of 18.
- vii. USARS is working on a plan, to post via our website and the public any of our membership that has been declared permanently ineligible, so that other NGB's and organizations outside of sports are made aware.
- viii. As the Executive Director and Chair of the National Championships, I am personally moving forward with a plan to promote SafeSport at our event, and to offer an educational session on the importance of the training.
- ix. There will be more ideas on this moving forward and as the ideas generate, they will be presented to our compliance committee and executive board to continue to move the progress forward.

6. Please identify any circumstances in which USOC did not take any action following a report of criminal behavior from your organization. To the extent possible, please provide all details regarding the justification and circumstances involved in the USOC's decision not to act?
- a. Based on conversations with our staff, there has never been an incident in which the USOC did not act in the best interest of USARS and our membership. There were no known reports from the staff that would fall into "a failure to act" category. However, it is important to note the long history of USARS, and to emphasize the reality that something could be in our history that as a current organization, we are unaware of and as such a failure could have existed.
7. In 2017, USOC engaged with a third-part consultant to assess compliance with SafeSport policies and procedures within USOC and all of its NGB's and High Performance Management Organizations necessary for full compliance. If additional recommendations were issued, what actions were taken by your organization? Are there any remaining recommendations that your organization has yet to fully implement?
- a. USARS has been fully onboard with SafeSport from the beginning. We initially struggled with implementation, not because we couldn't get our coaches to take it, but more because we were taking on a new membership registration system at the time and have had some struggles in merging them. However, we can validate through downloads of the membership and SafeSport reports that we are moving closer to 100% trained, as we are over 90% currently trained. Our biggest complaint here though revolves around confusion about who exactly should be trained. The area specifically revolves around officials and SafeSport's wording of other adults who may come in contact. This was

not the initial message conveyed to USARS, but is the message of today. The bottom line is our organization is committed to meeting these thresholds and will under my leadership, which began only on January 5 of this year, do everything possible to make it happen. But, there are concerns that we have in USARS, as there appears to be nothing in place to address individuals who may jump sports and who may have had an issue, suspension or deemed permanently ineligible, aside from posting a list on an NGB webpage. This is an area that leaves NGB's and the USOC extremely vulnerable and should be addressed with positive solutions put into place sooner rather than later.

We hope this letter of response will meet your request and should you have any additional questions, concerns of action needed, please do not hesitate in reaching back to me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. R. Steele', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Steele
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