



SPORT | Issue No. 17 | ASC Integrity Guidelines for Directors & Leaders of Sporting Organisations

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The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has published a document titled *Integrity Guidelines for Directors and Leaders of Sporting Organisations*. It is somewhat ironic that these integrity guidelines have been published at around the same time as the Parramatta saga appears to be going from bad to worse, certainly from the point of view of the involvement of the Board.

The document is an interesting one because whilst it's called guidelines, it's actually not. It encourages directors:

“to achieve appropriate oversight of their organisation's integrity framework and ensure their responsibilities as a director are fully discharged. Individual directors must fully inform themselves of the organisation's integrity practices.”

The paper then goes on to list a large number of questions, presumably for directors to be comfortable that they can answer or to seek answers in their organisations. These questions are listed under the heading of General, Sports Science, Sports Medicine, Anti-Doping, Illicit Drugs, Match Fixing, Member Protection and Child Protection.

All Sport watchers will quickly recognise that these specific headings are areas which have been in the headlines considerably over the last 12 months. From Essendon to Parramatta; drug cheating to illicit drug problems with high profile players; criminal convictions for match fixing; the Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse; looking specifically at Sport and issues relating to member protection and behaviour of participants (parents, staff, coaches) in amateur as well as professional Sport.

I would strongly suggest to you that if you are involved in Sports administration or you have any interest in that area, that you have a look at this document.

As I said, it poses questions, it doesn't provide answers. But it gives an insight into the challenges for sporting organisations and the length and breadth of the steps that need to be taken by organisations to ensure that they meet high levels of integrity.

Frankly, these are big issues and without significant resources being allocated to them very little improvement will occur. Whilst raising the issue is important and valuable, it doesn't provide the answers as to how Sport is going to address all of these challenges.

The paper can be accessed via the Ausport website or by clicking [here](#).

It will be interesting to see how Sport proposes to respond to the ASC on these issues.

Previously with governance principles, the ASC initially sent out a set of principles and then, for the larger Sports, these principles became mandatory principles (if the Sport wished to continue receiving ASC funding).

It will be interesting to see what direction the ASC goes in relation to these integrity guidelines, as it seems to be becoming clearer and clearer that for many organisations there is a lot of room for improvement.



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