



# 2015 NSW ATHLETIC OFFICIALS SEMINAR



POLICIES

ANTI BULLYING

ASSESSING AND MANAGING OFFICIALS

# Anti-Bullying (Officials) Guidelines

Both ANSW and LANSW have policies banning bullying. This session will provide an overview of what is considered bullying and how to deal with it.

# DEFINITIONS

**Officials are volunteers who are either**

**Appointed to assist in the conduct of athletic events by LANSW or NSW or**

**Fulfilling duties allocated to Centres' at athletic events conducted by  
LANSW**

**Workplace**

**Includes grounds where athletic events, coaching, training, seminars etc.  
are conducted by LANSW or its affiliates.**

# INTRODUCTION

- Every official involved in athletics has the right to officiate in an environment that is fun, safe and healthy, and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Bullying denies officials these rights and can result in feelings of disgrace, embarrassment, humiliation, shame, fear, distress or intimidation. Bullying can also affect an individual's officiating performance, their enjoyment, their continuing participation in the sport, and their physical and mental health. Bullying behaviour can have negative long- term effects on all those involved.
- Unacceptable or unsporting behaviour from officials is not tolerated. Bullying amongst officials is prohibited under the Codes of Conduct of ANSW and LANSW and will not be tolerated.

# WHAT IS BULLYING?

**Bullying** means behaviour which is offensive, intimidating, intended to humiliate or threatening and is directed at other officials and /or competitors. Bullying will generally meet the following criteria:

- 1. It is repeated and systematic (although a serious single incident can also constitute bullying)
- 2. It is unwelcome and unsolicited
- 3. The recipient/s consider/s the behaviour to be offensive, intimidating, intended to humiliate or threatening
- 4. A reasonable person would consider the behaviour to be offensive, intimidating, intended to humiliate or threatening

# WHAT IS BULLYING CONT'D

Bullying behavior can take many different forms:-

- Overtly aggressive behavior such as shouting and physical confrontations.
- Using abusive or aggressive tone in speaking to other officials, athletes or staff.
- More subtle behaviours, such as passive bullying, or tacitly supporting bullying by allowing it to continue.
- Anti-social behavior e.g. excluding, alienating, ignoring, humiliating
- Note the guidelines also cover bullying via social media

# MANAGING BULLYING RESPONSIBILITIES

- All officials especially those in a supervisory role (e.g. Referees, area coordinators, manager etc.) should accept responsibility for preventing and managing bullying situations. Officials should:
- Understand what bullying is and the importance of preventing it.
- Be knowledgeable of, and vigilant for, signs of bullying.
- Show interest and sympathy with every allegation of bullying and provide support.
- Take all signs of bullying seriously and acting quickly.
- Role model respectful and caring behaviour.



# STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BULLYING?

The easiest way to deal with any bullying problems is to take measures in an attempt to prevent them from happening at all. This would include:-

## Awareness and Education

- Ensure officials are aware bullying is prohibited
- Officials to accept codes of conduct
- Adopt clear intolerance of bullying
- Ensure officials can talk to some one if they are worried.

## Ensuring a Positive Environment

Bullying is more likely to occur in environments that involve high pressure.

- . Emphasise and highlight positive aspects of the sport such as enjoyment, team work, social inclusion, respect, sportsmanship and skill development.
- Develop an induction program for all new officials that assists them to fit in and feel comfortable, happy and accepted. Ensure that they are aware of the policies, values and expectations with regards to behaviour and bullying

# IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Swift and decisive action, commensurate with the seriousness of an offence, is vital in stemming bullying and other incidents of misbehaviour. Quick and effective intervention may be enough to stop bullying and prevent it from occurring again. Bullying can become a habit if it is ignored.
- Initially, an effective verbal reprimand communicating a zero-tolerance, “no nonsense” approach may be all that is needed to stop and prevent the recurrence of a “one-off” bullying incident that is observed.

# MANAGING CONCERNS

A recommended complaints framework is

A report is received by Referee / Chief Judge (if at an event) who will

- Record the complaint
  - Who      Persons who are involved
  - When    Timing of the incident
  - What    What happened
- Get all view points
- Talk to witnesses
- Decide on sanction / action to be taken if any
- Ensure right of appeal

# RESPONSIBILITY

- At LANSW carnivals concerns would be raised with the appropriate Referee / Chief Judge initially however the Officials coordinator and or Carnival Manager would have the ultimate responsibility for managing complaints about bullying
- At ANSW carnivals concerns should be raised with the relevant Referee however it may require consultation between Meeting Manager and Referee

# FINAL TIPS

- Do not allow bullies to make excuses such as “It was just a bit of fun”, “We weren’t being serious”, “I was only joking”, or “We were only mucking around”. Ensure they understand the seriousness of the consequences of bullying.
- Do not accept bullying as a fact of life. It is not a normal part of growing up and can ruin lives.
- Do not think in stereotypes. If you do, bullying incidents can be missed. Bullies and victims do not come in standard shapes and sizes.
- Be aware of individuals that may be vulnerable to bullying who: are new to the group; are different in appearance, speech or background; suffer low self-esteem; demonstrate ‘entertaining’ reactions when bullied; are nervous or anxious.

# ASSESSING AND MANAGING OFFICIALS

# PRINCIPLES

Officials must be able to consistently fulfil their duties to the required standard, and without risk, to themselves or others to be eligible for appointment.

The competencies required for appointment vary according to the position applied for. The competencies are different for example if an individual is applying to be a referee, an event supervisor or an event judge. This means that an official may be eligible for appointment in alternate roles if considered unsuitable for the one to which they have applied.



From time to time the Officials Advisory Committees are made aware of officials who are not performing their officiating duties to the required standard, or appear at risk whilst performing them.

The two main area areas of concern are:-

1. Physical fitness to perform duties applied for / appointed to.
2. Up to date knowledge of rules and their application including continual updating as rules are changed

## PHYSICAL FITNESS

- The official must have sufficient fitness to satisfactorily fulfil their duties. This fitness may include: the ability to stand for extended periods of time; perform some physical work; have a capacity to react quickly and be able to judge activities that occur at speed.
- Need to be able to undertake all the duties associated with the position for which they have applied.
- Appointments should be consistent with current WHS athletic requirements

## KNOWLEDGE

- The official must have an adequate and up to date knowledge of the rules that apply during competition.
- They must understand how these rules apply in competition and be able to apply them in a fair and consistent manner.

## APPROPRIATE ACTION

- Where concerns about an official are brought to the attention of the Officials Advisory Committee (OAC) they may initiate an assessment of the official.
- There may be instances where, following assessment, it is appropriate to offer an official some additional training or to put some restrictions on appointments enabling them to continue in athletics. In this instance the course of action decided by the OAC will be drawn up and implemented. The official may be reassessed after completion of that program.

Note: Where practicable, consideration should be given to offering the official an appointment to alternate position/s within the official's capabilities.

- In appropriate circumstances the official may be offered mentoring to improve their knowledge and application of the rules
- At all stages of an assessment, the official concerned will be given the opportunity to present their perspective

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained from the relevant websites

### ❑ Athletics NSW

- <http://nswathletics.org.au/About-US/Policies-Constitutions>

### ❑ Little Athletics NSW

- <http://lansw.com.au>

Note The relevant policy documents will be available in the Officials Information section of the LANSW website which is currently being updated