



Child Safe Environments Procedure for Canoe Clubs - 15 May 2011

Introduction

Safeguarding children's safety and well-being is the shared responsibility of the whole community

Canoe clubs and state associations across Australia affiliated with Australian Canoeing (AC) have for some years applied the provisions of the AC Member Protection Policy and the requirements of the Member Protection By-law to safeguard the well-being of all, but in particular members under 18 yrs of age.

Changes in South Australian legislation in 2010 now require additional actions to be taken by sporting or recreational organisations in South Australia. The changes to the Children's Protection Act 1993 require "sporting or recreational organisations to take steps to protect children in their care and therefore establish child safe environments.

From January 1 2011, sporting and recreation organisations in South Australia (such as Canoe SA and canoe clubs) are required to:

1. Develop a documented Risk Assessment and Management Strategy (RAMS) that includes the provision of child safe environments.
2. Develop a Child Safe Environment Policy that adequately covers the requirements of the legislation.
3. Develop a Child Safe Environment Procedures and Guidelines in place that adequately covers the requirements of the legislation and needs of the association.
4. Communicate the policy, procedure and guidelines to relevant parties and members.
5. Develop a code of conduct for adults and children
6. Identify all "prescribed positions" (regularly are working with children) in the club or association
7. Conduct criminal history assessments on employees, contractors and volunteers who occupy the "prescribed positions"

8. Unless there are other pressing reasons for a shorter period, all employees, contractors or volunteers will be required to obtain a CHA every 3 years
9. Establish Basic Minimum Screening for people who work with children
10. Ensure information recorded from the screening process is protected and confidentially stored with safeguards to protect against loss, unauthorised access, modification, disclosure or other misuse.
11. Ensure volunteers and employees who work with children, or their records, are adequately supported and supervised in the organisation.
12. Ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children, or their records, have ongoing opportunities to maintain the necessary skills and understanding to promote child safe environments.
13. Educate volunteers and employees in prescribed positions about role and responsibility to report and respond appropriately to suspected cases of neglect or abuse.
14. Lodge a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement with the Dept. for Families and Communities (DFC).

The requirements under the South Australian Legislation.

Below are the steps for canoe clubs to take to meet the requirements of the legislation. Benchmark dates are also set and canoe club boards or committee's of management will need to communicate with Canoe SA to inform of their compliance.

Abbreviations used in this document

AC	Australian Canoeing Inc.
CHA	Criminal History Assessment
CSE	Child Safe Environments
DFC	Department for Families and Communities
MPP	Member Protection Policy (Australian Canoeing)
NPC	National Police Certificate

Step I. Identify Prescribed Positions

To be completed by 30 June 2011

Identify all positions and individuals within the organisation that involve working with children. These are "prescribed positions"

This includes all positions that involve:

- Regular contact with children that is not directly supervised at all times; or
- Work in close proximity to children that is not directly supervised at all times; or
- Supervision or management of persons who have regular contact with children or work in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
- Have access to records relating to children in connection with child protection services, education services, health services, disability services and court orders and proceedings.

Some limited exemptions apply. (not listed here)

Note: This is also a requirement by Australian Canoeing Member Protection Policy (MPP), Attachment B

Step 2. Screening Procedure for Prescribed Positions

To be completed by 30 September 2011

Step 2A - Establish Policies and Procedures for obtaining Criminal History Assessment (CHA)

Obtain a criminal history assessment (CHA) for persons in “prescribed positions”. CHA (commonly referred to as a Police Check) is carried out by the police with a National Police Certificate (NPC) being issued to the person.

The NPC is the property of the person named on it and must be returned to that person and not kept by the organisation.

The canoe club or association requesting may keep information on the NPC (in a secure location) such as:

Person named on it including date of birth

The date the certificate was issued

Certificate number

Outcome (including any criminal convictions recorded)

Note: This is a requirement of the AC MPP so canoe clubs and state associations are required to obtain a CHA for prescribed positions and the existing policy meets the requirements of the legislation.

The standard that is commonly adopted for renewal of CHA is 3 years. Unless there are other pressing reasons for a shorter period, all employees, contractors or volunteers will be required to obtain a CHA every 3 years.

Step 2B – Establish Basic Minimum Screening for “prescribed positions”

In addition to obtaining a CHA the legislation requires organisations to put in place basic screening procedure for all employees and volunteers who work with children.

In the case of volunteers where the person is not known to the organisation a basic screening procedure will involve one or more of the following elements:
A check of previous organisations where the person has been involved.
An interview with the person (may only be short)
A screening by DFC as a person suitable to work with children

In the case of an employee or contractor, (including a casual or temporary employee) basic minimum screening will include checking with referees and possibly any of the elements as set out above for volunteers.

Note: a comprehensive screening requirement is set out in the AC MPP at Attachment B1. State associations and canoe clubs are required to follow the procedure.

Step 3. Records Management

To be completed by 30 September 2011

Specific requirements for storing and recording information obtained through conducting a CHA is provided for in the legislation. This includes measures to ensure information recorded is protected and confidentially stored with safeguards to protect against loss, unauthorised access, modification, disclosure or other misuse.

Canoe Clubs and the state association are currently required to ensure that all volunteers, staff and contractors have signed an AC Code of Conduct. This procedural requirement has not changed with the changes to the legislation

A simple CHA template that captures the information that must be retained by organisations will be provided to clubs prior to the 1st July 2011.
(Attachment 1 is a template to be used by clubs for the recording of CHA information)

Step 4. Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

To be completed by 30 September 2011

Organisation's affected by the legislation are to ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children, or their records, have ongoing opportunities to maintain the necessary skills and understanding to promote child safe environments.

Regular opportunities for training will be provided by Canoe SA for employees and volunteers of canoe clubs. These will be provided in conjunction with the Office for Recreation and Sport as well as opportunity at least once a year for all canoe club volunteers to attend training provided through Canoe SA.

Canoe clubs are encouraged to set aside in their annual budget an amount for training of volunteers in child safe environments to ensure this important provision is properly accounted for in their canoe club and to ensure that the

creation and maintenance of child safe environments are given the proper attention.

The Child Safe Environment policy and any related procedures will be placed on the Canoe SA website and employees and volunteers will be provided access to the information.

Step 5. Compliance Statement

The Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement has been lodged with the DFC by 28 February 2011 by Canoe SA on behalf of all affiliated canoe clubs in SA. The legislation provides that a state representative body, such as Canoe SA is able to lodge a statement on behalf of member organisations.

Report to Clubs and to members of the Association

Each year by the 28 February (in the following year) Canoe SA will report to all canoe clubs and to members of the association in relation to child safe environments.

The report will include amongst other things:

The number of volunteers working with children.

Dates on which training was held for staff and volunteers and the numbers who attended.

Proposed dates for training to be held in the forthcoming year.

Information

Information to be provided to canoe clubs and discipline technical committees by Canoe SA (timelines as a guide)

1 Risk Assessment and Mitigation/Management Strategy

Canoe SA will provide a proforma by 30 September 2011 to be included as part of the clubs RAMS for events and operations.

2 Child Safe Environments Policy, Procedures and Guidelines

Canoe SA will provide to canoe clubs a proforma by 30 September 2011 to be adopted by the club. This will not repeat information contained in the AC MPP but will only cover elements not currently covered by that policy however required to be implemented by SA sporting or recreation organisations under the recently enacted changes to the SA legislation.

3 Mandated Notifier

Volunteers and staff who work with children are mandated notifiers under the legislation and have a legal obligation to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Canoe SA will provide information to clubs about training opportunities and requirements by 30 June 2011.

Australian Canoeing Member Protection Policy Requirements

Other actions required to be taken by affiliated canoe clubs and state associations under the Australian Canoeing Member Protection Policy

1 Code of Conduct

Apply the Code of Conduct (clause 4) set out in the AC MPP. This policy is available on the Australian Canoeing and Canoe SA websites.

2 Member Protection Declaration

All employees, volunteers, members and others involved in direct and/or unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years must sign a Member Protection Declaration (Attachment B2 of the AC MPP)

3 Member Protection Information Officer

Appoint a Member Protection Information Officer and display the name and contact details in a way that is readily accessible.

The role of the member Protection Information Officer is to receive and handle complaints and/or allegations.