



# **Procedures for Post Incident Review of Management of Child Protection Concerns**

**AMENDMENT RECORD**

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## **GUIDELINES - WHY REVIEW THE MANAGEMENT OF CONCERNS?**

Reviewing how concerns have been managed is an important part of practice. It provides an opportunity to:

1. Explore if policies and procedures were followed.
2. Establish whether appropriate action was taken.
3. Identify if any changes are required to improve procedures.
4. Identify whether individuals may require support in the aftermath of an incident.
5. Identify any training needs within the organisation.
6. Increase the confidence of those involved in the organisation by demonstrating an open and transparent approach.

Having to deal with concerns about child abuse, poor practice or misconduct is often difficult for those involved. While procedures and guidelines provide a structure of support, individuals often report feelings of isolation, worry and anxiety; for example,

*"I still worry if we did enough to keep the child safe".*

*"I'm not sure reporting it to the police was the right thing to do".*

*"I can't help feeling there's something else we could've done to prevent this from happening".*

In these situations, the organisation has a responsibility to offer support to those involved. Taking time to review how concerns were managed will, in most cases, provide reassurance about judgements made and action taken. This feedback is essential to develop confident and competent club and governing body child protection officers.

In a wider sense, reviewing the management of cases also provides an opportunity to identify specific areas of risk, trends or patterns within an organisation and across a sport. Identifying and sharing this information will help ensure that emerging policy is based on needs identified in practice and allow resources to be targeted more effectively.

These guidelines and procedures will help the Federation to plan and carry out a review. Template forms can be adapted for use. Further advice on conducting a review is available from the Safeguarding in Sport Service.

## **GUIDELINES - PLANNING A REVIEW**

Taking time to think about some preliminary matters will help to ensure that the review is as effective as possible. The template at the end may help you to plan your review.

### **1. WHY?**

Be clear from the outset about the remit and aim(s) of the review, or why you are reviewing. This will make it much easier to decide who should be involved, how to go about it and what information you need to gather.

There may be more than one reason for reviewing a case or cases; for example:

- ◆ To examine the role of all staff/volunteers in responding to concerns identified about a child or coach.
- ◆ To establish whether the organisation's procedures were followed and how effective they were in safeguarding the child.
- ◆ To establish how well the child and the staff/volunteers involved in the case were supported by the organisation.
- ◆ To explore how well all of the organisations involved in the case worked together.
- ◆ To establish whether there are lessons to be learned, what those lessons are and to make recommendations for future action.

Setting out the remit for the review will keep the reviewer focused and also provide clarity to others about the process or intended outcomes.

### **2. WHO?**

The child protection lead officer should help the organisation determine who should conduct the review.

- ◆ This may be part of the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers Child Protection Officer's role.
- ◆ An ex-officio member of the management team.
- ◆ In some cases it may be appropriate for an independent person to conduct the review; for example, where individuals from the organisation have been very closely involved or there are concerns around the conduct of individuals or the processes they have applied.

Having someone independent carry out the review can be beneficial, particularly where the case has had a significant impact on the individuals involved and/or the sport. This 'independent person' should have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding of child protection, from either within or out with the sport; for example, a child protection officer from another sports organisation or an existing volunteer who works professionally in child protection.

***Where someone independent is involved, it is important to ensure there is agreement about confidentiality.***

Other points to consider are:

- ◆ Who else, if anyone, should be involved in the review?
- ◆ Will other organisations involved in the case be invited to contribute? This may include police, social work or the governing body.
- ◆ Will the child and parents/carers be involved? If so, how? If the child and parents/carers are involved, it is important to keep them informed of the progress of the review and to share findings with them.

### 3. WHEN?

Here are some examples of WHEN a review may be appropriate:

- ◆ At the conclusion of any case dealt with through the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers procedures for Responding to Concerns about a Child or Responding to Concerns about the Conduct of a Staff Member or Volunteer.
- ◆ At the conclusion of legal proceedings.
- ◆ At the conclusion of disciplinary proceedings including an appeal.
- ◆ As part of an annual review of all child protection cases which arose during the year.

Clearly a full review of a case subject to criminal investigation by the police, a child protection investigation by police and social work, or legal proceedings will only be possible at the conclusion of the investigation or legal proceedings. However a review should be held as soon as possible to ensure that any lessons learned are acted upon timeously.

### 4. HOW?

- ◆ Firstly, agree a timescale for carrying out the review.
- ◆ Secondly, ensure that police and/or social workers have completed any investigations and that there are no outstanding legal proceedings.

The review process will be informed by the reasons for reviewing, which will probably reflect the complexity of the incident.

The main source of information is likely to be the form for recording concerns, the 'Significant Incident Form' which was raised when the concerns came to light. This form may provide all the information required. In cases where these forms have not been completed or the quality of the information is poor, it may be necessary to speak to the people involved to get more details.

It's important to consider and acknowledge how people might be feeling about the incident itself and the possible impact of a review. People may feel their actions are being called into question or scrutinised, which could leave them feeling anxious or threatened. Where the reviewer intends to speak to those involved, they should plan how they will introduce the review, explain the purpose of it and how they will deal with any reactions or questions from those involved; for example:

*"I've been asked by the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers to review how the organisation dealt with the concerns about X. This review will consider how procedures were followed and whether appropriate action was taken to protect those involved. I understand that you were involved in this case and would like to talk to you about it. This will give you an opportunity to tell me about your experience and make any suggestions for improving things in the future."*

### 5. RECORDING AND REPORTING THE FINDINGS

The reviewer should make a record of the review and its findings. This doesn't necessarily need to be a lengthy report, although a full report may be appropriate in certain circumstances.

Generally, any record of a review should contain the following information:

- ◆ The source of the concern.
- ◆ The nature of the concern.
- ◆ A chronology of events, individuals and organisations involved.
- ◆ Action taken.
- ◆ An analysis of the key issues or matters linked to the aims of the review.
- ◆ Any other relevant points or observations.

- ◆ Lessons to be learned and changes to be made.
- ◆ Recommendations.

## **SFSA PROCEDURE: REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF CONCERNS**

### **1. Establish the facts of the case, a chronology of events and the roles of individuals and organisations involved.**

Setting out the actual sequence of events will help the reviewer to understand what happened, when, and who was involved; for example:

23 April 2011	Child disclosed physical abuse to coach.
23 April 2011	Coach reported concern to club CPO.
24 April 2011	Club CPO reported incident to SFSA CPO.
24 April 2011	SFSA CPO sought advice from PC Smith, London Road Police Station, referral then made to the Family Protection Unit.

### **2. Identify any issues or key questions relating to the aims of the review.**

Having established the sequence of events the reviewer should then be able to answer the questions contained in the specific remit of the review.

If the reviewer considers that a child may still be at risk despite action taken during the case or as a result of the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers failure to take appropriate action, they should be prepared to act. Any urgent issues should be addressed immediately without waiting for the conclusion of the review.

### **3. Identify any other relevant points or observations.**

The reviewer may identify issues which are worth exploring further. These may include:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROCEDURES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Were the relevant procedures followed?</li> <li>◆ If not, is there a reasonable explanation for this?</li> <li>◆ Were the timescales appropriate?</li> <li>◆ Do the current procedures provide adequate information about what to do in such a situation?</li> <li>◆ If appropriate, was a referral made to Disclosure Scotland as required by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PEOPLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Were the right people involved?</li> <li>◆ Were the views of the child/family obtained?</li> <li>◆ Were those involved aware of the procedures?</li> <li>◆ Had the people involved been trained on the procedures?</li> <li>◆ Where appropriate, were external organisations involved; for example, the police or governing body of sport?</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OUTCOMES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Was the outcome appropriate in the case?</li> <li>◆ If not, why not?</li> <li>◆ Is there a need to take further action in this case; for example, referring the case to police/social work?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RECORDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Were records kept?</li> <li>◆ Is the quality of the information recorded satisfactory?</li> <li>◆ Can the forms be improved?</li> </ul>

### **4. Identify any lessons to be learned and what changes need to be made.**

### **5. Make recommendations.**



Recommendations may include things like changes to procedures, forms and/or the provision of training. It may be helpful for the reviewer to prioritise the recommendations as appropriate; for example, essential, desirable or helpful.

## **POST REVIEW**

### **Responding to the Findings and Recommendations**

Having invested the time and effort in conducting a review, the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers should carefully consider how to respond to the findings and any recommendations. It must also consider how to advise/support any others on whose behalf it has conducted the review. Decisions on how to react to the recommendations should be taken by the appropriate board/management/executive committee.

Where recommendations are to be followed, the management should identify the priorities, what action is required, who will take action and timescales for completion. This information must be clearly communicated to those involved. Management should follow up to check that action has in fact been taken.

If it is decided not to follow the recommendations, this decision and the reasons should be clearly recorded in management minutes.

### **Applying the Learning in Practice**

Lessons learned and/or changes made to procedures or practice must be communicated to those who need to know so they can be put into practice. This can be achieved in a number of ways:

- ◆ a briefing note
- ◆ training session
- ◆ group email
- ◆ article on the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers website.

The best method will often be determined by the significance or nature of the information to be passed on. Like all other policies and procedures, these changes in practice should be subject to regular monitoring and review to ensure compliance.

### **Sharing the Findings and Recommendations Internally and Externally**

There are benefits to sharing the outcomes of a review with others:

- ◆ It demonstrates that the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers is committed to continuous improvement.
- ◆ Other individuals and organisations may benefit from the lessons learned from the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers's experience.
- ◆ It can contribute to the wider understanding of child protection in sport and the ways in which practice and guidance can be enhanced.

***Remember that many of the details of the case will be confidential, so any information shared must be presented in a way that protects the anonymity and privacy of those involved.***

#### **Internally**

Identify those within the Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers who should get feedback on the

outcomes of the review. This will include the board/management/executive committee, the individuals involved in the case, and where appropriate, member clubs.

### **Externally**

The Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers should also consider whether there are other organisations or partners who would benefit from the review and its recommendations.

Depending on the circumstances of the case, there may be media interest in the outcome of the review. The Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers should have a strategy in place to deal with any enquiries from the media.

## **REVIEW PLANNING - TEMPLATE**

<b>Name of reviewer:</b>	
<b>Case reference:</b>	If this record is going to be shared with others, the details of the case should be anonymised using a unique reference number or identifier.
<b>Outstanding investigations and proceedings:</b>	<p><b><i>If relevant to this case, have the following been concluded:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Police and social work child protection investigation? Y/N</li> <li>2. A criminal investigation by the police? Y/N</li> <li>3. Any related legal proceedings? Y/N</li> </ol> <p><b>If the answer to any of these questions is no, the review cannot proceed.</b></p>
<b>Remit of review:</b>	List here in bullet point form the reasons for the review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> <li>◆</li> </ul>
<b>Timescales for completion:</b>	This should be the dates when the review will begin and end with the reported findings.
<b>How will the review be conducted?</b>	List here the methods to be used to conduct the review; for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a review of all paper records</li> <li>◆ telephone/face to face interviews with relevant individuals</li> <li>◆ contact with other organisations involved as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Are there any special considerations or features in this case?</b>	For example, this case was reported in the press, the child involved has a learning disability.
<b>How will the findings and recommendations be reported?</b>	
<b>Who will the outcomes of the review be shared with?</b>	List here all internal and external parties with whom information will be shared.
<b>Is a media strategy required?</b>	

## **TRAINING WORKSHOP**

### **Reviewing of the Management of Child Protection Concerns, CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup> workshop**

This 1-day workshop is for anyone who will have responsibility in reviewing the management of a concern at the conclusion of a case. The overall aim of this workshop is to help participants understand how to undertake a review of the management of a child protection concern, and be clear about how to go about it.