



INTEGRITY IN SPORT FORUM

'IN GOVERNANCE WE TRUST'



Sport Integrity: Think Globally, Act Locally

Dennis Hemphill

Global attempts to improve governance and safeguard sport from corruption need to have community sport reach if they are to be effective.

The International Centre for Sport Security announced recently the creation of a [50 nation-plus Sport Integrity Global Alliance \(SIGA\)](#) to drive reform in sport. With the [FIFA scandal](#) perhaps the tipping point, SIGA is a neutral coalition of international stakeholders across the government and private sector seeking to promote good governance and financial transparency.

Since the ['crisis' in Australian sport in 2013](#) there have been widespread changes to rebuild sport integrity and public trust. In addition to expanded policing powers, the Australian government has established a National Integrity in Sport unit, the peak body ESSA has developed a sport science accreditation scheme, professional sport organisations are increasingly employing integrity officers, and the market is filling with sport integrity-related courses, workshops and seminars.

There is no doubt that substantial international and national efforts will be required to re-establish the credibility of sport, a theme that will feature prominently in the upcoming Victoria University - Sport Australia Hall of Fame presented ['Integrity in Sport Forum: In Governance We Trust'](#).

While there is a need for these coordinated international and national efforts to bolster efforts against doping, match fixing, financial corruption and other threats to sport integrity, more support is needed at the local sport level.

Research presented by Victoria University researchers at the Victorian Minister's Forum on July 29, 2015 indicated that local communities may be unaware of the extent to which performance enhancing substances and methods, illicit drugs, and illegal gambling markets have filtered down to the community sport level. Managers, coaches and players who might be aware of them and are willing to do something about it, may not be aware of who to contact for more

information or how to report suspect behaviours. In a sport sector managed largely by volunteers, there may simply be little or no time to develop procedures to prevent and police these dubious behaviours and practices.

The high-performance ethos, which may be appropriate at the elite sport level, has gradually filtered down to community sport level.

It is not uncommon to see increasing training loads and the use of supplements or other means to improve performance or manage pain and injuries. Player and umpire abuse by overzealous coaches and fans is another symptom. At the same time, the rise of sport betting, even at junior sport levels, increases the risk of 'cheating to lose'.

Sport integrity can be thought of as the consistent living up to declared standards and principles, which might be different at elite, school and community sport levels. It goes without saying that elite sport focusses on value of performance excellence. The educational value of school sport is thought to lie in skill acquisition, fitness and character building, while the mission statements and mottos of community sport organisations usually centre on participation, fun, doing your best and community building.

One way forward is for the governing bodies of sport to provide the leadership and resources to help local sporting clubs "walk the talk", that is, uphold the values and principles that are appropriate to community sport. Victoria University is currently working with Sport and Recreation Victoria on a sport integrity readiness project, which aims to provide state sporting associations and eventually community clubs with a handy tool to improve awareness and management of sport integrity risks. More still is needed though to bolster the capabilities of local communities to safeguard sport for the future.

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