

Extract from the Football Federation Australia – National Member Protection Policy

5.9 Cyber Bullying/Safety

Bullying and harassment in all forms is regarded by the Governing Bodies as unacceptable in this sport. Given the emergence of new telephone and internet social networks, the opportunity for unwanted and improper comments and statements has dramatically increased. Messages or statements made in these ways using these means of communication are largely instantaneous, and can easily be abused. Others may also manipulate a person by encouraging a statement to be made on Twitter, Facebook, My Space or LinkedIn, for example, when the writer may be upset or vulnerable. Bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and distress to the person who has been the target of any comments or statements. In some cases, bullying is regarded as a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment, amongst other things. Frustration at a referee, team-mate, coach, or sporting body should never be communicated on social network channels, but rather by way of reasoned and logical verbal and written statements and where appropriate, complaints, to the relevant controlling Competition Administrator, Club, District Association or Member Federation.

5.10 Social Networking Websites Policy

The Governing Bodies acknowledge the emergence of new technology and communication mediums (**Social Media**), and wish to enable such Social Media to be used to benefit football and its participants, and to applaud achievements. However, participants within football need to be mindful of the possibility of Social Media being used inappropriately. Inappropriate use may occur unintentionally or when participants do not realise that their comments, once published are in a public forum, and are difficult to retract.

Social Media platforms include:

- a) social networking sites, including Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn;
- b) video and photo sharing websites, including Flickr and YouTube;
- c) micro-blogging sites, such as Twitter;
- d) weblogs, including personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications;
- e) forums and discussion boards, including those operated by Fox Sports, Four Four Two or The World Game;
- f) online encyclopaedias, such as Wikipedia; and
- g) any other web site that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

Cautions the Governing Bodies recommend include:

- a) do not include personal information of yourself or others in Social Media channels;
- b) do not use offensive, provocative or hateful language in Social Media channels;
- c) use your best judgment – do not publish something that makes you the slightest bit uncomfortable, and never write/ publish if you are feeling emotional or upset (or are intoxicated);
- d) always ask for a person's permission before posting their picture on Social Media platform;
- e) never comment on rumours, do not deny or affirm them or speculate about rumours in Social Media channels; and
- f) always use Social Media/ network forums to add value and promote football in a positive way.

In addition to this Policy, FFA may from time to time issue Social Media policies and/ or guidelines that apply to specific individuals.