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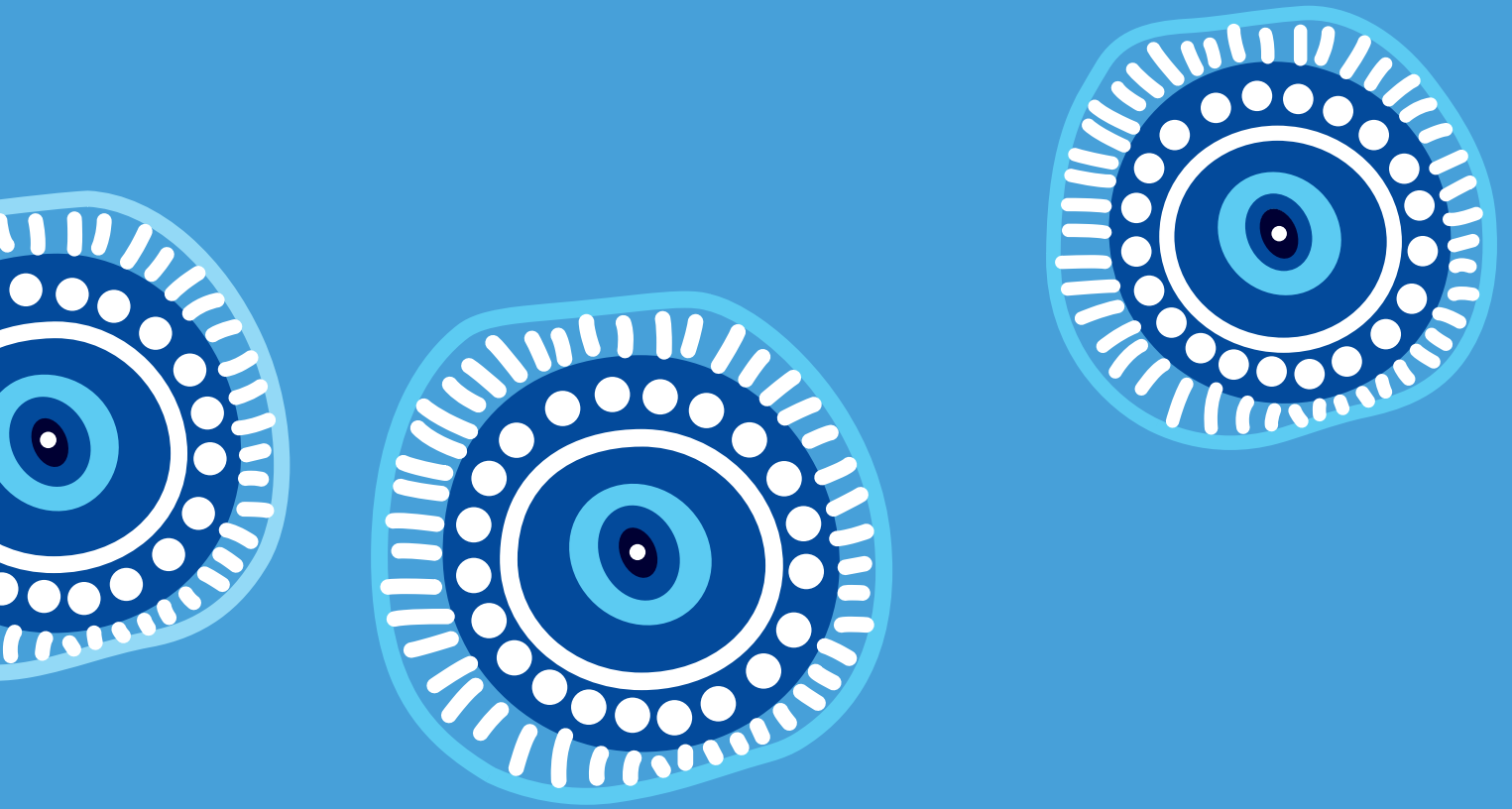


Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

Child Safe Annual Statement of Compliance 2022-23

Published 27 October 2023





Australian Sports Commission Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its offices are located, the Ngunnawal people and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the people of the Yugambah Nation and the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The ASC extends this acknowledgment to all the Traditional Custodians of the lands and First Nations Peoples throughout Australia and would like to pay its respects to all Elders past, present and future.

The ASC recognises the outstanding contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to society and sport in Australia and celebrates the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



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Statement by the CEO — 2022–23

Compliance Statement

On behalf of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), I am pleased to present the Annual Statement of Compliance for child safety for the year ended 30 June 2023, as required under the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.

Having made diligent enquiries, I am confident that the ASC:

- has undertaken an annual risk assessment to identify the level of responsibility for, and contact with, children and young people and to evaluate the risk of harm or abuse, and has implemented appropriate and effective strategies to manage any risks identified
- has ensured that all child related personnel have undertaken training on the requirements of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations contained in the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and relevant legislation
- has complied with relevant legislation relating to requirements for working with children, in all jurisdictions in which we operate
- has complied with relevant legislation, in all jurisdictions in which we operate, relating to mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect as required or otherwise defined by state or territory legislation
- has complied with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations contained in the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.

Kieren Perkins OAM

Chief Executive Officer

Australian Sports Commission

25 October 2023



Child safety at the ASC

Introduction

About the ASC

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) is the Australian Government agency responsible for supporting and investing in sport. It was established in 1985 under the *Australian Sports Commission Act 1989* and operates in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The ASC is governed by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the Minister for Sport. The Board determines the ASC's overall direction and decides on the allocation of resources and policy for delegated decisions. It is accountable to the Minister for Sport.

The ASC is administered from Canberra at the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Bruce campus and has offices in Melbourne and Sydney. The AIS campus is a 65-hectare multi-purpose facility with sporting, administration, commercial and residential functions. The ASC also operates the European Training Centre (ETC) in Varese, Italy and high performance sports training facilities at Yarralumla in ACT and Pizzey Park on the Gold Coast.

From grassroots to the pinnacle of elite international competition, we work with the sport sector, other government partners, businesses, and the wider community to champion the role sport can play in engaging every Australian.

We exist because sport matters. It drives all we do at the ASC, including our culture. We stand for respect, integrity, teamwork, and excellence. These values underpin how we treat each other and our stakeholders, how we deliver for sport, and how we create the world's best environment at the ASC.

Children at the ASC

The ASC has a broad range of programs and services delivered directly to children, young people and their families. This includes programs run on the AIS campus at Bruce, including Learn to Swim, the AIS Caretakers Cottage Childcare Centre, AIS campus tours and high performance services to athletes.

The nature of ASC programs and facilities creates conditions in which there may be a risk of harm, including overnight accommodation, physical interaction between children and educators or instructors, and medical treatment services such as physiotherapy. A significant portion of ASC employees have or may have contact with children, even where they are not delivering child facing programs. Employees may also work in developing or assessing programs and grants for children and young people without direct or indirect contact.

The ASC has a significant role in funding individuals and organisations in community and high performance sport. This includes our partnerships with national sporting organisations (NSOs) and national sporting organisations for people with disability (NSODs) and funding to the broader sport industry through programs such as Sporting Schools and the Regional Sport Events Fund. The ASC acknowledges its responsibility and has embedded policy and procedures to ensure that organisations we fund implement adequate child safeguarding practices.



Table 1. ASC interaction with children and young people

ASC interaction with children and young people	
Direct interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – AIS Caretakers Cottage childcare centre – AIS Aquatic and Fitness Centre – AIS Tours – AIS Residences – AIS Hub – AIS Sport Science and Sport Medicine and AIS Recovery Centre – AIS Mental Health Referral Network (MHRN) – AIS Athlete Wellbeing and Development – European Training Centre – High Performance Events and Camps – NSO Centres of Excellence
Direct funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dAIS grants – Local Sporting Champions grants – Local Para Champions grants – AIS Elevate Learning Grants Program
Indirect funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO/NSOD participation funding – NSO/NSOD high performance funding – Sporting Schools program – Capability Building Grant Program – Regional Sport Events Fund

Following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have now experienced a return to on-site activities on the ASC campus. Public tours of the AIS recommenced February 2023 and the Learn to Swim program has returned to full capacity. High performance camps and activities have increased to pre-pandemic levels and large sporting events, including school carnivals and international championships, have been hosted on site.

Early in 2023, the ASC undertook an organisational realignment to help shape the way we will deliver on our strategic vision. The organisational realignment will support the ASC to deliver on its child safety commitment and our vision that sport has a place for everyone and delivers results that make Australian's proud.



Our Commitment to Child Safety

Our approach

The **ASC Child Safe Policy**, first published in 2011, outlines our commitment to child safety and our aim to create and maintain an inclusive, child safe environment that is understood, endorsed, put into action and adhered to by everyone. The ASC is focused on embedding child safety into our organisational culture, reflecting this in our policies and procedures, and ensuring our employees understand and implement child safe practices, regardless of their role.

Specifically, the ASC Child Safe Policy:

- is part of the ASC's proactive and preventative approach to upholding its commitment to the safety, wellbeing, participation and empowerment of all children accessing the ASC's programs, services and facilities
- outlines prohibited conduct and imposes obligations on persons bound by the policy to respond to allegations of prohibited and reportable conduct and to implement a commitment to child safety and child safe practices, including recruitment and screening of people that have contact with children
- seeks to ensure that persons bound by this policy are aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities, as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them
- gives effect to the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

In July 2022, the ASC launched the Restorative Program to recognise and respond to former AIS scholarship athletes who experienced harm from inappropriate practices or abuse as a result of their time at the AIS. Insights and learnings from the Restorative Program are used to inform future practices at the ASC and within Australian sport to make sport safe for children and young people.

The ASC's Child and Athlete Safety Committee assists with embedding a child safe culture across the organisation. The Committee is chaired by the ASC Child Safe Champion, who, as a member of the ASC Executive, is responsible for promoting the importance of child safety and how it applies to employees, contractors and site users. Following the organisational realignment, a new Child Safe Champion was appointed, and the Child and Athlete Safety Committee Terms of Reference was updated.

The ASC is a participating institution in the National Redress Scheme and implements the Australian Government National Redress Grant Connected Policy. The ASC incorporates integrity policy requirements into agreements for services and funding, particularly those for NSOs and NSODs, and continues to work with Sport Integrity Australia to improve safeguarding in the sector.



ASC Child Safe Commitment Statement

In 2023, the ASC Board updated the ASC Child Safe Commitment Statement to reflect ASC safeguarding commitments and align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Win Well Pledge.

The ASC is strongly committed to safe, supportive and friendly environments where children and young people are valued and enjoy sport.

We are proud to have adopted the Win Well pledge, where how we win is just as important as when we win. We will prioritise and focus on the physical, mental, emotional and cultural wellbeing of children, young people and athletes, to unlock their full potential and Win Well.

We are committed to providing meaningful acknowledgement, care and support to former AIS athletes who experienced harm in the past. We offered a public apology in May 2021 and have established the ASC Restorative Program. We will use insights from this program to learn from our past and to inform our enterprise safeguarding approach.

The ASC has adopted the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and is committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and ensuring that child safety is reflected in everything we do. The ASC takes seriously our responsibility to provide an environment that is caring, nurturing and safe.

- **We are committed to keeping children and young people safe.**
- **We encourage the involvement of children and young people.**
- **We involve families and the community in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**
- **We promote equity and respect diversity.**
- **We ensure that our people are suitable and supported to work with children and young people.**
- **We encourage reporting of all complaints and concerns.**
- **We equip our staff, contractors and site users with ongoing education and training.**
- **We ensure that environments are safe.**
- **We maintain and improve our policies and practices.**

The full commitment statement can be read on the [ASC website](#).



Win Well Pledge

In December 2022, Australia's peak Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sporting organisations joined forces with the AIS to launch the High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy aimed at building success towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games and beyond. The strategy incorporates the Win Well pledge, which highlights wellbeing as the foundation for sustainable success.

The Win Well pledge is a commitment to balancing ambitious sporting goals with cultures that are safe, fair and supportive. The Win Well pledge has been incorporated into our child safe commitment statement.



We commit to being an organisation that strives to win well, where how we win is just as important as when we win.

We commit to the holistic development of our athletes and our staff, recognising wellbeing as the foundation of sustainable success.

We commit to leading sport with integrity, where we are accountable for the culture we foster and the decisions we make.

We commit to acknowledging and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their cultures, and to walk together as we embed their knowledge and experience into our organisation and build a greater sense of belonging and connection to communities and country.

We commit to a culture of challenge and care so our athletes and staff can perform at their best and reach their potential.

We commit to creating safe and thriving environments for our people to fail so they can learn, grow and succeed.

We commit to being custodians of sport and building a legacy where sport is more inclusive and representative of the diversity of Australian communities.

We commit to Win Well.





Child Safety Risk Assessment

ASC Risk Management Framework

The ASC Risk Management Framework outlines the risk management practices of our organisation and how we comply with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.

The ASC regularly reviews its enterprise risk assessment and conducts risk reporting to the ASC Executive Committee. We have a low tolerance for risks related to children and young people and are committed to the ongoing safety on our site and for those participating in our programs.

Table 2. Child Safety Enterprise Risks

Risk Area	Risk description	Key risk controls
Integrity	There is a significant breakdown of integrity in programs funded or delivered by the ASC	Integrity requirements in ASC Recognition Agreements and Grant Agreements
Unacceptable Behaviours	Behaviours by staff, athletes, coaches, NSOs or brand ambassadors falls short of community expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASC Code of Conduct ASC Child Safe Policy Police checks and Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff Mandatory Child Safe online learning for all ASC staff ASC induction program for new staff Safe Behaviours workshops for child facing staff
Participant Safety	The safety of children, young people, athletes or vulnerable participants is compromised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASC Child Safe Policy Police checks and Working with Children Checks for all staff Mandatory Child Safe online learning for all ASC staff ASC induction program for new staff Safe Behaviours and Responding & Reporting workshops for child facing staff ASC Child Safe Officers



2023 Child Safety Risk Assessment

In 2022-23, the ASC conducted an analysis of the enterprise risk, Participant Safety, as a part of the maturation of our approach to the assessment of enterprise risks and controls. Through this analysis, controls were classified into preventative, detective and mitigative controls and the effectiveness was assessed. Due to the depth and breadth of users participating in ASC programs, the ASC has a **HIGH** residual risk rating for the Enterprise Risk of Participant Safety. The ASC Internal Risk Committee endorsed the Participant Safety risk analysis.

In 2022-23, the ASC strengthened controls related to our people, including the implementation of mandatory WWCC for staff, expanded induction and training requirements, and the roll out of a compliance and monitoring program across WWCC and online Learning. Communication resources for child safety were launched across the ASC campus, allowing for improved visibility of reporting mechanisms for child safety concerns.

The ASC continues to review operational child safety risks on an annual basis and risk assessment is a standing agenda item for the Child and Athlete Safety Committee. The ASC has reviewed the Child Safety Risk Management Guide, published by the National Office for Child Safety, as a part of its child safety risk assessment processes in 2023. The ASC is updating the operational risk assessment to incorporate elements of this guide including the classification of the sources of risks across four categories. A summary of risk sources is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Classification of ASC Child Safety Risk

Risk Source	ASC Risk Source
Propensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sport sector culture has historically tolerated unsafe practices towards children. - The ASC operates facilities and delivers services to children.
Situational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The residence facilities provide overnight accommodation for u18s. - ASC sites have shared public facilities, including changerooms. - ASC programs and services involve physical contact and 1:1 settings
Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and athletes from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures engage in ASC programs and services. - The residence facilities accommodate a mix of u18s and adults. - Power imbalances exist between children, athletes and staff.
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ASC has a diverse and dispersed workforce. - The ASC partners with other organisations in the delivery of services (for example, NSOs and NSODs). - The ASC provides significant grant funding for child related services to other organisations.



Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

Implementation of the Framework

The ASC adheres to the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including the National Principles for Child Safety. A summary of our compliance with the Framework is outlined below.

Compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

Requirement 1: Undertake risk assessments annually

Rating: Compliant

Child safety is considered and included in the ASC Risk Management Framework and Enterprise Risk Register.

The ASC has a Child Safety Action Plan, which outlines proposed controls to manage child safety risks and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The plan is approved by the ASC Executive and reviewed annually.

The ASC Child Safe Policy outlines the requirement for an annual risk assessment for child safety.

Requirement 2: Establish and maintain a system of training and compliance

Rating: Compliant

The ASC Child Safe Policy outlines training requirements for employees.

The ASC requires all permanent, fixed term and casual staff to complete mandatory child safety online learning each year and all new staff participate in an induction which includes a dedicated session on child safety.

In 2022-23, the ASC delivered further face-to-face training to staff, including:

- safer recruitment
- responding and reporting for child safety
- safe behaviours

The ASC has implemented mandatory screening for all employees, including police checks and working with children checks (WWCC) or equivalent. The ASC maintains records for the WWCC for employees.



Requirement 3: Adopt and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Rating: Compliant

The ASC has adopted the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and is embedding the Principles in its programs. The Child Safety Action Plan is updated annually and outlines our proposed actions to implement the Principles.

The ASC has a Child Safe Champion, a dedicated Safeguarding and Integrity team, and a Child and Athlete Safety Committee. Reporting occurs regularly to senior executives and the ASC Board on child safety. The ASC Child Safe Policy is published on the ASC website and is updated on an annual basis.

Child Safety controls for recruitment have been further strengthened, with child safety screening in place across the application, interview and referee stages of recruitment. All staff must hold a WWCC (or equivalent), complete mandatory child safe online learning and participate in an onboarding induction.

Requirement 4: Annual reporting

Rating: Compliant

The ASC has implemented a process for annual reporting and publishes an Annual Statement of Compliance in October each year.

The Annual Statement of Compliance is approved by the CEO and reported to the ASC Board.

Additional obligation: Funding third parties

Rating: Compliant

The ASC includes child safety requirements for all organisations recognise and fund, including through Grant and Recognition Agreements. The ASC has an annual statement of compliance reporting process for funded NSO/NSODs, who are required to complete a checklist and declaration to confirm progress against child safety requirements in NSO Grant Agreements.

The ASC implements child safety requirements into grant programs, including the Australian Government National Redress Scheme Grant Connected Policy. The ASC has included mandatory questions into the grant application portal and compliance checks are conducted as a part of grant assessment processes.



Our progress

The launch of the Restorative Program in July 2022 represented a significant step toward recognising former AIS scholarship holders who experienced harm or abuse during their time at the AIS. Over 100 applications have been received, and the ASC is committed to providing meaningful acknowledgement, care and support to these athletes.

In 2022-23, the ASC strengthened child safe education for staff and those using ASC facilities. We expanded our delivery of externally facilitated child safe workshops, and launched a new staff induction program which includes a dedicated session related to child safety.



248 attendees

across three child safe workshop streams since introduction in June 2022.

The ASC introduced a requirement for all staff to hold and maintain a WWCC card or equivalent. This reflects our operating context, whereby many employees have contact with, or access to, children and young people. We strengthened our compliance and monitoring processes for WWCC and mandatory child safe online learning, reflecting our commitment to ensuring that child safe requirements are fully embedded.

We are committed to creating and maintaining spaces across our sites where children and athletes feel safe and know how to report concerns. To support this, postcards were deployed across the AIS campus and we are implementing QR codes for reporting. We also delivered physical safety and wellbeing projects, for example improved CCTV coverage in our high performance aquatic facility.



In June 2023, the ASC commissioned and unveiled a First Nations artwork titled “Kinship” by Brad Hore OLY. The artwork is a story of belonging to country and community and has been reproduced and installed around the site to enhance cultural safety and reinforce the ASCs commitment to reconciliation. During National Reconciliation Week, children from The Cottage participated in a flag raising ceremony, strengthening the concept of community and belonging.

Our Sporting Schools program continues to make a positive impact for Australian students with the program reaching 15 million participants since its inception.

In 2022-23 the ASC focused on implementing recommendations from the Sporting Schools child safe review, including delivering education to NSO delivery partners and updating the Sporting Schools website to include child safety information and reporting. A new Sporting Schools platform is set to launch in 2024 with improved safeguarding measures.

The ASC continues to champion child safeguarding in the sector and in 2022 the Sport Learning Centre partnered with Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) and Disability Sports Australia (DSA) to launch the Accessibility Champion course, which includes content regarding the protection of vulnerable people. Our Leadership and Professionalism team delivered Respectful Behaviours education sessions targeted at athletes, coaches, and support staff. The ASC’s free online platform, Game Plan, which is focusing on improving the capability of sporting organisations, released a new safeguarding in sport module in partnership with SIA.

The ASC is improving athlete consent processes to ensure that consent within sport is informed, empowering and creates positive outcomes. We have implemented revised athlete consent forms in line with our vision of an athlete centred sport environment and developed an athlete consent education program, which is due to launch in 2023-24.



The ASC is focused on fully embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and being a leader for child safeguarding. In 2022-23, we achieved best practice implementation across a number of principles. Figure 1 below outlines our approach.

Figure 1. ASC approach to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations



Principle 1: Leadership, governance & culture

- Board Commitment Statement for Child Safety
 - Child and Athlete Safety Committee
 - Child Safe Champion
 - Restorative Program
 - Child Safe Policy
 - Child safety represented in the Enterprise Risk Register
-



Principle 5: Suitable people work with children

- All job advertisements, applications and interviews include child safety
 - All staff must hold a WWCC and undergo a national police check
 - Safe recruitment workshops
 - Child safety is included in staff induction program
 - Mandatory child safety online learning module for new staff
 - Child safety goals are included in performance agreements
-



Principle 7: Training for staff

- Mandatory annual child safety online learning module
- Responding and reporting for child safety workshops
- Safer behaviours workshops
- Child safety reporting promoted across ASC sites
- Child Safe Officer Network



Our focus for 2023-2024

Our Child Safe Action Plan focuses on broadening awareness, strengthening education, and achieving best practice across the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations related to children's participation and family and community involvement. Our Child Safe Policy will be updated and simplified materials to support the Policy will be developed for children, athletes and families. The co-designed National Sport Participation Strategy is due to be launched in November 2023 and will transform the way participation is connected, delivered and supported in Australia, to ensure that sport has a place for everyone. Figure 2 below outlines our planned activities.

Figure 2. ASC planned activities under the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations



Principle 2

Children and Young People Participate

- Launch of the National Sport Participation Strategy
- Improve communication with children, young people and families
- Publish simplified resources to support the Child Safe Policy
- Strengthen the Child Safe Officer Network
- Improve induction processes and onsite experience for athletes



Principle 10

Policies and Procedures

- Update policies and procedures to support the ASC child safe position
- Update communication resources to support the Child Safe Policy
- Embed child safe recruitment practices
- Undertake an external child safe review



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