



# **The Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia**

## **Australian Capital Territory Incorporated**

### **Member Protection Policy**

Interim Policy approved by Council on 2 August 2022

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## Revision Status

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## **1. Aims and Objectives**

1.1 The aims and objectives of the SSAA ACT are to:

- a. promote and improve the role of sporting shooters and hunters,
- b. help educate people in the skills of hunting and shooting and the proper and safe handling of firearms,
- c. assist those interested in hunting and shooting to further their interests,
- d. advocate for better laws within the ACT to protect and promote the interests of hunters and shooters,
- e. encourage all members to abide by the SSAA Code of Conduct,
- f. work to improve understanding between landholders and members,
- g. provide and promote knowledge and information on firearms and ammunition to support safety,
- h. advocate game conservation and the legal recognition of game animals Assist authorities with the control of pest animals, and
- i. take other actions which assist in the delivery of the aims and objectives outlined above.

## **2. Purpose of the Member Protection Policy**

2.1 To support the SSAA ACT aims and objectives above, the Member Protection Policy (MPP) purpose is to maintain responsible behaviour and support the making of informed decisions by the members of the SSAA ACT. The policy outlines the SSAA ACTs commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, to be safe and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. The policy informs everyone involved in the SSAA ACT of their legal/ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.

## **3. Who the Policy Applies To**

3.1 This policy applies to everyone involved in the activities of the SSAA ACT, its Clubs and Sections, including:

- a. Executive members,
- b. Council members,
- c. Committee members,
- d. Office bearers,
- e. Instructors and Range Officers,
- f. General Members,

- g. Life Members, and
- h. Visitors.

#### **4. Extent of the Policy**

- 4.1 This policy covers all matters directly and indirectly related to SSAA ACT activities and business. In particular, the policy governs unfair selection decisions and actions, breaches of the Code of Conduct and behaviour that occurs anywhere in the Majura Range Complex, club rooms, ranges, car parks, social events organised or sanctioned by the SSAA ACT or individual Clubs and Sections.
- 4.2 This also includes members representing the SSAA ACT, Club or Section travelling away to compete or visit other range facilities.
- 4.3 This policy also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings the SSAA ACT Club or Section or shooting in general into disrepute.

#### **5. SSAA ACT Responsibilities**

5.1 The SSAA ACT shall:

- a. adopt, implement and comply with this policy,
- b. ensure that this policy is enforceable,
- c. publish, distribute and promote this policy and the consequences of any breaches of this policy,
- d. promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times,
- e. deal with any complaints made under this policy in an appropriate manner,
- f. deal with any breaches of this policy in an appropriate manner,
- g. recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy,
- h. ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to all members to whom this policy applies,
- i. review this policy every 12 months; and
- j. seek advice from and refer serious issues to appropriate authorities.

5.2 Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that state or national bodies request to be referred to them.

#### **6. Individual Responsibilities**

6.1 All SSAA ACT members shall:

- a. make themselves aware of the contents of this policy,

- b. comply with all relevant provisions of this policy, including the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy,
- c. consent to the screening requirements set out in this policy, and ACT Working with Children and Vulnerable People checks, if a person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18, or where otherwise required by law,
- d. treat other people with respect,
- e. always place the safety and welfare of other members, especially children, above other considerations,
- f. be responsible and accountable for their behaviour, and
- g. follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour, and
- h. comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy.

## **7. Protection of Children**

- 7.1 The SSAA ACT is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in shooting activities. The SSAA ACT supports the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child safe environment is maintained.
- 7.2 The SSAA ACT will also support the rights and wellbeing of our members and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants.
- 7.3 The SSAA ACT acknowledges the valuable contribution made by SSAA ACT members and volunteers and encourages their active participation in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all shooting participants.

## **8. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying**

- 8.1 The SSAA ACT is committed to providing an environment in which people are treated fairly and equitably and that is, as far as practicable, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- 8.2 The SSAA ACT recognises that people may not be able to enjoy themselves or perform at their best if they are treated unfairly, discriminated against, harassed or bullied.

## **9. Discrimination**

- 9.1 Unlawful discrimination involves the less favourable treatment of a person on the basis of one or more of the personal characteristics protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination laws.
- 9.2 Discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination:

- a. **Direct discrimination** occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably because of that personal characteristic.
  - b. **Indirect discrimination** occurs if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that will disadvantage a person with a protected personal characteristic and that requirement, condition or practice is not reasonable.
- 9.3 For the purpose of determining discrimination, the offender's awareness and motive are irrelevant.

## **10. Harassment**

- 10.1 Harassment is any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, that intimidates, offends or humiliates another person and which happens because a person has a certain personal characteristic protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination legislation.
- 10.2 The offensive behaviour does not have to take place a number of times, a single incident can constitute harassment.
- 10.3 Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome conduct, remarks or innuendo of a sexual nature. It covers a wide range of behaviours and can be verbal, written, visual or physical. Sexual harassment is not limited to members of the opposite sex.
- 10.4 Every person is covered by the anti-discrimination laws that apply in each State or Territory as well as the Federal anti-discrimination laws.
- 10.5 The following is a list of all the personal characteristics that apply throughout Australia:
- a. gender,
  - b. race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, nationality, ethno-religious origin, immigration,
  - c. national extraction or social origin,
  - d. marital status, relationship status, identity of spouse or domestic partner,
  - e. pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding,
  - f. family or carer responsibilities, status as a parent or carer,
  - g. age,
  - h. religion, religious beliefs or activities,
  - i. political beliefs or activities,
  - j. lawful sexual activity,
  - k. sexual orientation and gender identity,

- l. profession, trade, occupation or calling,
- m. irrelevant criminal record, spent convictions,
- n. irrelevant medical record,
- o. member of SSAA ACT or organisation of employees or employers, industrial activity, trade union activity,
- p. physical features,
- q. disability, mental or physical impairment,
- r. defence service; and
- s. personal SSAA ACT with someone who has, or is assumed to have, any of these personal characteristics.

10.6 Legislation also prohibits:

- a. racial, religious, homosexual, transgender and HIV/AIDS vilification, and
- b. victimisation resulting from a complaint.

**11. Bullying**

11.1 The SSAA ACT is committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying. The SSAA ACT understands that bullying has the potential to result in significant negative consequences for an individual's health, wellbeing and safety. The SSAA ACT regards bullying in all forms as unacceptable.

11.2 Bullying is characterised by repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a person, or group of persons, that creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying behaviour is that which a reasonable person in the circumstances would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine, threaten, degrade, offend or intimidate a person. Bullying behaviour can include actions of an individual or group.

11.3 Whilst generally characterised by repeated behaviours, one off instances can amount to bullying.

11.4 The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, would be considered bullying:

- a. verbal abuse including shouting, swearing, teasing, making belittling remarks or persistent unjustified criticism,
- b. excluding or isolating a group or person,
- c. spreading malicious rumours, or
- d. psychological harassment such as intimidation.

11.5 Bullying includes cyber-bullying which occurs through the use of technology. New technologies and communication tools, such as smart phones and social networking



websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments. The SSAA ACT will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online.

11.6 If any member or person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by another person or organisation bound by this policy, they may make a complaint.

11.7 Refer to Sections 10 through 13 for the complaint process.

## **12. Inclusive Practices**

12.1 The SSAA ACT is welcoming and will seek to include members from all areas of our community. The following are examples of some of our inclusive practices.

12.2 **People with a disability.** The SSAA ACT will not discriminate against any person because they have a disability. Where it is necessary, the SSAA ACT will make reasonable adjustments (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

12.3 **People from diverse cultures.** The SSAA ACT will support, respect and encourage people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in the SSAA ACT and where possible we will accommodate requests for flexibility.

12.4 **Sexual & Gender Identity.** All people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, are welcome at our SSAA ACT. The SSAA ACT strives to provide a safe environment for participation and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment because of a person's sexuality or gender identity.

12.5 **Pregnancy.** The SSAA ACT is committed to treating pregnant women fairly and to removing any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in SSAA ACT activities. We will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women. We will take reasonable care to ensure the continuing safety, health and wellbeing of pregnant women. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing and that of their unborn child, is of utmost importance in their decision-making about the extent they choose to participate in shooting. We encourage all pregnant women to talk with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in shooting and ensure that they make informed decisions about their participation in shooting. Pregnant women should make these decisions themselves, in consultation with their medical advisers and in discussion with their respective Club/Section. If a pregnant woman believes she is being, or has been, harassed or discriminated against by another person bound by this policy, they may make a complaint, refer Sections 10 through 13.

## **10. Responding to Complaints**

10.1 The SSAA ACT takes all complaints about behaviour seriously. The SSAA ACT will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness and ensure:

- a. all complaints will be taken seriously,
- b. the person the complaint is against will be given full details of what is being alleged against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations,

- c. irrelevant matters will not be taken into account,
  - d. decisions will be unbiased, and
  - e. any penalties imposed will be reasonable.
- 10.2 More serious complaints may be escalated to relevant authorities as required. If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then the SSAA ACT will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.
- 11. Complaint Handling Process**
- 11.1 When a complaint is received by the SSAA ACT, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Secretary or other Council Member) will:
- a. listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the concern,
  - b. ask what the complaint is and how they would like their concern to be resolved and if they need any support,
  - c. explain the different options available to help resolve the complainant's concern,
  - d. inform the relevant government authorities and/or police, if required by law to do so, and
  - e. where possible and appropriate, maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.
- 11.2 Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the SSAA ACT will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve enacting the Dispute Resolution Process, refer the Constitution of the SSAA ACT.
- 11.3 To support resolving the dispute between the parties, before escalating the dispute further, the SSAA ACT will appoint a Shooters Friend. The role of the Shooters Friend will be to:
- a. support the person complaining and to talk to the person being complained about,
  - b. bring the dispute parties involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem,
  - c. gather more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour),
  - d. seek advice as required from internal sources or external agencies as required,
  - e. refer the complaint to relevant SSAA ACT policies/rules (Code of Conduct and Constitution),

- f. if necessary refer the complainant to an external agencies such as police or anti-discrimination agency.
- 11.4 The Shooters Friend needs be be conversant with the Rules and Policies of the SSAA ACT. A trained/certified dispute resolution coordinator is not necessary; however, dispute resolution certification/qualifications would be advantageous.
- 11.5 In situations where a dispute is not resolved between Parties within 14 days, as required by the Constitution, and the Complaint wishes to progress the complaint further, the Shooters Friend will assist the member in raising a formal complaint to the Council.
- 11.6 The Council will progress the dispute through the Mediation, Disciplining Members and Appeals processes as laid down by the SSAA ACT Constitution.
- 11.7 At any stage of the process, a member/person can seek advice from external agencies including dispute resolution support agencies, anti-discrimination commission or other external agencies.

## **12. Disciplinary Sanctions**

- 12.1 The SSAA ACT will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached policies or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:
  - a. be applied consistently,
  - b. be fair and reasonable, and
  - c. be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach.
- 12.2 Possible sanctions that may be taken include:
  - a. a direction that the individual make verbal and/or written apology,
  - b. counselling of the individual to address behaviour,
  - c. suspension of membership,
  - d. termination of membership, or
  - e. any other form of discipline that the SSAA ACT considers reasonable and appropriate.

## **13. Appeals**

- 13.1 The complainant or respondent will be entitled to lodge an appeal against a decision made in relation to a complaint (including a decision where disciplinary sanctions are imposed), in accordance with the Constitution of the SSAA ACT.



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Can tick more than one box</p> | <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or    <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist    <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute            <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexuality            <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash            <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race                    <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying                        <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion                <input type="checkbox"/> Disability                        <input type="checkbox"/> Victimization<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy            <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse                    <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other ..... </p> |
| <p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>  |  |
| <p>Information provided to them</p>   |  |
| <p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>   |  |
| <p>Follow-up action</p>   |  |