

Maccabi Australia Media Release
September 4 2014



Maccabi releases its Member Protection Policy

Maccabi Australia is pleased to release its Member Protection Policy (MPP) Handbook which has been developed as a direct response to society demands for proper processes and appropriate conduct for all people involved in organisations where children are members. Maccabi's MPP Handbook is extensive, providing detailed policies for anyone in or associated to the Maccabi organisation and dealing with its members. It provides mechanisms to ensure protection is in place and outlines processes to deal with any incidents where there is bullying, sexual harassment, gender inequality and discrimination.

There has been significant consultation with eminent legal, child protection and work safe practitioners to ensure that the Handbook is best in class. The Handbook is a model that has application to all other community organisations.

Not satisfied with the establishment of the policies and handbook, Maccabi is now embarking on a complete implementation and training program for all of its clubs, members and coaches. Indeed, Maccabi is taking the lead in the community to ensure that child protection remains foremost in its organisation agenda.

Barry Smorgon, Chairman of Maccabi Australia said "For these policies to make the genuine difference they should, the Maccabi community needs to embrace the lead taken by the Maccabi Boards. Whilst built on the back of things that we all wish never would have happened, our approach is to engage in conversations with our 9000 members on a regular basis so that they aware of the challenges and risks and in so doing we want to establish a resource base to help deal with any issues as they arise. Through this proactive approach we can build a culture that recognises and responds to the needs of our members. "

The entire process has been and will continue to be driven by the MAI Board and its MPP Sub Committee, which is chaired by Philip Sheezel. Philip, along with a cross national subcommittee will oversee the effective roll out of the Policy to the 50 Clubs across the States. The sub committee together with the Executive Director of MAI, Ellana Aarons will undertake regular reviews of the document and its implementation to ensure its ongoing relevance.

In addition, a number of Governance bodies have been established to ensure the integrity of the processes outlined. The structure of these committees and the names of the people involved are attached to this press release but include The Hon Frank Marks LL.M in NSW, Rob Goldstein LL.B, Hani Greenberg, Searle Batten and Jonathan Kaplan in Victoria as well as Alan Wein LL.B.

Smorgon said "Maccabi is committed to ensuring that every person who participates with our organisation is treated with respect and dignity, and is protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. The safety, wellbeing and rights of all members, but most specifically children accessing services, events and activities undertaken by our organisation is paramount. These policies provide the platform for this commitment, as well as the processes and people to support our members to hopefully resolve issues should they arise."

Maccabi is indebted to the passionate and wonderful people who have committed their time and expertise to the Maccabi MPP program.



The Maccabi Member Protection Handbook is now available at www.maccabi.com.au

Any questions regarding this statement can be directed through Ellana Aarons, Executive Director Maccabi Australia on (03)9563 5865 or ellana@maccabi.com.au

Attachment to Release

Key Facts and Appointments

Every club will have a **Club Member Protection Compliance Officer (MPCO)**, who will be the first point of contact for any issues that may emerge.

In the event that a club is unable to resolve the issue or the matter occurs at state level, the matter can be referred to a **Maccabi Integrity Officer (MIO)**. A group of highly credentialed people have been appointed to these roles:

New South Wales – David Lewis

Queensland – Ashleigh Lewis

Western Australia – David Lenhoff

Victoria – Dr Lesley Braun

National matters – Dr Yvonne Fayman

Should the matter remain unresolved, it can then be referred to a **Grievance Tribunal**. A number of highly respected independent persons have agreed to sit on the various Grievance Tribunals and Appeals Tribunal as follows, with others to be confirmed and appointed:

Maccabi Grievance Tribunals:

NSW – Hon. Frank Marks LL.M

Victoria – Rob Goldstein LL.B (Chairman), Hani Greenberg, Searle Batten and Jonathan Kaplan

Maccabi Appeals Tribunal – Alan Wein LL.B (Chairman)

A National **MPP Sub Committee** has been instituted under the leadership of Philip Sheezel. Members of this sub- committee include Tom Danos (barrister), Nicki Isaacs (psychologist), Brian Swersky (Maccabi Victoria) and Joel Liebovitz (Maccabi NSW).