



Lessons From Other Sports (Football)

Alan Darfi – Head of Legal

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- 1. Introduction and background**
- 2. FA historic allegations**
- 3. FA procedures**
- 4. RFL procedures**
- 5. The future**



1. Introduction and background

- **Importance of Safeguarding in Sport**
- **Different aspects of Safeguarding**
- **My background**



2. FA historic allegations

- **2016 - initial reports of historic allegations (Barry Bennell – Crewe/Man City)**
- **Led to substantial historic allegations across Football (by September 2017 – 2,208 referrals, 784 alleged victims, 285 identified suspects and 331 affected Clubs)**
- **Resulted in numerous criminal charges and ongoing investigations. Described by some as ‘the worst crisis The FA has ever faced’**
- **Reputational damage, commercial devaluation and increased scrutiny**



2. FA historic allegations

- **Investigation has flagged numerous historic incidents where concerns were raised to authorities. Allegations have been made that these weren't taken seriously**
- **The allegations have resulted in widespread historic reporting across all Sport. To date, Rugby League has not been affected, but we all must be alive to any potential historic concerns**



3. FA procedures

- **Important to appreciate that historic allegations took place in a different period. However, demonstrates importance of having appropriate safeguards in place**
- **Recent FA procedures for safeguarding were already in a good place, but have been strengthened significantly (the vast majority of these were already in place in one form or another) Good to compare, as The FA have arguably tried to put in place best practice:**



3. FA procedures

- **Mandatory CWO – regular training**
- **Mandatory online training**
- **Mandatory named coaches per team – DBS checked**
- **Mandatory LWO**
- **Spot checks on 10% of all clubs to ensure named coaches present for training**
- **Spot check interviews with parents to assess safeguarding awareness**
- **Allegations reported to County Welfare Officer, who liaises with FA where deemed appropriate (i.e not poor practice) Investigated by County Welfare Officer**

4. RFL procedures

- **Mandatory CWO – regular training**
- **Mandatory DBS checks for those in regulated activities (free)**
- **LWO**
- **2018 – club visits (following insurance discussions)**
- **CWO recommended to be part of Committee**
- **Allegations reported to RFL. Team of experienced independent investigators where appropriate**
- **40 years combined experience amongst RFL team**
- **Green RAG rating – Child Protection In Schools Unit**



5. The Future

- **Safeguarding rightfully in the spotlight**
- **Remain vigilant and treat any concerns seriously. Ensure all those within the Club are aware of the correct reporting mechanisms for any concerns**
- **Support RFL investigations as appropriate. Check and challenge behaviour in the Club. Ensure Safeguarding on agenda within Club**
- **Likely next area of focus – bullying. Be aware and check/challenge**