

Violence in Sport

The State Government condemns any form of violent behaviour (physical and/or verbal) outside the rules of a sport and/or recreation activity. The government encourages organisations to:

- Provide sport and recreation activities in settings that participants can reasonably expect to be free of violence;
- Have responsive protocols that provide for appropriate management if a violent incident occurs;
- Ensure that participants' play within the rules of the sport/activity and exhibit fair play at all times; and
- Extend these expectations of fair play and non-violent behaviour to officials, administrators, coaches, parents and spectators.

Background

Violence against a person and/or property is an offence punishable by law, be it on or off the field. The sporting arena is not exempt from the law.

Sport is an integral part of life in Western Australia. Regrettably, there are occasions when violence, either verbal or physical, occurs in sport and recreation settings involving players, officials, administrators and spectators.

In all instances, the sporting fraternity in Western Australia condemns such behaviour and certainly supports initiatives to prevent violence and, where it does occur, to manage it responsibly. Sport is not immune from the responsibility of upholding the accepted values and norms of our community.

Many sporting organisations have established procedures for managing violence that occurs during an event and such procedures begin with the manner in which officials manage the play and the way players have been briefed by their coaches. The Australian Football Tribunals and the National Rugby League Tribunals are examples of the end of the line management of violence on the field by the sporting organisations and are models for self-management.

Community sporting organisations also need to have procedures in place to manage and prevent violence on and off the field and to promote these procedures to their members. In many organisations these are outlined in their constitution and/or by-laws.

The sporting community in Australia has taken a very proactive role in preventing and managing violence in their respective sports and this has the support of governments.

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Resources

Australian Sports Commission – Codes of behaviour resource

<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/publications/resources/Codes%20of%20Behaviour.pdf>

Fair and Safe Behaviour (brochure)

http://www.playbytherules.net.au/downloads/resources/sports_brochure_ACT.pdf

Useful Websites

Australian Sports Commission – www.ausport.gov.au under Policy/Issues/Behaviour and sport

www.playbrtherules.net.au - under Policies and Resources