

VICTORIAN AMATEUR BOXING LEAGUE INCOPRORATED

Policy

Responding to Sexual Misconduct



Policy

Responding to Sexual Misconduct

Policy Statement

Victorian Amateur Boxing League (VABL) is committed to ensuring that every person involved with the VABL is treated with respect and dignity and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse.

The VABL *has* zero tolerance for sexual misconduct and for any behaviour that puts the wellbeing of people in the boxing community at risk.

Accordingly, we are committed to providing support and care for anyone impacted by sexual misconduct while under the VABL's care.

Through a dedicated support and response framework, the VABL will ensure that athletes, staff and others in the VABL's care can confidentially report sexual misconduct, seek help and appropriate action can be taken.

This includes a focussed approach with the individual affected by sexual misconduct through the provision of appropriate, sensitive and timely support. The VABL's focus is on assisting any individuals with their immediate safety and wellbeing, as well as their care and recovery.

The VABL's response will be individual-focused and trauma-informed, ensuring that the individual's wishes, safety and wellbeing are prioritised throughout the response.

Scope

This document details the VABL's support and response framework for sexual misconduct.

This framework seeks to assist any individual who has been, or is at risk of being, impacted by sexual misconduct while under the VABL's care. This includes VABL staff, athletes and trainers.

It also seeks to assist individuals seeking information, advice and/or support in the prevention or response to observed sexual misconduct.

The activities outlined in this document are a secondary form of prevention in the event of an incident of sexual misconduct. The VABL recognises that primary prevention and the creation of a respectful culture is critical to minimise the incidence of sexual misconduct and is committed to appropriate education and action at the primary level.

We expect all within our league, those attending our events and those in the broader boxing community to act to keep people safe from harm.

Definitions

Sexual Misconduct¹ includes *sexual offences* and serious *incidents of a sexual nature* which can cause trauma, including:

- > repeated demeaning behaviours of a sexual nature
- > exclusion based on gender, sexual orientation or gender identification
- > persistent unwanted/unwarranted attention of a sexual nature
- > recording photographing or transmitting incidents and images of sexual misconduct.

Sexual offences cover a range of criminal offences (including sexual assault/rape and acts of indecency) against a person that involve a physical act of a sexual nature, sometimes accompanied by violence that is committed against a person without their consent.

Incidents of a sexual nature have an element relating to gender, sexual orientation, gender identification and/or sexual language and elements of intimidation, aggression and/or violence.

Trauma can be as the result of a singular event or a series of incidents and experiences and can impair normal functioning, reactions, decision making, behaviours and relationships. The VABL recognises that trauma can manifest itself in a variety of ways and at different points in time dependent on the individual and the incident. The extent to which a person recovers from a traumatic incident is largely linked to the nature of support offered to the individual on disclosure.

Support and Response Framework

The VABL's framework for responding to incidents of sexual misconduct has four components:

- >> Initial contact and first response
- >> Confidential disclosure
- >> Formal report and investigation
- >> Action and improvement.

Initial contact and first response

The VABL recognises that the extent to which a person recovers from a traumatic incident is largely linked to the nature of support offered to the individual on disclosure and has established specialised services to support this first response. These services include customised support for individuals under the age of eighteen.

Anyone impacted by sexual misconduct while under the VABL's care can call the confidential telephone helpline (1800 RESPECT) to receive independent, professional support at no cost to the individual. Services are confidential and support staff are trained in counselling and assisting individuals impacted by sexual misconduct and abuse.

This crisis and counselling telephone service is available to any man, woman or child who has experienced any form of sexual misconduct whether it is a recent event, or something which happened in the past.

Confidential disclosure

For anyone impacted by sexual misconduct, disclosing what happened allows individuals to receive appropriate support. The VABL will coordinate trauma-informed care that provides a safe place for individuals to talk confidentially to experienced professionals.

A confidential disclosure allows a person to disclose their experience directly to a trained professional without involving the VABL or the state/territory police. This option is available so as to encourage individuals who may not otherwise report to come forward to receive appropriate support to assist them in their recovery. Anyone making a confidential disclosure will receive advice, support and guidance.

Formal report and investigation

An individual can, at any time, elect to make a formal report to police or relevant authorities. This includes an individual who chooses to progress their initial confidential disclosure to a formal report. This may result in investigative action by state/territory police, or other authorities.

Changing a confidential disclosure to a formal report does not mean that everyone should or will know about the circumstances of the case. Regardless of how an incident is reported, the VABL and the support services it engages will treat disclosures with the utmost confidence.

The support coordinator put in place at the initial contact and first response phase will explain the processes involved in a formal report and continue to support the individual through the process, including making statements to police, assisting with investigations and where relevant, the collection of forensic evidence.

Where individuals choose to make a formal report, the appropriate reporting means will be activated.

The VABL will investigate any matters that are formally reported under its policy framework in accordance with the established procedures and will support authorities with any formal report made to them including where they progress an investigation.

Personal support services for individuals impacted by sexual misconduct will be available according to their needs.

Action and improvement

The VABL is committed to eliminating sexual misconduct and fostering a culture of dignity and respect within the boxing community. The desired end state is an environment where the cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, professional values, and team commitment are reinforced to create an environment where sexual misconduct is not tolerated, condoned, or ignored.

To achieve this, the VABL needs to understand what risks exist and where system improvements can be made to reduce the chance for these actions to be repeated.

The VABL will utilise de-identified data from the first response phase, as well as formal reports, to build its knowledge and identify factors such as prevalence, areas of risk and trends to inform further action around general and targeted prevention and the continuous improvement of its practices. The identity of individuals will not be compromised and all information will remain confidential.

The VABL will continue to evolve its policies and practices in response to information collected in responding to sexual misconduct to ensure safety of the highest standard.

Context

The reputation of boxing in Victoria is underpinned by fair and ethical behaviour. The incidence of integrity issues whether they be sports betting, child safety, drugs (performance enhancing, illicit drugs and alcohol), corruption, violence or inappropriate behaviour, impact the lives of individuals, impact the sustainability of organisations and threaten the image of the sport.

This policy of responding to sexual misconduct under the VABL's care is one of the ways the VABL is taking action to ensure boxing is safe and everyone participates in a respectful environment.

Affected by sexual misconduct? – Call 1800 RESPECT or txt 0458 737 732

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service.