



# SOCIAL MEDIA & ISSUES MANAGEMENT IN SPORT

Australia has a rich and diverse history in sport. It's a proud place to call home and to play ball. Since the first Test match in 1877 to this year's AFL Pride match, in that time the nation has overcome adversity and grown in its acceptance of the LGBTQ community. We've seen the introduction of marriage equality but also had to grapple with issues caused by high profile sports people, and the antiquated opinions of some fans, who do not share the same views of the majority of Australians.

In order to respond to such issues, it's important that sporting organisations are well prepared with robust social media response mechanisms; issues and crisis management frameworks and support from partner networks.

## SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE MECHANISMS

### Your early warning alarm – social media

Establish the governance and protocol to identify potential issues and resolve quickly.

### Issues identification

Develop a comprehensive scenario forecast and establish process and tools to flag in the eventuality any arise.

### Governance protocol

Define a clear workflow, elevation criteria and sign off responsibilities to ensure that if a crisis occurs, we can fast track the resolution.

### Stakeholder management

Create a thorough and up to date list of all stakeholders with relationship level and contact detail for easy access in a crisis.

### Scenario testing

Prepare for potential crisis with live test scenarios which will allow staff to become familiar with how to manage, reducing panic or ineffective response in the case of a real crisis.

## SPORT IN AUSTRALIA



Australians watch  
**3.6 BILLION**  
minutes of sport  
per week



56 percent of all participants &  
**72% OF GAY MEN**  
believe homophobia is more  
common in Australian sport  
than the rest of society



**55%**  
of Australian sport fans  
say they use the internet  
to feel more connected  
to sport



LGBTQ young people  
aged 16 to 27 are  
**5 TIMES**  
more likely  
to attempt suicide\*

\*Source: National LGBTI Health Alliance

Whether online or offline, when assessing the impact of an issue it's important to consider the following:



### REPUTATION

Could the issue impact the organisations reputation?



### PEOPLE

How does the issue impact people; spectators, employees, broader communities?



### OPERATIONS

Does the issue have the potential to disrupt operations?



### CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Does the organisation have a responsibility to respond?



### FINANCIAL

How will the issue affect the bottom line?

## ISSUES AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The best managed crisis is the one you never hear about. That's why crisis preparation, planning and training is so important.

It helps to inform decision making, test responsiveness and ensure your organisation has the skills and support to effectively navigate situations that pose a risk, either to people and safety, operations or reputation.

Crisis preparedness involves planning for the high-risk scenarios that are known, and building muscle memory in crisis response that will help you respond quickly and effectively to unforeseen issues that arise.

We've identified **four key steps** to take to help prepare your organisation to mitigate a crisis:

1. Establish a crisis communications protocol or framework (if not already in place)
2. Conduct regular (annual) training with staff to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities
3. Put in place media monitoring and social media listening to help identify any potential issues brewing
4. Identify high impact/likelihood scenarios and develop communication plans in advance

## SUPPORT NETWORKS

### Herd MSL

#### HERD MSL

Herd MSL's purpose is to change Australia through communications. They believe there is an opportunity to unite people through the power of sport, to change the hearts and minds of Australians; in order to become a more inclusive and tolerant place to live, work and play. We provide advice on social media management and issues management as well as a broad range of communications advice.



#### PRIDE IN SPORT

Pride in Sport is the only sporting inclusion program specifically designed to assist National and State sporting organisations and clubs with the inclusion of LGBTI employees, players, coaches, volunteers and spectators. The world-first Pride in Sport Index (PSI) benchmarks and assesses the inclusion of LGBTI people across all sporting contexts.

