



MEMBER PROTECTION

SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

**Adopted by NSW Netball Association Ltd Board Meeting on
15th April 2008**

Last review date 15th April 2008

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Netball NSW Sexual Relationships Policy forms one part of the Netball NSW Member Protection Policy, and as such, should be read in conjunction with the Member Protection Policy.

Netball NSW takes the view that intimate relationships (whether or not of a sexual nature) between coaches and players, while not necessarily constituting Harassment, can have harmful effects on the individual player involved, on other players and on the sport's public image.

Such relationships may be perceived to be exploitative because there is usually a disparity between coaches and players in terms of authority, maturity, status and dependence.

If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, please refer to the Netball NSW MPP - Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and/or the complaints procedure outlined in the Netball NSW MPP - Part C (Complaint Handling Policy). This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how Netball NSW will deal with the problem.

2. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 This policy applies to all financial members of Netball NSW.
- 2.2 This policy applies to behaviour occurring both within and outside the course of Netball NSW business, activities and events, when the behaviour involves individuals associated with Netball NSW and negatively affects relationships within our sport and work environment.

3. POLICY GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Administrators, officials, managers, supervisors, and coaches have a direct responsibility to make sure that financial members and employees know about this policy and adhere to it. They have been trained in this policy and its implementation by means of forums to communicate the planning and implementation of the policy, together with inclusion of the policy issues in relevant courses.
- 3.2 Financial members and employees will be informed about this policy through distribution to all Associations and during the conduct of relevant courses.
- 3.3 Netball NSW is further responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are monitored and reviewed regularly.
- 3.4 It will be the responsibility of all employees and financial members to:
 - comply with this policy;
 - offer support to anyone who is being harassed and let them know where they can get help and advice;
 - maintain complete confidentiality if they provide information during the investigation of a complaint; and
 - avoid gossiping or spreading rumours about harassment (except where providing information as part of a legitimate investigation process). Such behaviour can result in legal action for defamation.

- 3.5 Given there is always a risk that the relative power of the coach may be a factor in the development of intimate relationships, Netball NSW takes the position that coaches working at all levels should avoid intimate sexual relations with persons who may be considered subordinate or dependant in the coaching context.
- 3.6 Should a sexual relationship develop between a player/umpire and coach, Netball NSW will investigate whether any action against the coach is necessary. Factors that it may be relevant to consider are the age and maturity of the player/umpire relative to the coach, the financial or emotional dependence of the player/umpire on the coach, and the likelihood of the relationship having any adverse impact on the player/umpire. If it is determined that the sexual relationship is inappropriate, action may be taken to terminate the coaching relationship with the player/umpire. Action may include transfer, or if this is not feasible, a request for resignation or dismissal from employment coaching duties.
- 3.7 In the event that a player/umpire attempts to initiate an intimate sexual relationship, the coach must take personal responsibility for discouraging such approaches, explaining the ethical basis for such action. The coach may wish to approach the Netball NSW Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) if they feel harassed.
- 3.8 The law is always the minimum standard for behaviour within Netball NSW and therefore sex with a minor, of either the same or opposite sex, is a criminal offence.