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HAVING **FUN** TODAY ... BUILDING **CHAMPIONS** FOR TOMORROW!

February 15, 2018

Senator Jerry Moran  
Subcommittee of Consumer Protection,  
Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security

Senator Richard Blumenthal  
Subcommittee of Consumer Protection,  
Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security

Gentlemen,

This is in response to the inquiries posed by Senators Jerry Moran and Richard Blumenthal in correspondence dated February 2, 2018.

As an overview, USA Water Ski is a non-Olympic NGB member of the United States Olympic Committee. There are nine sport disciplines underneath the USA Water Ski umbrella that are responsible for the specific rules relating to their sport discipline. All sport disciplines are required to adhere to the universal policies and procedures set by USA Water Ski such as the Code of Conduct, SafeSport policies, etc.

USA Water Ski does not receive funding from the USOC. Our elite athletes may earn Operation Gold benefits if they place at world championship events. A select few elite athletes have access to the USOC's Elite Athlete Health Insurance program.

USA Water Ski does not have a national training program. USA Water Ski does not hire coaches, trainers, high performance directors or any support staff to work with elite or developing athletes. Every athlete seeks their own training program independently from the NGB.

USA Water Ski is a club based organization. Water Ski and the related sport disciplines participate in a family atmosphere and we can clearly state this is a family sport. It is common to see parents and children all participating in the same tournaments, training together and becoming members of the same team. The family participation factor makes our sport rather unique in the world of NGBs.

The following specific questions were asked by Senators Moran and Blumenthal;

- 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?**

The reporting requirements and procedures are outlined in the USA Water Ski Policies and Procedures which also includes the USA Water Ski SafeSport Handbook.

- 2. Are there special accommodations to account for volunteers that are separately employed by non-NGB institutions, like the case of Dr. Nassar who was employed at MSU, in these reporting practices?**

USA Water Ski does not have a national team program. All athletes select their own method of training independently from USA Water Ski. All athletes determine their own coaching and support staff needed to maximize their performance. USA Water Ski does not employ support staff for athletes that would be similar to Dr. Nassar's employment with MSU.

- 3. Has your organization ever utilized an 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.**

USA Water Ski has never utilized an NDA to enforce confidentiality against any athlete, volunteer or employee. There is a confidentiality statement in the USA Water Ski Employee Handbook that addresses confidentiality as it relates to employee privacy and confidential information.

- 4. Has your organization ever utilized additional binding agreements other than NDAs 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.**

All athletes and team staff are required to sign and adhere to a U.S. Team Agreement which includes sections regarding Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Procedures, and Appeals and Grievance procedures.

All athletes are required to sign and adhere to the U.S. Team Agreement as a condition of selection to an international team representing USA Water Ski.

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 additional steps to improve the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of its criminal misconduct reporting mechanisms?

USA Water Ski has increased its efforts to create awareness and educate its members on all SafeSport issues. A new awareness brochure has been created and will be distributed with every USA Water Ski membership card. Presentations have been made to our sport discipline leadership.

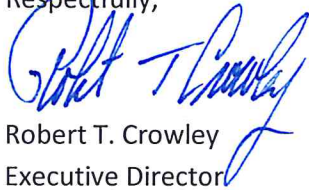
6. Please identify any circumstances in which the USOC did not take any action following a report of criminal behavior from your organization. To the extent possible, please provide all details regarding the justification and circumstances involved in the USOC's decision to not act.

There have been no reports made to the USOC of any criminal behavior by a USA Water Ski member.

7. In 2017, USOC engaged with a third party consultant to assess compliance with SafeSport policies and procedures within USOC and all of its NGBs and High Performance Management Organizations (HPMO). Please describe the report issued for your organization, including all recommendations 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?

The discussions and recommendations made while completing the audit were highly beneficial in determining an improved method to deal with the abuse issues and creating a compliance strategy. We have created new education and awareness materials. We have reviewed and increased the classes of individuals required to be SafeSport certified and background screened. We have been educating our sport discipline leadership with information to provide to their members. We have created a new infrastructure to allow for easy access for our members to be compliant. This is all unfolding as we approach our new season this spring.

Respectfully,



Robert T. Crowley  
Executive Director

**Attachments:**

(All of which are on the USA Water Ski website: [www.usawaterski.org](http://www.usawaterski.org))

- USA Water Ski Policies and Procedures which includes the SafeSport Handbook
- U.S. Team Agreement