Sport Environment Assessments ("**SEA**") serve a dual function in both addressing and preventing maltreatment, discrimination and other prohibited behaviour related to the *Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport* ("**UCCMS**"). A SEA is designed to identify and remedy alleged systemic issues.

Unlike an investigation, in a SEA, there is no complainant or respondent. Survey respondents and interviewees ("**Assessment Participants**") are asked to provide answers that describe their experiences. Therefore, the information in the SEA reflects how the Assessment Participants perceived the issues, systems or dynamics within the sport environment subject to the SEA.

The answers that Assessment Participants provide in interviews or to surveys are not subject to further examination to establish validity; it constitutes their individual perspectives.

Effects Related to the Termination of OSIC Operations

At the time of publishing, the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) was undergoing a phased wind down of its operations, in view of the termination of its activities as of July 31, 2025. As a result of this wind down, the Monitoring Phase outlined at Section 7g. of the *OSIC Guidelines Regarding Sport Environment Assessments* falls outside of the purview of the OSIC and has not been undertaken.

Sport Canada therefore assumed responsibility to undertake necessary measures to ensure the continuity of this process.

Hockey Canada and Hockey in Canada

Sport Environment Assessment: Phase Two Report

Prepared for:

Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner of Canada

May 8, 2025

Independent Assessor:

Kyra Hudson, Lawyer, Mediator + Investigator and Member of the Abuse-Free Sport, Sport Environment Assessment Unit (SEAU) (2022-2025)

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1. Introduction

This Sport Environment Assessment Report provides a framework to understand and address the alleged systemic issues of maltreatment in the sport of ice hockey in Canada and Hockey Canada. It is the view of the author of this Report that if we better understand the areas of ice hockey culture in Canada that are connected to the risks of maltreatment, we can help to prevent maltreatment and move together towards a culture of safety and well-being in the sport.

1.1 Mandate and Purpose

The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (the "OSIC") appointed the Independent Assessor (the "Assessor"), to conduct a Sport Environment Assessment (the "SEA") of ice hockey in Canada and Hockey Canada, as the national governing body recognized by the Canadian Government as the National Sport Organization ("NSO") responsible for ice hockey in Canada, and a Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program. The OSIC has the authority to independently address systemic issues related to maltreatment, discrimination, and other prohibited behaviour under the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (the "UCCMS"). The purpose of SEAs, as articulated by the OSIC on its website, is to "seek to understand the problem and its root causes, and then look at possible solutions, all of which are ultimately presented in a published report."

To provide guidance about the goals and scope of process at the outset of the SEA, the OSIC provided a discussion document, (the "Discussion Guide"), which indicated the SEA was to be concerned with all forms of maltreatment, discrimination and prohibited behaviours as defined in section 5 of the UCCMS. Maltreatment as defined by the UCCMS is a "volitional act and/or omission" that "results in harm of has the potential for

physical or psychological harm." Types of maltreatment outlined in the UCCMS include psychological maltreatment, physical maltreatment, neglect, sexual maltreatment, grooming, boundary transgressions, and discrimination. The Discussion Guide describes the overarching objective of the SEA is to examine:

> *... systemic issues regarding different forms of maltreatment discrimination and other prohibited behaviour under the UCCMS which are alleged to prevail in Canadian ice hockey.*

The Discussion Guide indicated that while Hockey Canada should be a "preliminary focus" of the SEA, given its capacity as the NSO, the SEA should also seek to "encourage" participation from impacted organizations and participants at "different levels" in the sport. The SEA was encouraged to include participants who are "reflective of Canada's diverse society" and who participate in different capacities and spaces within the Canadian "hockey ecosystem." Further, the Discussion Guide noted the SEA should not attempt to duplicate other past and concurrent reviews related to hockey in Canada (for example, the *2022 Cromwell Review*), but look to ensure the findings of other relevant examinations could be relied upon, or drawn from, as the SEA considers similar themes. This could include, for instance, examining how elements of authority and influence impact the prevalence and perpetration of alleged systemic issues related to the UCCMS.

Based on the considerable scope of the undertaking of this SEA, the OSIC determined that the SEA would occur over at least two phases. To begin, the Assessor assembled a team of process and subject-matter specialists (the "SEA Team") and prepared a proposal document outlining an initial engagement plan, which set out to understand the Canadian hockey context, what was already understood about maltreatment in hockey and what further questions needed to be asked and understood during the SEA ("Phase One"). Further details of Phase One are discussed below, and the Phase One

Report was published by the OSIC on its website on July 3, 2024. The Phase One Report set out the engagement plan and goals for the second phase of the SEA ("Phase Two").

The goals of the SEA were developed during Phase One of the process, with the aim of going beyond merely reporting about the prevalence of maltreatment to understanding the aspects of hockey culture connected to the risks of maltreatment and consider how to address those risks and improve the sport environment for current and future participants. The SEA goals are to:

A. *Identify the nature and scope of systemic issues related to the UCCMS in Canadian ice hockey;*

B. *Identify the contributing factors and risk factors leading to the prevalence of any such issues;*

C. *Identify sustainable solutions to eliminate and prevent future occurrences of maltreatment and/or prohibited behaviours to cultivate a more inclusive and safer environment for those who participate in hockey in Canada;*

D. *Share implementation approach/tool that will equip Hockey Canada to make progress towards a more inclusive and safer environment and position the organization to track its progress over time and course correct where needed.*

This Report outlines the work of the SEA in both Phase One and Phase Two; it summarizes the methodology, responses collected, and the observations and recommendations about how to address and prevent systemic maltreatment in Canadian ice hockey.

The Assessor would like to acknowledge the important contributions of members of the SEA Team, including Sarah Daitch, Chris Ellis, Richard Johnson, Darsey Meredith, Maya Nussbaum, Anika Taylor, and Patrick Zakaria.

1.1.1   Background

Over the past several years, Hockey Canada has been under intense scrutiny for issues related to maltreatment, including abuse, harassment, and discrimination. While there has been important attention directed toward Hockey Canada and its role navigating maltreatment, there have also been significant concerns raised in media, literature and public discourse about long-standing issues in all parts of the Canadian ice hockey ecosystem.

The concerns and allegations related to Hockey Canada and its 13 provincial, regional and territorial member branches (the "Members") have emerged alongside a recognition of Safe Sport issues across Canadian amateur sport. In recent years, several other NSOs have faced allegations of maltreatment and published accounts of abuse by athletes and former athletes, at all levels of competition. The Canadian Safe Sport landscape has been evolving, and sports organizations and administrators in all sports have been working to respond to the waves of concerns and allegations of maltreatment being raised. At the same time, there has been an attempt to understand maltreatment, shore up certification requirements and training to prevent issues from occurring and come to terms with the parts of sport ecosystems that may be leaving individuals and organizations at risk for maltreatment.

Over the last two decades there have been many notable improvements in Canada's Safe Sport landscape, to understand and address maltreatment. In fact, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (the "CCES") first published the UCCMS in 2019 after federal, provincial and territorial sport leaders came together and committed to the elimination of abuse, discrimination and harassment in sport (the "Red Deer Declaration"). Following the Red Deer Declaration, the Coaching Association of Canada led a series of sport summits and consultations with leaders and subject-matter experts from across the

country and built a national consensus that action must be taken. This collaboration was informed by a 2019 University of Toronto study (in partnership with AthletesCAN) which confirmed the troubling prevalence of maltreatment among current and former national team athletes in Canada (the "2019 Prevalence Study").[1] The 2019 Prevalence Study found the most frequently experienced form of maltreatment reported by athletes was psychological harm (e.g. shouting, name-calling, humiliation), followed by neglect (e.g. unequal treatment, forced training despite an injury, etc.). For all forms of maltreatment, a significantly higher proportion of women reported at least one form of maltreatment compared to men.

On April 28, 2021, following allegations of maltreatment that arose in connection with another NSO, the Canadian House of Commons passed a motion recognizing "the responsibility of the government to do everything in its power to protect our high-performance athletes from situation of abuse and harassment" and asked the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (the "CHPC") to study how complaints in sport were handled.

After journalist Rick Westhead reported in May 2022 that Hockey Canada had reached an out-of-court settlement with a woman who alleged she had been sexually assaulted by members of the 2017-18 National Junior Hockey Team, the House of Commons adopted a motion for Hockey Canada to appear before the CHPC to speak to its involvement in connection with the allegations. Meetings were held with Hockey Canada in the summer of 2022, which led to renewed public calls for a more in-depth study of Safe Sport in Canada. The CHPC expanded its study to include "… all matters related to the administration of Hockey Canada and other national sporting federations."

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[1]Kerr, Gretchen, Erin Wilson, Ashley Stirling, and AthletesCAN. 2019. "Prevalence of Maltreatment Among Current and Former National Team Athletes." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

The CHPC's report was published June 2024 and titled: *Safe Sport in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage* (the "2024 Safe Sport Report").[2] The 2024 Safe Sport Report contains evidence related to Hockey Canada's handling of sexual assault allegations and 21 recommendations related to Safe Sport in Canada.

Also in 2022, Hockey Canada engaged former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Honourable Thomas Cromwell, C.C. to conduct an independent governance review of Hockey Canada and a final report was released in November 2022 (the "2022 Cromwell Review").[3] This review and its recommendations were aimed at identifying a framework for how Hockey Canada organizes itself and for how it should make changes in its governance model to "rebuild the confidence of stakeholders and the public." The introduction of the 2022 Cromwell Review notes that issues, outside of the scope of that review, were raised about the culture challenges Hockey Canada and the sport of ice hockey are facing:

> *During the review, stakeholders raised several issues and challenges they believe Hockey Canada, and the sport generally, were facing, which were outside the scope of this review and I was not able to consider. However, I wish to make a note of these issues so that Hockey Canada and its broader constituency may consider them as part of their future efforts to effect change. These include: the toxic culture of the sport and the requirements for broader culture change, the additional support required for women's hockey, the eligibility criteria for Hockey Canada Members, the support, or lack thereof, afforded to para hockey, ...*

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[2]Fry, Hon. Hedy. 2024. "Safe Sport in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[3]Cromwell, The Honourable T. 2022. "Final Report Hockey Canada Governance Review." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

While these issues were not able to be addressed in the 2022 Cromwell Review, it was noted that strengthening governance would provide the foundation for these issues to be addressed. As we heard from people throughout this SEA, these themes continue to be of interest and concern.

Sport Canada has implemented several policies and initiatives aimed at strengthening Safe Sport expectations. At the time Phase 2 of the SEA was conducted, for NSOs to be eligible to receive Sport Canada funding, they were required to adopt the UCCMS and become a Program Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program, administered by the OSIC. At the time of writing this Report, all 62 NSOs in Canada were signatories to the Abuse-Free Sport Program. In May 2024, the (then) Minister of Sport and Physical Activity announced changes, including that, as of April 1, 2025, the CCES would independently administer the UCCMS through its new Canadian Safe Sport Program (the "CSSP") Rules for federally funded, national-level sport organizations in Canada.

Despite the work done in recent years to understand and move toward a more consistent Safe Sport landscape, as Canadians we are grappling with the reality that maltreatment does occur in sport, at all levels, and the question of how to deal with it.

To date, much of the work that has been done to address maltreatment in sport has focused on understanding individual causal or risk factors and the development of reporting and complaint mechanisms. While it is important to have effective complaint processes to adequately and fairly deal with specific maltreatment allegations, those processes are not built to address system-level challenges. In addition, few researchers have considered the organizational level of analysis and, consequently, there is a limited understanding of the structural and social mechanisms in sport organizations, which enable, allow or even encourage maltreatment to take place. This dynamic was

considered by Victoria Roberts et al, in their paper, "*Organisational factors and non-accidental violence in sport: A systemic review*":[4]

> *In part, the lack of progress in the reduction or elimination of non-accidental violence in sport is due to interventions that only tackle individuals or cases, ignoring organisational or ecosystem level factors. A strong focus on "bad apples" and "bad cases," instead of exploring the "barrel" and "orchard," has crippled our capacity to understand and address non-accidental violence in sport.*

From the perspective of ice hockey in Canada, there has been acknowledgment that maltreatment occurs, both at the elite level and within the grassroots arena.

In an open letter to Canadians, published on its website on July 14, 2022, Hockey Canada apologized for its handling of the allegations against members of the 2018 National Junior Team, and outlined their plans for change, stating:

> *We know we need to do more to address the behaviours, on and off the ice, that conflict with what Canadians want hockey to be, and which undermine the many good things that the game brings to our country.*

A part of Hockey Canada's response was published in its *Action Plan to Improve Canada's Game.*[5] Further, in 2022, Hockey Canada and its Members published its first report of incidents of abuse under Rule 11.4 – Discrimination, outlining all incidents of verbal taunts, insults or intimidation based on discriminatory grounds, which occurred in the 2021 – 2022 season ("2021-22 Tracking Discrimination in Hockey - Rule 11.4").[6]

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[4]Sojo, Victor, and Felix Grant. 2019. "Organisational factors and non-accidental violence in sport: A systematic review." *Sport Management Review* 23, no. 1 (April): 8-27. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.
[5]Hockey Canada. 2022. "Action Plan: Shatter the Code of Silence and Eliminate Toxic Behaviour In and Around Canada's Game." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.
[6]Hockey Canada. 2022. "Tracking Discrimination in Hockey Rule 11.4 2021-2022." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Hockey Canada acknowledged their role in preventing maltreatment again, in the most recent maltreatment report, *Hockey Canada Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey: 2022-23:*[7]

> *Hockey Canada recognizes that for all the good the sport brings to individuals and communities, maltreatment does occur in hockey. In collaboration with our Members, we need to gain a better understanding of the types of maltreatment present in hockey in order for the hockey community to address it in tangible and meaningful ways.*

While there is much work that remains to be done to address these long-standing issues, as seen in recent years, Hockey Canada has taken several promising steps to change the culture of hockey. Some of these steps include: overhauling their leadership and hiring a Vice President of Sport Integrity to lead its safe sport initiatives, introducing policies to address and prevent maltreatment, launching an Independent Third Party ("ITP") to receive complaints of maltreatment at all levels of hockey and becoming a Program Signatory to the OSIC and the Abuse-free Sport program. Further, as noted above, Hockey Canada and its Members have begun tracking and reporting all instances of maltreatment including abuse, discrimination and harassment in sanctioned hockey programs across Canada.

Given the recognition on many fronts that maltreatment has occurred in Canadian ice hockey, the OSIC made the determination to conduct this SEA to understand the systemic issues related to maltreatment. The OSIC mandated the SEA to consider the broader Canadian ice hockey ecosystem and include a broad range of voices that reflect Canada's diverse society and consider hockey participants who have different hockey

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[7]Hockey Canada. 2023. "Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey 2022-2023." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

experiences. As there had already been acknowledgment of maltreatment in Canadian ice hockey, the SEA's objective was to go beyond merely reporting about the prevalence of maltreatment to understand the aspects of hockey culture connected to the risks of maltreatment and consider how to address those risks and improve the sport environment for current and future participants.

The OSIC's mandate for this SEA was to examine Canadian ice hockey and Hockey Canada, as the Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program. Questions were raised about why the SEA should include the broad scope of Canadian ice hockey and consider the experiences of the grassroots hockey participants. The answer is that, for there to be a shift in Canadian hockey culture toward increased well-being and reduced maltreatment, everyone within the hockey ecosystem needs an opportunity for a common understanding in order to move forward together to make changes. This can only take place with all the stakeholders involved, including leadership from Hockey Canada, which is both a thought-leader and currently the national governing body for grassroots hockey in the country. In Dr. Victoria Roberts' article, "*Abuse in sport: Bad apples or bad barrels*?"[8] she argues that taking a "system-wide approach" is required to eliminate maltreatment in sport. To do that, all stakeholders need to be involved, including governments, the public and sport organizations, including administrators, regulators, training personnel, sponsors, agents and current and future athletes and their families.

An oft-cited challenge in making any changes within the Canadian sport landscape is the tension between authority and accountability at different places and spaces within

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[8]Roberts, Dr Victoria, and Dr Victor Sojo. 2020. "Abuse in sport: Bad apples or bad barrels?" *Pursuit*, January 7, 2020. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

the system. Given that much of the work to move toward a culture of well-being and prevent maltreatment in hockey will require a common understanding and willingness for different stakeholder groups to make change together, the SEA has been designed as a dialogue process. This means that the intent of the SEA has been to engage with the people who participate in ice hockey to connect system issues with the very real and individual ones they face. Their voices, experiences and insights are crucial to both understanding the issues, and moving forward together as Canadians to make positive culture change.

The SEA has heard from people across Canada to understand the facets of hockey culture Canadians believe need to change, to identify the aspects connected to the risks of maltreatment and to consider how to address those risks and improve the sport environment for current and future participants.

1.1.2   Individual to Systemic Approach

In Canada, as we move from a focus predominantly on individual cases and incidents of maltreatment to considering it through a broader lens, a systems approach begins to emerge. In their 2019 article, "*Maltreatment in Youth Sport: A Systemic Issue,*" Kerr et al, identified the need to consider maltreatment as a systemic issue and considered unique conditions associated with sport contexts that increase risk for maltreatment to occur and for concerns to be ignored.[9] This organizational or systems approach is taken

[9]Kerr, Gretchen, Anthony Battaglia, and Ashley Stirling. 2019. "Maltreatment in Youth Sport: A Systemic Issue." *Kinesiology Review* 8, no. 3 (August): 237-243. 10.1123/kr.2019-0016.

in other sectors, including child protection and education, and in other geographical jurisdictions in sport, such as, Australia.[10]

It is beneficial for the Canadian sport community to make this shift because, to date, much of the focus has been on addressing specific cases of abuse and "fires" that need to be put out. Despite the recognition that if we are unable to "change the structure and culture within sport, it will keep happening."[11] For this reason, much of the SEA is focused on the system factors related to maltreatment in Canadian ice hockey and has drawn on the work of other reviews and research that has considered maltreatment as a systemic issue, and used this lens in the field with the aim to:

- Create recommendations that can be used by policymakers within ice hockey and other sports; and

- Invite others to advance this field work to be even more universal and robust.

1.1.3   Who are the SEA Participants?

Throughout the SEA, individuals from across Canada and from diverse segments of the hockey ecosystem (the "Participants") participated by sharing their voices, their concerns and their recommendations about how to shape the culture of hockey to be a more safe, welcoming and inclusive sport environment for all Canadians.

While it is important to hear from those who are engaged as leaders and who already have seats at the decision-making table, the SEA was deliberately designed to hear from

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[10]Sojo, Victor, and Felix Grant. 2019. "Organisational factors and non-accidental violence in sport: A systematic review." *Sport Management Review* 23, no. 1 (April): 8-27. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[11]Roberts, Dr Victoria, and Dr Victor Sojo. 2020. "Abuse in sport: Bad apples or bad barrels?" *Pursuit*, January 7, 2020. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

people who are both part of and affected by the system, as they know its impacts best. This approach recognizes the immense collective wisdom that resides in the grassroots of Canadian hockey—wisdom born from the combined experiences of people across different contexts and communities.

Hockey exists primarily at the community level, where the everyday experiences of players, caregivers, volunteers and local administrators reveal the true strengths and challenges of the sport's culture. These grassroots participants provide critical perspectives that might otherwise be overlooked as they experience firsthand how policies and practices translate into lived realities on the ice, in locker rooms and within community rinks across the country.

By tapping into this distributed knowledge and amplifying these diverse voices, the SEA gained deeper insights into systemic issues and identified practical, community-informed solutions that reflect the collective expertise of those who form the foundation of Canadian hockey.

Figure A: More than 1830 voices heard during SEA.

To achieve the SEA's goal of hearing from a diverse range of voices, a representation model was developed to guide the selection of Participants (the "Representation Model"). The Representation Model drew on data from multiple sources, including Hockey Canada's 2023-24 Annual Report and Statistics Canada, to reflect the hockey community's demographic composition. Some of the key factors included:

- Organizational affiliations: Hockey Canada, Members and the grassroots (Minor Hockey Associations)
- Roles within hockey: Board members, leadership, staff, administrators, volunteers, coaches, officials, parents of child athletes and adult athletes
- Age groups

- Years of hockey experience

- Level of hockey participation

- Racial and other identities

- Geographic distribution

- Rural and urban

- Francophones and Anglophones

The Representation Model served as a guide and in selecting Participants, several considerations were balanced:

- Capturing diverse hockey experiences (including positive, neutral and negative experiences);

- Maintaining proportional representation of major demographic groups; and

- Ensuring inclusion of historically underrepresented populations.

While the Representation Model's full demographic alignment was limited by the number of Participants the SEA was able to include (due to budget and time available), it provided a framework for thoughtful Participant selection and data analysis. *Further details about Participant recruitment are provided in section 2.3.2.*

Ultimately, over 1,800 individuals participated in the SEA across three surveys, one-on-one interviews, a validation workshop and ongoing Guidance Group engagement. Participants, particularly those from grassroots hockey, were keen to be a part of the SEA and shared their time generously along with insights about their hockey experiences. The SEA Team is grateful for the willingness and enthusiasm of all the Participants who contributed to the SEA. Throughout the SEA, many individuals expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to have their voice and input heard in this process. Just a few of the Participant comments include:

The change starts with each of us being committed to a fair process.

Let's keep this momentum going. I'm confident that by working together, we can drive real change.

Thanks everyone for the robust discussion. It's inspiring to see so many of us passionate about making hockey a better environment for all.

What was abundantly clear, is that people from all parts of the hockey ecosystem are passionate about shaping the culture of Canadian ice hockey.

Given the passion and interest shared by so many throughout this SEA, there is an opportunity to harness this energy and shift the understanding that we, as Canadians, all can play a role in preventing maltreatment and improving the culture in hockey and in sport more broadly.

1.1.4   Consultative Process

This SEA is not an investigation and does not provide findings of fact.

Throughout the SEA, Participants were informed that the SEA process is a consultative process and not a formal investigation and therefore the focus was not on any specific incident or individual, and no formal findings of fact would be made. It was confirmed to Participants that their responses would remain anonymous during the SEA and in any reporting. To maintain their anonymity, no Participant identifying details are included in the SEA reporting. An exception to the general principle of anonymity was made for a small number of individuals and organizations that consented to being identified and having their responses included in a transparent way in this Report.

To clarify, in the SEA, unlike in a formal investigation, there are no complainants or respondents, and Participants were invited to share their views and experiences, rather than to provide evidence. The information collected in the SEA reflects the views and

perspectives of the Participants, including their concerns about maltreatment and recommendations about what would improve the culture of hockey in Canada. This means that the information provided by Participants was not subject to further examination to establish its validity and constitutes their individual perspectives, rather than a finding of fact.

A significant benefit to an anonymous, consultative process, such as this SEA, is the value of sharing outcomes more widely with the Canadian ice hockey community, as it enables people to see their concerns have been recognized and that they are not alone or isolated in their experiences. In addition, by shifting from individual concerns to understanding them as a collective challenge, it allows the Canadian ice hockey community to consider systemic changes to address the issues at their foundation and encourages stakeholders at all levels to understand there is a collective responsibility to work together to make positive changes.

1.2 The Canadian Ice Hockey Context

Canadian ice hockey exists in the complex multi-level governance system of Canadian sport. This is, in part, because the regulation of sport and physical activity in Canada falls within a shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial and territorial governments. Provincial and territorial sport organizations in Canada are often referred to as "P/TSOs" and, in hockey, P/TSOs are referred to as Members or Member Branches (defined in this Report as the "Members"). While the federal jurisdiction is concerned with national and international level aspects of sport, the provinces and territories have exclusive jurisdiction in their region and the power to adopt their own policies and programs. This distinction is, in part, what leads to much of the complexity of sport governance in this country, because while P/TSOs have jurisdiction within their region, an NSO like Hockey Canada is also tasked with developing, promoting and governing

their sport across the country. Participants throughout the SEA consistently commented on the problems created by the "grey area" of authority between NSOs, P/TSOs and other levels of governance in the sport.

In hockey, in addition to the Members, there are also regional or district subdivision associations (the "Regions") with elected Boards of directors, representing regional areas and who can work to facilitate, or on the flip side avert, effective communication and policy implementation from Members to grassroots associations. Finally, there are thousands of Minor Hockey Associations ("MHA") existing across the country, and each MHA is composed of Boards of directors, administrators, volunteers, coaches and players.

Besides geographic Members and Regions, ice hockey in Canada is divided into amateur or professional, different divisions, and different age groups. Divisions refer to the classes of hockey being operated within Hockey Canada, including Minor hockey, Junior hockey and Senior hockey. Senior hockey usually refers to adult players. Minor hockey is divided into age groups from U7 to U21 and includes categories from recreational to highly competitive, known as AAA hockey or Tier 1 hockey.[12] While competitive youth hockey is focused on developing young players and are not considered "for profit" bodies, organizations running highly competitive hockey may generate revenue through registration fees, sponsorships or other means, and are seen by some to be shifting the sport to a "business model."

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[12]SPRATT School of Business Carleton University, François Brouard, Marc Pilon, and Andrew Webb. 2023. "Hockey in Canadian Provinces & Territories Membership statistics from Hockey Canada." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Junior hockey is a level of play above minor hockey and is seen as a stepping-stone to professional hockey in Canada. It is further divided into tiers: Major Junior (governed by the Canadian Hockey League ("CHL")), Junior A (governed by the Canadian Junior Hockey League ("CJHL"), Junior B, and Junior C and Junior Female. The CHL is comprised of three member leagues: the Ontario Hockey League ("OHL"), the Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League ("QMJHL"), and the Western Hockey League ("WHL"). The CHL works in partnership with Hockey Canada but is not a Member organization. The British Columbia Hockey League ("BCHL") is a Major Junior hockey league that operates in British Columbia and Alberta and that broke from the CJHL to become independent in 2023. The BCHL operates independently of Hockey Canada and BC Hockey. Professional hockey, including the National Hockey League ("NHL") operates outside of Hockey Canada's governance authority.

Further, it is widely noted that there continues to be a proliferation of non-sanctioned ice hockey in Canada that is not affiliated with Hockey Canada, its Members, or the International Ice Hockey Federation (the "IIHF"), and operates with its own rules, oversight and processes for safety and maltreatment. This means non-sanctioned leagues may not be using the same rules to protect player safety, including following Hockey Canada's Canada Long Term Athlete Development model, following Safe Sport practices or be providing adequate insurance.

Hockey Canada has updated its Non-Sanctioned Leagues Policy[13] to stipulate that any player who participates in a non-sanctioned league is ineligible to join, affiliate with or be reinstated to any sanctioned team that competes for a national championship. Hockey

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[13]Fraser, Hugh, and Katherine Henderson. 2023. "Hockey Canada: Non-Sanctioned Leagues- Leagues Operating Outside the Auspices of Hockey Canada." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Canada also released a document that clarifies the benefits of participation in sanctioned hockey programs, which are either not provided or not guaranteed with non-sanctioned programs, which all operate without being recognized by government in Canada and are not governed by the IIHF. Despite these clarifying documents, non-sanctioned leagues continue to operate across Canada, and Hockey Canada has limited direct influence on their programming.

Canadian organized hockey functions as a multi-layered ecosystem, encompassing everything from local community leagues to major professional organizations. This intricate network connects players, coaches, officials and administrators through a structured hierarchy of associations from Hockey Canada at the national level to its 13 Members and local MHAs. The system is bound together not just by formal rules and governance, but by deeply embedded cultural traditions, shared values and social norms that have evolved over generations.

The result of this complex system is that approximately 60,000 people across Canada are responsible for the leadership, decision-making and governance of sanctioned Canadian ice hockey – not only Hockey Canada. This challenge was noted in the 2022 Cromwell Review (at page 31):

> *This myriad of organizations, associations, leagues, teams, and Participants, of varying sizes, with different resources and in different regions, results in a variety of ways of operating, but it also means that the responsibility for developing the sport of hockey in accordance with good governance principles lies with multiple parties. Moreover, a lack of clarity around organizational structure and authority can result in uncertainty.*

The 2022 Cromwell Review provided a roadmap for Hockey Canada to evolve the effectiveness its governance structure, however, making real change in the sport will need to be a collaborative process. As noted in the 2022 Cromwell Review (at page 13):

> *Implementing my recommendations will require strong support and openness to change on the part of the membership, Participants and stakeholders. Hockey Canada alone will not be able to achieve all the changes required. Indeed, it is just one entity in the web of organizations and entities that have a role to play in hockey in this country. Furthermore, the average player, parent, coach, trainer, volunteer or official is more likely to come into direct contact with those organizations than Hockey Canada. Change will require support and implementation at all levels of hockey across the country. Hockey Canada has an important leadership role to play, but it cannot by itself bring about the change for which so many are calling.*

As Cromwell expressed above, the average hockey player, parent or volunteer is more likely to be in direct contact with an MHA or Member, rather than Hockey Canada, however, at the same time, as Canadians, we look to Hockey Canada as the governing body and thought leader in the sport to take the lead in making change. This dynamic is extremely challenging for any NSO, as they are tasked with a great deal of responsibility, while only working with limited authority.

Many of the Safe Sport concerns that arise in ice hockey, and other sports, relate to questions of jurisdiction and accountability. It can be difficult, therefore, for organizations trying to make change to determine whose role it is to set policy or respond to concerns. Additionally, it is confusing for individuals looking for resources and answers to know where to look.

In January 2023, McLaren Global Sport Solutions, released its final report for an independent review of gymnastics in Canada, titled, "*A Framework for Change: How to*

Achieve a Culture Shift for Gymnastics in Canada" (the "2023 McLaren Report").[14] The 2023 McLaren Report, noted a "chasm" exists in the sport of gymnastics, between the NSO and the provincial and territorial organizations as it relates to jurisdiction and oversight. As noted in the 2023 McLaren Report, this leads to accountability gaps and ineffective performance management of coaches and others in leadership positions within the sport. While each sport will have its own culture, practices and challenges, it was evident hearing from Participants during the SEA, that it can be hard for individuals within the hockey ecosystem to understand which level of governance and authority is responsible for the area they are involved in and the type of concern they have.

1.2.1   Hockey Canada

Hockey Canada is the national self-governing body for amateur hockey and oversees the sport across Canada with the 13 Members and other partners including the CHL and U Sports (the national governing body for university sports in Canada). Hockey Canada is a not-for-profit corporation and a Registered Canadian Amateur Athletic Association. On its website, Hockey Canada indicates its focus is from grassroots development and programs to high-performance teams and international competitions such as the IIHF world championships and the Olympic Winter Games.

Not-for-profit corporations like Hockey Canada have members, directors and officers. Hockey Canada's Members are the 13 provincial, regional or territorial associations who are "empowered to manage and foster amateur hockey within their geographic region and have the responsibility to represent their constituents." The Members include BC Hockey, Hockey Alberta, Hockey Saskatchewan, Hockey Manitoba, Hockey Northwestern Ontario, Ontario Hockey Federation, Hockey Eastern Ontario, Hockey

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[14]McLaren Global Sport Solutions. 2023. "A Framework for Change: How to Achieve a Culture Shift for Gymnastics in Canada." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Québec, Hockey New Brunswick, Hockey PEI, Hockey Nova Scotia, Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador, and Hockey North.

The 2022 Cromwell Review, set out extensive governance recommendations for Hockey Canada, which included an overhaul of its senior leadership and Board of Directors (the "Board") composition and process. Currently, the Board is comprised of nine volunteer members from across Canada.

At the time of writing this Report, Hockey Canada reported it had implemented or was in the process of implementing all the 2022 Cromwell Review recommendations. As part of this work, Hockey Canada hired a full-time governance specialist to help ensure the continued use of best practices for governance now and in the future and to monitor the impact of these practices.

Hockey Canada became a Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program on October 1, 2022, when Hockey Canada adopted the UCCMS as a standalone policy. Since becoming a Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program, all complaints of abuse, discrimination and harassment at the national level have been managed via the OSIC's Complaint Management process. In 2022, Hockey Canada introduced the ITP, its independent Safe Sport complaint administrator, as a confidential third-party mechanism responsible for to administer maltreatment complaints under Hockey Canada's *Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy* (the "Maltreatment Policy") regarding alleged incidents involving Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs.[15] In addition to the Maltreatment Policy, *Hockey Canada's Playing Rules: Rule 11 – Maltreatment* ("Rule 11"), sets out the on-ice expectations related to maltreatment

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[15]Hockey Canada. 2023. "Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

(unsportsmanlike conduct, abusive behaviour, spitting, discrimination, or physical threats of officials) that may be sanctioned and reported to a Member and/or the ITP by officials.[16]

Hockey Canada's ITP receives maltreatment complaints, considers the appropriate jurisdiction and may engage an external mediator, investigator or adjudicator as needed, if the matter falls within their jurisdiction. The ITP's jurisdiction includes matters regarding sexual abuse, sexual maltreatment, distribution of child pornography, physical assault, repeated instances of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, and other forms of severe maltreatment as defined by the ITP.

Alternatively, the ITP may redirect a matter to the OSIC or to a Member to conduct its own investigation or other process. In practice, Members have access to different mechanisms for complaint management depending on the province and region and they are addressed, based on severity and type of complaint, available resources and safety of participants. The *ITP Annual Report 2023-24* (the "2023-24 ITP Annual Report")[17] indicates that in the reporting period between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, the ITP received 2,073 complaints, redirected 849 maltreatment complaints to Members, 530 Rule 11 complaints to Members and 1 complaint to the OSIC. Complaints that are found to be within the ITP's mandate are addressed via either a summary or comprehensive process depending on the factors such as age of parties and nature of allegations.

Hockey Canada's *Annual Report 2023-24* (the "2023-24 Annual Report") provides insight into who is a part of this organized "entry-level to high performance" hockey

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[16]"SECTION 11 - MALTREATMENT." In *Hockey Canada Playing Rules*, 15th ed., 138–45. Ottawa, Ontario: Hockey Canada, 2024. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[17]PSC. 2024. "Annual Report 2023-2024." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

ecosystem. At its foundation are nearly 600,000 registered players, supported by an infrastructure of over 175,000 coaches, officials, and administrators. While Hockey Canada sits at the apex of this pyramid, providing national oversight and strategic direction, the real engine of Canadian hockey operates through the 13 Member organizations that adapt and implement programs across diverse regional contexts. Notably, according to the 2023-24 Annual Report, the 2023-24 season saw significant initiatives in equity and inclusion, with women and girls' hockey surpassing 100,000 participants for the first time.

The hockey development pathway begins with entry-level programs like *The First Shift*, which introduced over 8,100 new players to the sport in 2023-24, and extends through to high-performance programs that produced three world championship teams this season. Supporting this player development is an extensive education network that delivered over 950 coaching clinics and trained thousands of officials through a multi-level certification system. Perhaps most notably, the system is evolving beyond its traditional demographic boundaries.

Canadian ice hockey represents one of the most sophisticated amateur sport systems in the world. As noted in the 2022 Cromwell Review, to make any changes in hockey culture in order to reduce maltreatment, will require a common understanding of the current parts of hockey culture connected to the risks of maltreatment, and buy-in from stakeholders at all levels to make changes necessary.

In order to realize the culture changes needed in hockey that will make the game safe, more accessible and more fun, it will be paramount for Hockey Canada to act in a supportive leadership role, collaborating with its Members, Regions and MHAs, along with other stakeholders like the CHL.

When all these actors, who often have different interests, are included in decision making and solution finding, this painstaking collaborative work is the vehicle that will drive culture change. While Hockey Canada is the NSO responsible for ice hockey in Canada, the SEA recognizes that in order for there to be meaningful change to hockey culture, that effectively reduces maltreatment, all stakeholders at various levels need to have an active voice and role in leading the change.

1.2.2   Tracking Maltreatment in Canadian ice hockey

Currently, maltreatment is being tracked and reported in several different ways, largely in connection with formal complaint processes and on-ice incidents and allegations related to Rule 11.

In 2022, Hockey Canada and its Member Branches published its first report of incidents of abuse under Rule 11.4 – Discrimination, outlining all incidents of verbal taunts, insults or intimidation based on discriminatory grounds, that occurred in the 2021 – 2022 season.[18] This expanded for the 2022-2023 season to include data from the OSIC and the ITP.

Hockey Canada's *2023-2024 Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey* (the "2022-23 Maltreatment Report")[19], reports on the number of player and official violations of Rule (Section) 11, with most of the focus on violations of Rule 11.4. Violations of Rule 11.4 refers to acts of discriminatory maltreatment which includes discrimination based on characteristics including skin color, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status and disability.

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[18]Hockey Canada. 2022. "Tracking Discrimination in Hockey Rule 11.4 2021-2022." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.
[19]Hockey Canada. 2023. "Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey 2022-2023." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

In the 2023-2024 season, officials issued penalties for Rule 11.4 at a rate of 2.6 per 1,000 players (a total of 1,291 penalties). The 2022-23 Maltreatment Report notes this was an increase from the previous year, up from 1.9/1,000 players (913) in the 2022-23 season. Additionally, 1.3 per 1,000 players (or 636 incidents) reported allegations of 11.4 maltreatment that were unwitnessed by an official during the 2023-2024 season, representing an 11% decrease from the 2022-2023 season. Other violations under Rule 11 resulted in a total of 14.2 penalties per 1,000 players. The 2022-23 Maltreatment Report notes that like previous seasons, "sex, sexual orientation and gender-based discriminatory slurs were the most common type of witnessed penalties resulting in suspensions. Race-based discriminatory slurs were the second-most common type of reported alleged discrimination."

For the first time, all types of Rule 11 penalties were tracked and reported on by all 13 Members which captured a total of 14.2 penalties called per 1,000 players, which will serve as baseline data moving forward. The most common penalties included 11.1(e) Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 11.2(e) Abusive Conduct, and 11.3(c) Spitting.

The 2022-23 Maltreatment Report indicates Hockey Canada will use this data to enhance their ability to "target behaviours [they] unequivocally want to remove from hockey, while investing in ways to create safe and inclusive spaces for all participants."

The 2023-24 ITP Annual Report is focused more broadly on how complaints were overseen by Hockey Canada's ITP. Though the ITP is the primary body that oversees all complaints filed by Hockey Canada participants, it only directly handles complaints that are deemed to meet a certain maltreatment severity threshold.

In 2023-2024, 2,073 reported complaints were received by the ITP. Bullying and harassment were the most reported forms of maltreatment, followed by Rule 11.4

violations, discrimination, sexual maltreatment, physical abuse, social media harassment, abuse of power, hazing and lastly, neglect. Non-maltreatment complaints most frequently concerned issues with the complaint process, followed by concerns related to the field of play. Managing complaints through the ITP follows a general two-phase process: intake and acceptance.

In the intake phase, which takes an average of 5-8 days, the ITP receives the complaint and decides if the complaint is within its mandate and meets the required severity threshold. If the complaint is outside their mandate, the complaint is either dismissed or redirected. In the 2023-2024 season, 849 maltreatment complaints were redirected to Members (of those, 73 were returned to complainants as they did not wish to provide the complaint to the Member and 85 were withdrawn before they could be redirected to the Member).

The 2023-24 ITP Annual Report indicates there were 530 Rule 11.4 complaints redirected to Members and 291 complaints that were summarily dismissed. If the complaint is found to be within the ITP's mandate, the ITP accepts it and assigns an investigator, adjudicator or mediator. In the 2023-2024 period, 238 complaints naming 402 respondents were accepted by the ITP for investigation.

Though it is important to track and report maltreatment data, these numbers alone do not explain the underlying reasons for both the reporting and occurrence of maltreatment. At an individual level, victims or witnesses may avoid reporting for various reasons, such as a lack of awareness about what constitutes maltreatment, fear of speaking out, normalization of harmful behaviours, or distrust in the reporting system. At a broader level, the reasons maltreatment occurs in the first place cannot be fully understood through numbers of reported maltreatment alone. For example, a question arises of whether increased reports of maltreatment are due to awareness of reporting

processes or due to more incidents of maltreatment occurring. Maltreatment, beyond a number, is shaped by complex societal and cultural dynamics, including power imbalances, entrenched social norms and gaps in intervention systems. These factors create environments where maltreatment can thrive, often going unaddressed and further obscured by the limitations of reporting mechanisms.

It is crucial, therefore, to examine the cultural context that enables both visible and hidden forms of maltreatment to persist, as well as the factors influencing individuals' willingness to report. By focusing on the cultural risk factors behind maltreatment, this SEA aims to uncover the deeper, often unclear or unspoken, influences that contribute to its occurrence.

2.   Methodology

The purpose of the SEA is to understand the systemic issues related to maltreatment in Canadian ice hockey, by hearing from the people involved in Canadian ice hockey. The aim has been to engage with as many Participants as possible from across the country and across the ice hockey ecosystem to create opportunities for Participants to share their experiences, insights and recommendations to create a more safe, welcoming and inclusive ice hockey experience.

During Phase One of the SEA and engagement with the Guidance Group, there was a clear interest expressed for diverse voices to be included in the SEA, rather than only those voices at the highest levels of leadership or elite competition. The broad spectrum of suggested Participants ranged from grassroots representation (including administrators or leadership of MHAs, athletes, para-athletes or former athletes and para-athletes, transgender, non-binary representation, and representation from underrepresented groups and communities) to elite players and the most senior leaders

and Board representatives from within Hockey Canada and its Members. Given the vast scale of the Canadian hockey population, set against the available budget, time and resources of the SEA, the Phase Two engagement looked to find a reasonable balance approach. The sections below set out the processes used in the SEA.

2.1 Guiding Principles

The OSIC *Guidelines Regarding Sport Environment Assessments* outline the purpose and process expectations of Sport Environment Assessments and was a guiding document throughout this SEA (the "OSIC SEA Guidelines").

Another guiding principle of the SEA was to make use of other relevant or related reviews, studies and other OSIC SEAs, without duplicating the work or making recommendations that have already been considered. For this reason, we undertook the Document Review (discussed below) and made every effort to include and consider other relevant reviews and studies, which are referenced throughout this Report.

Finally, the SEA Team undertook the SEA with the following principles of collaborative practice guiding the work:

- Transparency: steps were taken to ensure the SEA's scope of work, the engagement tools and reporting mechanisms, would be transparent. This included the development of a dedicated website, to share information about the SEA's processes and to share different mechanisms for people to get involved or reach out to ask questions (at **Appendix A**);

- Collaboration: the SEA Team approached this consultative work with the view that hockey Participants are the individuals who are the most knowledgeable about the aspects of the sport that are working well and those that need to be

improved. For this reason, tools were chosen that would encourage people to participate and share their voices.

- Confidentiality: Participants' private information is protected and anonymous. For Participants to feel comfortable sharing private information, it was important that individuals would be able to remain anonymous and have confidence their views and opinions would not be shared with Hockey Canada, the OSIC or any other sport body. This included developing and publishing an SEA Data and Privacy Policy, which was shared on the SEA's dedicated website (at **Appendix B**);

- Trauma-informed: while the SEA was not an investigation, the SEA Team was mindful that topics discussed may prompt some Participants to recall difficult experiences, including of abuse and maltreatment. For this reason, the interviewers were trained and experienced in trauma-informed interviewing and an interview guide was designed with trauma-informed practices in mind. Also, mechanisms were in place to refer Participants to reporting and support resources as needed.

2.2 Phase One

As noted above, in Phase One of the SEA, the Assessor assembled the SEA Team and worked to define the SEA scope and engagement process. The purpose of Phase One was to review and understand the materials available and the relevant stakeholders who participate in the hockey ecosystem, to inform the understanding of the questions to be asked in the SEA, and to determine to whom the questions should be asked. For the Assessor and the SEA Team to be free of conflict, they were appointed from outside the hockey ecosystem. Given that decision, an important step in Phase One was to understand the sport of hockey in Canada, its challenges, the recent research and data

available, initiatives being undertaken, the depth and breadth of issues to be canvassed and who should be canvassed about those issues.

2.2.1   Document Review

Phase One began with a document review (the "Document Review") which included a summary inventory of relevant policy, literature and media reports concerning maltreatment in the Canadian hockey landscape. The Document Review process is outlined in the Phase One report, which was published by the OSIC on July 3, 2024.[20]

The Document Review included a review of academic literature, which pointed to several risk factors in perpetuating maltreatment. Factors that made a sport environment vulnerable to maltreatment risk included: sport cultures that value winning at all costs, profit over people, substantial and absolute power vested in authority figures, strong team cultures around conforming to ideals of masculinity, early isolation from non-sport communities as well as inadequate education on safety and appropriate practices. The SEA Team also considered population-specific risks of maltreatment among people with disabilities, women, girls and gender diverse communities, and racialized people, and looked at challenges and best practices around safeguarding.

The Document Review included a small scope media review to understand how maltreatment in hockey has been discussed in the media. This included significant coverage of Hockey Canada's handling of sexual assault cases, and coverage of how Hockey Canada's actions and missteps resulted in lost sponsorships. Reporting in the media coverage was critical of Hockey Canada as an organization for avoiding accountability and initial resistance to adoption of Safe Sport mechanisms, as well as

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[20] Hudson, Kyra. 2024. "Hockey Canada Sport Environment Assessment – Phase One Assessment Report." Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner, July 3, 2024. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

inefficient communication with participant organizations to help realize changes set out in Hockey Canada's policies.

The SEA Team also considered the changes to the Hockey Canada Board of Directors and senior leadership and the new positions added to the organization, including the Vice President of Sport Integrity and the Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion. Additional Hockey Canada materials were reviewed including: 2021-22 Tracking Discrimination in Hockey – Rule 11.4, 2022-23 Maltreatment Report, the Hockey Canada Action Plan, the Hockey Canada *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Path Forward* (the "EDI Path Forward").[21] The SEA Team also reviewed material shared during Hockey Canada's first *Beyond the Boards Summit* which took place in September 2023. This included an article presented at the Summit, by Dr. Teresa Anne Fowler: "*The evolution of elite hockey culture in Canada: A scoping literature review.*"[22] Hockey Canada hosted its second Beyond the Boards Summit in November 2024, with a focus on outcomes of unhealthy hockey culture, including gender-based violence, homophobia, sexism and transphobia. A post-event report from the Beyond the Boards Summit, prepared by Hockey Canada is attached at **Appendix C.**[23]

The Document Review allowed the SEA Team to understand and organize the issues outlined in the literature and other relevant material to take into consideration in the SEA. The learning from the Document Review, led to creation of the "9 Needs" discussed below and an SEA research matrix (the "Research Matrix"), which informed the

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[21]Hockey Canada. 2023. "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Path Forward: Our Commitment to Action." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[22]Fowler, Dr. Teresa A. 2023. "The evolution of elite hockey culture in Canada: A scoping literature review." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[23]Hockey Canada. 2024. "Beyond the Boards Summit 2024 Post-Event Report." *Hockey Canada.* Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

questions to be asked in Phase Two of the SEA. The Research Matrix is attached at **Appendix D**.

2.2.2   Guidance Group

To understand the Canadian hockey landscape, its stakeholders as well as the current challenges and dynamics, the SEA Team formed a diverse Guidance Group of individuals who are familiar with the hockey ecosystem and could work together to help shape the scope of the SEA. The purpose of the Guidance Group was to ensure relevant sport community and subject-matter experts participated in identifying what the SEA should seek to understand and who the relevant and possible Participants should be.

Another objective of the Guidance Group was to be consistent with the SEA guiding principles of collaboration and transparency. By engaging semi-regularly with the diverse group of individuals on the Guidance Group, the aim was to provide information about the SEA process in a transparent manner. This worked in two directions: that Guidance Group members could disseminate information about the SEA to their own hockey communities and that the SEA Team could seek assistance of the Guidance Group, to engage with Participants from their diverse parts of the hockey ecosystem.

The Guidance Group included a range of thought leaders, including recently retired professional players, advocates and representatives from advocacy organizations, Senior Hockey Canada staff members, one Hockey Canada Board member, Member Branch Board members, and a senior leader from the QMJHL of the CHL. While a goal of the Guidance Group was to allow for a range of viewpoints, including those both supportive and critical of hockey and Hockey Canada, individual Guidance Group members were not asked to provide evidence or make conclusions and had no decision-making authority in the SEA.

While there are pros and cons to any process decision, this approach was taken with the recognition that, ultimately, if any of the SEA's recommendations are to be considered and implemented by different players in the hockey ecosystem, it is valuable to have representatives from these organizations involved along the way. The SEA Team aimed to share and socialize the ideas and observations, emerging through the engagement with Participants across the large cross section of the hockey community, to increase our understanding of all the issues and to increase the likelihood of uptake of any recommendations. While it may be imperfect, the dialogue-based approach of the SEA aimed to foster greater learning, buy-in and traction in areas that can improve hockey culture, and to invite thinking, inspiration and action from thought leaders in different parts of the hockey community.

During Phase Two, the SEA Team met again with the Guidance Group in September 2024 to provide an update on the Phase Two engagement process, and in February 2025 to canvas their feedback about the themes and recommendations contained in this Report.

The SEA Team took note of how open, engaged, committed and responsive Guidance Group members have been throughout the SEA. While the Guidance Group had a wide range of perspectives on the issues, there was a shared commitment and interest in this work. This is encouraging, given that all Guidance Group members come to the SEA with a significant volume of other commitments in their respective roles. The SEA Team is grateful for the Guidance Group's generous commitment to this work.

2.2.3   The 9 Needs

As noted above, the SEA Team summarized the recurring themes and essential questions and challenges facing ice hockey in Canada as identified in the available

literature, into the "9 Needs." The 9 Needs provide a framework of discussion topics and concepts to be queried and understood in the SEA. The 9 Needs created a framework for discussion in the first Guidance Group workshop and the interviews with each of the Guidance Group members. The 9 Needs were also used in the development of the SEA Research Matrix, which is a structured of set of topics of interest and concerns for query in the SEA. This was used to develop related questions to canvas with SEA Participants in Phase Two of the SEA.

Below is a summary of the 9 Needs, and a description of each need:

1. **Commitment from leadership to achieving well-being – a safer, welcoming and fun sport environment**

- What words and actions need to be carried out at all levels of hockey to demonstrate commitment and willingness to influence and shape a better culture?

- What would it look like to demonstrate a real internal commitment to address maltreatment issues?

- What are opportunities for dialogue between Hockey Canada and athletes and stakeholders to share their experiences, learn from them and enact change?

- How to rebuild participant and public trust in Hockey Canada through improved accountability, listening and communicating transparently on plans and progress?

2. **Accountability for implementing key initiatives and changes between Hockey Canada and its members – clarity on roles and responsibilities**

- How to establish a shared understanding of the governance relationship between Hockey Canada's Board of Directors, Executive, its Members and other hockey participants, to clarify who is responsible for what?

- What is the progress on key initiatives Hockey Canada is undertaking?

- Where are the opportunities to report to hockey participants and the public on progress of key initiatives and changes outlined in various documents, including the Hockey Canada EDI Path Forward, the Action Plan, implementation of 2022 Cromwell Review recommendations, and others?

- How can sanctions for bad behaviour or failure to adhere to maltreatment expectations be more feasibly applied (for example, a stepwise process) to ensure Hockey Canada and hockey participants are accountable to policies and commitments?

3. Address policy gaps and establish greater policy clarity

- What prevents or enables a common set of Safe Sport policies from being adopted by Members? (i.e. Rule 11 adopted by Members but not UCCMS.) This question emerges, given that in Canadian Sport, provincial and territorial member associations are normally empowered to form their own policies. However, to avoid a patchwork and inconsistent approach, some sports have adopted what is seen as the gold standard: all provincial and territorial members bodies, alongside their NSO, adopt a uniform pan-Canadian set of UCCMS aligned Safe Sport policies.

- Are the policies accessible for Members and hockey participants to use day-to-day when encountering an issue and needing to engage with it (for example, a complaint process)?

- Are the policies consistent across Hockey Canada's policy suite? Do they align in terms of who they apply to, and are they aligned with UCCMS?

4. **Gaps in coordinated approaches to communication, education, and training – about preventing maltreatment in hockey**

- Is the UCCMS, to which Hockey Canada is a Signatory, widely understood across Hockey Canada's Members and others in the hockey ecosystem?

- What is working and what is not working when it comes to coordinating the approach to communication, education, and training to prevent maltreatment across the participant organizations?

- To what extent is the expanded work and new approaches of the Vice President of Sport Safety and Vice President of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion communicated to participants and to the Hockey community?

5. **Define and operationalize behaviours and actions that contribute to a healthy hockey culture**

- Noting that UCCMS outlines all the prohibited behaviours that are Code violations, what is Hockey Canada's role in building off the UCCMS to define, incentivize, and hold community participants accountable to good behaviour?

- To what extent is it useful if Hockey Canada can define and provide examples of maltreatment in the Code (e.g., psychological) specific to the context of hockey, to help bring hockey participants along in understanding and making change?

6. **Foster a coordinated approach to culture change throughout the Hockey Canada system**

- How can the existing relationships and engagement strategy between Hockey Canada and participant organizations be used to ensure a coordinated approach to culture change throughout the system?

- What is the opportunity for the existing participant engagement strategy to be applied to plan for change in culture together with hockey participants? Can the Action Plan be revisited as a shared approach together with hockey participants?

- How can this be achieved as a follow up to Beyond the Boards Summit (and/or other engagement approaches) that focus on working directly with Members and other organizations?

7. **Understanding and addressing barriers to enacting stronger safety systems and safeguarding behaviours in hockey**

- What factors and dynamics are a barrier to improving safety systems, reporting and safeguarding behaviours for Hockey Canada and across its Member and hockey participant organizations?

- On the flip side, what factors and dynamics can allow for improving safety systems, reporting and safeguarding behaviours?

8. **Establishing a healthy balance between a focus on performance and a culture of well-being, physical and psychological safety**

- Does a pervasive focus on performance contribute to maltreatment?

- Does a "win at all costs" mentality relate to a situation of absolute power of authority figures?

- When does team bonding and cohesion become linked to toxic masculinity and normalized expectation of harmful behaviours without challenging norms?

9. **Information and data management gaps**

- What steps are needed to ensure data is collected, complied, and analyzed with an intersectional lens and informs decision-making on operations? How can Hockey

Canada make sure diversity is not tokenized and progress narratives are not a focus over widespread change?

- Is there a research or data gathering strategy around collecting relevant maltreatment information in a way that is comparable and consistent over time, year over year, in a robust, statistically reliable way? (for example, the 2022-23 Maltreatment Report)

- How are learnings from data then translated to meaningful action?

2.3 Phase Two

The SEA Team developed a Phase Two engagement plan which was approved by the OSIC and published in the Phase One Report on July 3, 2024. As noted by a Guidance Group member during Phase One of the SEA, there is no manual to guide the hockey community in how to make the cultural changes required for the sport, and it is a goal of Phase Two of the SEA to help provide insight about what people are experiencing and concerned about, as well as guidance to make the change required.

Hockey Canada & Member Branches
Assessment Survey

Grassroots + Youth Assessment Survey

Semi-Structured Interviews

Confirmation
Workshops

Guidance
Group

SEA Report
Process, Observations,
& Recommendations
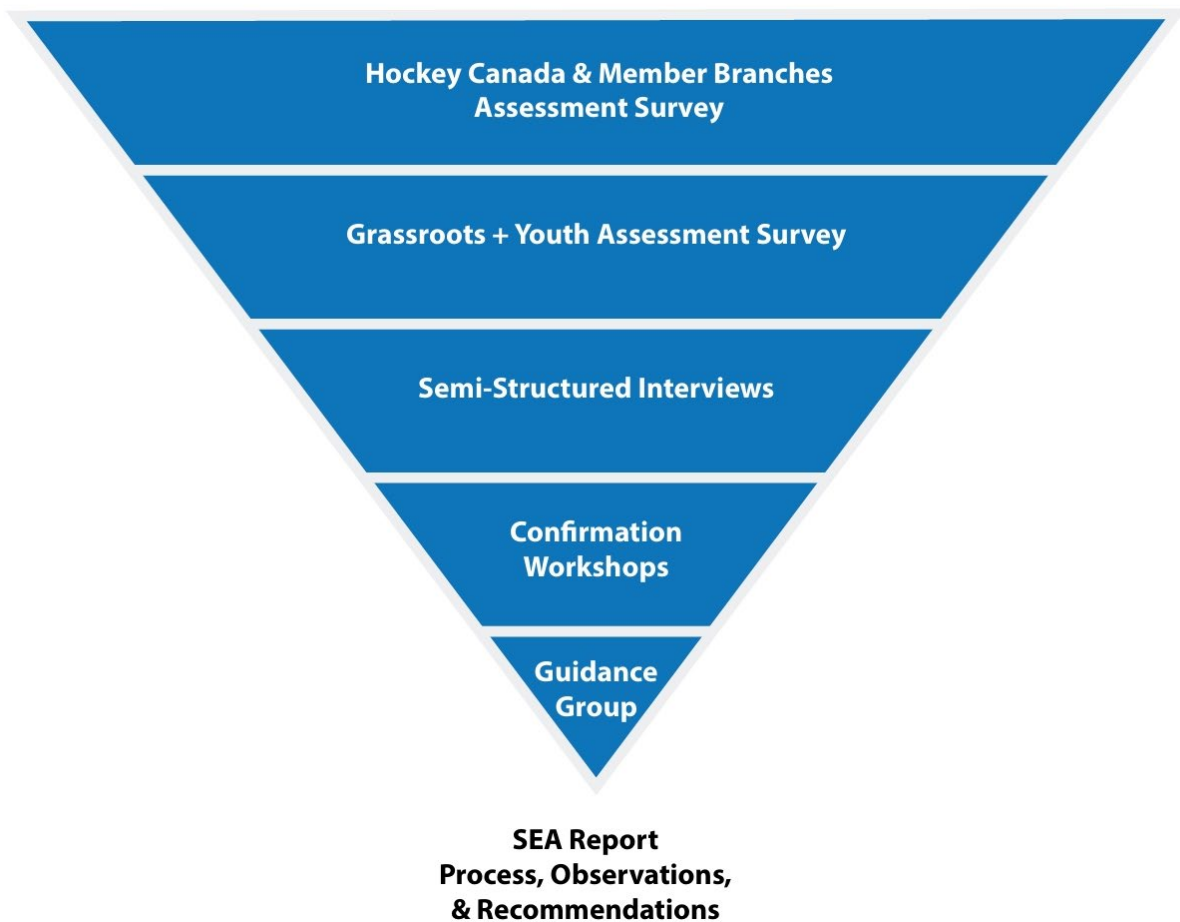
Figure B: Inverted triangle describing the Phase Two engagement plan for the SEA.

2.3.1 Recruitment and Data Collection

The SEA Team developed communication tools to support and explain the SEA process and its objectives, including the development of the SEA website and material publicly available via the OSIC website. The SEA Team also collaborated with representatives from Hockey Canada, Members (including material shared and reviewed during a Member Branch Assembly) and Guidance Group members in order to inform people about the SEA and invite them to participate. A copy of the communications material created for the Member Branch Assembly is attached at **Appendix E**.

The recruitment of SEA Participants and collection of data occurred between July 2024 and February 2025 and included:

- Development of the Representation Model to align the recruitment and selection process for Participants with the diversity of Canadian hockey participants (based on Phase One research and learning);

- Development of the SEA identity, website and other communication tools, including an outreach kit and targeted emails for distribution by Hockey Canada and Members, all to explain and validate the SEA process and recruit Participants.

- Engagement with Hockey Canada and its Members to communicate with and recruit individuals to complete one of the three Innerlogic indices;

- Development of a voluntary sign-up process for Index Participants who were interested and consented to volunteer to participate in semi-structured interviews. This was made available as a part of the three surveys, via the SEA and the OSIC websites, and a request for Guidance Group members to share and invite individuals to register an interest;

- Selection and invitations to Index Participants who had volunteered to participate in a semi-structured interview, using the Representation Model;

- Conducting interviews with individuals and parents with youth;

- Selection and invitations to interview Participants who had volunteered to participate in a validation (*what we heard*) workshop (the "Validation Workshop") using the using the Representation Model;

- Conducting Validation Workshop; and

- Ongoing engagement with Guidance Group.

Although material reviewed and some interview and Guidance Group Participants came from outside Hockey Canada's sanctioned programs, the SEA primarily engaged with Participants from sanctioned hockey due to recruitment mainly occurring through Hockey Canada's communication channels. Future assessments would benefit from broader engagement with non-sanctioned hockey participants to gain their unique perspectives and insights.

The SEA Team is thankful for the support of everyone who supported the recruitment process.

2.3.1.1   Representation Model Development

As noted above, the SEA Team combined data from Hockey Canada's 2023-24 Annual Report and Statistics Canada to develop Representation Model which provides demographic and categorical targets to guide the SEA Participant recruitment process. The Representation Model aimed to ensure Participants were included from the across hockey's diverse ecosystem, while preventing overrepresentation of any group. The model incorporated organizational affiliations spanning from Hockey Canada leadership to grassroots involvement, while accounting for various roles such as Board members, coaches, officials, caregivers and athletes. Demographic considerations included age distribution, experience levels, competitive tiers and racial identities. Geographic diversity was ensured through balanced representation across regions, rural-urban settings and both official language communities.

The Representation Model served as a guide rather than strict quotas, ensuring broad alignment with Canadian hockey participant diversity, and carefully weighed several key factors: the need to capture a spectrum of experiences with hockey (from positive to negative), maintaining proportional representation of major demographic groups, and ensuring historically underrepresented populations had meaningful opportunities to

contribute their perspectives. While the total number of Participants was constrained by practical considerations of budget and timeline, the Representation Model provided a thoughtful framework for both Participant selection and subsequent data analysis.

2.3.2 Assessing Sport Culture

The sport of hockey plays a significant role in Canadian culture and communities, shaping the lives of millions of Canadians each year. Despite the work undertaken in recent years to improve hockey's culture and practices, the SEA is an opportunity to comprehensively examine and understand how this work is impacting the experiences and concerns of the people who know it best – from across the Canadian ice hockey ecosystem.

The SEA is working to identify conditions that contribute to or prevent maltreatment in order to develop recommendations of actions that will support well-being as part of a safer sport environment in hockey. The vision of the SEA is that if we all can better understand the areas of hockey culture connected to the risks of maltreatment, the hockey community can address these things and prevent harms to everyone involved. If we understand what contributes to a healthy sport culture, that supports the well-being of hockey participants, sport leaders and organizations can use this as a guide for best practices. The aim is to reduce the risk of maltreatment, achieve greater well-being for everyone in hockey so that the game is welcoming, safe and fun for all.

To understand and measure aspects of hockey culture that are relevant to either a positive experience or contribute to risk of a negative experience or maltreatment, the SEA Team reflected on the work already undertaken by stakeholders in the Canadian sport community and the relevant tools available.

In 2019 a Canadian Think-Tank, which included representation from the Canadian Olympic Committee ("COC"), Canadian Paralympic Committee ("CPC"), Own the Podium ("OTP"), Canadian universities, NSOs and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network ("COPSIN"), came together to develop a framework to understand and facilitate cultures of excellence in high-performance sport in Canada.

The Sport Information Resource Centre ("SIRC") outlined this work in the "*Canadian Culture of Excellence in High-Performance Sport – Position Statement*"[24] (the "SIRC Position Statement") which illustrates the culture of excellence characteristics, framework and matrix. An outcome of the work of the Think-Tank is the Culture of Excellence Assessment and Audit Tool (the "CAAT"). The CAAT was built to measure culture within high-performance sport and features a series of questions that measure two key dimensions: the "Person Dimension" and the "Performance Dimension." Each factor includes a series of questions and the scores for each factor are plotted on a graph and can be compared to identify the specific response to the culture being measured. This means results can be plotted onto the Culture of Excellence Matrix of different potential cultures including, a culture of harassment, apathy, care, quality or excellence.

The concept of the CAAT was explored in the 2023 McLaren Report (at page 97) which considered the connection between the risk and prevalence of maltreatment and issues in sport culture, at the high-performance level. The 2023 McLaren Report recommended all NSOs adopt a common culture assessment evaluation tool to allow a comparison of cultures between NSOs and track longitudinal data to assess if progress is being made over time. The 2023 McLaren Report cites the value of the CAAT to assess culture within

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24SIRC. *Canadian Culture of Excellence in High-Performance Sport Position Statement*. SIRC, 2021. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

high-performance disciplines of gymnastics in Canada and recommended developing a companion survey tool to systematically assess and audit culture at the grassroots, developmental level of the Canadian amateur sport community and suggests that Sport Canada "reverse engineer" the CAAT tool so it could be adapted to measure culture in recreational and other competitive contexts. As noted at page 101 of the 2023 McLaren Report:

> *A common tool to assess culture in local grassroots sports contexts that can be implemented quickly and efficiently would be a game changer and offer significant advantages to the amateur sport community in Canada.*

2.3.2.1   Innerlogic Research Surveys

For the purposes of measuring culture in Canadian ice hockey, the SEA Team engaged with Innerlogic, a leading Canadian culture analytics provider with extensive experience in sport research and process design, to deploy surveys to people involved in Canadian ice hockey in the different areas of the hockey ecosystem.

The SEA Team worked with Innerlogic to modify two of their validated research surveys for use in the SEA. The research tools are called the Holistic Culture Index (the "HCI") and the Youth Sport Culture Index (the "YSCI"). The modifications done for the SEA made the two surveys more fit-for-purpose for deployment in the hockey ecosystem and across the three key SEA Participant groups. These groups include:

1. Hockey Canada Board members and employees

2. Member Branches Board members and employees

3. Grassroots hockey participants from across the hockey ecosystem

The SEA Team worked with Innerlogic, Hockey Canada and its Members to distribute the modified HCI and YSCI to each of the three Participant groups. These modified indices are described below in section 2.3.2.3.

2.3.2.2   The Holistic Culture Index (HCI) and the Youth Sport Culture Index (YSCI)

Innerlogic defines organizational culture as the unified and enduring attitudes, behaviours, beliefs, and practices that characterize an environment. The idea is that organizational culture forms the foundation of how individuals consciously and unconsciously interact, connect, and create meaningful experiences in the pursuit of a shared purpose. The HCI and the YSCI are research surveys designed to assess organizational culture through the theoretical lens of the tried-and-true Competing Values Framework (CVF).[25] The HCI and the YSCI are not the same as the CAAT, but also views culture existing across two core dimensions:

1. **People Dimension:** Measures a supportive and intentional culture, focusing on factors and associated questions related to psychological safety and belonging.

2. **Performance Dimension:** Measures an aligned and goal-oriented culture, emphasizing factors and associated questions like accountability and clarity.

What do the HCI and YSCI provide?

The HCI and the YSCI were designed to capture broad cultural patterns rather than individual experiences. By asking people to evaluate their environment, these tools reveal systemic strengths and weaknesses in organizational culture. Both surveys

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[25]Quinn, Robert E., and John Rohrbaugh. 1981. "A Competing Values Approach to Organizational Effectiveness." *Public Productivity Review* 5, no. 2 (June): 122-140. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

integrate questions about key outcomes — including well-being, safety and inclusion — to connect cultural factors with their real-world impact on people and performance.

The HCI is Innerlogic's foundational tool, a core system that serves as an essential building block for further work, designed for employees, managers, leaders and board members in high-performance sport organizations. Since 2022, the HCI has been implemented in over 20 sport organizations including NSOs, P/TSOs, sport institutes, post-secondary athletics and professional sport leagues. The HCI has assessed the cultural landscape across various stakeholders, such as high-performance athletes/players, coaches, staff, senior leaders and board members. The tool has been applied across a wide range of sports, including men's and women's volleyball, hockey, swimming, rowing, soccer, tennis, rugby, track and field, Nordic skiing, basketball, skating and cycling. Its reach spans multiple provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and Quebec, as well as national and international contexts.

The YSCI has been applied across over 15 youth sport contexts to date, including youth sports clubs, national development programs and sport academies, P/TSOs, non-profit sport organizations and an elite sports league. It has been implemented in various sports, including hockey, Nordic skiing, track and field, wrestling and volleyball. Its use extends across multiple provinces and territories, including Nunavut, Quebec, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario.

While there is conceptual overlap between the HCI and YSCI, their usefulness lies in their ability to address the unique needs of their respective contexts. The HCI focuses on professional organizational settings within the high-performance domains, while the YSCI targets the developmental and youth sport experiences.

Development and Validation of the HCI and YSCI

The HCI and YSCI research tools were developed through rigorous, evidence-based processes. This included iterative scale development with experts in organizational behaviour, leadership, and sport psychology. Focus group consultations, content validity interviews and pre-testing with target populations ensured the robustness, face validation and practicality of these tools for their intended audiences.

The development of the YSCI was driven by a clear need from specific Innerlogic clients who were already using the HCI with senior athletes, staff and administrators, but sought a grassroots-level assessment designed for youth sport environments. Innerlogic recognized the importance of an age-appropriate measurement and created a tool that captured the unique cultural dynamics of amateur and developmental sport contexts while maintaining the balance of people- and performance-related dimensions, as established in the HCI.

To ensure the YSCI was both research-driven and practical for youth sport environments, its development followed a three-phase approach. In the first two phases, three separate focus groups were conducted with athletes, coaches, administrators and board members from P/TSOs across the Maritimes. Transcriptions of these discussions were analyzed to identify key cultural themes and subsequent factors. Items were then generated based on focus group insights, existing literature and internal discussions.

In the third phase, external experts, including leaders from a Canadian high-performance and safe sport community, iteratively reviewed the tool to assess clarity and validity, ensuring that the items accurately reflected the realities of youth sport environments. Following this, an item sorting task was conducted with a new set of athletes and

coaches, where participants categorized the items into each culture dimension to ensure utility and inform final refinements of the tool.

How does the HCI and YSCI collect information?

Both the HCI and YSCI assess culture through a structured pool of 10 core factors and two optional factors for a total of 30 to 36 questions. Additionally, the culture tools include core outcomes. All responses are collected using a similar sliding scale ranging from 0 to 10 (strongly disagree to strongly agree). This approach allows people to provide nuanced assessments of cultural gaps and strengths. The factors are organized across a *people dimension* and a *performance dimension* — see the table below.

Holistic Culture Index (HCI)		Youth Sport Culture Index (YSCI)	
People Dimension	*Performance Dimension*	*People Dimension*	*Performance Dimension*
Psychological Safety: *A measure of people feeling safe to speak up, share ideas, and express concerns without fear of negative consequences.*	***Accountability:*** *A measure of collectively upholding goals, maintaining the highest standards, and meeting performance expectations.*	***Psychological Safety:*** *A measure of people feeling safe to speak up, share ideas, and express concerns without fear of negative consequences.*	***Access:*** *A measure of the availability of appropriate training facilities, quality competitive opportunities, and readily accessible coaching.*
Belonging: *A measure of supporting individual differences, so people feel respected, heard, and accepted.*	***Clarity:*** *A measure of the clear definition of roles and responsibilities, outlined performance expectations, and a well-defined path to achieving objectives.*	***Belonging:*** *A measure of supporting individual differences, so people feel respected, heard, and accepted.*	***Pathway:*** *A measure of a well-defined pathway from grassroots to elite levels, fostering development, and clearly communicated selection criteria.*
Empathy: *A measure of support through*	***Mission/Vision:*** *A measure of the commitment to the*	***Integrity:*** *A measure of the commitment to mutual*	***Coaching/Leadership:*** *A measure of providing clear guidance, leading by*

hardships, fostering open conversations about feelings, and emphasizing care.	*organization's purpose and direction, serving as a roadmap to approach work.*	*respect, where fairness is upheld, and people are honest and sincere in their actions*	*example, and supporting the whole person*
Values: *A measure of a clearly defined set of values that are regularly communicated and used to guide behaviours and decision-making across the organization.*	***Impact:*** *A measure of the effectiveness of everyone's work in aligning with the organization's broader goals and mission, ensuring that each contribution drives success and makes a meaningful difference.*	***Values Alignment:*** *A measure of a clearly defined set of values that are regularly communicated and used to guide behaviours and decision-making across the organization.*	***Growth & Development:*** *A measure of providing tools and resources for everyone's growth, emphasizing long-term progress, and nurturing future leaders.*
Learning: *A measure of promoting growth through treating mistakes as improvement opportunities and fostering curiosity to seek solutions.*	***Resilience:*** *A measure of persevering during challenges, availability of resources, and support to cope with setbacks or stressful situations.*	***Physical Safety:*** *A measure of ensuring attention and effort is placed on physical safety protocols and minimizing physical harm.*	***Improvement/Excellence:*** *A measure of the emphasis on continuous growth, encouragement for everyone to reach their full potential, and the commitment to embedding high standards.*
Optional Culture Factors:		***Optional Culture Factors:***	
Communication: *A measure of transparently and promptly sharing information, with a focus on open dialogue to keep everyone informed and connected.*	***Adaptability:*** *A measure of prioritizing understanding the reasons for change, implementing changes strategically, and considering the impact of changes on individuals.*	***Empathy:*** *A measure of supporting each other through hardships, fostering open conversations about feelings, and emphasizing care.*	***Winning:*** *A measure of valuing success beyond outcomes, discouraging a win-at-any-cost mindset, and prioritizing mental and physical well-being.*

Figure 1 HCI and YSCI Culture Factors

2.3.2.3 Modifications for the SEA

To build upon what was learned in Phase One of the SEA, the survey tools were customized through collaboration between Innerlogic and the SEA Team. This adaptation ensured that both the HCI and YSCI were relevant and appropriate for each of the three key SEA Participant groups, while maintaining their ability to measure core cultural elements. The customizations were crafted specifically in consideration of the specific issues and concerns identified in the Document Review, the 9 Needs, Guidance Group feedback and the resulting Research Matrix (i.e., the identification of current problems, gaps and barriers in ice hockey in Canada).

Essentially, a contextual integration occurred by slightly refining a small number of questions and the addition of one sub-dimension to better reflect the language and priorities identified in the report (i.e., governance/leadership in the Hockey Canada and Member versions). These modifications were designed to ensure that the surveys captured the dimensions of culture relevant to Canadian ice hockey while maintaining the integrity of the original instruments. Further, consistent outcome questions focused on well-being, safety and inclusion were included in each survey.

Additionally, each survey featured one customized outcome question and three tailored open-ended questions. While distinctions between groups were important for tailoring the surveys to their specific contexts, overlap was incorporated where appropriate to maintain coherence across the instruments to make a reasonable level of cross analysis possible.

Ultimately, the HCI and YSCI were customized for hockey to address the needs of the three key groups. These three surveys will be referred to collectively as the "Index" or by their defined names going forward in this Report:

1. Hockey Canada Board members and employees (the "**HC Index**")

2. Member Branches Board members and employees (the "**Members Index**")

3. Grassroots hockey participants from across the hockey ecosystem (the "**Grassroots Index**")

The customized factors, organized across the *people dimension* and the *performance dimension* — for each Index are set out in the table below.

The HC Index		The Members Index		The Grassroots Index	
People Dimension	**Performance Dimension**	**People Dimension**	**Performance Dimension**	**People Dimension**	**Performance Dimension**
Psychological safety Belonging Values alignment Communication Learning	Accountability Clarity Mission & Vision Impact Governance /Leadership	Psychological safety Belonging Values alignment Communication Learning	Accountability Clarity Mission & Vision Impact Governance /Leadership Integrity	Psychological safety Belonging Values alignment Physical safety Empathy Integrity	Access Pathway Coaching /Leadership Growth & Development Winning Improvement

Figure 2 The Customized Factors

The full list of questions asked in the HC Index, the Members Index, and the Grassroots Index is attached at **Appendix F**. In addition to the cultural index questions, the SEA Team worked with Innerlogic to include several open text questions at the end of each survey to provide a way for Participants to share their individual experiences. The additional open text questions asked were:

HC Index Questions:

- *What does and does not work for preventing maltreatment and dealing with maltreatment incidents?*

- *What are ways to drive a healthy culture that supports athletes?*

- *What are the barriers and enablers to ensuring consistent policies?*

Members Index Questions:

- *What are ways to drive a healthy culture that supports athletes?*

- *What does and does not work for preventing maltreatment and dealing with maltreatment incidents?*

- *What are the barriers and enablers to ensuring consistent policies?*

Grassroots Index Questions:

- *Please give one example of one safe sport program or initiative that is available and commonly used in your hockey organization*

- *What does and does not work for preventing maltreatment and dealing with maltreatment incidents?*

3. Participant Response Overview

3.1 Analysis Approach

The SEA Team analyzed and interpreted Participant response data through three approaches:

- An overview of Index responses examining demographics and general trends (sections 3.2 – 3.4)

- An analysis by Innerlogic of an overall cultural score in relation to the cultural index and their Competing Values Framework (CVF) model (section 3.5)

- An introduction of the SEA's concept of a "Risk Factor Framework" (section 4) and the exploration of the data including:

- Interpretation of Innerlogic scores;

- Analysis of open text Index question data;

- Analysis of interview data.

The sections below provide an overview of the SEA Participants who participated in one of the Index surveys (the HC Index, the Members Index or the Grassroots Index). The distribution of Participant responses across the three Index categories are as follows: the **HC Index (66),** the **Members Index (80)** and the **Grassroots Index (1,668)**. While it is common to refer to individuals who participate in surveys as respondents, for the purposes of the SEA, we continue to use the term "Participants."

3.2 Summary of SEA Participant Demographics

3.2.1 HC Index and Members Index

66 individuals responded to the HC Index and 80 individuals responded to the Members Index (total of 148 combined). These Participants included Board representatives, leaders and employees of all levels. The HC Index and Members Index responses were blended here, given the lower overall number of responses.

Demographics

- Overall, these Participants are predominantly male (62.2%), with female representation at 34.5%, and a small percentage identifying as non-binary (0.7%) or preferring not to say (2.7%)

- Core age demographic concentrated in middle-age brackets, with 41-50 years (43 Participants) and 31-40 years (41 Participants) being the largest groups

- Predominantly English-speaking (78.4%), with bilingual English-French capability in a minority

Organizational Characteristics

- Majority of these Participants identified as employees (81 Participants), leaders/managers (20 Participants) and Board members (36 Participants)

- Leadership roles are well-represented across both the HC Index and Members Index

Experience and Tenure

- Relatively new involvement with largest groups having 2-4 years (54 Participants) or less than 1 year experience (29 Participants)

- This could point to a mix of fresh perspectives and established experience, with some Participants having 20+ years in their organization

Geographic Coverage

- Broad national coverage with representation from across Canada and representation from 10 of 13 Members

- Stronger representation in urban centers

- Notably strong response from western provinces, particularly Hockey Alberta and BC Hockey

3.2.2 Grassroots Index

The Grassroots Index gathered responses from 1,668 individuals, representing a diverse range of roles, levels and experiences within grassroots hockey organizations in Canada, including players and parents of players.

Overall representation of the broader population: The Grassroots Index was aimed at individuals 14 years of age and older (14-18 years of age with the support of a parent/guardian) and included responses from players in the U15-U18 age group. There was also parent/guardian feedback, which effectively balanced the representation of younger players (U13 and below). Geographic distribution closely aligned with registration data, reflecting strong regional engagement. However, gender representation showed higher proportions of female and non-binary Participants compared to registration figures, suggesting greater demand for engagement. Overall, the Grassroots Index provides a reliable foundation for understanding this hockey community's experiences.

Demographics

- The majority of Participants identified as male (60.2%), followed by female (36.8%). A small percentage identified as non-binary (0.2%), gender fluid (0.1%) or preferred not to say (2.5%)

- The majority of Participants identified as Caucasian (82.5%), with smaller representation from multiple races/ethnicities (2.9%), Indigenous (4.8%), and other ethnic groups. A notable 5.5% preferred not to disclose their ethnicity

- The majority of Participants were fluent in English only (72.5%), with 18.4% fluent in both English and French. Smaller groups reported fluency in other languages or combinations of languages

- The largest group of Participants were parents/guardians of children under 14 years old (45.9%), followed by parents providing a player perspective (18.2%) and coaches (16.8%)

- Most Participants were associated with U18 (20.5%), U15 (17.7%) and U13 (17.2%) levels, with smaller representation from U7, Junior and Senior levels

- Parent/Guardian roles dominate the dataset, accounting for 64.1% of responses, with 45.9% representing children under 14 and 18.2% providing a player perspective, while direct player responses (14-18 and 19+) make up 7.3%

- Coaches represent 16.8% and support roles (bench staff, officials, administrators and volunteers) collectively represent 11%

Experience and Tenure

- The largest groups had 8-10 years (21.5%), 2-4 years (20.4%) and 5-7 years (19.7%) of experience, indicating a mix of seasoned and relatively newer hockey participants

Geographic Coverage

- The majority of Participants were from urban areas (65.3%), with rural areas (33.8%) and remote regions (0.9%) being less represented.

Member Branch Geographies Distribution (West to East)
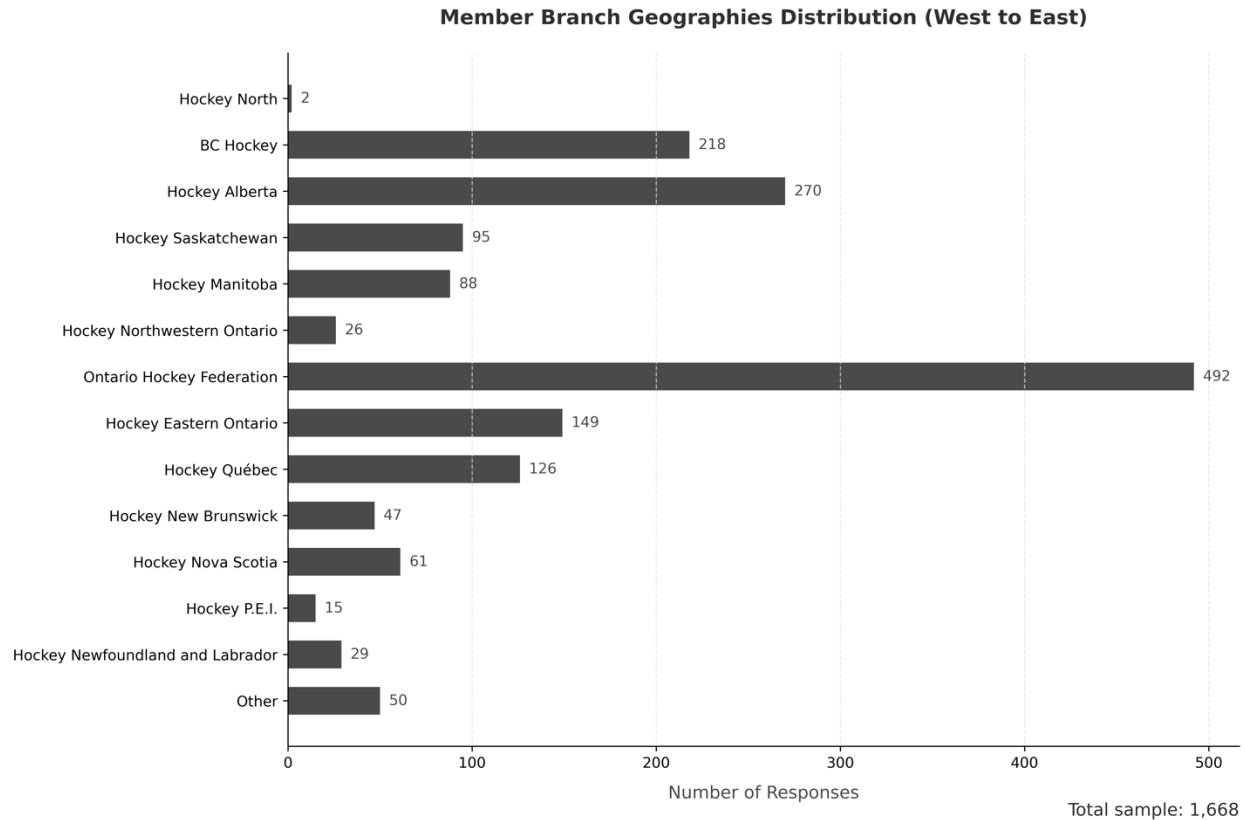
Figure E: Member Branch Geographies Distribution (West to East) of Member Branches Organizations in Canada. The Ontario Hockey Federation leads with the highest count (492), followed by Hockey Alberta (270) and BC Hockey (218). Smaller Members like Hockey North (2) and Hockey P.E.I. (15) reflect regional variations in representation.

3.2.3   Interview Participants

Over 450 people volunteered to participate in the SEA interview process and, ultimately, 45 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Participants. This included representatives from within the Hockey Canada ecosystem – administrators, Board members, volunteers, players, caregivers of players, coaches, former players and officials - as well as from peripheral organizations, including the IIHF, the ITP, Para ice hockey, the CHL and Tennis Canada. The interview Participants were invited in a manner consistent with the goals of the Representation Model. The Participants from peripheral organizations were included to provide insights on best practices that could be applied for learning here.

The demographics showcase a diverse and inclusive representation of grassroots Participants, which reflects the broader population and ensures the SEA heard from the voices of real Canadians who participate in hockey. Key demographic aspects of the 45 interview Participants include:

- **Grassroots Participation**: Over half of the interviewees were grassroots members of the hockey community, including parents, players, MHA administrators and MHA volunteers, who volunteered directly via the Grassroots Index volunteer sign up process;

- **Geographic Coverage**: Interviewees spanned 9 provinces from coast to coast;

- **Role Representation**: 11 out of 15 age divisions were included;

- **Racial and Gender Diversity**: 25% of grassroots interview Participants identified as being from racialized backgrounds and 35% identified as female.

3.3 Summary: Distribution of Scores

The overall distribution of Participant responses between the HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index varied. HC Index and Members Index Participant responses were more aligned and consistent with each other; however, Members Index responses were overall more positive. Grassroots Index responses were not aligned with HC Index and Members Index Participant responses and overall, Grassroots Index responses were less positive and more varied. This illustrates that Participants within at the grassroots part of the hockey ecosystem and within MHAs are less satisfied with their overall experience than those in leadership at the Members or Hockey Canada level.

Distribution of HC Index Responses
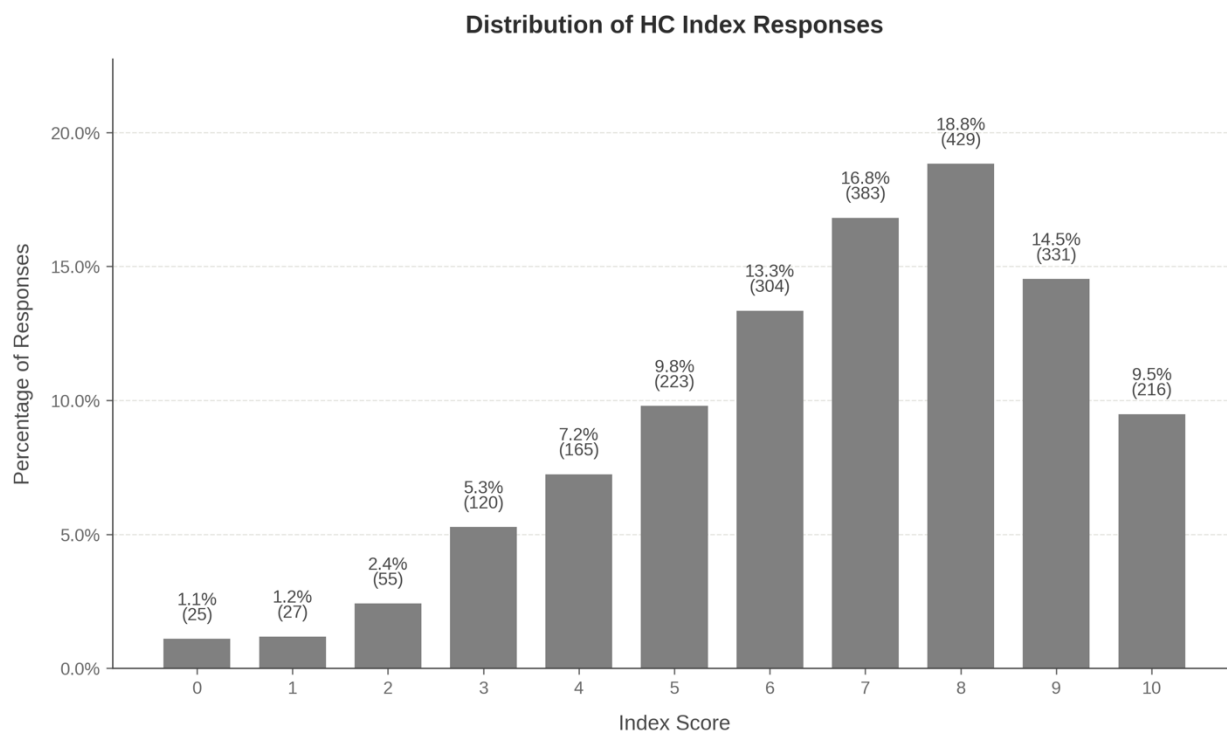
Figure F: Distribution of HC Index Responses Across all Index Questions (0-10).

Distribution of Member Index Responses
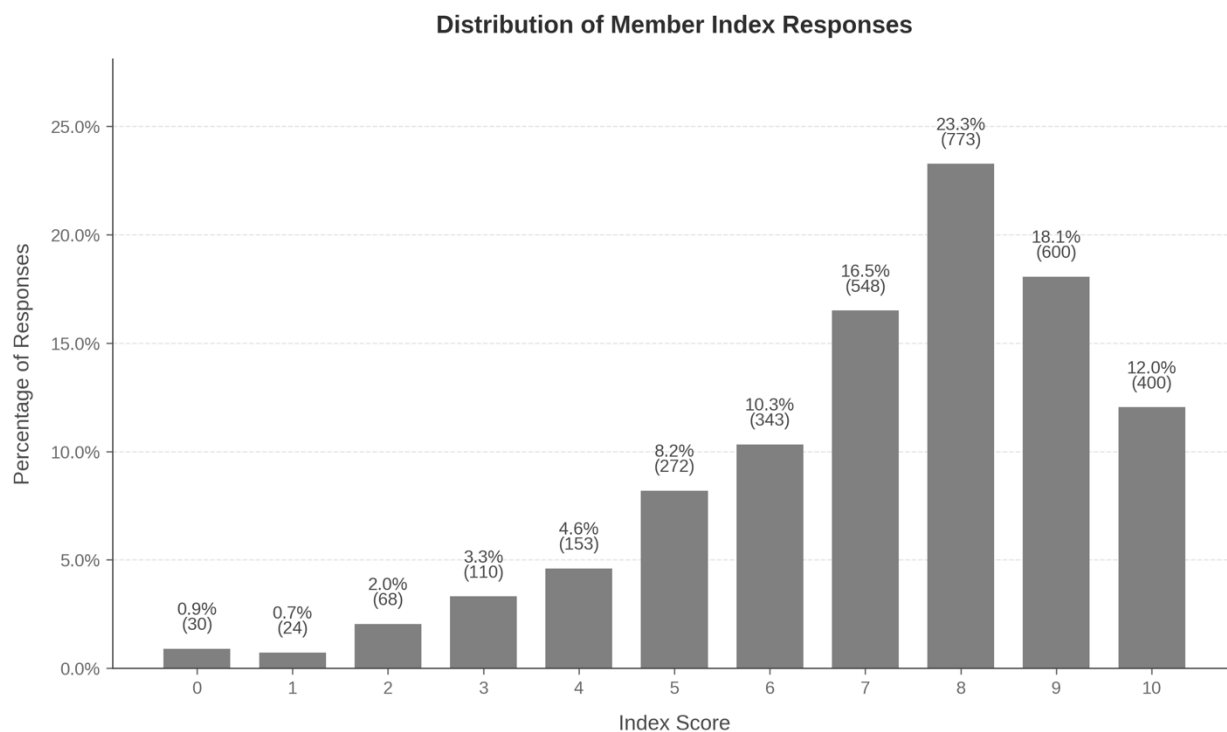
Figure G: Distribution of Member Index Responses Across all Index Questions (0-10).

Distribution of Grassroots Index Responses
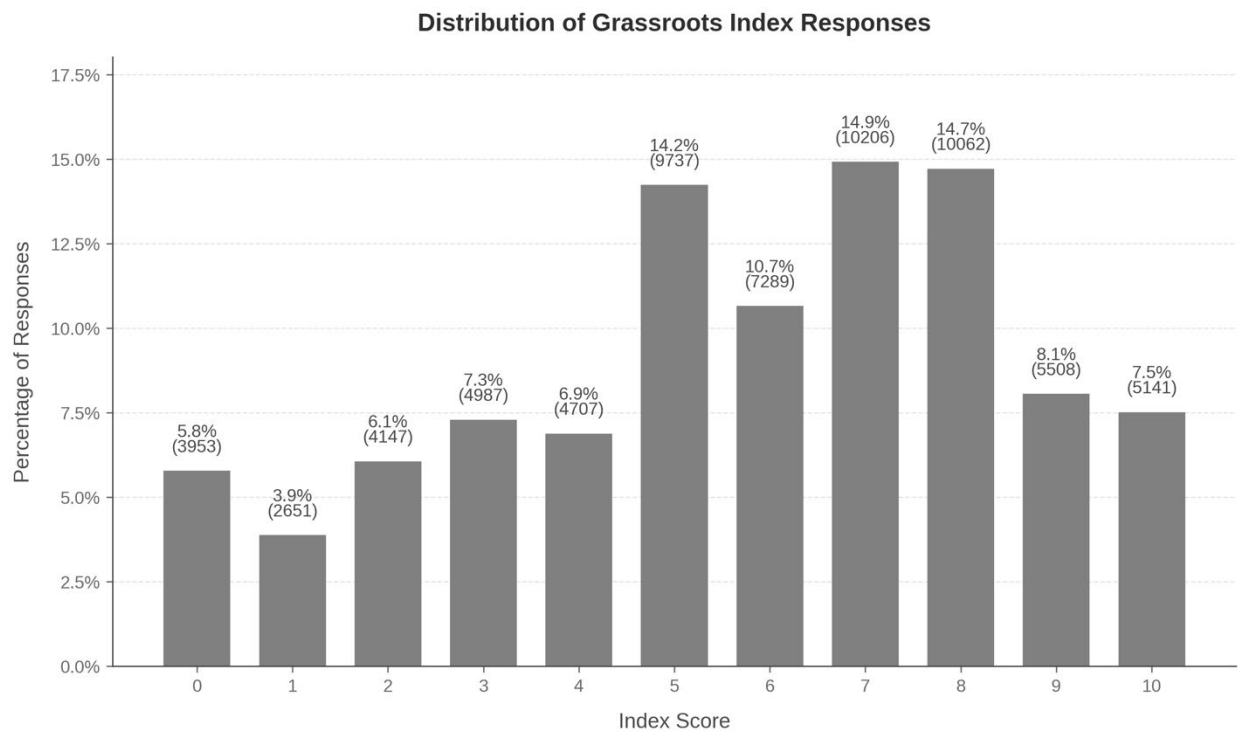
Figure H: Distribution of Grassroots Index Responses Across all Index Questions (0-10).

Figures F-H: Comparison of 0-10 score distributions across HC Index, Members Index and Grassroot Index datasets: The histograms reveal distinct patterns, with HC Index scores showing a higher concentration around the upper range (positive scores), Member Index displaying a more even spread, and Grassroot Index exhibiting a broader distribution with more lower scores and peaks in the mid-range. These variations highlight differing perceptions across the groups — the hockey experience in Canada is not homogeneous.

3.3.1 Index Categories

To make analysis easier, Index responses were categorized the 0-10 index scale into three distinct categories: **Low** (0 to 3); **Neutral** (4 to 6); and **High** (7 to 10). This chart better indicates the differences between the scores across the three Index groups:

Distribution of Index Responses by Group
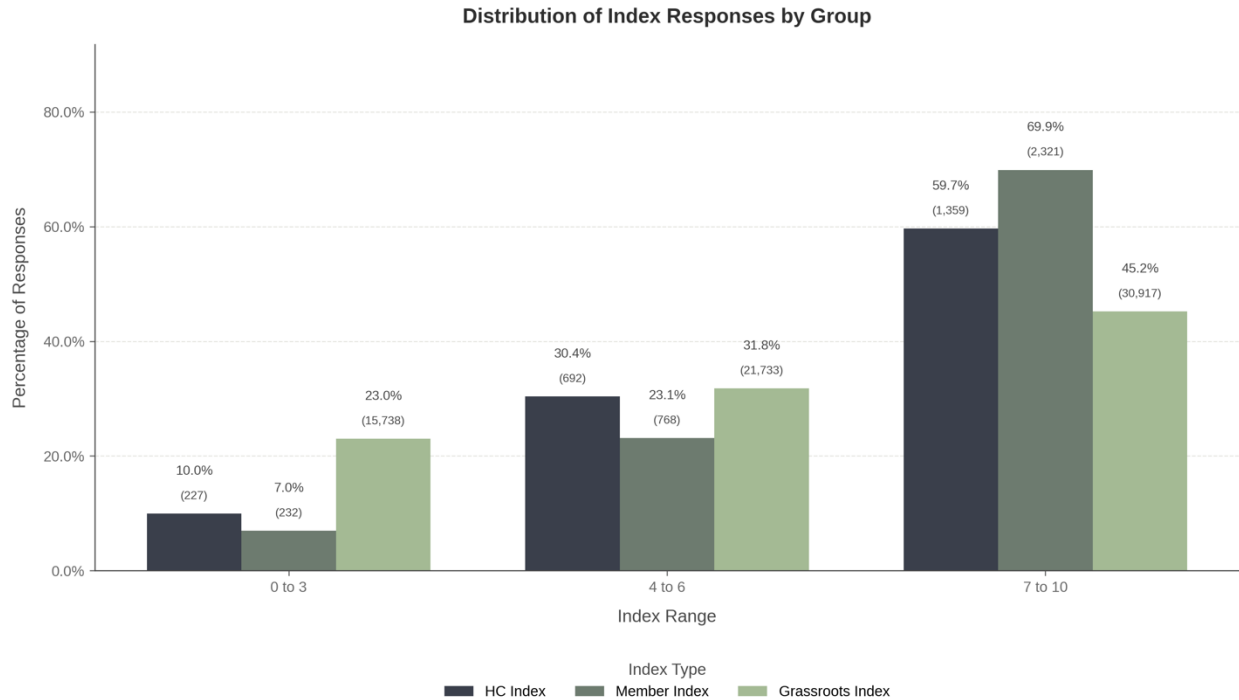
Figure I: Distribution of scores grouped into Low (0-3), Neutral (4-6), and High (7-10) ranges across HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index responses. HC Index and Members Index show predominantly high scores, while Grassroots Index responses show a descending pattern from high to low scores, with a notably higher proportion of low scores compared to the other groups.

Notable Observations

- Leadership Alignment: HC Index and Members Index responses show strong positive alignment, with over 70% of Participants rating in the high category. These ratings indicate a strong leadership confidence, as indicated by the consistently high ratings in both groups

- Grassroots Participant Gap: A notable 21.3% difference exists between Members Index responses (highest) and Grassroots Index responses (lowest) high ratings

- Response Distribution: While all Index responses show a majority of positive ratings, the Grassroots Index shows more distributed responses across all categories. The Grassroots Index experiences show more variation and room for

improvement and indicate these Participants have a different experience than the HC Index and Members Index Participants.

- 1 in 8 Grassroots Index ratings (12.1%) fall in the low category which points to an important gap that warrants action

- Neutral Scores: Grassroots Index responses have nearly double the neutral ratings (29.2%) compared to Members Index responses (15.3%). This indicates that there is room for improvement

3.4 Index Responses: General Trends

Across the Index data collected, the SEA Team observed several strong trends, many similar to Innerlogic's observations (set out below in section 3.5). These trends are generally related to the overall scores of Participants by category or group. These are important to note because they do show or reinforce that different groups have different experiences within the hockey ecosystem.

3.4.1   HC Index and Members Index

- Leadership Alignment: HC Index and Members Index responses show strong positive alignment in their scoring; however, Members Index scores are higher overall.

- Language Diversity Impact: Analysis reveals significant variation in responses based on language fluency (3.83 point spread), with bilingual English-French Participants consistently providing the highest ratings across metrics, while English-only speakers showed moderate scores and multi-language speakers (those fluent in additional languages beyond English and French) reported notably lower scores.

- Ethnic Background Patterns: Analysis demonstrates meaningful differences in responses across ethnic groups (3.25 point spread), with Participants identifying as multiple races/ethnicities providing the highest overall ratings, Caucasian Participants showing consistent mid-range scores and Southeast Asian Participants reporting lower scores across measured dimensions.

3.4.2   Grassroots Index

- Participant Gap: A notable 21.3% difference exists between Members Index (highest) and Grassroots Index (lowest) high ratings.

- Response Distribution: Participants show more varied responses across all categories compared to responses from HC Index and Members Index. While the majority are positive, Grassroots Index Participant experience shows more variation and room for improvement. 1 in 8 Grassroots Index ratings (12.1%) fall in the low (0 to 3 scored) category which warrants action.

- Neutral Scores: Grassroots Index Participants have nearly double the neutral (4 to 6 scored) ratings (29.2%) compared to Members Index responses (15.3%). This indicates that there is room for improvement.

3.5 Innerlogic Assessment: Identifying Culture Gaps

Innerlogic's independent analysis of the Index response data identified critical culture gaps by examining the three lowest-scoring areas within each group's Index results (HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index). This analysis was approached in two ways. First, Innerlogic looked at aggregate scores to identify which cultural factors each group rated lowest. These low scores point to areas where Participants feel the greatest disconnect between current practices and desired culture, helping to pinpoint where change is most needed. Second, Innerlogic conducted correlation analyses to

understand how different cultural factors influence key outcomes in each Index. Strong correlations (above 0.70) reveal which cultural factors have the most significant impact on important outcomes, helping prioritize which changes might have the greatest effect.

Innerlogic combines these two approaches, identifying the lowest-rated areas and understanding their relationships to outcomes. Improvement efforts can be better targeted to their area where they're most likely to create meaningful change. This creates a practical roadmap for overall cultural improvement by:

1. Identifying what each group sees as most problematic;

2. Understanding which of these problems have the strongest connection to desired outcomes;

3. Providing clear, data-driven priorities for action.

3.5.1   HC Index

Innerlogic's review of the HC Index responses, provided an overall culture score of 67%, calculated as the aggregate score of all 10 culture factors and their associated 30 questions, based on responses from all HC Index Participants. The table below illustrates a detailed breakdown of each factor and its corresponding score.
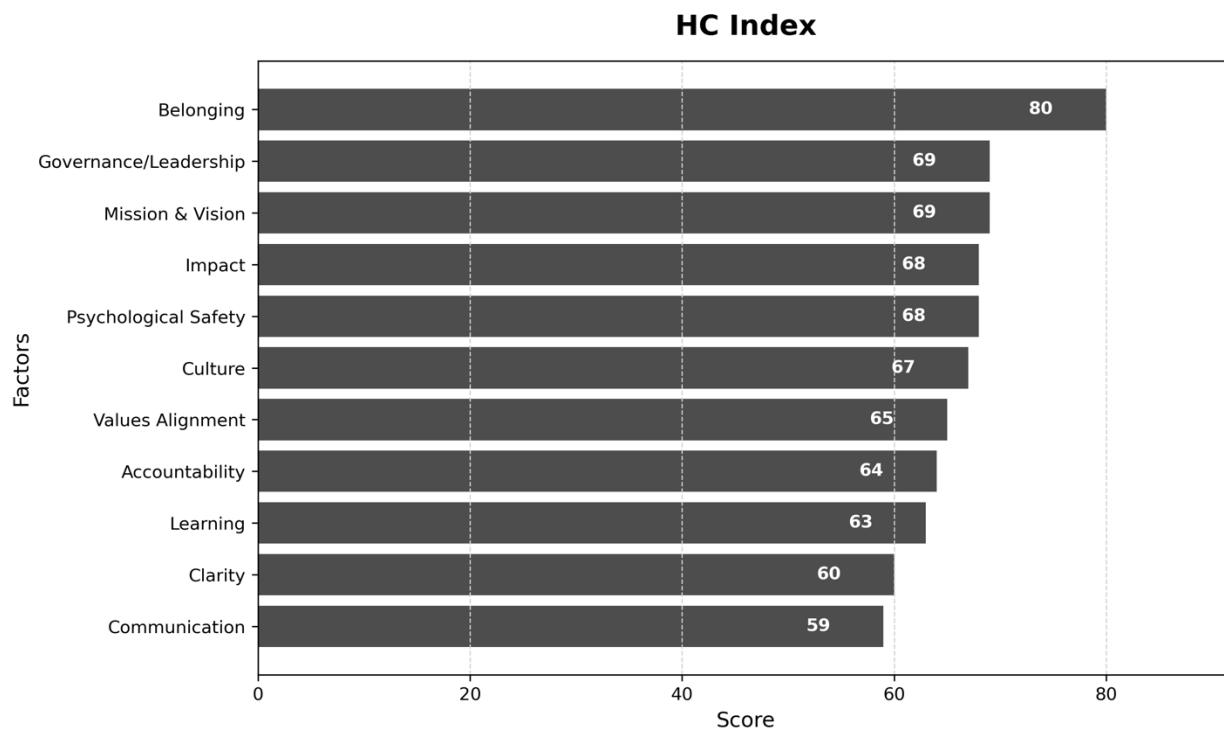
HC Index

Figure J: HC Index Factor Scores. This chart displays the aggregate scores for each of the 10 culture factors assessed in the HC Index, arranged from highest to lowest. Belonging scored highest at 80, while Communication scored lowest at 59, compared to the overall culture score of 67. The visualization highlights the relative score of each factor, with particular areas of concern being Communication, Clarity and Learning, all of which fall below the organizational average.

For the HC Index, the **lowest** aggregate culture factor score was **communication**, which scored 59% compared to the overall culture score of 67%. Among the three **communication-related** questions in the Index, the statement "Communication is transparent (e.g., open)" scored the lowest, at 56%. The **second lowest** aggregate culture factor score was **clarity**, which scored 60%, slightly above communication, but still below the overall culture score of 67%. Among the three clarity-related questions in the Index, the statement "Roles and responsibilities are well defined" received the lowest score at 57%. The **third-lowest** aggregate culture factor score overall was **learning**, which scored a 63%, remaining below the overall culture score of 67%. Among the three learning-related questions in the Index, the statement "Mistakes are shared

and discussed to enable others to learn from them" scored the lowest, at 53% (this question scored the lowest on the HC Index overall).

Regarding correlations, the lowest outcome overall was **alignment**, which scored 55%. It showed the highest positive correlation (r = 0.74) with the culture factor **clarity**. Interestingly, **clarity** emerged as one of the lowest-scoring culture factors, yet it demonstrated a strong positive correlation with **alignment**. This suggests that efforts to **improve clarity** could also address **alignment** challenges. In contrast, the outcome **well-being** scored a 76% overall and had a strong positive relationship (r = 0.80) with **communication** indicating the importance of focusing efforts on **communication** to further improve well-being.

3.5.2   Members Index

For the Members Index, the overall culture score was 71%, which is the aggregate score of all 12 culture factors and associated 36 questions, based on the responses of all Participants. The table below illustrates a detailed breakdown of each factor and its corresponding score.
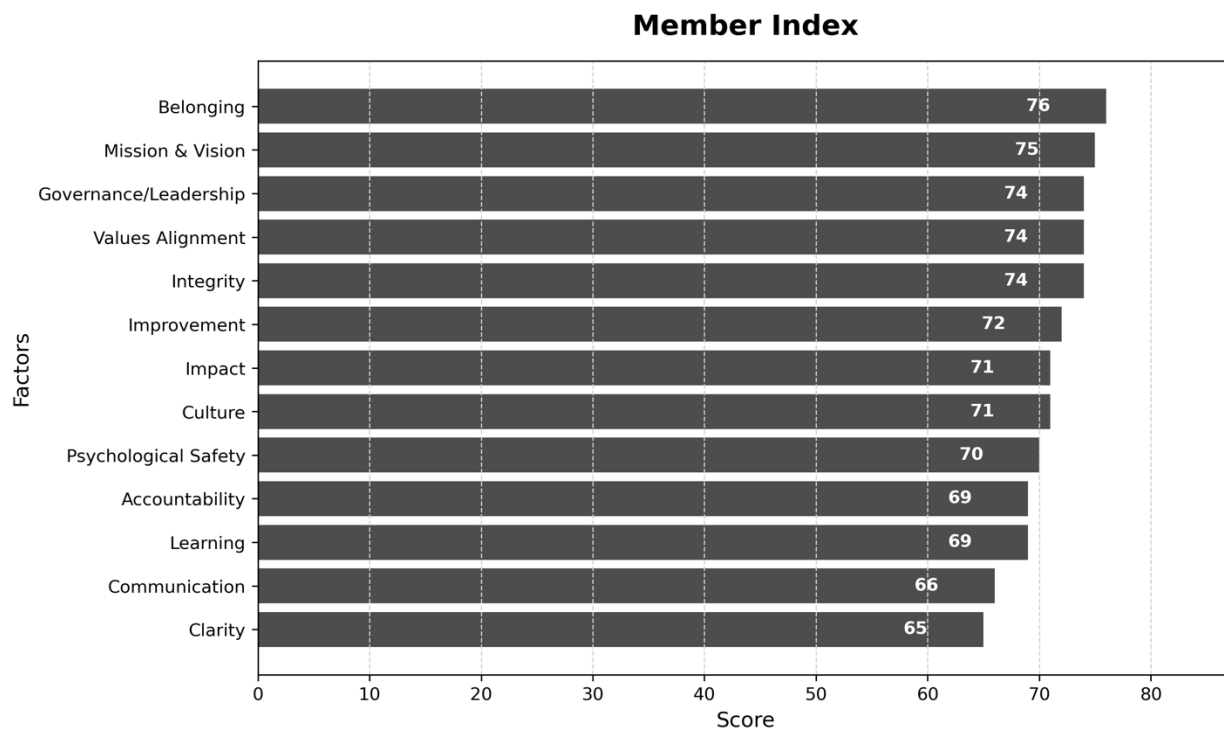
Member Index

Figure K: Member Index Factor Scores. This horizontal bar chart displays the scores for 13 factors from the Member Index, arranged from least to most (with Clarity scoring the lowest at 65 and Belonging the highest at 76). Overall, the average score is 71. Notably, the factors scoring below this average are Culture, Clarity, Communication, Learning, Accountability, Psychological Safety and Impact.

The **lowest** aggregate culture factor was **clarity**, which scored 65% compared to the overall culture score of 71%. Among the three **clarity-related** questions, the statement "Roles and responsibilities are well defined" received the lowest score at 62%, which is also the lowest score for any culture question asked.

The **second-lowest** aggregate culture factor score was **communication**, which scored 66%. Among the three **communication-related** questions in the Index, the statement "Information (e.g. changes and key initiatives) is communicated clearly and promptly" scored the lowest at 63%. The **third-lowest** culture factors are **accountability** and **learning**, which both scored 69%. Among the three **accountability-related** questions in the Index, the statement "We hold each other accountable for the goals we set" scored

the lowest at 64% whereas the **learning-related** statement, "Mistakes are shared and discussed to enable others to learn from them" received the lowest score of 63%.

Regarding the correlations between culture factors and key outcomes, **well-being**, which scored a 76% overall, demonstrated a high-positive correlation with the culture factors **clarity** (r = 0.75) and **improvement** (r = 0.75).

3.5.3   Grassroots Index

For the Grassroots Index, the overall culture score was 56%, calculated as the aggregate score of all 12 culture factors and their 36 associated questions, based on responses from all Participants. The table below illustrates a detailed breakdown of each factor and its corresponding score.
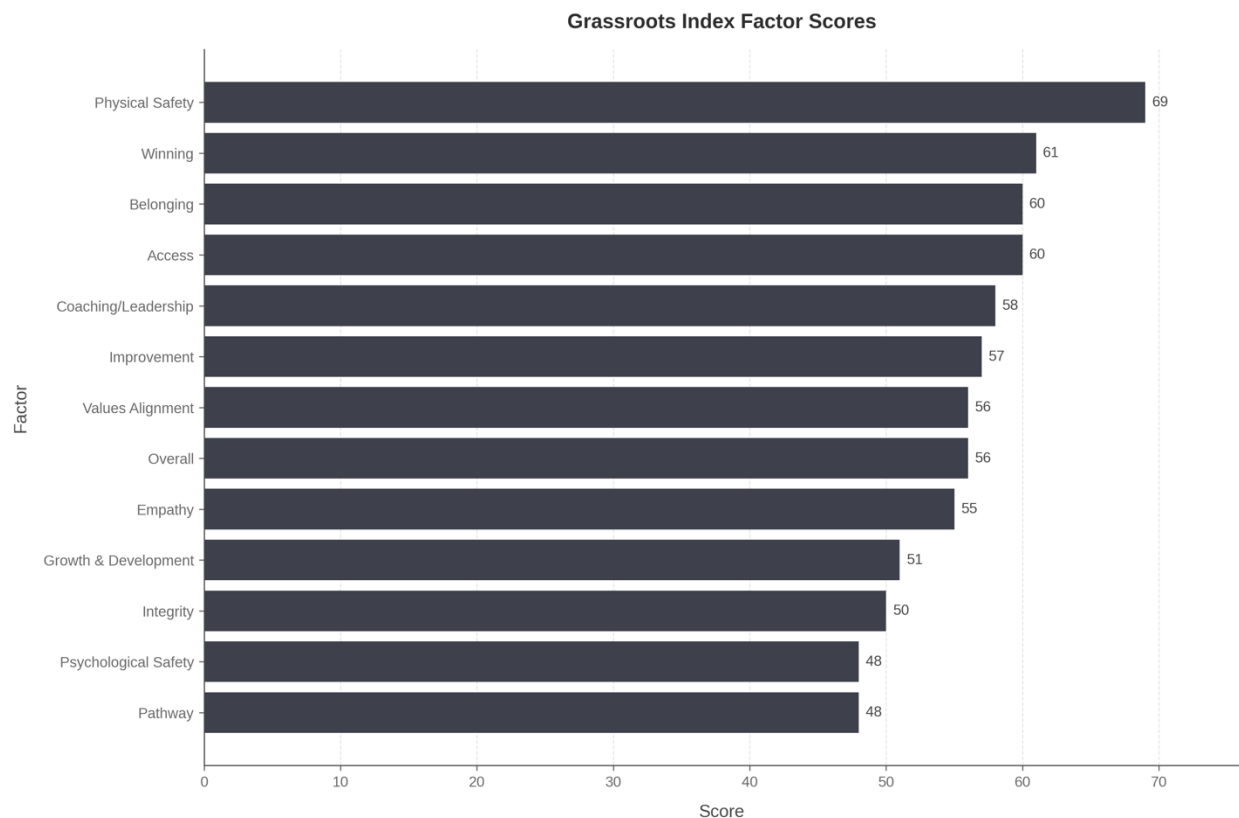
Figure L: Grassroot Index Factor Scores. This horizontal bar chart displays the scores for the 13 culture factors measured in the Grassroots Index, ranked from highest to lowest. Physical Safety received the highest score (69), while Pathway and Psychological Safety tied for the lowest scores (48 each). The overall culture score was 56, which reflects the aggregate score across all

12 culture factors and their 36 associated questions. The chart illustrates the significant variations in perception across different cultural dimensions, with a 21-point gap between the highest and lowest scoring factors. Notably, several factors fall below the average score of 56, highlighting particular areas of concern, including Psychological Safety, Pathway, Integrity and Growth & Development, that may require targeted improvement initiatives.

The lowest aggregate culture factor scores were **pathway** and **psychological safety**, both scoring 48% compared to the overall culture score of 56%. Among the three **pathway-related** questions in the Index, the statement "Selection criteria is clearly communicated" scored the lowest of all culture questions, at 41%. Similarly, among the three **psychological safety-related** questions, the statement, "Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences" scored the lowest, at 44%.

The **second-lowest** aggregate culture factor score was **integrity**, which scored 50%, slightly above **pathway** and **psychological safety**, but still below the overall culture score of 56%. Among the three integrity-related questions in the Index, the statement "People are honest and sincere" received the lowest score at 48%. Finally, the **third-lowest** aggregate culture factor score overall was **growth and development**, which scored a 51%, remaining below the overall culture score of 56%. Among the three **growth and development-related** questions in the Index, the statement "Future leaders are actively nurtured and developed" scored the lowest, at 49%.

Regarding correlations, the lowest outcome overall was **prevention**, it scored 56%. It showed the highest-positive correlation (r = 0.71) with the culture factor **empathy**. In contrast, the outcome **well-being** scored a 62% overall and had strong-positive relationships (r = 0.75 - 0.76) with **integrity**, **empathy**, and **belonging** indicating the importance of focusing efforts on improving these culture factors to enhance well-being in hockey.

4. Risk Factor Framework

When the culture scores from the HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index are considered, it provides some clear metrics about Participants' well-being and the way they are experiencing culture in the different parts of the hockey ecosystem in which they operate. Given that the goal of the SEA is to understand the risk factors contributing to maltreatment, a need was identified to consider the Index responses through the lens of maltreatment risk. To do this, the SEA Team looked at the literature in this area to understand what the systemic risk factors are impacting the hockey ecosystem. This allows the SEA to look at the data collected from the Index and interview process through the lens of maltreatment risk.

While there is no single, universal risk factor framework for maltreatment in sport, research has identified several key risk factors and categories that contribute to the occurrence of maltreatment in athletic environments. These risk factors can be broadly categorized into individual, relational, and systemic factors.

Risk factors for maltreatment in sport can be categorized into four interconnected areas: individual factors relating to personal characteristics and vulnerabilities; relational factors involving dynamics between athletes and others in the sport environment; systemic factors encompassing broader sport culture and organizational structures; and sport-specific factors related to the nature of competition, training environments, and specific sport requirements.

These risk factors create a complex web of potential vulnerabilities that must be understood and addressed through comprehensive prevention strategies and protective measures. While these risk factors provide a framework for understanding potential

vulnerabilities, it's important to note that the presence of risk factors does not concretely lead to maltreatment.

However, better defining and identifying the prevalence risk factors within a sports environment can help align policy and programs to more effectively mitigate them and potentially reduce the opportunity for maltreatment to occur.

4.1 Development and Usage

As noted throughout this Report, the SEA's aim is to identify systemic issues that influence maltreatment, and in turn, recommend actions that enhance safety and well-being in hockey.

While Innerlogic's CVF Index effectively measures organizational culture and health, these metrics do not directly align with maltreatment risk factors. Although strong organizational health supports performance and satisfaction, identifying specific risk areas is crucial for developing targeted maltreatment prevention strategies.

The SEA Team explored an innovative approach to leverage Innerlogic's CVF Index data. While Innerlogic's framework typically measures an organizational cultural health through survey questions, the SEA Team theorized these same questions could help identify potential risk areas. For example, if the Index responses show weak or lower scores in a particular aspect of cultural health, these might indicate where risks of maltreatment are more likely to occur.

To apply this concept, the SEA Team matched Innerlogic's CVF survey questions with a framework of risk areas related to maltreatment (or risk factors) based on shared themes and analyzed the scores. The result of this work is a question matching tool, which is attached at **Appendix G**. For the purpose of the SEA, the primary focus was on

developing risk factors within the bounds of system and cultural areas. The maltreatment risk factors definitions were informed by previous Sport Environment Assessments and research into the concept of maltreatment risk factors in other fields outside of sport. This framework to is referred to as the "Risk Factor Framework." The sources relied upon in the development of the Risk Factor Framework are attached at **Appendix H**.

As the Innerlogic Index data is measured against the Risk Factor Framework, the concept is that **lower scores per risk factor** may indicate more risk in that area that needs attention. While this approach is exploratory and will require further testing, it offers a practical way to spot potential risks using available data, while building toward more sophisticated risk assessment methods in the future.

In addition, the Risk Factor Framework was used to better categorize and understand open text questions collected through the Innerlogic Index. The Risk Factor Framework was also used to categorize and understand the SEA Participant interview data.

Figure M: 7 Risk Factors identified in the Risk Factor Framework.

4.2 Recommendations for Future Development

The SEA Team acknowledges that the development of and application of the Risk Factor Framework is an exploration, not a formal test. More rigorous testing and validation of the framework are needed. For the Risk Factor Framework to become a useful tool for sport organizations to assess the areas in which their sport or organization may be more vulnerable or at risk for maltreatment, further work should be done to test, strengthen and adapt it. Future work should focus on strengthening the framework's predictive capabilities and practical application. To advance this work, we recommend the following steps:

1. Test how well the Risk Factor Framework predicts incident rates by studying historical reporting and cultural survey results;

2. Improve how survey questions connect to risk factors by working with experts and analyzing patterns in the data;

3. Set clear risk level guidelines by gathering data from multiple sports organizations;

4. Create user-friendly guides and training to help organizations use and engagement the Risk Factor Framework;

5. Regularly update the Risk Factor Framework based on new research and feedback from practical use;

6. Work with researchers to study how effective the Risk Factor Framework is at identifying and preventing risks over time;

7. Include other types of information beyond cultural surveys to build a more complete risk picture;

8. Consider adapting the Risk Factor Framework for the unique cultures and organizational structures of different sports.

This progression from exploratory model to validated tool requires sustained investment and collaboration across the hockey community. Each recommendation builds upon the Risk Factor Framework's current foundation while acknowledging the need for scientific validation and practical refinement. In the future, a single tool that assesses both cultural health and risk factors together could be a useful and efficient tool for policy makers.

4.3 Interpretation of SEA Data Through the Risk Factor Framework

As set out in the section above, the Risk Factor Framework was developed to identify cultural and organizational elements that may increase maltreatment risk. By mapping Innerlogic's CVF Index questions to risk factors based on shared themes, the Risk Factor Framework offers a novel approach to understanding potential vulnerabilities in hockey culture.

The Index data analysis reveals varying risk scores across the HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index, with lower scores indicating higher risk. For example, low scores in the category "Systemic Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting" suggest weakened accountability systems and potential barriers to addressing maltreatment. This interpretation is strengthened by consistent themes emerging from Index open text responses and SEA interviews.

While the Risk Factor Framework requires further validation through research, it provides a structured foundation for understanding and mitigating risk in sport cultures. The alignment between quantitative survey data and qualitative feedback suggests the framework reasonably captures key risk areas within different parts of the hockey ecosystem. In Figure N, below, the cumulative mean score for each risk factor is charted against the cumulative mean score for all risk factors. The concept being proposed for this element of the SEA, <u>is that the lower the mean score, the higher the risk or opportunity for maltreatment.</u>

Risk Factors Mean Scores
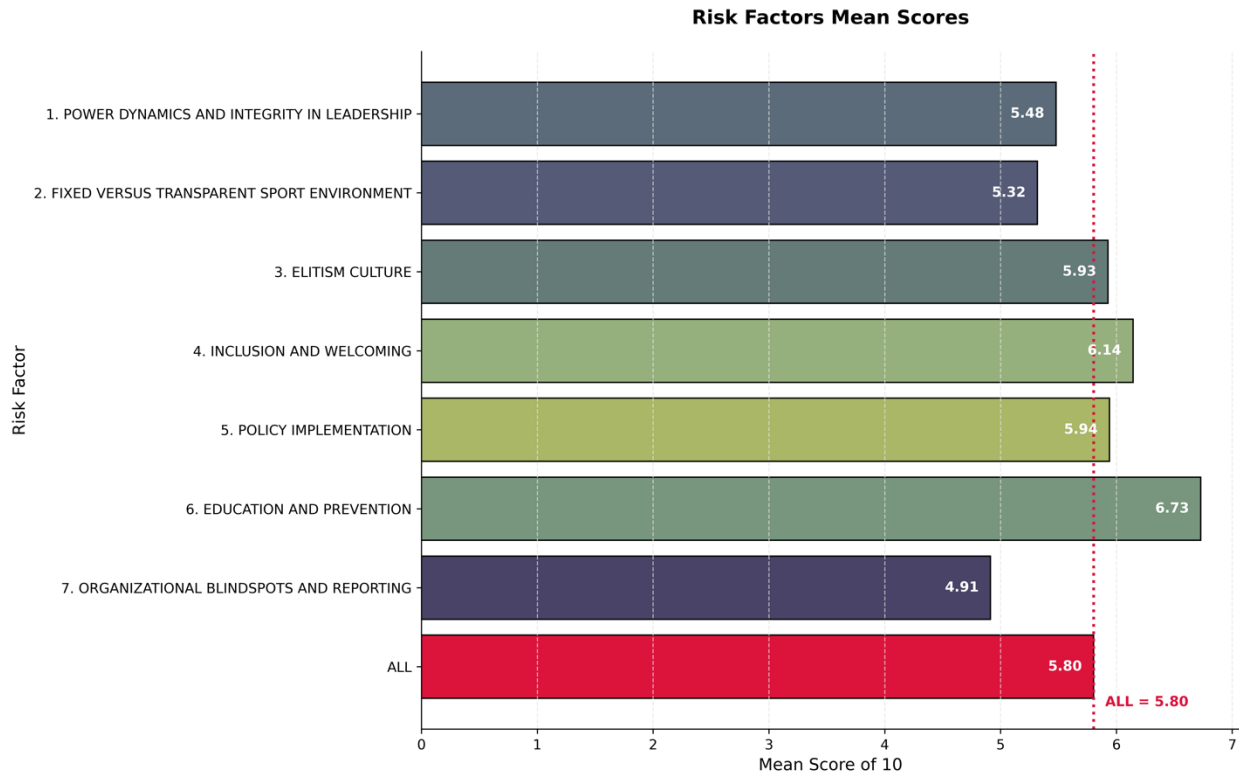
Figure N: Mean scores out of 10 of the seven organizational risk factors. The factors include Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership (5.48), Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment (5.32), Elitism Culture (5.93), Inclusion and Welcoming (6.14), Policy Implementation (5.94), Education and Prevention (6.73) and Organizational Blind Spots and Reporting (4.91). Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk, and lower scores indicating higher possible risk.

If we break out responses from the HC Index, Members Index and Grassroots Index, and compare scores across all risk factors, there is further variation which indicates that the three groups of Index Participants experienced or perceived risks differently. Figure O, below, illustrates that the Grassroots Index scores lower than the HC Index or the Members Index across all the risk factors, except Education and Prevention. This figure indicates a disconnect between the three groups and that people in these three groups are viewing their experiences and hockey culture differently.

Risk Score Comparison
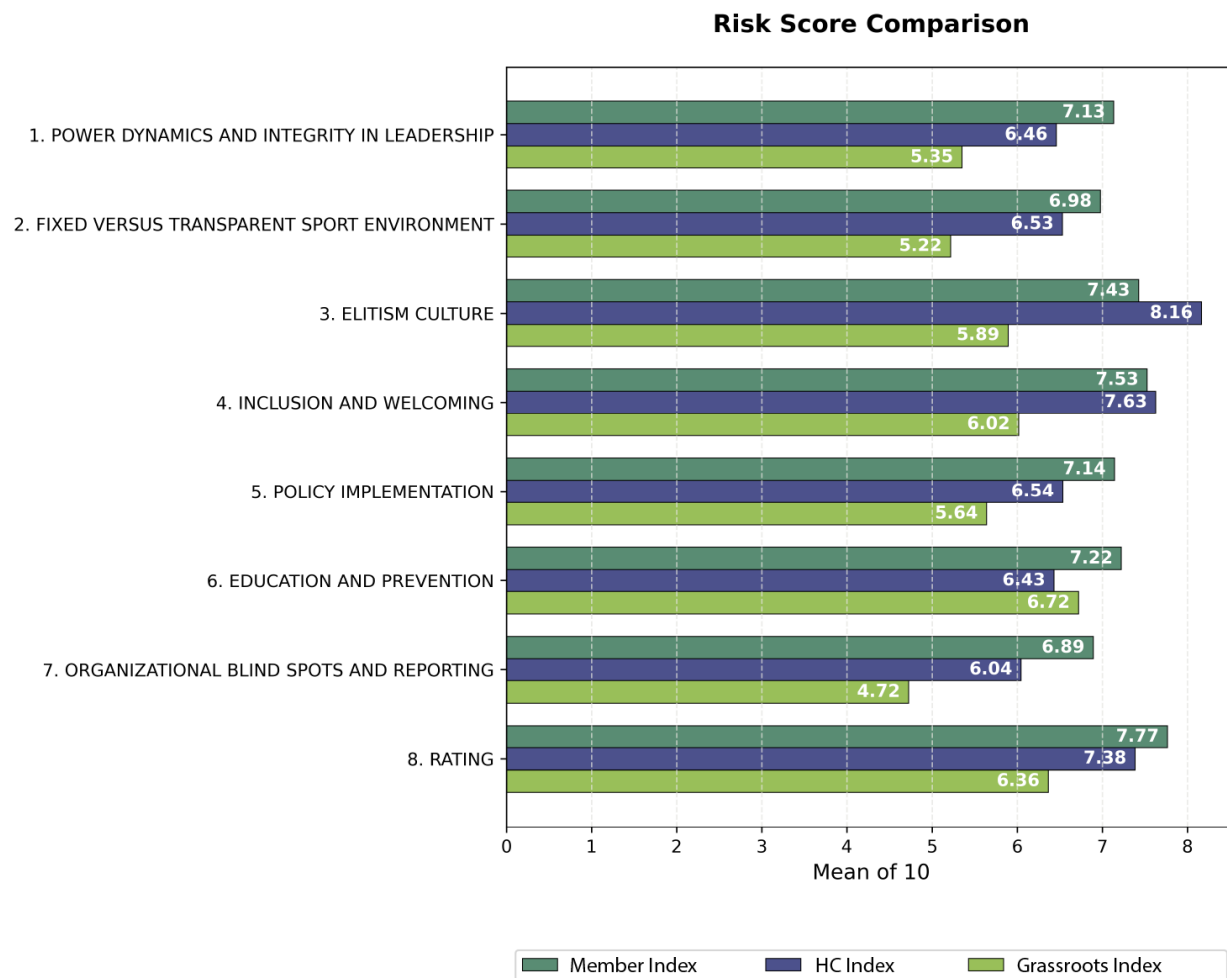
Figure O: Horizontal bar chart comparing mean risk factor score out of 10 across HC Index, Member Index and Grassroots Index responses. The chart displays average scores for each group, with HC Index showing the highest score (6.8), followed by Member Index (6.4) and Grassroots Index showing the lowest score (5.6). Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk, and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The differences suggest that HC Index perceives the least risk, while Grassroots Index perceive the most risk.

This trend is consistent within the roles of Index Participants, where the overall trend is downward (less positive) from Hockey Canada Board and leadership Participants to Members to lowest for those in grassroots, including players.

We can also see that the rank (low to high) of the risk factor scores for HC Index, Members Index, and Grassroots Index Participants is not the same. This variety indicates

risks can be perceived differently across the three groups and it is possible that HC Index and the Members Index Participants are missing the risks or issues that Grassroots Index Participants see as problematic. This misalignment across leadership, member organizations, and user, in any sector, can cause policy development problems and friction. This is illustrated in Figure P below:

HC Index	Members Index	Grassroots Index
7. Organizational Blind Spots and Reporting	7. Organizational Blind Spots and Reporting	7. Organizational Blind Spots and Reporting
2. Fixed Versus Transparent Sport Environment	6. Education and Prevention	2. Fixed Versus Transparent Sport Environment
1. Power Dynamics and Integrity In Leadership	1. Power Dynamics and Integrity In Leadership	1. Power Dynamics and Integrity In Leadership
5. Policy Implementation	2. Fixed Versus Transparent Sport Environment	5. Policy Implementation
6. Education and Prevention	5. Policy Implementation	3. Elitism Culture
3. Elitism Culture	4. Inclusion and Welcoming	4. Inclusion and Welcoming
4. Inclusion and Welcoming	3. Elitism Culture	6. Education and Prevention

Figure P: Ranking of Risk Factors by Organizational Level within Hockey Canada. The figure displays the prioritization of seven key risk factors as perceived by three distinct groups: HC Index, Members Index, and Grassroots Index. The rankings reveal notable differences in risk perception across organizational levels, with Organizational Blind Spots and Reporting consistently ranked as the top concern across all groups. The variation in rankings for other risk factors, such as Education and Prevention and Fixed Versus Transparent Sport Environment, suggests different priorities and perspectives at each organizational level.

4.3.1   Identifying Zero Scores

Contributing to some of the more critical average scores, many Index Participants submitted a zero (0) score in response to different Index questions. Zero scores are important to track because they can provide a record of hotspots or identify Participants who have experienced serious issues or have become unhappy. By identifying these areas with zero scores, it's possible to see specific areas of concern noted by Participants as follows:

Distribution of responses by Percentage of Zero Scores:
- 82.8% of responses had no zero scores.
- 8.2% gave one zero score,
- 3.1% gave two
- 2.6% gave three.

Risk Factors by Percentage of Zero Scores:
- Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership: 10.3%
- Fixed Versus Transparent Sport Environment: 8.0%
- Elitism Culture: 6.5%
- Inclusion and Welcoming: 6.4%
- Policy Implementation: 4.5%
- Education and Prevention: 3.2%
- Organizational Blind spots and Reporting: 2.8%

Index Question by Percentage (top 5) of Zero Scores:
- Honesty and Sincerity: 10.3%
- Mutual Respect: 8.0%
- Leadership by Example: 6.5%
- Leadership Development: 6.4%
- Leadership Guidance: 4.5%

Demographics of Zero Score responses:
- Primary Role: 17.0% of parents/guardians of children under 14 gave zero scores.
- Secondary Role: 18.6% of Participants identified as Players gave zero scores.
- Branch Geography: 16.1% of respondents from the Ontario Hockey Federation gave zero scores.
- Experience: 22.0% of responses with 8-10 years of experience gave zero scores.

5. Participant Responses through the Risk Factor Framework

The Participant responses below have been considered using the Risk Factor Framework and includes data from the HC Index, the Members Index, the Grassroots Index, Interview responses, the Validation Workshop feedback and Guidance Group feedback.

Each section below will focus on one risk factor, identifying the themes that run through the Index data and direct Participant feedback. Each risk factor is described on a bar graph which shows the mean (average) scores given to each of the risk factor's Index

question reference themes, ordered from lowest to highest, and a red bar representing the combined mean (average) score of all themes. <u>Risk factors which scored lowest are considered to have a higher risk of contributing to maltreatment.</u> Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10. For the purposes of the SEA, responses are considered to have scored "low" if Participants gave them a score of between 0 and 3. The below sections will note implications of the low scores, and notable demographic or categorical observations related to each risk factor.

Index Question Reference Themes: In each section, the reference names (thematically named) of the Innerlogic Index questions, which were assigned to the risk factor by the SEA Team, are provided in red.

Additionally, each section will include analysis of both open text survey question responses and interview question responses from the perspectives of the Participants and the SEA Team's interpretation of the implications. The Assessor's observations and recommendations in each section are derived from a combination of the Document Review and Participant responses related to each risk factor.

5.1 Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership

5.1.1   Risk Factor Description

In sport environments, coaches and other authority figures can be (or are viewed as) gatekeepers to athletic success, due to their expertise, experience, access to resources and decision-making authority. This means power and authority often becomes concentrated in the hands of a few key individuals, particularly organizational leadership, coaches, or high-ranking officials. This dynamic creates situations where athletes and caregivers believe they are dependent on these authority figures for access to success and makes people vulnerable to potential abuses of power. In addition, it's

common for those in leadership and decision-making roles to have multiple other interests and roles (including caregivers of athletes). While this is a reality in smaller sports organizations with fewer volunteers available, it can result in individuals who may be in a position of conflict of interest when they are making decisions that impact other parties.

Index Questions Reference Themes: Honesty and Sincerity; Leadership Development; Mutual Respect; Leadership by Example; Leadership Guidance; Clear Role Definition; Goal Accountability; High Standards; and Ethical Decision-Making.

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- The organization may not recognize how having caregivers or individuals with multiple interests in leadership positions could create conflicts of interest that compromise athlete welfare and decision-making;

- There could be insufficient awareness of how concentrating power among a small group of key figures (coaches, officials, board members) makes athletes overly dependent on these individuals for their quality of experience, success and advancement;

- The organization might lack proper checks and balances to prevent authority figures from leveraging their influence over athletes' careers in potentially exploitative ways;

- There may be inadequate recognition of how athletes' fear of jeopardizing their sporting opportunities could make them hesitant to challenge or report concerning behaviour by those in power;

- The organization could be overlooking how dual roles (e.g., a parent who is also a board member or coach) might create favouritism or pressure on athletes and blur professional boundaries.

5.1.2   Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership

1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP

Sub-Factor	Mean out of 10
Ethical Decision-Making	7.61
High Standards	7.44
Goal Accountability	6.09
Clear Role Definition	5.96
Leadership Guidance	5.91
Leadership by Example	5.87
Mutual Respect	5.43
Honesty and Sincerity	4.88
Leadership Development	4.87
ALL	5.48
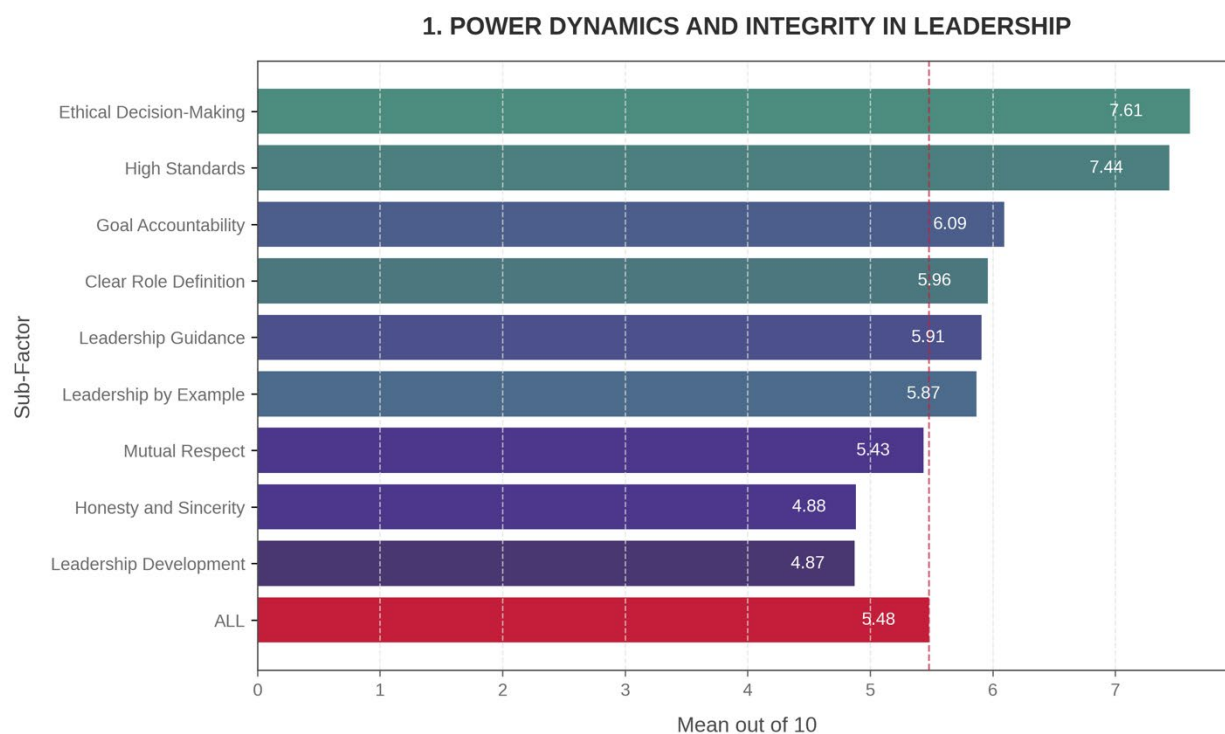
Figure Q: Risk Factor Score: 5.48 of 10   Nearly 1 in 4 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership. The factors include Leadership Development (4.87), Honesty and Sincerity (4.88), Mutual Respect (5.43), Leadership by Example (5.87), Leadership Guidance (5.91), Clear Role Definition (5.96), Goal Accountability (6.09), High Standards (7.44), and Ethical Decision-Making (7.61). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 5.48. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in formal organizational aspects (Ethical Decision-Making, High Standards) but lower scores in interpersonal leadership elements (Leadership Development, Honesty and Sincerity).

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Coach perspectives: A significant proportion (19%) of coaches provided low scores in this area, suggesting those directly engaged in player development perceive substantial challenges related to leadership practices. This indicates potential misalignment between leadership approaches and the needs of those working directly with players.

- Early-career employee perspectives (2-4 years): Employees with moderate tenure demonstrated particular concern regarding role definition clarity. This suggests organizational structures may not adequately delineate responsibilities, potentially creating environments of uncertainty.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership,* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Hierarchical Power**

- **Perception**: Many Participants indicated they felt intimidated and described how a top-heavy hierarchy made it nearly impossible to challenge or question decisions. They indicated they felt powerless and increasingly skeptical about the fairness of the system.

- **Implication**: Participants indicated that when they feel they are not welcome into the decision-making process or that they will not be heard, then they are less likely to ask questions, to get involved and to identify behaviour inconsistent with Codes of Conduct, or to report or challenge maltreatment.

2. **Conflicts of Interest and Favoritism in Leadership**

- **Perception**: Many Participants noted that personal relationships and preferential treatment often undermined merit-based decisions. This was reported to be connected to instances of financial means or instances where an individual sponsors a team or MHA; they can be seen to be given special treatment.

- **Implication**: Conflicts of interest compromise athlete welfare and decision-making and create an environment in which opportunities are perceived to be based on personal or financial relationships rather than merit.

3. **Exclusionary or Opaque Decision-making**

- **Perception:** Participants pointed out that not all voices—be it caregivers, players, or minority groups—are adequately represented in decision-making processes. Participants also noted that hockey organizations and team environments often do not accommodate feedback or evolving needs. Participants also noted that decisions are often made behind closed doors and without enough active updates to those affected by those decisions.

- **Implication:** When hockey participants feel excluded, it not only affects perceptions of fairness but also undermines the legitimacy of decisions that are being made ethically.

5.1.3   Observations

Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants. It was observed in at least 25 of 45 (56%) interviews. The most significant issues discussed by interview Participants were concerns about conflict of interest (sometimes related to financial contributions) and exclusionary and hierarchical decision-making. Open communication about decisions

emerged as an interest in 17 out of 45 (38%) Interviews. Participants stressed the importance of transparent dialogue at all levels of hockey—from communicating team selection criteria to clearly outlining expectations for both players and caregivers.

Participants shared that a perception of, or real, concentration of power in hockey environments creates pronounced distance between those with decision-making authority and everyone else. Participants described a culture where people feel unable to question or challenge those in positions of power. This reluctance to speak up extended beyond simple disagreements, to include raising legitimate concerns, suggesting improvements or reporting problems. Participants explained this resulted in environments which limited open dialogue or the ability to share potentially valuable feedback. This ultimately reinforces existing power imbalances, impedes organizational improvement and may limit maltreatment from being prevented or reported.

One interview Participant described the impact of this kind of leadership in a team environment:

> *When [the coach] asked for feedback or, or something, like, you could hear a pin drop because everyone was scared to answer, or everyone was scared to express their opinion on whatever the topic may be... so it would just really be silence.*

The result of this dynamic is that even when people have ideas or concerns, they may not raise them, in fear they will be excluded, be seen as problematic or even retaliated against.

Another issue associated with this risk factor is the quality of decision-making when leadership positions are held predominantly by people with possible conflicts of interest. This includes where people have made financial contributions or are wearing other hats (such as caregivers of athletes). Participants reported that when leaders are put in the

position to prioritize personal interests over team benefits, it often leads to poor and inequitable decisions for others. As one Participant commented this can lead to unfair selection decisions:

> *Probably my biggest... contention is when we're select[ing] hockey players for teams during tryouts and whatnot, and how we are protecting the volunteers... some volunteers' kids will make that team, and they probably have no business making that team.*

The reliance on volunteer leadership, predominantly caregivers, creates a dual challenge: it can compromise leadership quality and simultaneously introduce potential conflicts of interest when volunteers must balance personal interests with organizational responsibilities.

While Participants recognized the substantial resource constraints in grassroots hockey, given the important role of volunteers, they also emphasized the need for leaders to be accountable and understand their role and impact on others. The risk for possible conflicts of interest was articulated by an interview Participant:

> *People's motivations for being involved in hockey are largely driven by motives that have nothing to do with wanting to benefit kids in general, but their kids specifically. I know that's a hell of a blanket statement to make, but I think it's an important context [for everyone] to understand.*

Given the high level of dedication, time and energy being invested by volunteers, across the hockey ecosystem, which is essential to hockey's existence, it makes sense that people and organizations are also provided with the reciprocal guidance, support and resources to do the work and understand the responsibility to make decisions in an equitable manner. This should include greater support for MHAs, so they have the resources they need to support their volunteers, instead of asking each to start from scratch to satisfy the latest requirements. While some MHAs have effective structures,

policy and governance practices in place, depending on the size, history and capacity of each MHA, it can be very difficult and financially constraining to individually invest in the work necessary to ensure consistent standards across all organizations. It makes sense then to provide MHAs with the basic support, materials and training to ensure agreed upon governance standards are being met.

In recent years, Hockey Canada has gone through significant reflection, learning and changes, in relation to their own leadership and governance, in large part due its shortcomings addressed in the 2022 Cromwell Review and the CHPC 2024 Safe Sport Report. Given the experiences and concerns expressed by Participants from every level of hockey during the SEA, it's time to shift the focus to the grassroots space to provide the resources and supports necessary to address these leadership and governance challenges impacting people every level of hockey.

5.1.4   Recommendations

The main issues raised in connection with the maltreatment risk factor *Power Dynamics and Integrity in Leadership* were related the way hockey organizations make decisions and communicate them, concerns about conflict of interest for those with decision-making authority and the resulting sense of absolute power in authority figures. Participants talked about capacity challenges for MHAs and how they largely rely on thousands of volunteer hours each year for governance, decision-making and programming in every organization. For this reason, Participants indicated support and resources would be required for Regions and MHAs to implement any new changes.

Participants indicated it would help to have mechanisms for people to give feedback, raise concerns and ask questions directly to Regions and MHAs. They talked about how more diverse representation in Boards and leadership roles would counterbalance

concentrated power. Participants also strongly advocated for more public decision-making processes – especially for pathway and selection criteria for how teams are selected, to ensure that choices were based on merit, which would reduce the reliance on personal relationships or favoritism. This would also limit the high degree of unchecked hierarchical power or perceived power of only those few in decision-making roles.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, it is recommended:

Recommendation 1A):

Hockey Canada should post the 2022 Cromwell Review recommendations on its website, together with a clear outline of how the recommendations were implemented, so the hockey community can transparently understand the changes that have been made. Hockey Canada should consider developing a more consistent and transparent method to communicate on its website the follow-up process on any reports, reviews and initiatives undertaken, so the hockey community understands how and whether valuable plans and programs such as the Action Plan or the EDI Path Forward are impacting the hockey ecosystem. While it is significant that these initiatives have been undertaken, currently it is not clear to the public how they have been acted upon or whether they have made any changes.

Recommendation 1B):

Hockey Canada should undertake a governance review of the hockey ecosystem to understand and identify how various stakeholders integrate and work together with each other. The review should aim to highlight the different areas of authority, where there is overlap and possible areas of collaboration to ensure that there is clarity in roles between Hockey Canada, Members and others and propose solutions. Hockey Canada

should publish the review and socialize it with stakeholders to move toward a standardized governance approach for the entire ecosystem and resolve any areas in which governance conflict or gaps exist.

Recommendation 1C):

Hockey Canada should establish a Healthy Hockey Culture Working Group jointly with Members and grassroots representatives from the hockey ecosystem to work together to understand and integrate the SEA recommendations and to identify and implement solutions. To do this, the Healthy Hockey Culture Working Group should have following objectives:

- Prioritize, track and encourage implementation of the SEA recommendations across all parts of the hockey ecosystem;

- Create a toolkit to support Regions and MHAs (and other relevant partner organizations) to strive for greater transparency. The Healthy Hockey Culture Working Group should decide which tools and training for good governance expectations and conflict of interest will be recommended or required for organizations. The toolkit will include resources and expectations for the Regions and MHAs on governance training and should be accessible on every Members' website. It is recommended that Members make this mandatory for all Regions and MHAs to support them to carry out their duties transparently and effectively for the benefit of all hockey participants. A starting point to inform the

Governance Working Group's resources for governance in sport include: CCES Governance Essentials training[26] and the COC-NSO Governance Series.[27]

MHAs and Regions Boards of Directors should strive for greater transparency through completing mandatory training on both good governance and conflict of interest and incorporate any material set out in the Hockey Canada and Members Governance Working Group toolkit. The completion of this good governance training is one factor that will be gauged in the annual well-being scorecard (see 2C below).

Recommendation 1D):

MHAs and Regions should assess their systems for communication with hockey participants and fill any gaps to strengthen transparency and inclusive access to information. In particular, SEA responses indicated that timely and clear communication of the MHA teams' selection criteria, the rationale and policy for team selection decisions and Codes of Conduct should be communicated in advance of team selections to all hockey participants in an easy to access platform.

5.2 Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment

5.2.1   Risk Factor Description

In sports environments, long-standing traditions and practices can normalize behaviours that can be harmful to athletes. These deep-rooted customs often resist change and create circumstances where maltreatment can be accepted without question. An example of this is the way violence is often accepted, and even celebrated, in hockey

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[26]Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport: Governance Essentials. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[27]Canadian Sport Governance Code-NSO Sharing Centre. 2023. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

culture. The pressure to conform to these traditional approaches can override concerns about athlete welfare. The flip side of this are sports environments that promote and create open communication with players and caregivers, have transparent decision-making and encourage accessible information sharing. This creates an environment where people feel safe to speak up, clear channels for dialogue exist, and organizational processes are visible and understandable for all stakeholders. These environments allow for positive change and limit the possibility of maltreatment occurring unquestioned.

Index Questions Reference Themes: Clear Selection Criteria; Clear Development Pathway; Emotional Openness; Safe Problem Discussion; Embedded High Standards; Care Emphasis; Holistic Support; Emotional Support; Speaking Up Encouraged; Long-term Development Focus; Excellence Development Path; Communication Transparency; Learning from Mistakes; Open Dialogue; Priority Stakeholder Responsiveness; Understanding Encouraged; Stakeholder Inclusion

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- An organization may not recognize how longstanding traditional, social practices could be normalizing harmful behaviours or creating unsafe training environments for athletes;

- There could be insufficient examination of how deeply embedded coaching methods or team culture might perpetuate problematic practices under the guise of "that's how it's always been done";

- An organization might lack awareness of how pressure to conform to traditional approaches could be silencing concerns about athlete welfare or discouraging questioning of potentially harmful practices;

- There may be inadequate recognition of how cultural resistance to change within the sport could be maintaining outdated or unsafe training methods despite evidence of their negative impact;

- An organization could be overlooking how the acceptance of aggressive or intense coaching styles (or other roles with power) as "normal" might be masking behaviours that could be considered abusive or harmful in other contexts;

5.2.2 Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment

2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT

Sub-Factor	Mean out of 10
Understanding Encouraged	7.30
Stakeholder Responsiveness	7.06
Stakeholder Inclusion	6.85
Open Dialogue Priority	6.69
Communication Transparency	6.09
Learning from Mistakes	5.87
Emotional Support	5.85
Holistic Support	5.69
Care Emphasis	5.67
Embedded High Standards	5.65
Excellence Development Path	5.34
Safe Problem Discussion	5.31
Long-term Development Focus	5.29
Speaking Up Encouraged	5.07
Emotional Openness	4.93
Clear Development Pathway	4.91
Clear Selection Criteria	4.10
ALL	5.32

Figure R: Risk Factor Score: 5.32 of 10   Nearly 1 in 4 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment. The factors include Clear Selection Criteria (4.10), Clear Development

Pathway (4.91), Emotional Openness (4.93), Speaking Up Encouraged (5.07), Long-term Development Focus (5.29), Safe Problem Discussion (5.31), Excellence Development Path (5.34), Embedded High Standards (5.65), Care Emphasis (5.67), Holistic Support (5.69), Emotional Support (5.85), Learning from Mistakes (5.87), Communication Transparency (6.09), Open Dialogue Priority (6.69), Stakeholder Inclusion (6.85), Stakeholder Responsiveness (7.06), and Understanding Encouraged (7.30). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 5.32. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in stakeholder engagement and understanding (Understanding Encouraged, Stakeholder Responsiveness, Stakeholder Inclusion) but lower scores in selection and development clarity (Clear Selection Criteria, Clear Development Pathway).

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Officials' perspectives: Officials consistently provided lower scores in this domain, potentially indicating systemic rigidity or insufficient transparency in communication and problem solving.

- Experience: Participants with 11-19 years of experience gave lower scores, suggesting a longitudinal perspective enables greater recognition of potential improvements. Their responses may reflect comparisons between current and historical practices.

- Geographic distinction: There was a pronounced divide between urban and rural responses in this area which highlights contextual influence on expectations and experiences.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Normalized Harmful Behaviours in Hockey Culture**

- **Perception:** Many Participants reported that instances of players who used slurs and racially motivated comments were common occurrences, with there were multiple accounts of verbal abuse being dismissed as "just part of hockey."

- **Implication:** Some long-standing traditions and practices in hockey culture normalize aggressive and inappropriate behaviours, particularly around violence, discrimination and abuse, creating a toxic environment.

2. **Resistance to Change in Hockey Culture**

- **Perception:** Many Participants repeatedly expressed frustration with what they called "political relationships" and "old school mentalities," noting that this could prevent progress and making healthy changes.

- **Implication:** When there is a strong pressure to conform to tradition, concerns about athlete welfare and questioning of potentially harmful practices are discouraged under the guise of "that's how it's always been done."

5.2.3   Observations

Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants. Concerns in this risk factor came up frequently and were raised by Participants in at least 39 of 45 (87%) interviews. Normalized harmful behaviour, including aggression and bullying was the most prevalent issue, which was observed in 27 of 45 (60%) interviews, and a concern about traditional thinking in at least 15 of 45 (33%) interviews.

Participants noted, however, that younger generations are showing progress and less "old-school thinking." The sense that younger hockey participants are ready and keen to adopt more progressive and inclusive mind-sets was also expressed by members of the

Guidance Group. This points to an opportunity to reflect on the aspects of hockey culture that are no longer working for everyone and hockey participants at all levels to be open to change.

Two elite players interview Participants, spoke about the value of empowering athletes to be positive leaders and role models as they mature, so they can hold their peers accountable for respectful norms and standards, which can improve the environment for a whole team. One interview Participant related that the WHL has done successful work implementing team charters as a process to break down traditional power and hierarchy notions, that only a coach has authority, to encourage sharing power and responsibility and team members to hold each other accountable for positive and respectful expectations of conduct.

Participants suggested that proactive communication would help create opportunities for open dialogue before issues arise. For Participants, this extended to everything from sharing team selection criteria to outlining expectations and rule of conduct for both players and caregivers. Participants explained that often coaches were the key communicators (and could be very effective at this), but if they did not happen to have this skill set, and others in the hockey environment did not fill the gap, it could lead to conflict, lack of transparency, and even harmful behaviour. One Participant reflected on the importance of proactive communication to set expectations with players and said:

> That [absence of information] doesn't cut it with these young players today. You have to communicate with them and if you don't, then you'll lose them fast.

One interview Participant, who is an elite player, talked about the positive impact of playing on a team with psychological safety and a coaching style that encourages players to ask questions and make mistakes. This Participant reflected that respectful

communication with coaches and "being able to ask questions" and "being able to make mistakes" has led to well-being in a high-performance environment.

Unfortunately, Participants also shared experiences in which harmful behaviours continued to be normalized and widely accepted in hockey, with harmful and aggressive behaviour often being not only tolerated but encouraged by the overall culture. Participants reported experiences in which coaches, players, and caregivers enabled excessive aggression and violence to happen during games, and discrimination, and derogatory name-calling are frequently celebrated. One Participant recalled:

> *I played alongside a guy for many years who was pretty well known for his temper and for, you know, he'd spend a lot of time in the penalty boxes and this and that. And, like, I remember he would get into shouting matches with parents [it was] just, just ridiculous, like embarrassing behaviour.*

In the executive summary of her paper, "*The evolution of elite hockey culture in Canada: A scoping literature review,*" Dr. Fowler wrote about the legacy of traditional hockey culture:

> *… the fabric of ice hockey, woven from threads of colonization, nationalism, whiteness, hegemonic masculinity and violence resulting in a systemic structure that has erased Black and Indigenous roots and maintained a privileged status quo that includes an unhealthy culture and unhealthy representations of masculinity. The thread of hockey masculinity considers how hegemonic masculinity has created a culture of violence with limited potential for inclusion.*

Another important reference that exposes the culture of toxic masculinity in professional hockey, including the normalization of violence, abusive, misogynistic, racist and

homophobic behaviours, is "*Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, and Violence against Women.*"[28]

Another Participant described the impact of the harmful language and conversations that was still culturally accepted in locker rooms in their hockey environment:

> *… a lot of homophobic and transphobic comments and jokes are made and just sort of that on a team cultural level and, sort of, the conversations that are normalised in these settings really contributed to just me not feeling safe and accepted.*

One interview Participant recalled how physically harmful behaviour was still "expected" and shared an experience with a teenage player who saw "… coaches grabbing a hold of a teen and getting in their face and yelling at them." Afterward the teenage player said, "well, that's normal, isn't it?". Another interview Participant reflected on the hockey culture they would like to see, and the degree to which abusive on-ice behaviour still occurs:

> *I think maybe just around trying to have the culture be inclusive, there's still a lot of normalization of inappropriate words being used and normalized as long as you say them out on the ice… there's a culture in hockey where whatever you can do to get under your opponent's skin is a value-add… I do think there's a piece around ice hockey where… fighting's more normalized, getting under the other team's skin is more normalized and sometimes even valued by coaches and your teammates.*

According to Participants, this continues to occur despite Hockey Canada's sanctioning this kind of behaviour in its playing rules. Participants expressed a central goal for hockey is to ensure that everyone involved in the sport feels comfortable and physically

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[28]DeKeseredy, Walter S., Stu Cowan, Martin D. Schwartz, Heather Mallick, and Jack Todd. 2023. *Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, and Violence against Women.* University of Toronto Press. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

and psychologically safe. Participants indicated that issues related to physical and psychological safety are still ingrained in some hockey traditions, and they emphasized that leaders, including coaches and caregivers, must actively work together to foster a healthier environment and transform the culture.

There have been changes to minimize fighting in hockey in Canada: Hockey Canada has implemented strict rules for fighting, resulting in game suspensions and the QMJHL of the CHL has also imposed stricter rules to penalize fighting in the 2023-2024 season onwards. To date, these changes have not been adopted in the other CHL leagues, and the celebration of violence and fighting persists through its prominent display in the NHL. One Participant noted that, in Europe, fighting in hockey is not "celebrated," so it does not happen.

The SEA Guidance Group flagged a risk that the celebration of violence and fighting is an image that can negatively impact youth and normalize disrespectful behaviour and even deter many Canadian families from registering their child in hockey. The Guidance Group identified the role of Canadian media has in how this violence is portrayed as worthy of emulation by youth and children. SEA Participants expressed a concern that, despite the changes to the rules, there continues to be a "trickle down" in hockey culture where kids are influenced by what they see being celebrated. In addition, the persistence of fighting in CHL elite leagues exposes young athletes to unnecessary and preventable risks of injuries that may affect their hockey careers and their lives beyond hockey.

Given the social value of eliminating harmful behaviour in hockey and increasingly psychological safety, there is an opportunity here for Hockey Canada, and its partner stakeholders, to mobilize their influence and shift away from celebrating violence in the sport – with the goal to eventually eliminate violence from all parts of the game. One Participant reflected that when the issue is considered through the safety lens, it

becomes difficult to defend violence. While Participants acknowledged this kind of culture shift would require an understanding and effort from many diverse stakeholder groups, the time is now to push for this change throughout Canadian ice hockey.

Throughout the SEA, Participants described how fixed or traditional thinking in hockey, or a desire to do "what has always been done" often leads organizations to continue established, yet sometimes harmful practices. This was sometimes described by Participants as an "old boys club" mentality in both coaches and hockey organizations, which contributes to issues such as gender discrimination, acceptance of harmful coaching methods and resistance to Safe Sport practices. While this approach does not always lead to maltreatment, traditional thinking was seen by Participants as an underlying factor leading to problems including elitism, normalized harmful behaviour, lack of diversity in leadership, and even the celebration of violence. Moving forward there is a need for those in leadership roles to adopt inclusive, open and transparent leadership approaches and clearly communicate their commitment to this style of leadership.

One Participant reflected on the shift away from some of the harmful traditional practices toward a more respectful hockey culture:

> *I don't want to say that, you know, coaches 30, 40, 50 years ago were bad, but I think the tools that they had at their disposal, intimidation, you know, physical abuse, that sort of thing, bullying, that can't exist anymore. That's harassment and I think you still have an old vestige that, you know, their fall-back position always is all "we're just being soft on them" ... There's a lot of dads and moms that get into the system that are my age that kind of came up [in that environment] and more of an abusive and still look back and go, "well, that's what I was exposed to" ...I am very excited about the number of young coaches and, and new coaches that I run into that seem to have a better handle on it than the coaches that I had...*

5.2.4   Recommendations

In main issues raised in connection with the risk factor *Fixed versus Transparent Sport Environment* were related to the normalized traditional and harmful behaviours that continue in hockey culture, which cause people and organizations to be resistant to positive change.

This means that when people and organizations directly or indirectly resist change and allow harmful traditions to continue, it suggests, at best, that they accept the status quo and the negative impact on people that comes with it. At worst, it suggests people and organizations view maltreatment, not as a problem to solve, but as a tool for maintaining control. A result is that anyone who challenges harmful practices or raises concerns about maltreatment can be seen as a threat to the broader status quo and to authority figures who can implement repercussions. To truly change the power dynamics in leadership, there needs to be an awareness and willingness to do things differently, support and protection for those who speak out and clear accountability, at all levels, for enforcing appropriate standards.

At the player level, those who grew up and played in environments where there was normalized harmful behaviour and a "don't ask" mentality, can come to see these tools as an unavoidable, even necessary, component of their athletic journey, internalizing these dynamics as part of the rite of passage, rather than something to speak out against. To stop this cycle, we must be ready to acknowledge that some systems and practices need to change and support people and organizations to promote more open communication, transparent decision-making and safety for everyone to speak up.

In practice, this would mean hockey organizations at all levels should look for more opportunities to normalize feedback (including critical feedback) from stakeholders. This

could include employing tools to allow feedback and input being heard and applied to ensure every hockey organization has a positive culture and strong focus on player well-being. This kind of change would encourage greater transparency and a recognition that everyone involved has a responsibility to prevent maltreatment and needs to be a part of the solution.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, it is recommended:

Recommendation 2A):

Hockey Canada should develop a specific checklist tool to empower caregivers and players to understand a healthy Safe Sport team culture and what role everyone plays. The checklist should be provided to all Members, Regions and MHAs (and other relevant stakeholders organizations, such as school hockey associations) and will set out what caregivers and players can look for in a team environment to ensure it is a healthy Safe Sport culture aimed at player well-being. The checklist should include a link to clear information about the training and credentials required at every level for various youth-facing roles and for the role and expectations for caregivers and players. The checklist should form part of the information material provided when players register as a hockey participant across the country and will be a tool to empower caregivers to understand their role to prevent maltreatment.

Members and MHAs should use the checklist to ensure Safe Sport training expectations are being met and communicated to their respective communities.

Recommendation 2B):

Hockey Canada and Members should develop a standardized culture and well-being scorecard for MHAs to distribute annually to hockey participants, in the 3rd quarter of

each year. The scorecard would be developed with the help of technical subject-matter experts and be focused on the MHA overall, and not on individual coaches, volunteers, or staff. Individuals would participate anonymously, and the scorecard would include measures on the hockey participant's experience of a healthy hockey culture – including organizational transparency, such as publication of team selection criteria and completion of Board good governance training, availability of accessible lower-cost programs, as well as adherence to the Code of Conduct. Members should publish scorecard results annually on their websites and provide information about how they can support MHAs with resources to fill any gaps identified in the scorecard results.

Recommendation 2C):

Hockey Canada should invite partnership with national governing bodies from other countries and other stakeholders, to work toward a concerted effort to campaign and influence the CHL and other leagues to eliminate fighting, in alignment with Hockey Canada's existing policies for minor hockey. The aim would be to ensure the celebration of violence is not a deterrent for grassroots enrollment, and to protect the safety and well-being of young athletes. As part of this effort, Hockey Canada should undertake a public awareness campaign featuring champions, alumni and players who are proponents of eliminating the celebration of violence in the game. While Hockey Canada is only one stakeholder in any dialogue that would lead to this kind of change, there is an opportunity for Hockey Canada to be a thought-leader in the sport and create momentum behind this important shift.

Hockey Canada should engage with the CHL in support of a transition for the OHL and WHL to follow the lead of the QMJHL, to eliminate fighting. This may include leveraging data collected from the QMJHL tracking how the fighting ban implemented has or has not affected other types of penalties, to understand any changes in specific types of

penalties as an unintended outcome of eliminating fighting. This data can be used to bolster efforts to reduce the celebration of violence and fighting, in an effort aimed to help prevent harm and improve player safety.

Canadian Media including hockey broadcasters, journalists and commentators are invited to reflect on and discuss how they can be part of the solution to end the celebration of violence and fighting in the game. Canadian media can play a responsible, forward-looking role in how they broadcast and discuss violence in the game, to contribute to the well-being and safety of young athletes.

5.3 Elitism Culture: Performance Over Sport for Personal Development

5.3.1   Risk Factor Description

When there is a high emphasis on elite performance over sport for personal development, it can lead to a mind-set where athlete well-being takes a back seat. Sport environments where winning and opportunities for elite competition are the main measure of success can lead to situations where some athletes are entitled, others are excluded and others pushed beyond safe limits. In these environments, injuries are downplayed, and psychological manipulation becomes normalized. When a sports culture puts value in self-sacrifice and an unyielding dedication to "the game" people become expendable. Success is prioritized over safety, creating environments where harmful practices are justified in the name of achievement. In addition, when a sport is heavily influenced by the business and cottage industry of elite sport programs, profits are valued over people and maltreatment can be normalized in the pursuit of performance excellence.

Index Questions Reference Themes: Potential Development; Development Resources; Health Over Winning; Balanced Success Definition; Anti-Win-At-All-Costs; Universal Respect; Competition Access

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- There may be inadequate recognition of how a focus on elite or high-performance sport may discourage opportunities for sport for personal development and fun. This can result in negative attitudes directed to participation-focused programming and less attention and resources being provided to those programs;

- An organization may not recognize how an overemphasis on competitive success could be leading to decisions that compromise athlete safety and wellbeing in pursuit of results;

- There could be insufficient awareness of how pressure to win might be causing coaches and staff to normalize pushing athletes beyond safe physical and psychological limits;

- An organization might lack understanding of how prioritizing achievement over welfare could be creating environments where harmful practices are justified or overlooked because they believe this is the only way to produce results.

5.3.2   Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Elitism Culture
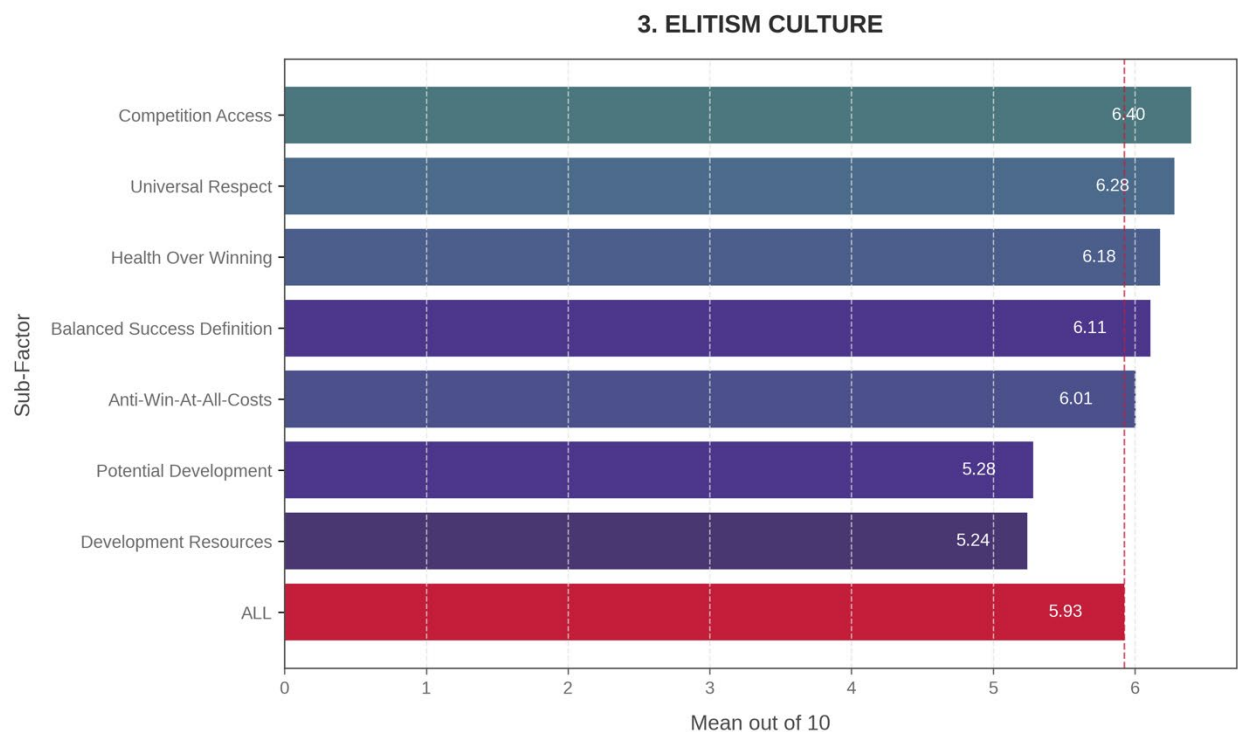
Figure S: Risk Factor Score: 5.93 of 10   Nearly 1 in 5 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Elitism Culture. The factors include Development Resources (5.24), Potential Development (5.28), Anti-Win-At-All-Costs (6.01), Balanced Success Definition (6.11), Health Over Winning (6.18), Universal Respect (6.28), and Competition Access (6.40). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 5.93. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in inclusivity-related aspects (Universal Respect, Competition Access) but lower scores in resource and development elements (Development Resources, Potential Development).

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Player experiences: Responses from players revealed the lowest scores in this category, indicating first-hand experiences of exclusionary practices directly impacting the player and team environment.

- Age-related perspectives: Younger Participants (25-30 years) expressed greater dissatisfaction, suggesting evolving expectations. Their responses indicate a

possible disconnect between established cultural norms and contemporary expectations related to this risk factor.

- Program variation: Participants from competitive programs demonstrated more critical responses in this risk factor compared to recreational programs, suggesting performance emphasis may foster exclusionary practices.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Elitism Culture* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Performance Over Well-being**

- **Perception:** Many Participants reported that they experienced a "win-at-all-costs" mentality where their well-being and physical safety were neglected.

- **Implication:** When there is an overemphasis on competitive success, athlete safety and well-being is compromised in pursuit of results or related status.

2. **Entitlement Culture**

- **Perception:** Participants reported that when elitism culture is celebrated, players who are particularly skilled can be treated as "above" the rules and expectations others are held to.

- **Implication:** This can lead to a poisoned environment, where some people, including players and caregivers, expect to be treated differently, and may not adhere to conduct and respect expectations; and they may dispute sanctions

when they are administered by a coach or MHA. This can lead to a dynamic where people are not being held accountable for harmful behaviour.

3. **Financial Access**

- **Perception**: Participants revealed feelings of exclusion, with many families expressing they felt "shut out" when the cost of participation made it nearly impossible for less affluent players to play and especially to compete on an equal footing.

- **Implication**: When there are high financial demands, some people are unfairly excluded from hockey.

4. **Normalized Psychological Pressure**

- **Perception**: Many Participants reported feeling overwhelmed and anxious, with several noting that they "felt crushed by the pressure." Some were particularly concerned that early specialization in competitive hockey was forcing children into a narrow, high-stress pathway and preventing a focus on other important parts of sport, including health and personal development.

- **Implication**: An excessive focus on early competitive achievement can lead to undue stress on players and players' families as well as long-term burnout in athletes and people leaving the sport.

5.3.3   Observations

Elitism Culture was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants and was noted in 38 of 45 (84%) interviews. The most frequent issue expressed was performance pressure versus a focus on player development, which was

observed in 34 of 45 (76%) interviews. This was followed by financial elitism, which was observed in 23 of 45 (51%) interviews.

Performance pressure is what Participants described as an unhealthy "win-at-all-costs" mentality that harms players. Participants explained that as hockey becomes more and more focused on elite and high-performance programs and opportunities, the "business" of hockey influences player experience. Families often feel pressured to participate in every off-season camp, travel opportunity and academy available, so their child is not "left behind." This leads to higher parental and coaching expectations, which Participants linked to normalized harmful behaviours, including performance-related abuse. One Participant shared:

> *I think that when there is a performance focus, there is sort of a culture of accepting maltreatment because...it's what we do...it's just how you get better or it's how you get opportunities.*

Financial elitism refers to a "business-oriented" dynamic created in hockey, which Participants reported manifests at both the top and grassroots level of the sport. This model prioritizes elite teams for their potential financial returns, which can lead to an uneven distribution of resources to the detriment of non-elite teams. At the grassroots level, participation in hockey—especially in elite programs—can include high financial barriers, such as costly equipment, expensive private coaching and a significant time commitment required from caregivers. One interview Participant reflected on their experience with the financial barriers of hockey and said:

> *... We talk out of the side of our mouths about, you know, wanting hockey to be for everyone, but you can't afford hockey.*

Another Participant reflected that the financial barrier is well-known, but generally accepted:

*[Other] parents would often say "I'm so glad my kid didn't pick hockey..."
And it's usually for two things. They know that the culture is not very good
and...the cost [of hockey], which is immensely high.*

Participants also pointed out that the current overemphasis on "naturally talented" players neglects the broader skill development needs of all athletes. They advocated for shifting the focus of hockey toward creating a fun, inclusive environment that promotes both skill improvement and the holistic growth of players into well-rounded human beings. One Participant reflected on the value of this approach:

*The best coaches that I've met over the years are the ones that are focused
on development, not the ones that are focused on winning.*

Participants explained that early specialization into elite teams—where players are funnelled into high-pressure environments at a young age—is strongly related to this dynamic and can lead to players having a negative experience and even quitting the sport. As one Participant noted:

*[Kids] have more negative experiences in competitive hockey
environments. It is detrimental for kids to be separated into competitive
and non-competitive leagues at such a young age, and it feeds an
unnecessary cottage industry that does not actually help players develop
the necessary skills and competencies and creates unhelpful barriers to
children of lesser means continuing to develop in the sport.*

Another interview Participant described how performance pressure can manifest in harmful behaviours including maltreatment:

*If a player is not developing or contributing properly to a hockey team... he
may be singled out by his teammates or singled out by a parent that says
he's not producing.*

Participants expressed a strong interest in the hockey community refocusing on player development, skill growth and enjoyment (versus focusing on elite opportunities). This

was seen as a key solution to pressure to be a part of the machine of "private hockey lessons, clinics, spring [and] summer leagues" in addition to their regular minor hockey commitments. Despite the sacrifices some families make for their players to have access to these elite commitments, Participants acknowledged it can be too much, lead to fatigue, burnout and even leaving the sport. This is despite an acknowledgment at many levels that "making the NHL is a very long shot" and not realistic for most players (according to different sources, approximately 1 in 4000 players).[29]

A focus on the intrinsic value of playing sport, for participation and for lifelong health and enjoyment, are not new concepts. These are well established in the sport community and in other jurisdictions, such as the Norwegian sport model and the Aspen Institute's Project Play.[30] In 2022, this approach was discussed in an Aspen Institute article, "*How Norway Won All That Olympic Gold (Again)*," which highlights Norway's approach to children's participation in sport:[31]

> *Ninety-three percent of all Norwegian children and youths participate in organized sports during their childhood. Participation in sporting activities for children up to 12 years of age follows the Children's Rights in Sports statement, which underscores the intrinsic value of playing sports and encourages experiences and skills that in turn provide the basis for a lifelong enjoyment of sports.*

[29]Kalchman, Lois. 2003. "Making NHL A Very Long Shot." *Hockey Canada*, January 25, 2003. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[30]Aspen Institute's Project Play. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.
[31]Andersen, Inge, Øyvind Sandbakk, and Johann O. Koss. 2022. "How Norway Won All That Olympic Gold (Again)." *Aspen Institute*, February 23, 2022. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

The *Children's Rights in Sports* and *Provisions on Children's Sports*[32] statements, adopted by the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports, are designed to ensure every child has a positive experience every time they participate in any kind of sporting activity, for children up to 12 years of age.

During the SEA, it was suggested that delaying specialization and competition would encourage participation and defer the focus on winning for younger age groups. A Participant noted:

> *We know that according to the, the sport for development model, or the physical literacy model, that kids should not be specialising in one sport or intensifying their participation in any given sport before the age of 12 or 13. Yet hockey, as is widely understood in Canada, is the sport that you enrol your kids in at 6...They're playing full ice at age 6, they're playing year-long hockey at age 6, they're playing hockey, 5, 6, 7 days a week at age 6.*

One elite player Participant reflected on the value of players of the same age training together for much longer before they begin to advance, and are divided into different levels of competition:

> *I trained at [a] club in Sweden that had, you know, a person who is a world junior medalist and people who are maybe in their first-year learning to compete. And they all trained together as part of a school, like a school ski program but they just adapted the workout to the different levels of the different players. And then everyone can learn something from others.*

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[32]Idrettsforbund, Nores. 2007. "Children's Rights in Sports and Provisions on Children's Sports." Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF). Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

In an interview with Katherine Henderson, Hockey Canada President and CEO, she reflected on the issue of *Elitism Culture* and Hockey Canada's aims when it comes to player experience and well-being:

> *The goal is to be gold medal performances on and off the ice, safest, most inclusive sport where people have incredible experiences and world leading on the ice. A safe, welcoming place on the ice that takes the person into consideration who is playing. Start with sport as being seen as a human right, and how to form systems around those, end up with better engaged, healthier children, creates a strong community.... We need to reframe sport collectively as being for health, community and well-being. Hockey is for all kinds of good life lessons, and when it's done well, it can help create good people. Our focus needs to be on person, then athlete, then hockey player...*

5.3.4   Recommendations

The main issues raised in connection with the risk factor *Elitism Culture: Performance Over Sport for Personal Development* were related to how the focus on elite and high-performance competition results in the devaluation of sport for personal, health and community development. As players' worth increases based on performance, the risk of physical and psychological maltreatment increases.

As the hockey ecosystem becomes more focused and more interested in elite and competitive programs, the entrepreneurial, and sometimes non-sanctioned, cottage industry of academies and development clinics proliferates and makes people think this is the only valuable way to participate in the sport. This mindset drives families to believe that, if they want their player to have a chance, they need to sacrifice everything for these opportunities. This results in players learning to value themselves and their contributions only by their performance. It also results in players, families and others accepting, and even condoning, maltreatment to get and keep their "chance." To truly

address this systemic issue, as Canadians, we must ask whether this approach is consistent with our values and make a cultural shift to see players as people first and the sport as an opportunity for health and personal development, not as a machine to churn out professional athletes.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, its recommended:

Recommendation 3A):

Hockey Canada should continue to consider opportunities to support, communicate and celebrate the intrinsic value of playing hockey for fun, participation, lifelong health and enjoyment, and the concepts outlined in the Aspen Institute's Project Play.

Recommendation 3B):

Hockey Canada should facilitate dialogue between grassroots stakeholders, including MHAs, Members and other partners, to consider how to encourage the sport principles listed above (Recommendation 3A) and to ensure accessible and affordable programs are available across age, gender, race, ability and financial backgrounds. These dialogues, which could kick off at the third Beyond the Boards Summit in 2025, would be an opportunity to seed new programs, make current ones more effective, and to scale up the most effective programs across the country. Examples of these type of programs identified in the SEA include: learn to skate programs, intramural programs, once a week programs at low cost, equipment lending and programs that take place at one facility to ease travel barriers (amongst others). Eventually, reporting on whether these programs are offered by hockey organizations may be included in the MHA culture scorecard (Recommendation 2B). Ultimately, this will help more Canadians enjoy hockey in a healthy, inclusive environment that prioritizes personal development over elitism, while

providing developmentally appropriate pathways for competition to those hockey participants who want them.

5.4 Inclusion and Welcoming

5.4.1 Risk Factor Description

Not everyone has equal access to safe sports environments. Barriers faced by equity-deserving groups, combined with leadership gaps and economic challenges, create situations where a sport is less representative and leaves some athletes vulnerable to maltreatment. Surface-level inclusion efforts often fail to address these deeper systemic issues. This risk factor can be closely related to *Elitism Culture*, in that sports programming directed toward diverse player populations may be excluded from access and resources when elite programming is favored and prioritized.

Index Question Reference Themes: Diversity Celebration; Training Facility Access; Community Impact; Understanding; Welcoming Environment

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- An organization may not recognize how systemic barriers and lack of representation could be making some athletes more vulnerable to maltreatment and have a negative impact on athletes' well-being;

- There could be insufficient understanding of how economic challenges and leadership gaps might be creating unequal access to Safe Sport resources and support systems;

- An organization might lack awareness of how superficial diversity efforts without deeper systemic changes could be failing to address fundamental safety and inclusion issues;

- There may be inadequate recognition of how underrepresentation in leadership and decision-making roles could be perpetuating blind spots in identifying and addressing maltreatment risks for equity-deserving groups.

5.4.2 Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Inclusion and Welcoming

4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING

Coaching Accessibility — 5.34
Diversity Celebration — 5.53
Training Facility Access — 6.11
Welcoming Environment — 6.68
Community Impact Understanding — 7.50
ALL — 5.96

Sub-Factor / Mean out of 10
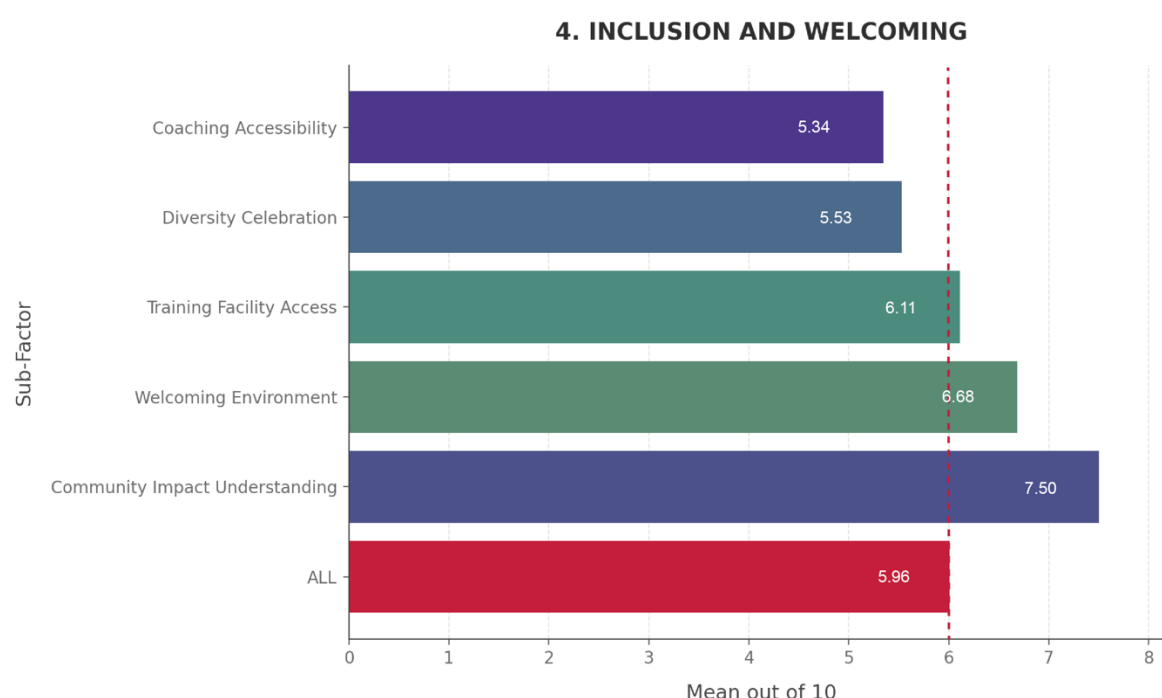
Figure T: Risk Factor Score: 5.96 of 10   1 in 5 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Inclusion and Welcoming. The factors include Coaching Accessibility (5.34), Diversity Celebration (5.53), Training Facility Access (6.11), Welcome Environment (6.68), Community Impact and Understanding (7.50). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 5.96. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in community-related aspects (Welcome Environment, Community Impact and Understanding) but lower scores in direct-impact factors (Diversity Celebration, Training Facility Access).

Notable Demographic Scoring:

- Player perspectives: Player responses in this risk factor were low and signal an opportunity for enhancing inclusivity practices across all levels of participation.

- Generational expectations: Younger participants demonstrated heightened sensitivity to inclusivity concerns, suggesting evolving expectations regarding culture.

- Program variation: Disparity between Participants from competitive and recreational programs, indicates potential tension between performance objectives and inclusivity practices. This presents an opportunity to integrate inclusive principles into competitive environments.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Inclusion and Welcoming* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Barriers against Equity-Deserving Groups**

- **Perception:** Participants who identified as new community members and minorities expressed that they "felt like outsiders," and that the unwritten cultural rules left them marginalized.

- **Implication:** When there are intersecting barriers faced by certain athletes, their well-being is negatively impacted, and they are less likely to report concerns or access available safeguarding measures.

2. **Surface-Level Inclusion Efforts Over Systemic Change**

- **Perception:** Participants expressed that they "felt skeptical" about inclusion measures that felt performative and did not lead to tangible improvements in support to equity-deserving groups or representation.

- **Implication:** When there is a perception surface-level efforts are prioritized over deeper systemic changes, fundamental safety and inclusion issues remain unaddressed.

5.4.3   Observations

Inclusion and Welcoming was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature, and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants. The most frequent issues brought up were leadership representation gaps, unequal treatment and unequal access to resources. Although issues related to this risk factor were the least frequently mentioned by interview Participants, it is acknowledged that this risk factor is highly affected by the lived experience of the Participants. It was noted by Participants during the Validation Workshop that marginalized communities are often skeptical of new processes, especially when previous engagement has not had an obvious, positive impact and, as such, people from those communities may not participate or choose to share their views as readily as those from other groups.

Participants indicated that representation gaps for equity-deserving groups are evident both in hockey leadership and among players. Participants most frequently referenced insufficient visible minority and female representation in leadership, which creates a reinforcing effect whereby individuals from these groups feel isolated and choose not to remain involved in hockey. Participants suggested specific quotas or goals for leadership representation at all levels of hockey would improve leadership and encourage more diverse representation. One interview Participant described this dynamic bluntly:

It's very much it's the white men, white boys' sports and you cross your fingers when you go to tryouts, you cross your fingers when you get onto a team, that you will have [that] acceptance.

Despite the view by some, that hockey continues to be a "boys club," registration among girls and women has significantly increased; according to Hockey Canada's 2023-24 Annual Report, women and girls' hockey registration surpassed 100,000 participants for the first time in the 2023-24 season.

In terms of removing barriers to access, Participants shared suggestions to help alleviate inequities including direct communication with equity-deserving communities, such as new Canadians, who may not be aware of how to be involved in hockey or face barriers to joining. Other examples shared were ensuring that women and girls have access to changing rooms, that marginalized groups are clearly welcomed, and that people with disabilities have access to resources and support as needed. Participants indicated that participation in hockey would be encouraged if there were more opportunities for lower-cost hockey programs, equipment sharing, emphasis on fun over competition, and learning to skate.

Issues of inclusion also exist at a systemic level and impact how resources are distributed, which can reinforce barriers for equity-deserving groups. The relationship to access to resources and identify is explored in the CBC documentary: "*Hockey for All,*"[33] in which journalist Douglas Gelevan outlines the obstacles some Canadians face when it comes to playing hockey and how the complex system of ice time allocation often favours elite male players, while pushing others to the margins. The documentary described three main challenges for disabled players accessing hockey programs and

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[33]Douglas, Gelevan, December 2024. "Hockey for All." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

ice time. The first is the reality that many rinks across the country are not physically accessible for some players. The second challenge is related to the prioritization of elite programs, and was raised by a contributor in the documentary:

> I've talked to a lot of people at arenas. Getting ice time has become difficult because these AAA teams are picking up the ice time and I think that's going to be a detriment to our minor hockey system.

The third challenge noted in the documentary are the barriers for specialized programming that operate outside of sanctioned hockey. Some adapted programs operate outside of sanctioned hockey and, according to the documentary, often struggle in the competition for ice time across the country. Another contributor in the documentary described how these dynamics impact an adapted hockey program in Quebec:

> Ice time has been a constant struggle for us because we're not associated to any type of hockey team or hockey League or under Hockey Quebec's banner. We just don't fit in... Avalanche Kids Hockey is a privately run, adapted hockey program for children on the autism spectrum. It's relatively new, this is only its third year, but it fills a gaping need in Montreal. If you need assistance on the ice, like many autistic children do, you can't play with your local hockey association. And under the provincial authority Hockey Quebec, there are no adapted hockey programs for kids in the city with neurological disabilities, so privately run programs like Avalanche are the only options.

There is also a clear interest and need for more diverse representation in leadership roles—including coaches, MHAs, and Board leaders—as well as among players, including representation of disabled individuals and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. One Participant reflected on how this shows up in leadership and advancement and said, "As a minority, I like, I get passed over a lot for advancement." Many Participants identified that traditional thinking is strongly correlated with this issue

as it encourages the same people to continue in positions of power. One Participant reflected on the value of diversity in leadership:

> *Even just having a visible minority in the room, it already changes behaviour...there's the rule of magic third, where if you start getting to 33% or higher, it no longer becomes a tokenized person, but it becomes a group of thought that can create and harness change within that organization or within that space.*

One Participant reflected on their experience in para-hockey, and that it was typical for able-bodied coaches to have strong technical hockey skills, but no experience playing para-hockey, which limits their ability to appreciate the kinds of issues the players may be facing.

In consideration of many of the issues in this risk factor, in August 2023, Hockey Canada published its EDI Path Forward, which includes a commitment to action statement to "Make Hockey More – Commitment to inclusion and belonging." The EDI Path Forward sets out Hockey Canada's framework for how they will implement and evaluate long-term change to support equity, diversity and inclusion across the hockey ecosystem in Canada.

Another area raised by Participants related to this risk factor is the crucial need to prioritize athletes' psychological well-being and increase investment in comprehensive mental health resources across the hockey ecosystem. One interview Participant brought up the need to prioritize mental health and well-being of players:

> *The safety element, the well-being element is the first and foremost issue. I don't care how good of a hockey player or coach you are or how much you know about technical skills. At the end of the day, you need to be able to look out for the safety of your team and focus on what is best for their mental and physical health.*

It was widely noted that mental wellness supports are often accessible and effective at higher levels of competition, but less available at the grassroots level. One Participant reflected on how access to a mental health support has been integral to managing stress and mental wellness:

> *I've used the mental health coach, and I think he's great... I was honestly not in a great place when I when I was going through that ... [with] the stress, I don't know what it would have happened... So, I'm happy that that resource was available, and it was made very clear to me that it was available and confidential, which was nice.*

While Participants and Guidance Group members both noted that there are barriers and challenges to providing this in an ethically sound, safe and financially sustainable manner, it was consistently raised as an interest. This includes more open dialogue and communication about mental health and well-being and the prioritization of mental health over winning. This interest, reported consistently by Participants, is a concern that is intrinsically linked to the broader concept of sport as a vehicle for personal development.

In an interview with Katherine Henderson, Hockey Canada President and CEO, she reported Hockey Canada has formed a "Mental Wellness Strategy" working group, including subject-matter experts, who will begin work in the spring of 2025 to provide guidance and direction on the development of a mental wellness strategy for grassroots hockey.

5.4.4   Recommendations

The main issues identified in connection with the risk factor *Inclusion and Welcoming* were connected to how some people are excluded from hockey due to barriers for entry,

unwelcome treatment in hockey spaces, representation gaps in leaders and the related negative effect on the mental health and well-being of those who are impacted.

When hockey only makes space for certain types of players, it pushes away many newcomers to the game who want to play — whether because of their background, gender, culture, physical needs, or mental well-being or because they have not had the chance to learn to skate. Without these players represented in the game and in organizations, hockey continues to operate in ways that may unintentionally overlook their needs. To create real change, hockey organizations must go beyond just saying "everyone is welcome" and take intentional steps to make sure everyone who wants to play truly feels they belong and has access to participate fully in the sport.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, its recommended:

Recommendation 4A):

Hockey Canada should provide updates on the implementation and impact of its EDI Path Forward and Action Plan and other important initiatives. It would be effective to track and provide information in one place on the Hockey Canada website to outline the degree it is encouraging diverse representation in leadership roles (including coaches) and ensuring people with diverse needs have access to play hockey. Hockey Canada may use this space to communicate about strategies Members and MHAs can implement to support adapted hockey programming for players with diverse needs.

Recommendation 4B):

To make Mental Health Supports more accessible at the grassroots level:

Hockey Canada should continue its work with the Mental Wellness Strategy working group to develop a mental wellness strategy for grassroots hockey. As this strategy is

developed, Hockey Canada can engage with its Members to ensure each has information and resources available on their websites, so it is clear and accessible to grassroots hockey participants who may need supports.

Members should support the Mental Wellness Strategy and, while it is being developed, ensure their websites identify accredited mental health resources in each region of the province or territory, including helplines and community resources accessible to grassroots hockey participants who may need these supports.

5.5 Policy Implementation

5.5.1   Risk Factor Description

Even when good policies exist on paper, putting them into practice often falls short. Organizations struggle with inconsistent adoption across different levels, limited resources, and confusion about responsibilities. This gap between policy and practice leaves athletes and others vulnerable despite seemingly robust protection frameworks.

Index Question Reference Themes: Values Communication; Clear Organizational Values; Values-Guided Behaviour; Clear Objective Achievement; Performance Standards; Clear Performance Expectations; Work-Mission Alignment; Objective Alignment; Mission as Roadmap; Mission Understanding; Mission Commitment

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- An organization may not recognize how having strong policies on paper without effective implementation strategies could be creating false sense of security while leaving athletes vulnerable;

- There could be insufficient awareness of how resource limitations and unclear responsibilities or accountabilities might be preventing proper execution of maltreatment identification and mitigation policies across all levels of an organization;

- Especially in complex organizations, there may be a lack of understanding of how inconsistent adoption of protection measures could be creating gaps in athlete safety, despite having formal frameworks in place;

- There may be inadequate acceptance of accountability regarding how the disconnect between written policies and actual practices could be compromising the effectiveness of their safeguarding efforts.

5.5.2 Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Policy Implementation

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Sub-Factor	Mean out of 10
Mission Understanding	7.35
Mission Commitment	7.32
Mission as Roadmap	6.95
Objective Alignment	6.76
Work-Mission Alignment	6.74
Clear Performance Expectations	6.53
Performance Standards	6.48
Clear Objective Achievement	6.38
Values-Guided Behavior	5.87
Clear Organizational Values	5.85
Values Communication	5.54
ALL	5.94
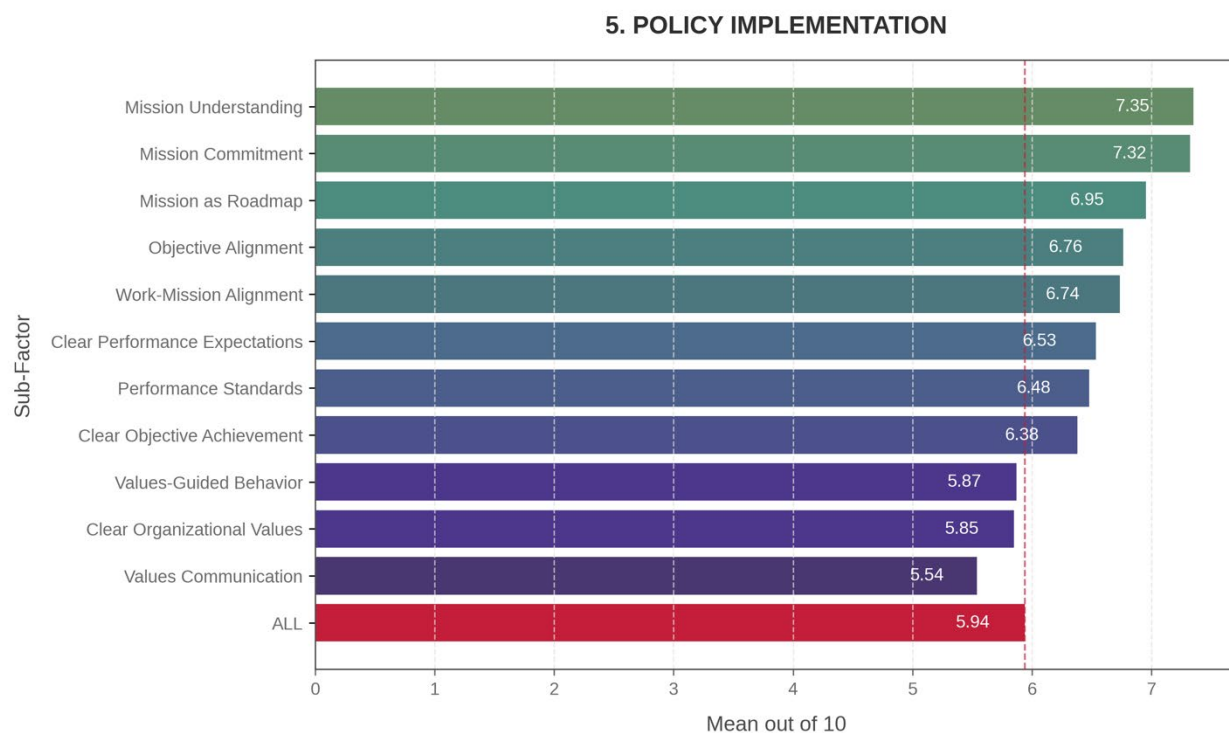
Figure U: Risk Factor Score: 5.94 of 10   *Nearly 1 in 6 Responses Scored Low (0-3)*

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Policy Implementation. The factors include Values Communication (5.54), Clear Organizational Values (5.85), Values-Guided Behaviour (5.87), Clear Objective Achievement (6.38), Performance Standards (6.48), Clear Performance Expectations (6.53), Work-Mission Alignment (6.74), Objective Alignment (6.76), Mission as Roadmap (6.95), Mission Commitment (7.32), and Mission Understanding (7.35). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 5.94. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in mission-related aspects (Mission Understanding, Mission Commitment) but lower scores in values communication elements (Values Communication, Clear Organizational Values).

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Employee perspectives: Mid-tenure employees with 2-4 years of organizational experience consistently demonstrated more critical assessments of this risk factor In Members Index responses, these employees scored lower than overall averages on 10 of 11 key policy measures. Similarly, in HC Index responses, these employees indicated moderate but notable concerns. This pattern suggests this cohort occupies a unique analytical position—possessing sufficient organizational knowledge to understand intended policy function while maintaining critical perspective on implementation challenges.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Policy Implementation* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Inconsistent Policy Adoption and Enforcement**

- **Perception:** Many Participants conveyed that they understood there were different policies and degrees of enforcement of these policies across different MHAs, Members and other organizations.

- **Implication:** A lack of uniform policies and policy enforcement across levels creates vulnerabilities in athlete protection, lack of confidence in reporting and complaint processes and undermines the credibility of safe sports.

2. **Capacity and Resource Limitations**

- **Perception:** A high number of organizations, parents and staff reported being overwhelmed and unsupported in implementing comprehensive Safe Sport practices due to resource and financial constraints as well as low numbers of staff and volunteers. Many reported feeling that they are left to "fend for themselves."

- **Implication:** Insufficient resources prevent organizations from properly implementing, monitoring, and maintaining Safe Sport practices effectively, which creates gaps in player safety.

3. **Accountability Issues**

- **Perception:** Many Participants felt that accountability of policies often fell short and noted that leadership roles, guidelines, and decision-making processes were ambiguous.

- **Implication:** When there is inadequate and unclear accountability in safeguarding policies and processes, this can compromise their effectiveness.

5.5.3   Observations

Policy Implementation was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants. Concerns in this area emerged in 19 of 45 (42%) interviews. Poor policy coordination came up most frequently, followed by capacity barriers to policy implementation, inaccessible safe sport policies, and, finally, policy enforcement.

Participants described the challenges resulting from poor policy coordination when nationally implemented policies lack alignment with provincial and local levels, resulting in aspirational, rather than practical, safe sport frameworks. A Participant described that:

> *The delegation of responsibility from Hockey Canada to the provincial hockey authorities, down to the clubs creates a broken telephone scenario. So, the clarity and urgency of the message gets lost by the time it weaves its way down from the senior folks at Hockey Canada to the people in the local clubs who are expected to administer or manifest some of the thinking related to the mitigation of maltreatment.*

Some Participants described Hockey Canada's policies as "rushed," and lacking proper input and support for the grassroots level. Participants also expressed general confusion over which levels of hockey (Hockey Canada, Members, or MHAs) were responsible for policy implementation. While this is understandably challenging in such a complex sport environment as hockey, moving forward, the more the policy-making approach can continue to prioritize Members input and bottom-up engagement, the more likely new policies will be understood and implemented. Many Participants referenced challenges related to the development of the *Dressing Room Policy* in 2023, which mandates "minimum attire" and supervision in dressing rooms to promote inclusion and respect.

While there were many reported issues related to the development and implementation of that policy, a helpful tool Hockey Canada provided to support organizations in its implementation is the Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guide, so MHAs and individuals were not left on their own to implement.[34]

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[34]Hockey Canada. "Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guide." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

One interview Participant reflected on the value of a coordinated approach to policy implementation:

> *If the national program is pushing something out and it's going to the provincial Members, then we need to make sure it's trickling down again or vice versa, right? So, it's that partnership and, and figuring out who needs what, and who can do what, and how we can support each other on it.*

Participants consistently indicated that it would help if Hockey Canada, Members and MHAs all had a common place and way to communicate policy expectations. Participants suggested more of a "one-stop shop" to find information, rather than the "web" of resources, websites and tools to navigate across jurisdictions. Some Members are using flow charts on their webpages with content such as, "Who is Responsible for Safety?" to direct people to different resources and appropriate policies. These resources are important to help people see the options available to them, and yet Participants indicated they are still seen to be too complicated for people and organizations to navigate.

Participants indicated Safe Sport policies are inaccessible, as they are difficult to understand, which results in widespread confusion about Safe Sport standards. Participants mentioned that the language used in Safe Sport policies was confusing, while others pointed out that finding specific information on relevant Codes of Conduct required extensive searching. For some, this is related to the extensive, complex and overlapping expectations for different jurisdictions. Despite the work done in this area to date, Participants continued to emphasize the need for clearer communication regarding expectations and Safe Sport standards and report difficulties finding the right information or concerns that polices are "not super easy to find." Hockey Canada, its Members and MHAs have acted to make Safe Sport information more easily accessible

and Hockey Canada has it organized in one section of their website.[35] The more consistent, coordinated and clear that communications about Safe Sport policies can be, the more likely they will land well with Participants and be accessible for people who are looking for them.

Many Participants reported that capacity barriers to effective policy implementation related to financial resources and volunteer constraints at local levels prevent effective and consistent policy implementation. Participants noted how there is not enough support provided to clubs to monitor, enforce or create policies. Additionally, constraints at the volunteer level—either through a shortage of volunteers or because those available are overburdened—further impede the implementation of Safe Sport initiatives. Looking forward, as new policies and Safe Sport mechanisms are implemented, it is essential that grassroots programs and MHAs are provided with support and resources from Members and Hockey Canada to effectively incorporate changes. Many interview Participants reported this challenging dynamic of how capacity impacts outcomes. One Participant reflected:

> *Hockey Canada tends to forget in small communities, you have a well-meaning volunteer who acts as registrar, chair of the board, president of the hockey association, responsible for the safety committee, purchasing all the uniforms...there's no capacity to understand, "well, how am I supposed to implement all of these [Safe Sport policies]?"*

Participants also reported a view that there is inadequate enforcement of Safe Sport expectations, because although policies exist, they are not seen to be properly enforced. Without proper enforcement mechanisms and clear consequences, even well-designed policies become ineffective. Participants identified a lack of clear accountability for

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[35]Hockey Canada Safety Programs. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

specific policies, which resulted in those responsible failing to enforce them. Participants expressed a strong desire for there to be clearer accountability written into policies and better systems of "checks and balances" that can hold people accountable at all levels. One Participant described the value of policy enforcement as:

> I think there needs to be a larger crackdown on reinforcement of the rules they [hockey organizations] have in place. I think it's just not enough. It's always talk and reminders.

5.5.4   Recommendations

The main issues in connection with the risk factor *Policy Implementation* were related to how challenging it is to integrate policies and procedures across the large and expansive hockey ecosystem in a consistent manner. When policies are created but are too difficult to implement or fail in their practical application, they are not doing the job they were made for. Despite all the work done across the Canadian Safe Sport landscape in recent years, Participants across the hockey ecosystem continue to report difficulties in understanding which policies apply in different circumstances.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, its recommended:

Recommendation 5A):

Hockey Canada should ensure that an advisory function exists with the Director of Sport Integrity or elsewhere in the office of the Vice President Sport Integrity to support Members, Regions and MHAs who may have questions and need assistance to ensure Safe Sport policies are being implemented and interpreted appropriately and to provide direction to appropriate resources in a timely way. In addition, this function can act in an advisory manner, to gather and disseminate data, such as the Maltreatment and ITP Reports, and carry out targeted prevention efforts to reduce further incidents of harm

and address hot spots. It would be effective to track and provide information about the specific actions taken in response to the 2022-23 Maltreatment Report and the 2023-24 ITP Report (and forthcoming related reports) in one place on the Hockey Canada website; to outline the way Hockey Canada's programming is responding to systemic concerns and to assist the hockey ecosystem to understand these developments in a transparent way.

5.6 Education and Prevention

5.6.1   Risk Factor Description

Many sports organizations lack comprehensive or effective training programs to prevent and address maltreatment, particularly at the grassroots level. This can include inadequate education on safe, developmentally appropriate practices for athletes. Further, delivering training in a manner that is accessible and engaging without overwhelming people, given the many volunteers who are stretched in capacity, and including coaches, caregivers and athletes are important factors in considering the effectiveness of education. Training effectiveness is influenced by capacity and time constraints on volunteers, whether materials and courses are available to everyone due to location and cost and whether people and organizations learn from the training. One of the issues raised frequently by Participants is whether online training can be effective as there is a risk that people may click through the training without engaging in the material.

This gap in education leaves coaches, officials and athletes ill-equipped to use best practices and/or recognize warning signs or respond appropriately to maltreatment. Without proper training, harmful behaviours may continue unrecognized, unchallenged and unreported.

Index Question Reference Themes: Learning from Failure; Continuous Improvement; Physical Harm Prevention; Safety Protocols; Injury Prevention

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- An organization may not recognize how insufficient or ineffective training programs, especially at grassroots levels, could be leaving people unable and not confident to identify and address potential maltreatment situations;

- There could be inadequate awareness of how gaps or lapses in education about developmentally appropriate practices might be enabling harmful behaviours to continue unrecognized or unchallenged;

- An organization might lack understanding of how inaccessible training formats or strategies could be reducing the effectiveness of their education efforts for different people;

- An organization could be overlooking the need to reinforce or refresh important practices and knowledge to ensure they have the desired impact.

5.6.2   Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Education and Prevention

6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION
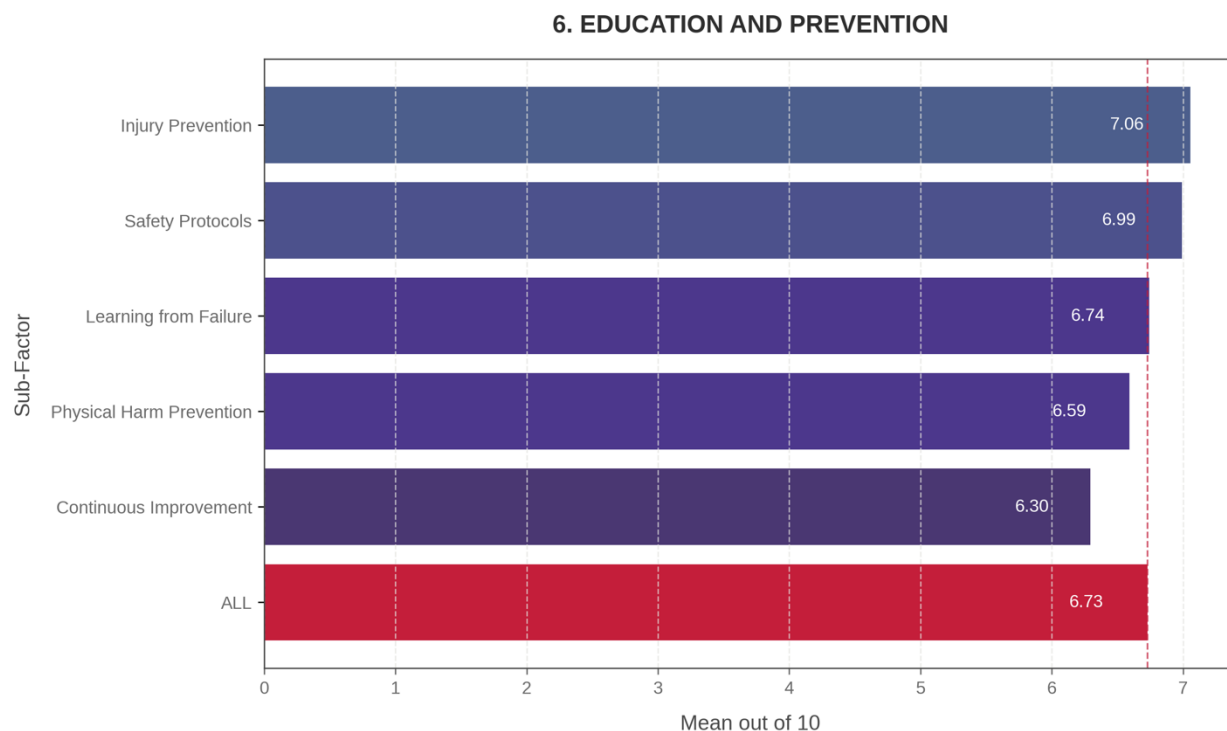
Figure V: Risk Factor Score: 6.73 of 10   1 in 9 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Education and Prevention. The factors include Continuous Improvement (6.30), Physical Harm Prevention (6.59), Learning from Failure (6.74), Safety Protocols (6.99), and Injury Prevention (7.06). The overall mean score for all risks in this category is 6.73. Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in Prevention and Safety Protocols, while Continuous Improvement or Learning shows the lowest score in this category.

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Experience level perspectives: Participants with 5-7 years of experience demonstrated the most critical responses. Analysis shows this cohort scored education and prevention measures 0.225 points below average, with two-thirds of their ratings falling below mean values. Unlike recent entrants or long-tenured individuals, these Participants possess sufficient experience to identify systemic issues while maintaining perspective on alternative approaches.

- Role-based perspectives: Participant responses reveal distinct patterns across functional roles. Administrative roles including volunteers, coaches and officials tend to assess education and prevention measures more positively (0.79 and 0.31 points above average respectively), while parents of players (under 14 years) and youth players (14-18) demonstrate more critical assessments (0.305 and 0.198 points below average).

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Education and Prevention,* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Ineffective Maltreatment Education**

- **Perception**: Many Participants see training as a box-checking exercise rather than a meaningful measure of engagement, and cited issues such as the lack of follow-up and an unstimulating online format. For some Participants, education is burdensome and does not accomplish the goals it is meant to achieve.

- **Implication**: When there are insufficient or ineffective training programs, especially at grassroots levels, people are left unable to identify and address potential maltreatment situations.

2. **Coaches Feel Unprepared**

- **Perception**: Many Participants reported coach education ensures they have strong technical skills, but many have less confidence to handle concerns about maltreatment or other sensitive situations.

- **Implication**: When training and education for how to handle maltreatment is not effective, coaches and other leaders are not properly equipped with the knowledge to implement Safe Sports practices and or deal with maltreatment when concerns arise.

3. **Insufficient Emphasis on Preventative Approaches**

- **Perception**: Many Participants reported that current approaches to deal with maltreatment emphasize punishment rather than focusing on repair, mediation or open dialogue.

- **Implication**: When there is an absence of early intervention and restorative conflict resolution processes (for non-criminal and/or less serious concerns), issues can escalate and are less likely to be prevented. Further, once parties enter a formal (rather than restorative) process, it can cause further time, resources and polarization for matters that could be better suited for dialogue-based problem solving.

5.6.3   Observations

Education and Prevention was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants, including in 24 of 45 (53%) interviews. Concerns were raised in 13 of 45 (29%) interviews about whether coaches were equipped with enough "soft skills" to handle sensitive situations, including conflict and concerns of maltreatment. In 23 of 45 (51%) interviews, Participants talked about the need for maltreatment education to be "comprehensive," to encourage critical self-reflection and think about how tools would work in their own team or organization.

On the flip side, Participants also recognized the challenges of burdening volunteer coaches with increasingly higher expectations. It was noted that any improvement in the amount of education and coaching requirements, including more comprehensive education put greater time and financial demands on volunteers and coaches. One Participant discussed the balance of improving coach education against the high demand on volunteers:

> We know that we're asking volunteers to do more. You know, they're required to have hold qualifications, attend courses, whatever the case may be, it's pretty significant to volunteer in minor hockey.

Another Participant reflected on the capacity issues at the grassroots level, and that paid and professional coaches are not a reality for many:

> We can't afford to hire coaches, period, because we need to spend our money on ice time and jerseys. So, there's no qualified coaching and there's no paid coaches.

The way education is delivered was an issue that arose, and Participants reflected that current educational modules are not always properly absorbed by their target audience, whether that be volunteers, caregivers, coaches or athletes. Participants reported that online programs such as the *Respect in Sport*[36] module are often perceived as a mere "box-checking" exercise, and some shared a concern that many volunteers and coaches do not meaningfully engage with the content or even discuss the topics at any point after the training with others in their hockey community. Despite these limitations, online resources are convenient and have made training accessible in communities across the country and for a fraction of the cost of in person training. To date, according to Hockey

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[36]Respect Group. "Respect in Sport." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Canada's 2023-24 Annual Report, more than 85,000 people have completed the Respect in Sport (Activity Leader and Parent) programs.

Further complicating this is the fact that implementing more comprehensive higher-quality education would place additional demands on volunteers who are already stretched thin. Moving forward, education needs to be continuous and easily digestible, but still attainable for the volunteers, players and coaches who take these courses. One Participant reflected on a concern about online training:

> *There are modules, you just click through, you can just hit play. I mean, do you have to sit there and listen to it? Nope. You could hit play and pay no attention to it. So, how is this really serving hockey in Canada?*

Participants suggested a way to resolve this issue would be to provide MHAs with follow-up training and communication material to ensure people were having discussions about the online training material, after they had completed online modules. Many Participants mentioned that once they had completed online training modules (for example, Respect in Sport or *NCCP: Make Ethical Decisions*),[37] the topics were never discussed or raised again by leaders within their MHA. Participants also suggested that providing refresher courses and incorporating interactive or group learning would improve training and education. It was noted that training incentives, including ensuring volunteers are never responsible for training and education fees, would be important for many people.

Participants indicated they hoped Hockey Canada would shift their focus from programs aimed at the elite levels of the sport and invest in education, training and program

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[37]"NCCP Make Ethical Decisions." 2020. Coaching Association of Canada. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

development for youth and grassroots. Many Participants shared a view, this should be the number one priority, and one interview Participant reflected:

> There has to be more attention and play to the needs of the grassroots populations ... [Hockey Canada] are all about the World Juniors and UA teams and it's all that sort of thing. And the people talking about Hockey Canada that are developing programs for the youth are sometimes not given the same kind of focus.

Finally, Participants explained maltreatment education delivery would be improved and more thorough if it went "into depth" on why something was harmful to a person rather than just stating that it was not allowed, and it would encourage people to have critical self-reflection. It was also suggested there is still a need for specific modules to support disabilities, mental health, dealing with social media and how to prevent maltreatment. Participants reflected on some of the challenges in offering and delivering effective education and training:

> There is an education [for coaches], but I don't know how you can teach morals and ethics.

> Actively telling people this is what's right and what's wrong and why and having them understand...not just directing them to "you can't do this," but knowing why it's not appropriate to do it.

When the SEA canvassed with Hockey Canada about their vision for Learning and Development in Safe Sport, Hockey Canada shared it has undertaken a significant review of all its coursework with a subject-matter expert that looked and the content and delivery from a behavioural and pedagogical approach. Out of this review, Hockey Canada has worked in consultation with Members on a new approach to Learning and Development linked to Safe Sport, diversity and inclusion, which draws on True Sport Principles of: "Go for it, Play fair, Respect others, Keep it fun, Stay healthy, Include everyone, and Give back." Katherine Henderson explained this initiative is a shift from a

"policy compliance approach" to a "how we want to show up" approach to drive behavioural change. Hockey Canada indicated the new Learning and Development initiative for activity leaders ("Activity Leaders") and caregivers is launching in May 2025 will the intent to fully transition over two to three years (the "Learning and Development Plan").

5.6.4   Recommendations

In connection with the risk factor *Education and Prevention,* Participants were concerned about the tools and confidence coaches have to ensure safe hockey environments that focus on player well-being. Participants also talked about the quality of education resources and questioned whether the education was getting through to people (including caregivers). Participants reflected that improvement in the quality of education, coaching requirements and/or more comprehensive education also demands more of volunteers who are already stretched to capacity. Despite the difficulty balancing these interests, Participants agreed that effective education is important to ensure values aimed at preventing maltreatment are accessible and integrated into the sport environment. It is critical for maltreatment education to be treated by all levels of hockey organizations as an integral part of sport and just as important as skating or shooting a puck.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, its recommended:

Recommendation 6A):

Hockey Canada will launch its new Learning and Development initiative for Activity Leaders and parents in the spring of 2025. It is recommended that the materials produced include content for Members, MHAs, Activity Leaders and parents that will prevent risks of maltreatment, including creating stronger team dynamics, safety to

make and discuss mistakes, strengthening peer to peer accountability, eliminating hierarchy, eliminating hazing and enhancing support for player well-being. It would be effective to track, report and provide information about the new Learning and Development in one place on the Hockey Canada website and align the training goals with related data collection and reporting taking place.

Recommendation 6B):

Hockey Canada, Members and MHAs should ensure that information about current required Safe Sport training (and the upcoming new Learning and Development initiative) is readily available and clearly set out on each of their websites. The purpose of this is two-fold: firstly, it will be consistently communicated for a coach or caregiver who wants to understand what training certifications they are required to take; secondly, if a caregiver wants to understand the Safe Sport education and credentials a coach is required to have, this information will be easily available. While this is not proof a particular coach has taken the required course, it allows a caregiver to check on the certifications a coach is meant to have, and they can follow up if they have questions.

5.7 Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

5.7.1 Risk Factor Description

The structural design of sport organizations can create blind spots where maltreatment goes unobserved and undocumented, leading to lack of awareness and underreporting. These organizational gaps compromise safety in sports environments because existing systems often fail to identify broader patterns, implement corrective actions, or establish clear accountability for both individuals and organizations. The perception that sports organizations are "self-regulating" creates a climate of unaccountability where there is

lack of clarity and confusion about who is responsible and how to report concerns of maltreatment.

Participants face significant barriers when trying to raise concerns or report maltreatment in sport. Complex reporting systems, fear of retaliation and inadequate complaint-handling processes discourage people from speaking up. A lack of early-intervention and a lack of available restorative conflict resolution processes discourage reporting and lead to issues becoming entrenched. Further, when reports are made, formal investigation processes often are not trauma-informed and fail to protect those who come forward.

Index Question Reference Themes: Safe Feedback Environment; Fairness; Clear Information Sharing

Observations gathered in the SEA suggest that when this risk factor scores low, organizations likely face challenges such as:

- There may be inadequate recognition of how the perception sports organizations are self-regulated and unclear accountabilities could be creating confusion about who is responsible to receive, manage and communicate about complaints and related sanctions;

- An organization may not recognize how their structure could be creating blind spots that encourage maltreatment to go undetected and unreported within the system;

- An organization might lack understanding of how inadequate investigation procedures and poor complainant protection could lead to a fear of retaliation deterring people from coming forward with complaints;

- An organization could be overlooking how the absence of early intervention and restorative conflict resolution processes might be allowing issues to become more serious, more entrenched and high-risk, instead of supporting early intervention, repair of harm and resolution.

5.7.2   Participant Responses related to Risk Factor – Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

7. ORGANIZATIONAL BLIND SPOTS AND REPORTING
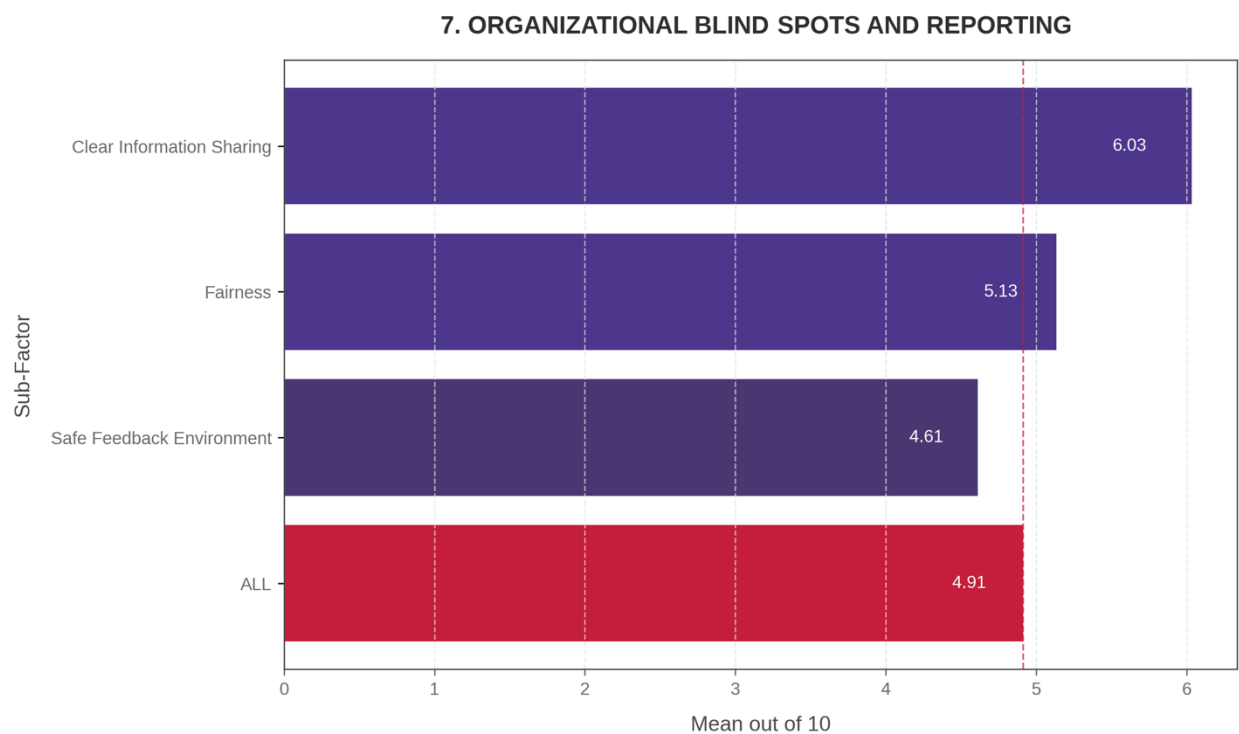
Figure W: Risk Factor Score: 4.91 of 10   Nearly 1 in 3 Responses Scored Low (0-3)

Horizontal bar chart displaying mean scores out of 10 for Risk Factor: Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting. The factors include Safe Feedback Environment (4.61), Fairness (5.13), Clear Information Sharing (6.03), and ALL Risks (4.91). Scores are measured on a scale from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating less possible risk and lower scores indicating higher possible risk. The data reveals stronger performance in Clear Information Sharing (communications) but lower scores in Safe Feedback Environment (listening and engagement), indicating areas for improvement in fostering a safe and transparent reporting environment.

Notable Demographic Observations:

- Gender-based perspectives: Responses from Participants identifying as non-binary or gender fluid reported significantly lower assessments of systemic fairness. Similarly, Participants declining to specify gender indicated reduced psychological safety to provide feedback. This suggests individuals outside traditional gender categories may experience enhanced barriers to equitable treatment and feedback opportunities related to this risk factor.

- Parent / Guardian perspectives: Parents and guardians of players consistently reported elevated concerns, in this risk factor, compared to other demographic groups. When responding from personal guardian perspective (rather than on behalf of youth players), this cohort provided some of the lowest responses for both fairness measures and psychological safety regarding feedback provision.

Open Text Analysis using the Risk Factor as a Filter

Based on an analysis of the open text responses from across all Index Participants, filtering for themes related to *Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms,* the following underlying issues were identified:

1. **Limited Understanding of Complaint Mechanisms**

- **Perception**: Many Participants, particularly at the grassroots level, indicated that the reporting systems are overly complicated and confusing, making it difficult for concerns to be effectively communicated.

- **Implication:** Issues in awareness and overly complicated systems can cause individuals to abandon or never initiate the reporting process.

2. **Inadequate Response**

- **Perception:** A high number of Participants expressed frustration with the current reporting framework and the mechanisms available. Many cited specific instances where issues had an inadequate response, where there was a long delay, or where the communication about the reporting process was flawed.

- **Implication:** When there are ineffective reporting mechanisms, it discourages future reporting and perpetuates a culture where issues remain unresolved and further undermines trust in the system. Further, when allegations are found to have occurred, but the resulting sanction is not enforced effectively, it undermines the whole process.

3. **Fear of Retaliation**

- **Perception:** Participants reported they felt "trapped" between wanting to report and fearing consequences. Several cases detailed how individuals faced subtle but impactful repercussions after reporting, from reduced opportunities to social isolation.

- **Implication**: When there is a lack of protection for reporters, complainants and whistleblowers, individuals opt to remain silent rather than speak out about maltreatment and risk facing adverse actions.

4. **Limited Information Sharing**

- **Perception**: Participants expressed feeling "left in limbo" about their reports, with many noting that the lack of updates created additional uncertainty. This left many feeling "disconnected" and "forgotten" after making reports.

- **Implication**: People who make reports lose confidence in the system when there is inconsistency about process expectations, limited information sharing, lack of

follow-up after reports, poor transparency in resolution processes, and insufficient updates to stakeholders involved.

5. **Data Collection Gaps**

- **Perception**: Many Participants indicated a view that the current monitoring practices are sporadic and insufficient. Participants noted that "deep supervision" is rarely implemented, and there is no transparent reporting about matters where a sanction has been applied, and no mechanism to ensure sanctions are enforced.

- **Implication**: When there is poor or inconsistent data collection (or transparent mechanisms to communicate results), maltreatment can continue to go undetected and unreported within the system. A related outcome is that a lack of coordination of data collection and reporting systems across jurisdictions allows people to slip by unnoticed.

5.7.3   Observations

Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms was identified as a component of the Risk Factor Framework in the literature and corroborated by how frequently it was considered by Index and interview Participants. This risk factor was the most frequently raised by Participants, including in 42 of 45 (93%) interviews. The most common themes raised were concerns about complaint management systems, poor monitoring and oversight, issues related to systemic tracking and inadequate mental health support for parties involved in reporting processes.

Participants talked about a dynamic in which people and hockey organizations are not keen to hear critical feedback and which leads people to feel the only way to provide it is to use formal complaint mechanisms. Instead of sharing critical feedback early, when

there are good opportunities for resolution and even changing behaviour, there is a sense that sharing feedback will be seen as a negative. Raising concerns is seen to be risky, as noted by a Participant:

> *But as far as the fear of retaliation... there are instances in our organization where people have gone to, like, the AGM... and then the next year, oh, suddenly their kid is in the bottom tier. That's weird. How did they move down 4 tiers?*

This is unfortunate as it leads to issues festering and sometimes escalating, instead of being brought to light and working towards resolution. Collaborative and restorative processes could be available at earlier stages in conflict, to encourage people to find dialogue-based resolution, before issues escalate or become entrenched. Additionally, Participants identified the necessity of appropriate education, re-integration and problem-solving dialogue to restore harm, for individuals and groups, after sanctions are applied and individuals return to the sport environment (in non-egregious matters).

Hockey Canada reported consideration in this area is underway and in 2023 a Discipline and Rehabilitation Working Group, with external expertise, was formed with the following goals:

- *Build and implement educational assets and infrastructure which centers the complex, multi-faceted, and interconnected needs of people in hockey as a way of creating the conditions for positive relationships between and among people, communities, organizations, and Hockey Canada.*

- *Develop a responsive and human-centered process for rebuilding relationships and communities damaged by misconduct by reintegrating those responsible for harm with careful and deliberate plans for future-focused accountability at the individual and the organizational level.*

- *Ensure that any discipline policies for reacting to harm capture, wherever possible, learnings about the context, causes, and circumstances surrounding the harm.*

Taking the complexity of the hockey ecosystem into account, the Discipline and Rehabilitation Working Group developed recommendations for a *Restorative Approach to Maltreatment Pilot* project. The Working Group's recommendations for the pilot project have been submitted for consideration to be included in Hockey Canada's next fiscal budget and the objectives of the pilot include:

- *Offering a restorative approach that helps those who cause harm to understand the impact of their actions*

- *Providing a safe environment for those harmed to voice their experiences and desired outcomes*

- *Providing an approach that identifies what went wrong through a future-oriented lens to create a plan to repair the harm for all involved in the hockey community (how can all those impacted improve – what role do officials, coaches, teams, and minor hockey associations play)*

- *Reducing incidents of harm and maltreatment in hockey*

- *Evaluating the effectiveness and practicality of a restorative approach in changing behavior and improving the overall culture within hockey*

The significant barriers to reporting and raising concerns about possible maltreatment, or even canvassing for support to resolve conflict, came up frequently during the SEA. One of the common concerns Participants shared is connected to fear of coming forward due to potential consequences, including social repercussions within their hockey community. Instead of encouraging people to have healthy dialogue and ask questions or raise issues when they have concerns, people are discouraged from speaking up

unless they have adequate evidence to bring a formal complaint. One Participant reflected:

> There's such a hush-hush culture and you don't want to be the one to rock the boat, whether you're a player, parent or... as an avid fan outside, because repercussions are severe.

Participants also shared instances and examples of when conflict or maltreatment issues were handled in an effective way, when they were provided with appropriate support, clear information about how to handle a situation and effective mechanisms to restore and repair relationships after (non-egregious) events take place. One Participant described a situation in which the MHA provided coaches with guidance, so they were confident dealing with a situation:

> ... So, we contacted our local association, our president, and just took us right through the process exactly how to do it... we had the resources there when we needed it.

Other Participants discussed the valuable role of education – both to prevent maltreatment and to ensure learning takes place after any concerns or allegations are raised. This was seen as a missed opportunity for learning:

> I don't know if a kid missing 3 or 4 games is the right message, or do we want these young players...educating themselves on why using a certain term on the ice is not a right thing to be doing or using a certain term in the dressing room is not the right thing to be doing...and here's why you shouldn't.. that probably has more of an impact than a player missing games.

As noted in the introduction of this Report, since 2022 when Hockey Canada became a Signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program, up to March 31, 2025, the OSIC has been responsible for administering the UCCMS with regard to Hockey Canada participants at the national level. At other levels of Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs, the ITP has

been established as a confidential third-party that is responsible for alleged maltreatment incidents. According to the 2023-24 ITP Annual Report, out of the 2,073 maltreatment complaints made to the ITP, 238 complaints naming 402 respondents were accepted by the ITP for investigation. This means a significant number of complaints were referred back to Members to be administered, because they were outside of the ITP's jurisdiction.

While some Participants shared critical feedback of the ITP's processes and its ability to respond to parties in a trauma-informed manner, most concerns and criticism of the complaint processes available were that they were not uniform or accessible for users. Access to the ITP is available on Hockey Canada and Members' websites but, depending on the type of complaint and where a complainant is located within the hockey ecosystem, they may be directed to various other resources. Members and MHAs have slightly different maltreatment response information and complaint forms available on their websites; they each describe instances in which maltreatment should be reported to the ITP, to the Member or both. The level of complexity to interpret the appropriate response in a given situation was seen as complex and inconsistent to Participants. Also, given the number of complaints referred back to the Members, Participants shared concerns about Members' capacity to effectively manage complaints at that level, given capacity and financial constraints.

The result is that, despite all these advancements made to provide an effective and consistent maltreatment complaint process across Hockey Canada's ecosystem, Participants continue to view the system as a complicated web of reporting and oversight. Participants indicated that people are dissuaded from coming forward about maltreatment because the reporting and complaint processes are currently so daunting to navigate and do not include adequate protection from retaliation.

Participants reported that following a formal complaint process, even when there was a finding the alleged maltreatment behaviour had occurred, there was insufficient sanctioning, or the sanctions in place were sometimes not adequately enforced. This meant, in some cases, people were allowed to continue in the same positions without incentives to change their behaviour. Participants were strongly in favour of a system to ensure accountability and adequate disciplinary actions, across all levels of hockey. For example, one Participant shared a view that it is still easy for maltreatment issues to go unaddressed, and hard for caregivers to proactively ensure their players were in a safe environment:

> It just concerns, not just me, but other parents I've spoken to about this culture of just ignoring this stuff to the point that... Well, how many other people are coaching in our organization that have done stuff like [maltreatment] and the board's ignoring it? It's extremely, extremely concerning.

Participants who had been involved in complaint processes described discrepancies in how sanctions were applied and depending on the experience, the resources and capacity of each organization responsible for the complaint process and the sanctioning decision. One Participant reflected on the value of clear and consistent sanctioning expectations, when maltreatment allegations are found to have occurred:

> There has to be set-in-stone thresholds. You meet this threshold, this is your life consequence... when things, certain actions happen and it's confirmed, then there should be thresholds that have to be met so that that way the governing bodies can make an easier ruling as well.

Another Participant shared the value of Canada-wide standards that would clearly establish in what instances would prevent individuals from returning to the sport to work with youth, including findings of maltreatment, types of convictions and peace-bonds.

A concern shared by Participants was that there is not currently a common understanding about how sanctions are to be communicated and enforced in matters in which maltreatment has found to have occurred. Participants shared experiences in which MHAs were unclear about their role in enforcing sanctions once they had been applied by another governing body (Member or ITP). Participants questioned whether third-party anonymous observers could be involved to ensure sanctioned individuals are no longer in positions of authority with youth. Participants also had a strong interest in seeing improved information-sharing mechanisms across organizations about maltreatment sanctions. The view was that, despite the need for confidentiality, better information-sharing would ensure sanctioned individuals were not moving from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. This enhanced oversight is seen as crucial for proactively preventing abuse and ensuring accountability. One Participant reflected on a common concern expressed that there are still too many "workarounds" in the current system, which may be taken advantage of:

> *The dilemma is not for the majority of participants in hockey who are not going to be nefarious in the way they engage with youth. It's for the small number who understand that there are so many cracks in the system that it's easy for them to hide and slither their way around and create a devastating wake in their impact.*

In an email from Katherine Henderson, she shared a view that it would improve sport to move to a more "transparent and public complaint process." This view is repeated in an online article, by lawyer Nick De Marco, KC, "*Six Reasons for sports disputes to be public*"[38] where it's argued that if sports disputes were more transparent, it would lead to greater public confidence and understanding in the complaint mechanisms.

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[38]Marco, Nick. 2024. "Six reasons for sports disputes to be public." *Blackstone Chambers*, July 17, 2024. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Currently, Hockey Canada is reporting maltreatment data annually – most recently in the 2022-23 Maltreatment Report and the 2023-24 ITP Annual Report. While this is excellent progress toward greater transparency in understanding the kind of maltreatment occurring and data related to the ITP complaint handling process, Participants questioned what will happen with that data and how it will impact changes. It appears that there are opportunities in connection with this kind of reporting: firstly, to share it more broadly with individuals in the hockey ecosystem, who either are unaware the information is available or unclear about what is being done with this information to make any changes; secondly, it will be helpful to connect any future initiatives resulting from this kind of reporting together, so that people understand the relationship between learning and making changes.

5.7.4   Recommendations

The main issues raised in connection with the risk factor *Organizational Blind Spots and Inadequate Reporting and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms* were related to the lack of confidence people have that the current system understands its own vulnerabilities. Participants discussed concerns about the effectiveness of conflict resolution tools and complaint reporting mechanisms available to deal with concerns about maltreatment.

Despite all the work done across the Canadian Safe Sport landscape in recent years, and within hockey, Participants across the hockey ecosystem continue to report difficulties understanding, accessing and navigating appropriate responses to serious concerns of maltreatment. Participants who experienced lengthy and difficult complaint processes, shared that, in some cases, the process was not trauma-informed, that there were inadequate supports in place for parties, and even when a sanction was made, there was no clarity about how the sanction would be enforced or whether the individual sanctioned for maltreatment could just end up in another jurisdiction without anyone

noticing. This erosion of trust not only reinforces a culture of silence and inequity but allows acts of harm to continue without accountability. Moving forward, there needs to be improvements made to the functionality of reporting systems to ensure parties who engage in them are supported and there is clarity about how sanctions are applied and enforced.

In addition, there are opportunities to increase accessibility for restorative, collaborative and educational conflict resolution processes so people have access to earlier, low-barrier and low-cost mechanisms to resolve conflict and address concerns as soon as possible.

Based on the feedback from Participants throughout the SEA, its recommended:

Recommendation 7A):

Hockey Canada should work in collaboration with Members to establish one common national Code of Conduct and one Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy to be adopted and implemented nationwide for hockey participants. These can be adjusted slightly in specific jurisdictions where it is required by provincial or territorial legislation and policy. This could build on the work done for Rule 11 adoption, tracking and enforcement, and include both on- and off-ice conduct. Following the implementation of the National Code of Conduct, Hockey Canada should continue to monitor and report about on- and off-ice conduct incidents and clear information about any responses to this data tracking. This national approach would help to establish clarity and consistency in expectations, norms and how complaints are managed across different jurisdictions.

Recommendation 7B):

Hockey Canada should work in collaboration with Members to create common national guidelines for sanctions and screening related to matters that prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. In addition to the current information about sanctioning in the Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy, there should be greater clarity and specific national standards set for specific instances to prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. This would include national guidelines requiring specific vulnerable sector checks and identifying what would prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. This would also include national guidelines to identify which criminal convictions, ongoing criminal investigations, pending criminal charges and outcomes from peace bonds would make individuals ineligible from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. Currently, guidelines exist in some jurisdictions but are inconsistent and unclear for those attempting to apply the policy. A practical example, is Hockey Alberta's guidelines for on-ice officials are set out on its website and outline unacceptable convictions and discretionary convictions.[39] During the SEA, Participants indicated this kind of consistent national approach would ensure that people would not be re-admitted inadvertently by an MHA or cross-jurisdictions to gain access in another area.

Recommendation 7C):

Hockey Canada should consider opportunities to implement the *Restorative Approach to Maltreatment Pilot* project in the next fiscal year.

Recommendation 7D):

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[39]"Background Screening/Criminal Record Checks Hockey Alberta Officials Committee." Hockey Alberta - Officials. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

Hockey Canada should consider how to support Members, Regions and MHAs to proactively create the conditions to prevent conflict or address it in the early stages when it is a "concern" rather than a "complaint." The following will encourage opportunities for more collaborative problem-solving:

- **Hockey Canada** should provide mediation and other collaborative conflict resolution education, resources and tools to Members, Regions and MHAs so they have early and low-barrier access to these resources, before problems and conflict becomes escalated and costly;

- **Hockey Canada** should ensure that new Learning and Development Plan materials being phased in starting in spring 2025, include or add a targeted video series explaining conflict resolution, complaint mechanisms and their scope for caregivers, coaches, and the MHA (including information about the legal duty to report child abuse). These videos could target MHAs, coaches, leaders and caregivers, to help address confusion about where to bring complaints, and what is in or out of scope;

- **Hockey Canada** should ensure all ITP processes and practitioners are trauma-informed; and

- **Hockey Canada** should consider providing enhanced online mental health resources that parties involved in complaints and conflict resolution mechanisms can access to improve their experience and ensure they are supported in an appropriate, trauma-informed manner.

6. Conclusion and Summary of Recommendations

Given the passion and interest shared by the Participants to date, there is an opportunity to harness this energy from the SEA and shift the conversation toward the role we, as Canadians, all can play in preventing maltreatment in hockey and sport more broadly and to improve the hockey environment, improve well-being and reduce the risk for maltreatment in hockey for both current and future participants.

Throughout the SEA, Participants reported dynamics, related to the inherent challenges in the composition of the hockey landscape in Canada, that increase the risk of maltreatment. For this reason, the SEA highlights the following topics that could be addressed, to prevent and address maltreatment in ice hockey in Canada and other sports:

- The governance of sport in Canada is currently a complex, multi-level system of jurisdiction. While NSOs are tasked with developing, promoting and governing their sport across the country, P/TSOs have jurisdiction in their region. Throughout the SEA, questions arose about the mandate and expectations currently being placed on NSOs and whether they have the authority and leverage necessary to implement and regulate, or whether the current sport framework inherently allows for gaps in both understanding and regulation, which increases risk for maltreatment. For this reason, Sport Canada and the *Future of Sport in Canada Commission*,[40] should examine whether there are system improvements, or clarity that could be provided which would decrease risk for systemic maltreatment.

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[40]Government of Canada. "The Future of Sport in Canada Commission." 2024. Canada.ca. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

- Safe Sport policies and processes in Canada should be streamlined and one agency and point of contact should be in place to advise and coordinate policy and sanctioning for all levels of sport in Canada, rather than separate policies and entities for different sports, different levels of competition and jurisdictions. Any Canadian participant, in any sport, at any level, should have access to the same Safe Sport expectations and remedies. The Abuse-Free Sport Registry currently acts a national public searchable database of individuals whose eligibility to participate in sport has been restricted due to provisional measures or sanctions imposed as part of or as a result of the Abuse-Free Sport Complaint Management Process. While there are numerous legal obstacles (including the division of power between NSOs and P/TSOs) to the creation of a national public registry, that would cover any sport, at any level, there should be consideration of how this could be established in Canada for individuals who have been proven to have made egregious or severe violations of Safe Sport policies. This kind of broad national public registry (for all levels of sport) would be consistent with Recommendation 17 of the CHPC 2024 Safe Sport Report.[41]

- Given the complex shared-governance model of sport in Canada, and level of stakeholder collaboration currently required to make systemic changes to improve a sport's culture and reduce maltreatment risk, Canadian bodies tasked with regulating Safe Sport, such as the CCES, should prioritize tools that allow them to take a systems-level approach and have access to tools aimed at understanding the systemic issues related to maltreatment and mechanisms to enforce recommendations. This would allow for tracking and understanding

[41]Fry, Hon. Hedy. 2024. "Safe Sport in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage." Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

maltreatment risk in sport from a systems perspective. As noted throughout the SEA, one of the reasons for lack of progress in eliminating abuse in sport is because governing bodies responsible for responding to maltreatment often deal with matters on a case-by-case basis, rather than considering larger institutional factors.

- Given the complex shared-governance model of sport in Canada and level of stakeholder collaboration currently required to make systemic changes to improve a sport's culture and reduce maltreatment risk, Canadian sport organizations, including NSOs, P/TSOs and others, should adopt and welcome any systemic processes that allow for tracking and understanding maltreatment risk in sport from a systems perspective. Furthermore, they should act to engage all stakeholders from their sport community in a transparent manner to ensure participant experiences, that may otherwise not be reported and well understood, are included, as well as perspectives from outside the system, where people may have fresh insights.

- Tools such as Innerlogic's HCI and YSCI, and the Risk Factor Framework (with further development) should be employed regularly by Hockey Canada to assess the cultural risk factors related to maltreatment at all levels of hockey organizations. This would become a useful and efficient tool for policy makers to measure and address maltreatment risks across the hockey ecosystem over time.

- Culture change is a long term-process that can take years to fully imbed in any organization or system. Some of the issues raised by Participants in this SEA have been ingrained in hockey culture for decades and generations. While Hockey Canada has begun its work to address some of the systemic issues related to maltreatment; these efforts will need to continue in a rigorous and transparent

manner to improve the sport environment for both current and future hockey participants. Many of the of the SEA recommendations will take time to both implement and measure the impact of the initiatives. For this reason, Hockey Canada and its Members should post the SEA report on their websites, together with a clear outline and updates about how the recommendations are being implemented, so the Canadian hockey ecosystem can transparently understand the changes as they are being made. Further, it is imperative that the implementation of the SEA recommendations be monitored beyond the delivery of this report. While section 7(g) of the OSIC SEA Guidelines, sets out a mechanism for a one-year monitoring process, this period will likely be insufficient. Given the significance of hockey in Canadian culture, and the investment already made in the work of the SEA, the OSIC and other Canadian sport stakeholders are invited to reflect on and apply a robust and transparent process to monitor Hockey Canada's implementation of the SEA recommendations over the next three to five years.

In addition, based on the Participant responses and all the material collected and reviewed throughout the SEA, the Assessor makes the following recommendations (as set out above in section 5 of this Report):

Recommendation 1A):

Hockey Canada should post the 2022 Cromwell Review recommendations on its website, together with a clear outline of how the recommendations were implemented, so the hockey community can transparently understand the changes that have been made. Hockey Canada should consider developing a more consistent and transparent method to communicate on its website the follow-up process on any reports, reviews and initiatives undertaken so the hockey community understands how and whether

valuable plans and programs such as the Action Plan or the EDI Path Forward are impacting the hockey ecosystem. While it is significant that these initiatives have been undertaken, currently it is not clear to the public how they have been acted upon or whether they have made any changes.

Recommendation 1B):

Hockey Canada should undertake a governance review of the hockey ecosystem to understand and identify how various stakeholders integrate and work together with each other. The review should aim to highlight the different areas of authority, where there is overlap and possible areas of collaboration to ensure that there is clarity in roles between Hockey Canada, Members and others and propose solutions. Hockey Canada should publish the review and socialize it with stakeholders to move toward a standardized governance approach for the entire ecosystem and resolve any areas in which governance conflict or gaps exist.

Recommendation 1C):

Hockey Canada should establish a Healthy Hockey Culture Working Group jointly with Members and grassroots representatives from the hockey ecosystem to work together to understand and integrate the SEA recommendations and to identify and implement solutions. To do this, the Healthy Hockey Culture Working Group should have the following objectives:

- Prioritize, track and encourage implementation of the SEA recommendations across all parts of the hockey ecosystem;

- Create a toolkit to support Regions and MHAs (and other relevant partner organizations) to strive for greater transparency. The Healthy Hockey Culture

Working Group should decide which tools and training for good governance expectations and conflict of interest will be recommended or required for organizations. The toolkit will include resources and expectations for the Regions and MHAs on governance training and should be accessible on every Members' website. It is recommended that Members make this mandatory for all Regions and MHAs to support them to carry out their duties transparently and effectively for the benefit of all hockey participants. A starting point to inform the Governance Working Group's resources for governance in sport include: CCES Governance Essentials training[42] and the COC-NSO Governance Series.[43]

MHAs and Regions Boards of Directors should strive for greater transparency through completing mandatory training on both good governance and conflict of interest and incorporate any material set out in the Hockey Canada and Members Governance Working Group toolkit. The completion of this good governance training is one factor that will be gauged in the annual well-being scorecard (see 2C below).

Recommendation 1D):

MHAs and Regions should assess their systems for communication with hockey participants and fill any gaps to strengthen transparency and inclusive access to information. In particular, SEA responses indicated that timely and clear communication of the MHA teams' selection criteria, the rationale and policy for team selection decisions

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[42] Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport: Governance Essentials. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

[43] Canadian Sport Governance Code-NSO Sharing Centre. 2023. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

and Codes of Conduct should be communicated in advance of team selections to all hockey participants in an easy to access platform.

Recommendation 2A):

Hockey Canada should develop a specific checklist tool to empower caregivers and players to understand a healthy Safe Sport team culture and what role everyone plays. The checklist should be provided to all Members, Regions and MHAs (and other relevant stakeholders organizations, such as school hockey associations) and will set out what caregivers and players can look for in a team environment to ensure it is a healthy Safe Sport culture aimed at player well-being. The checklist should include a link to clear information about the training and credentials required at every level for various youth-facing roles and for the role and expectations for caregivers and players. The checklist should form part of the information material provided when players register as a hockey participant across the country and will be a tool to empower caregivers to understand their role to prevent maltreatment.

Members and MHAs should use the checklist to ensure Safe Sport training expectations are being met and communicated to their respective communities.

Recommendation 2B):

Hockey Canada and Members should develop a standardized culture and well-being scorecard for MHAs to distribute annually to hockey participants, in the 3rd quarter of each year. The scorecard would be developed with the help of technical subject-matter experts and be focused on the MHA overall, and not on individual coaches, volunteers, or staff. Individuals would participate anonymously, and the scorecard would include measures on the hockey participant's experience of a healthy hockey culture – including organizational transparency, such as publication of team selection criteria and

completion of Board good governance training, availability of accessible lower-cost programs, as well as adherence to the Code of Conduct. Members should publish scorecard results annually on their websites and provide information about how they can support MHAs with resources to fill any gaps identified in the scorecard results.

Recommendation 2C):

Hockey Canada should invite partnership with national governing bodies from other countries and other stakeholders, to work toward a concerted effort to campaign and influence the CHL and other leagues to eliminate fighting, in alignment with Hockey Canada's existing policies for minor hockey. The aim would be to ensure the celebration of violence is not a deterrent for grassroots enrollment, and to protect the safety and well-being of young athletes. As part of this effort, Hockey Canada should undertake a public awareness campaign featuring champions, alumni and players who are proponents of eliminating the celebration of violence in the game. While Hockey Canada is only one stakeholder in any dialogue that would lead to this kind of change, there is an opportunity for Hockey Canada to be a thought-leader in the sport and create momentum behind this important shift.

Hockey Canada should engage with the CHL in support of a transition for the OHL and WHL to follow the lead of the QMJHL, to eliminate fighting. This may include leveraging data collected from the QMJHL tracking how the fighting ban implemented has or has not affected other types of penalties, to understand any changes in specific types of penalties as an unintended outcome of eliminating fighting. This data can be used to bolster efforts to reduce the celebration of violence and fighting, in an effort aimed to help prevent harm and improve player safety.

Canadian Media including hockey broadcasters, journalists and commentators are invited to reflect on and discuss how they can be part of the solution to end the celebration of violence and fighting in the game. Canadian media can play a responsible, forward-looking role in how they broadcast and discuss violence in the game, to contribute to the well-being and safety of young athletes.

Recommendation 3A):

Hockey Canada should continue to consider opportunities to support, communicate and celebrate the intrinsic value of playing hockey for fun, participation, lifelong health and enjoyment, and the concepts outlined in the Aspen Institute's Project Play.

Recommendation 3B):

Hockey Canada should facilitate dialogue between grassroots stakeholders, including MHAs, Members and other partners, to consider how to encourage the sport principles listed above (Recommendation 3A) and to ensure accessible and affordable programs are available across age, gender, race, ability and financial backgrounds. These dialogues, which could kick off at the third Beyond the Boards Summit in 2025, would be an opportunity to seed new programs, make current ones more effective, and to scale up the most effective programs across the country. Examples of these type of programs identified in the SEA include: learn to skate programs, intramural programs, once a week programs at low cost, equipment lending and programs that take place at one facility to ease travel barriers (amongst others). Eventually, reporting on whether these programs are offered by hockey organizations may be included in the MHA culture scorecard (Recommendation 2B). Ultimately, this will help more Canadians enjoy hockey in a healthy, inclusive environment that prioritizes personal development over elitism, while

providing developmentally appropriate pathways for competition to those hockey participants who want them.

Recommendation 4A):

Hockey Canada should provide updates on the implementation and impact of its EDI Path Forward and Action Plan and other important initiatives. It would be effective to track and provide information in one place on the Hockey Canada website to outline the degree it is encouraging diverse representation in leadership roles (including coaches) and ensuring people with diverse needs have access to play hockey. Hockey Canada may use this space to communicate about strategies Members and MHAs can implement to support adapted hockey programming for players with diverse needs.

Recommendation 4B):

To make Mental Health Supports more accessible at the grassroots level:

Hockey Canada should continue its work with the Mental Wellness Strategy working group to develop a mental wellness strategy for grassroots hockey. As this strategy is developed, Hockey Canada can engage with its Members to ensure each has information and resources available on their websites, so it is clear and accessible to grassroots hockey participants who may need supports.

Members should support the Mental Wellness Strategy and, while it is being developed, ensure their websites clearly identify accredited mental health resources in each region of the province or territory, including helplines and community resources accessible to grassroots hockey participants who may need these supports.

Recommendation 5A):

Hockey Canada should ensure that an advisory function exists with the Director of Sport Integrity or elsewhere in the office of the Vice President Sport Integrity to support Members, Regions and MHAs who may have questions and need assistance to ensure Safe Sport policies are being implemented and interpreted appropriately and to provide direction to appropriate resources in a timely way. In addition, this function can act in an advisory manner, to gather and disseminate data, such as the Maltreatment and ITP Reports, and carry out targeted prevention efforts to reduce further incidents of harm and address hot spots. It would be effective to track and provide information about the specific actions taken in response to the 2022-23 Maltreatment Report and the 2023-24 ITP Report (and forthcoming related reports) in one place on the Hockey Canada website; to outline the way Hockey Canada's programming is responding to systemic concerns and to assist the hockey ecosystem to understand these developments in a transparent way.

Recommendation 6A):

Hockey Canada will launch its new Learning and Development initiative for Activity Leaders and parents in the spring of 2025. It is recommended that the materials produced include content for Members, MHAs, Activity Leaders and parents that will prevent risks of maltreatment, including creating stronger team dynamics, safety to make and discuss mistakes, strengthening peer to peer accountability, eliminating hierarchy, eliminating hazing and enhancing support for player well-being. It would be effective to track, report and provide information about the new Learning and Development in one place on the Hockey Canada website and align the training goals with related data collection and reporting taking place.

Recommendation 6B):

Hockey Canada, Members and MHAs should ensure that information about current required Safe Sport training (and the upcoming new Learning and Development initiative) is readily available and clearly set out on each of their websites. The purpose of this is two-fold: firstly, it will be consistently communicated for a coach or caregiver who wants to understand what training certifications they are required to take; secondly, if a caregiver wants to understand the Safe Sport education and credentials a coach is required to have, this information will be easily available. While this is not proof a particular coach has taken the required course, it allows a caregiver to check on the certifications a coach is meant to have, and they can follow up if they have questions.

Recommendation 7A):

Hockey Canada should work in collaboration with Members to establish one common national Code of Conduct and one Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy to be adopted and implemented nationwide for hockey participants. These can be adjusted slightly in specific jurisdictions where it is required by provincial or territorial legislation and policy. This could build on the work done for Rule 11 adoption, tracking and enforcement, and include both on- and off-ice conduct. Following the implementation of the National Code of Conduct, Hockey Canada should continue to monitor and report about on- and off-ice conduct incidents and clear information about any responses to this data tracking. This national approach would help to establish clarity and consistency in expectations, norms and how complaints are managed across different jurisdictions.

Recommendation 7B):

Hockey Canada should work in collaboration with Members to create common national guidelines for sanctions and screening related to matters that prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. In addition to the current

information about sanctioning in the Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy, there should be greater clarity and specific national standards set for specific instances to prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. This would include national guidelines requiring specific vulnerable sector checks and identifying what would prevent individuals from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. This would also include national guidelines to identify which criminal convictions, ongoing criminal investigations, pending criminal charges and outcomes from peace bonds would make individuals ineligible from being in a position of authority and/or engaging with youth. Currently, guidelines exist in some jurisdictions but are inconsistent and unclear for those attempting to apply the policy. A practical example, is Hockey Alberta's guidelines for on-ice officials are set out on its website and outline unacceptable convictions and discretionary convictions.[44] During the SEA, Participants indicated this kind of consistent national approach would ensure that people would not be re-admitted inadvertently by an MHA or cross-jurisdictions to gain access in another area.

Recommendation 7C):

Hockey Canada should consider opportunities to implement the *Restorative Approach to Maltreatment Pilot* project in the next fiscal year.

Recommendation 7D):

Hockey Canada should consider how to support Members, Regions and MHAs to proactively create the conditions to prevent conflict or address it in the early stages

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[44]"Background Screening/ Criminal Record Checks | Hockey Alberta | Officials Committee." Hockey Alberta - Officials. Link in section 7: Defined Terms and Resources.

when it is a "concern" rather than a "complaint." The following will encourage opportunities for more collaborative problem-solving:

- **Hockey Canada** should provide mediation and other collaborative conflict resolution education, resources and tools to Members, Regions and MHAs so they have early and low-barrier access to these resources, before problems and conflict becomes escalated and costly;

- **Hockey Canada** should ensure that new Learning and Development Plan materials being phased in starting in spring 2025, include or add a targeted video series explaining conflict resolution, complaint mechanisms and their scope for caregivers, coaches, and the MHA (including information about the legal duty to report child abuse). These videos could target MHAs, coaches, leaders and caregivers, to help address confusion about where to bring complaints, and what is in or out of scope;

- **Hockey Canada** should ensure all ITP processes and practitioners are trauma-informed; and

- **Hockey Canada** should consider providing enhanced online mental health resources that parties involved in complaints and conflict resolution mechanisms can access to improve their experience and ensure they are supported in an appropriate, trauma-informed manner.

7. Defined Terms and Resources

"A Competing Values Approach to Organizational Effectiveness."	Quinn, Robert E., and John Rohrbaugh. 1981. "A Competing Values Approach to Organizational Effectiveness." *Public Productivity Review* 5, no. 2 (June): 122-140. https://doi.org/10.2307/3380029.
"Abuse in sport: Bad apples or bad barrels?"	Roberts, Dr Victoria, and Dr Victor Sojo. 2020. "Abuse in sport: Bad apples or bad barrels?" *Pursuit*, January 7, 2020. https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/abuse-in-sport-bad-apples-or-bad-barrels.
"Background Screening/ Criminal Record Checks | Hockey Alberta | Officials Committee."	"Background Screening/ Criminal Record Checks | Hockey Alberta | Officials Committee." Hockey Alberta - Officials. https://officials.hockeyalberta.ca/register/criminal-record-checks/.
"Beyond the Boards Summit 2024 Post-Event Report."	Hockey Canada. 2024. "Beyond the Boards Summit 2024 Post-Event Report." *Hockey Canada*. https://beyondtheboardssummit.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/2024-beyond-the-boards-summit-post-event-report-e.pdf.
"Children's Rights in Sports and	Idrettsforbund, Nores. 2007. "Children's Rights in Sports and Provisions on Children's Sports." Norwegian Olympic and

Provisions on Children's Sports."	Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF). https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Childrens-Right-to-Sport-in-Norway.pdf.
"Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guide."	Hockey Canada. "Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guide." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Downloads/dressing-room-policy-implementation-guide-e.pdf.
"Hockey in Canadian Provinces & Territories Membership statistics from Hockey Canada."	SPRATT School of Business Carleton University, François Brouard, Marc Pilon, and Andrew Webb. 2023. "Hockey in Canadian Provinces & Territories Membership statistics from Hockey Canada." https://carleton.ca/profbrouard/wp-content/uploads/PARGnote202318RNHockeyprovincesmembership20230115FBMPAW.pdf.
"How Norway Won All That Olympic Gold (Again)."	Andersen, Inge, Øyvind Sandbakk, and Johann O. Koss. 2022. "How Norway Won All That Olympic Gold (Again)." *Aspen Institute*, February 23, 2022. https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/how-norway-won-all-that-olympic-gold-again/
"Making NHL A Very Long Shot."	Kalchman, Lois. 2003. "Making NHL A Very Long Shot." *Hockey Canada*, January 25, 2003. https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/news/2003-gn-001-en.

"Maltreatment in Youth Sport: A Systemic Issue."	Kerr, Gretchen, Anthony Battaglia, and Ashley Stirling. 2019. "Maltreatment in Youth Sport: A Systemic Issue." *Kinesiology Review* 8, no. 3 (August): 237-243. 10.1123/kr.2019-0016.
"NCCP Make Ethical Decisions."	"NCCP Make Ethical Decisions." 2020. Coaching Association of Canada. https://coach.ca/module/nccp-make-ethical-decisions.
"Organisational factors and non-accidental violence in sport: A systematic review."	Sojo, Victor, and Felix Grant. 2019. "Organisational factors and non-accidental violence in sport: A systematic review." *Sport Management Review* 23, no. 1 (April): 8-27. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2019.03.001.
"Six reasons for sports disputes to be public."	Marco, Nick. 2024. "Six reasons for sports disputes to be public." *Blackstone Chambers*, July 17, 2024. https://www.sportslawbulletin.org/six-reasons-for-sports-disputes-to-be-public/
2019 Culture of Excellence in High-Performance Sport	Government of Canada. 2019. "2019 Canadian High-Performance Sport Strategy." https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/sport-policies-acts-regulations/high-performance-strategy.html
2019 Prevalence Study	Kerr, Gretchen, Erin Wilson, Ashley Stirling, and AthletesCAN. 2019. "Prevalence of Maltreatment Among Current and Former National Team Athletes." https://athletescan.ca/wp-

	content/uploads/2014/03/prevalence_of_maltreatment_reporteng.pdf.
2021-22 Tracking Discrimination in Hockey - Rule 11.4	Hockey Canada. 2022. "Tracking Discrimination in Hockey Rule 11.4 2021-2022." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2021-22-discrimination-report-e.pdf
2022 Cromwell Review	Cromwell, The Honourable T. 2022. "Final Report Hockey Canada Governance Review." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/action-plan/downloads/2022-hockey-canada-governance-review-final-report-e.pdf
2022-23 Maltreatment Report	Hockey Canada. 2023. "Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey 2022-2023." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2022-23-maltreatment-report-e.pdf
2023 McLaren Report	McLaren Global Sport Solutions. 2023. "A Framework for Change: How to Achieve a Culture Shift for Gymnastics in Canada." https://www.mclarenglobalsportsolutions.com/pdf/Gymnastics-Report-Jan-22-2023.pdf
2023 Time to Listen to Survivors Report	Vecchio, Karen. 2023. "Time to Listen to Survivors Report: Taking Action Towards Creating a Safe Sport Environment for All Athletes in Canada, Report to the Standing Committee on

	the Status of Women." https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/FEWO/Reports/RP12528102/feworp07/feworp07-e.pdf
2023-24 Annual Report	Hockey Canada. 2024. "Hockey Canada Annual Report 2023-2024." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2023-24-hockey-canada-annual-report-e.pdf
2023-24 ITP Report	PSC. 2024. "Annual Report 2023-2024." https://sportcomplaints.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/ENGLISH-HC-Annual-Report-2023-2024.pdf.
2024 Safe Sport Report	Fry, Hon. Hedy. 2024. "Safe Sport in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage." https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/CHPC/Reports/RP13203713/chpcrp12/chpcrp12-e.pdf.
Abuse-Free Sport Program	Abuse Free Sport: Home. https://abuse-free-sport.ca/
Action Plan to Improve Canada's Game	Hockey Canada. 2022. "Action Plan: Shatter the Code of Silence and Eliminate Toxic Behaviour In and Around Canada's Game." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/action-plan/hockey-canada-action-plan--e.pdf
Activity Leaders	Coaches and others who engage with players and support sports programming

Aspen Institute's Project Play	https://projectplay.org/theory-of-change
Assessor	Kyra Hudson, Independent Assessor appointed by the OSIC
AthletesCAN	AthletesCAN: Home. https://athletescan.ca/
BCHL	British Columbia Hockey League
Beyond the Boards Summit	Beyond the Boards Summit https://beyondtheboardssummit.ca
Board	Hockey Canada Board of Directors
CAAT	Culture of Excellence Assessment and Audit Tool
CCES	Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport: Home. https://cces.ca/
CCES Governance Essentials Training	Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport: Governance Essentials. https://cces.ca/governance-essentials
CHL	Canadian Hockey League governs Major Junior (the highest) level of junior hockey in Canada. The CHL's member leagues include: Ontario Hockey League (OHL), Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL), Western Hockey League (WHL) Canadian Hockey League. https://chl.ca/.

CHPC 2024 Safe Sport Report	Fry, Hon. Hedy. 2024. "Safe Sport in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage." https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/CHPC/Reports/RP13203713/chpcrp12/chpcrp12-e.pdf
CJHL	Canadian Junior Hockey League
COC	Canadian Olympic Committee
COC - NSO Governance Series	Canadian Sport Governance Code-NSO Sharing Centre. 2023. https://nso.olympic.ca/canadian-sport-governance-code/
Committee/ CHPC	The House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage: Home. https://www.ourcommons.ca/Committees/en/CHPC
COPSIN	Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network
CPC	Canadian Paralympic Committee
CSSP	Canadian Safe Sport Program
Discussion Guide	Document provided by the OSIC to guide the goals and scope of the SEA
Document Review	SEA Phase One process to review an inventory of relevant literature about the Canadian Hockey ecosystem
EDI Path Forward	Hockey Canada. 2023. "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Path Forward: Our Commitment to Action." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-

	canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2023-edi-path-forward-e.pdf
Future of Sport in Canada Commission	Government of Canada. "The Future of Sport in Canada Commission." 2024. Canada.ca. https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/future-sport.html.
Grassroots Index	Innerlogic YSCI survey adapted for grassroots hockey participants
Guidance Group	
HC Index	Innerlogic HCI survey adapted for Hockey Canada Board Members and employees
HCI	Innerlogic's Holistic Culture Index
Hockey Alberta Background Screening and Criminal Record Checks for On-ice Officials	"Background Screening/Criminal Record Checks Hockey Alberta Officials Committee." Hockey Alberta - Officials. https://officials.hockeyalberta.ca/register/criminal-record-checks/.
Hockey Canada	Hockey Canada. "The Official Website of Hockey Canada." Hockey Canada. https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/home.

Hockey Canada Non-Sanctioned Leagues Policy	Fraser, Hugh, and Katherine Henderson. 2023. "Hockey Canada: Non-Sanctioned Leagues- Leagues Operating Outside the Auspices of Hockey Canada." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2023-non-sanctioned-leagues-policy-e.pdf.
Hockey Canada Safety Programs	https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/~/hockey-programs/safety
Hockey for All documentary	Douglas, Gelevan, December 2024. "Hockey for All." https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/hockey-for-all/id1010707562?i=1000682741805&l=fr-CA
IIHF	IIHF - Home. https://www.iihf.com/.
Index	When referring to the (HC Index, Members Index, Grassroots Index) collectively
Innerlogic	innerlogic: Home. https://innerlogic.com/
ITP	PSC. "Independent Safe Sport Complaints." https://sportcomplaints.ca/.
Learning and Development Plan	Hockey Canada's new Learning and Development Plan for Safe Sport training delivery to Activity Leaders and caregivers to begin launching in spring 2025
Maltreatment Policy	Hockey Canada. 2023. "Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-

	Programs/Safety/Safety-Program/Downloads/maltreatment%20complaint-management-policy-e.pdf.
Members	Provincial Member Branch (Provincial Sport Organization) Duly constituted provincial, regional or territorial associations/federations that are responsible for the management of amateur hockey within their geographic region (not various stakeholders within HC)
Members Index	Innerlogic HCI survey adapted for Member Branch Board Members and employees
MHA	Minor Hockey Associations
NHL	National Hockey League
NSO	National Sport Organization
OHL	Ontario Hockey League
OSIC	Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner: Home. https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/.
OSIC SEA Guidelines	OSIC. 2022. "OSIC Guidelines Regarding Sport Environment Assessments." https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/files/OSIC_Guidelines_Regarding_Sport_Environment_Assessment_updated_version_July_2023_final_draft_EN.pdf?_t=1691693286.

OTP	Own the Podium
P/TSO	Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization
Participants	Individuals who participated in SEA
Phase One	The first phase of the SEA in which the SEA scope and engagement plan was determined, and the Phase One Report was published by the OSIC on July 3, 2024 https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/files/2024-07-03_OSIC_Sport_Environment_Assessment_Report_Hockey_Canada_Phase_1.pdf
Phase Two	The second engagement phase of the SEA
QMJHL	Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League
Red Deer Declaration	CICS. 2019. "Red Deer Declaration-For the Prevention of Harassment, Abuse, and Discrimination in Sport.". https://scics.ca/en/product-produit/red-deer-declaration-for-the-prevention-of-harassment-abuse-and-discrimination-in-sport/.
Regions	Geographic subdivisions within a Member Branch - also known as districts
Representation Model	Developed by SEA Team as a guide to ensure diverse Participant representation in SEA
Research Matrix	SEA research and query guide - Attached at Appendix D

Respect in Sport	Respect Group. "Respect in Sport." https://www.respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-sport/.
Risk Factor Framework	Developed to provide a framework to consider systemic risk of maltreatment - Sources attached at Appendix D
Rule 11	Hockey Canada's Playing Rules: Rule 11 - Maltreatment "SECTION 11 - MALTREATMENT." In *Hockey Canada Playing Rules*, 15th ed., 138–45. Ottawa, Ontario: Hockey Canada, 2024. https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Officiating/Downloads/2024-26-hc-rulebook-e.pdf
SEA	Sport Environment Assessment
SEA Phase One Report	Hudson, Kyra. 2024. "Hockey Canada and Hockey in Canada, Sport Environment Assessment: Phase One Assessment Report."https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/files/2024-07-03_OSIC_Sport_Environment_Assessment_Report_Hockey_Canada_Phase_1.pdf.
SEA Team	A team of process and subject-matter specialists who supported the work of the SEA
SIRC	Sport Information Resource Centre
SIRC Position Statement	Canadian Culture of Excellence in High-Performance Sport – Position Statement

	SIRC. *Canadian Culture of Excellence in High-Performance Sport Position Statement.* SIRC, 2021. https://sirc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CULTURE-OF-EXCELLENCE-POSITION-STATEMENT.pdf
Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, and Violence against Women.	DeKeseredy, Walter S., Stu Cowan, Martin D. Schwartz, Heather Mallick, and Jack Todd. 2023. *Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, and Violence against Women.* University of Toronto Press. https://utppublishing.com/doi/book/10.3138/9781487547103.
Sport Canada	A branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage that develops federal sport policy, provides funding, and administers special projects related to sport
The 9 Needs	A summary of the recurring themes and essential questions and challenges identified by the SEA in Phase One of the SEA
The evolution of elite hockey culture in Canada: A scoping literature review	Fowler, Dr. Teresa A. 2023. "The evolution of elite hockey culture in Canada: A scoping literature review." https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/Events/Downloads/beyond-the-boards-executive-summary-en.pdf
U Sports	The national governing body for university sports in Canada

UCCMS	Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC). 2022. "Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport." https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/files/UCCMS-v6.0-20220531.pdf
Validation Workshop	A workshop to test what was heard during the SEA
WHL	Western Hockey League
YSCI	Innerlogic's Youth Sport Culture Index

8. Appendices

| Appendix	Name
A	SEA Website
B	SEA Data and Privacy Policy
C	Beyond the Boards Summit post event report
D	Research Matrix
E	SEA communication material produced for Member Branch Assembly
F	Full list of questions asked in the HC Index, Members Index, and Grassroots Index
G	Question matching tool
H	Sources relied upon in development of Risk Factor Framework

Appendix A

If we better understand the areas of hockey culture connected to the risks of maltreatment, we can do better to prevent it.

Learn More   Take the Survey
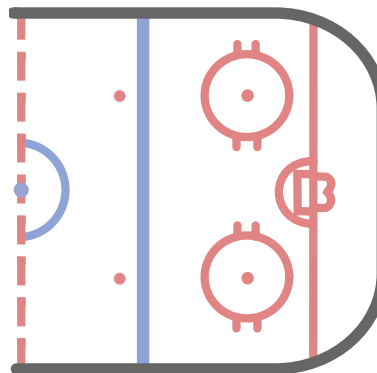
Tell me what's this about...

The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) has tasked an independent assessment team to conduct a Sport Environment Assessment (SEA) of Hockey Canada and hockey in Canada.

This SEA, part of the Abuse-Free Sport Program, aims to both address and prevent maltreatment, discrimination and other prohibited behaviour related to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS).

An SEA is designed to identify and remedy system issues, moving towards a culture of safety and well-being in the sport.

More information is available about OSIC and SEAs here.

What's Next

These are the big steps of the process

01   **The Hockey Culture Index – Hockey Canada**   This survey aims to understand the organizational culture within Hockey Canada by inviting participation from employees and Board Members
Mid-September 2024

02   **The Hockey Culture Index – Member Branches**   This survey aims to understand the organizational culture within each Member Branch across Canada.
October 2024

03   **The Hockey Participant Culture Index**   This survey is designed to capture the perspectives and experiences of grassroots hockey participants and youth.
Late October 2024

04   **Semi-Structured Interviews**   Interviews with a range of participants representing different parts of hockey across Canada.
Fall 2024

05   **Confirmation Workshops**   Presentations of what was heard during the survey and interview processes with SEA participants.
Winter 2025

06   **Guidance Group**   Review and deliberations of SEA observations with the SEA Guidance Group
Ongoing

07   **SEA Report**   Submission of SEA Report documenting process, observations, and recommendations to OSIC for publishing
Spring 2025

External Links

- Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner ↗
- Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport ↗
- Hockey Canada ↗

Other Links

- Data and Privacy Policy
- Comment Form

Appendix B

Hockey Canada and Hockey in Canada:
Sport Environmental Assessment (SEA):
Data and Privacy Policy

Assessor:
Kyra Hudson, Assessor
Toll-free: 1-833-974-1281

Subject: Attention Privacy
Email: info@sea-hockey-ems.ca

SEA: Key Stakeholders and Role

Organization	Role
OSIC	The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) administers the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) as part of the Abuse-Free Sport program and operates as an independent division of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC)
Hockey Canada	Signatory to Abuse-Free Sport program, OSIC and UCCMS
Kyra Hudson and the SEA team	Appointed by OSIC to conduct SEA
Innerlogic	Appointed by SEA team to conduct SEA survey engagement

General Information
What is this document?
This is the Data Collection and Privacy Statement for the SEA. It details how the Assessor and SEA team will work with, manage, and protect the information gathered from SEA participants (i.e., surveys, registrations, interviews, emails, etc.)

This document was informed by the following policies:
- OSIC Confidentiality Policy
- OSIC Guidelines Regarding Sport Environment Assessments
- SDRCC Protection of Privacy Policy

What is a Sport Environment Assessment (SEA)?
SEAs serve a dual function in both addressing and preventing maltreatment, discrimination and other prohibited behaviour related to the UCCMS. A SEA is designed to identify and remedy alleged systemic issues in a sport. All national sports organizations in Canada, including Hockey Canada, are signatories to OSIC and may be subject to a SEA. SEAs are carried out by experienced third-party neutrals who are Members of the Abuse-Free Sport Unit of Independent Assessors.

What is the purpose of this SEA?
The sport of hockey plays a significant role in Canadian culture and communities, shaping the lives of millions of Canadians each year — as we all know. While there has been considerable work undertaken in recent years to improve the sport's culture and practices, the SEA is an opportunity to comprehensively examine and understand the experiences of Canadian hockey participants, in different parts of the hockey ecosystem. By identifying systemic issues that contribute to, or prevent maltreatment, the SEA aims to inform and recommend actions that support well-being as part of a safer sport environment in hockey.

Why do we need your information?
A key part of the SEA is talking to people involved in hockey and understanding participants' experiences. To do this, we need to collect some basic information from participants so we can contact them, then gather and document their hockey experiences. It's important that we keep everyone's identity and information private. This way, people feel safe sharing their experiences honestly, knowing their personal details won't be revealed.

The goals of data or privacy protections of this SEA are:
- to ensure that participants' personal and private information shared during the SEA is protected;
- to ensure that there are reasonable options for participants' data to be removed/deleted upon their request;
- to mitigate the risks of participants' identities being discovered after the SEA process is completed;
- To detail how the participants' information will be collected, stored, used, secured, and then deleted after the completed SEA process.

How will participant data and information be used?
The primary reasons data is collected are to:
- communicate with participants;
- collect information about participants' experiences and perceptions.

Different levels of participation require different levels of data collection. Below is a list of examples of the data collected based on the action.
- **Website visitor:** IP address, date/time, and cookies for traffic engagement analysis.
- **SEA hotline and email:** phone number via call display; voicemail messages; name, email, phone number and other contact information (if applicable).

- **SEA survey/questionnaire/interview forms:** gender, age bracket, basic demographic information, attitudinal information, etc..
- **SEA email/interview outreach:** name, email, province, organization (if applicable).
- **General Correspondence:** name, phone number, address, email, organization (if applicable).
- In addition to the above, general information about participants' opinions will be collected throughout the project.

Data Deletion

Participants who provide their data (name, email, and other identifiable information) have a right to have this data securely deleted.

Please email the Assessor with your concerns and request to:

Subject: Attention Data Deletion
Email: info@sea-hockey-ems.ca

Data Protection Best Practices

All personal information (volunteer demographics, contact information, etc.) collected through the SEA work will be stored securely and only accessed as needed for the SEA team in compliance with the OSIC's and/or Abuse-Free Sport's policies and in compliance with the requirements of legislation and professional legal obligations. No personal information will be shared with the OSIC or Hockey Canada.

The SEA team will work to ensure that the data collected is correct and up-to-date reasonably. Once the SEA has been completed, data will be anonymized, and personal data will be securely deleted/destroyed. SEA team members will never ask for, collect, or store government identification data, such as driver's licenses, social security information, health care numbers, or financial information such as credit card information.

SEA team members will be actively transparent with participants and stakeholders if there are any suspected or actual data compromises or privacy breaches.

Our focus is protecting participants' personal information while ensuring they can participate in the engagement process.

Breach of Data
If the SEA team becomes aware of a suspected or actual data compromise or privacy breach, the assessor (named above) will inform:
- OSIC immediately;
- affected participants; and,
- as required, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (or the appropriate authority) of the scope and type of breach.

Training and Review
- All SEA team members will read and understand this policy and be trained in the use of the best practices listed below;
- Privacy and data policies will be reviewed with SEA team members and

- This data collection and privacy document will be reviewed, updated, and refined regularly throughout the active SEA as needed.

Data Locations and Services

Project Website Hosting (WIX / USA): WIX provides website hosting services for this project.

<u>Note</u>:
- The project website collects data to help understand website traffic: information about the user's browser, network, and device; web pages visited before coming to this website; and the user's IP address.
- This information may include details about your website use, including clicks, internal links, pages visited, scrolling, searches, and timestamps.
- [WIX's privacy policy.](#)

Form Hosting (simplesurvey.com / Canada): Simplesurveys.ca provides online survey, questionnaire, and form hosting.
This provider uses data storage servers located in Canada, as part of its business model based on working with public institutions and government clients within Canada that require Canadian hosting services. Data is secured in transit and at rest. The provider is compliant with applicable privacy and data protection legislation.

<u>Note</u>:
- Time stamps and IP addresses are collected on the form for security purposes — these are deleted during survey/questionnaire/form analysis.
- Personal information is collected if offered by participants — this can range from postal code information to age brackets and other information related to the selected representative participants of the Citizens' Assembly.
- Limited team member access.
- [Simple Survey's privacy policy](#)

Online Survey ([innerlogic.ca](#) / Canada): [innerlogic.ca](#) provides online survey/questionnaire design and hosting for sports-focused organizations.
This provider uses data storage servers located in Canada as part of its business model, which is based on working with public institutions and government clients within Canada that require Canadian hosting services. Data is secured in transit and at rest. The provider is compliant with applicable privacy and data protection legislation.
<u>Note</u>:
- Time stamps and IP addresses are collected on the survey/questionnaire for diagnostic purposes.
- Emails may be collected to provide a link to the survey/questionnaire — emails are never linked to a respondent's survey data.
- Limited team members have access to survey data.
- [Inner Logic's privacy policy](#)

Interview Analysis (condens.io / Germany): Condens.io provides an online platform so textual data (interview data in this case) can be tagged and analyzed.

Condens ensures the security and privacy of sensitive data by complying with GDPR, HIPAA, CCPA, and APA regulations. Data is secured in transit and at rest. Condens is SOC 2 Type 2 compliant demonstrating enterprise-level security for our customers' data. Data confidentiality is a key value of their business model.

> Note:
> ● Identifiable interviewee information (name, contact information) will be removed before being uploaded to Condens. Demographic and other categorical information will be coded to obscure it as identifiable information.
> ● Condens.io's privacy policy and their security information.

Business Services Hosting (Google / USA): Secure file, calendaring, and email hosting service.

> Note:
> ● Zero participant information is stored on Google Drive for analysis and SEA use; for example, calendar invitations may contain names, phone numbers, and email addresses.
> ● Participants will be encouraged not to share personal information such as demographics or other personal information via email.
> ● Limited team member access.
> ● Google's data/privacy statement.

Business Services Hosting (Microsoft / Canada): Secure file, calendaring, and email hosting service.

> Note:
> ● Limited participant information is stored on Microsoft for analysis and SEA use; for example, calendar invitations may contain names, phone numbers, and email addresses.
> ● Participants will be encouraged not to share personal information such as demographics or other personal information via email.
> ● Limited team member access.
> ● Microsoft's data/privacy statement.

Secure Information Online Transfers (Sync.com / Canada): Two-step password-protected, HTTPS-protected online transfers that are encrypted at rest and in transit with all storage located in Canada.

> Note:
> ● Non-anonymized participant information is stored on Sync as a backup for analysis and project use.
> ● Limited team member access.
> ● Sync.com's data/privacy statement.

SEA Team Computers: Sensitive data is not locally stored on team computers.

> Note:
> ● Laptops are password-protected and stored securely.

Online Meetings (Zoom.com / Canadian Servers): For online video meetings, Canadian data centers are used for meeting/webinar/whiteboard/note data.

> Note:
- For more information about Zoom users or meeting attendee's data and privacy go to Zoom to read more.

Phone Lines (Voip.ms / Canada): This service assesses voice over IP phone lines and voicemail services. It collects call history—phone numbers and dates—for billing and diagnostic purposes. VOIP.ms's data infrastructure is international, as it provides phone services.

> Note:
- Limited project team member access to data and voicemails.

Sharing of Information

Information collected during the SEA will be used on an anonymous basis. Your personal information will not be shared unless:

- A participant discloses the intent to harm; or
- To report information as required by law (including a child protection concern); or
- A participant authorizes us to do so.

Upon Completion of the Project
- Upon the completion of the SEA and the public publication of the final report, all participant data collected will be deidentified (names and contact information removed).
- Any data and information transferred to the OSIC will be provided in aggregate form to protect participants' identities.

Version 1.0 EN: September 5, 2024

This English copy is the true copy.

—end—

Appendix C

Beyond the Boards Summit 2024 Post-Event Report

The second Beyond the Boards Summit, held in Ottawa on November 14–15, 2024, brought together over 120 diverse stakeholders from across Canada and beyond to address critical issues in hockey culture, focusing on inclusivity, safety, and meaningful change. The summit spotlighted sexism, gender-based violence, homophobia, and transphobia.

Speakers included Normand Hector and Mark Tewksbury, with panellists sharing personal and lived experiences related to the themes of the 2024 summit. The summit also facilitated dialogue and active engagement, aiming to identify strategies for fostering positive cultural shifts within the sport, both on and off the ice. According to feedback from the post-summit survey for BTB2024 (n=68):

"We must continue to listen and learn and use our collective strength to make the necessary change."

- Katherine Henderson

76%
of survey respondents said the summit either met or exceeded their expectations.

97%
of survey respondents said the summit either significantly or somewhat broadened their knowledge and awareness of the issues that were discussed.

94%
of survey respondents said the summit has inspired them to change personally, professionally, and/or organizationally.

"That's where it all started, by me talking to hockey coaches and them hearing me and not listening to judge, but listening to understand."

- Normand Hector

Participants identified the following tools/supports needed to help them in their journey to change hockey culture:

49%
want resources they can use to share their learning with others.

26%
want to be better equipped to become a positive change agent in a hypermasculine environment.

21%
want supports and education that can help them be a better listener, as well as intervene when they witness unhealthy behaviours.

"You should be an ally...it's not that you can make a difference, but you should make a difference."

- Brian Burke

Mentimeter was used at this year's summit to enhance real-time audience engagement and foster meaningful discussions. At the summit's start and end, attendees were asked to rate their competence in ensuring inclusion and safety for LGBTQ2S+ individuals in hockey.

- Attendees indicated a slight increase (3.1 to 3.5 out of 5), highlighting a moderate level of self-assessed competence among participants during the summit.

- Insights captured during these discussions revealed critical themes and opportunities for addressing barriers to inclusion.

"Sometimes it's tiring to advocate for yourself [...] But to have somebody else [advocate] for you is a really big gift."

- Harrison Browne

Beyond the Summit: A Roadmap for Action

The Beyond the Boards Summit serves as a powerful catalyst for cultural transformation in hockey, addressing critical barriers and opportunities for inclusivity. By prioritizing storytelling, education, and actionable outcomes, the event lays the groundwork for systemic change. Three broad themes have emerged from the BTB Summits hosted so far, which are shaping the BTB Roadmap to Action:

Community & Relationship Building	Policy & Governance	Education & Awareness

While we have more listening to do, the intent is to take combined learnings through the BTB summits, and other initiatives occurring in parallel, to build a playbook that contains actions to drive culture change. The figure below highlights the current state of the BTB Road Map to Action, based on content and themes captured from BTB summit one and two.

Summit 1 (2023): Masculinity & Leadership

Community & Relationship Building
Introduce opportunities to incorporate healthy masculinity.

Policy & Governance
Challenge traditional norms and foster a culture of inclusion

Education & Awareness
Create resources and tools to support interrupting negative behaviours.

Summit 2 (2024): Sexism, Homophobia & Transphobia

Community & Relationship Building
Fostering relationships within the hockey community, engaging stakeholders, and creating spaces for listening and feedback to ensure broad-based representation and inclusivity.

Policy & Governance
A structured approach, including policies around maltreatment, growth and retention, EDI, Safety, etc. emphasizing institutional accountability and sustainable change.

Education & Awareness
Encompasses efforts related to learning and development, maltreatment, and fostering knowledge about EDI principles to cultivate a better understanding and informed behaviors within hockey culture.

Summit 3 (2025): Racism & Anti-racism

Theme A	Theme B	Theme C

beyond the boards summit
hosted by
Collective actions to change the culture of hockey

Appendix D

Areas Name	Description	Larger Query	Example Research Questions - (these are samples only and not complete.)
Clear Roles and Responsibilities	Who is responsible for what when it comes to Coordination and a shared sense of purpose for culture change across the Hockey ecosystem? (note this theme is crosscutting all five themes)	oHow to best establish a shared understanding of the governance relationship between Hockey Canada's Board, Executive, Member Branches and participants, to clarify who is responsible for what? oWhat words and actions need to be carried to demonstrate a shared sense of purpose for culture change out at all levels of Hockey in Canada (ie Hockey Canada, Member Branches, and participants)? oHow can Hockey Canada play a more effective role in supporting the implementation work carried out by each provincial participant organization? Are Programs and initiatives for safer sport understandable and accessible at the grassroots level?	o What Programs and initiatives for safer sport are available in your minor / community hockey association? Which ones are readily or frequently used? (ie// Code of Conduct, Education or training, Dressing Room Policy, formal complaint system, other) o To what extent to have the support and tools you need from Hockey Canada to implement the initatives most relevant to the safety and well being for players and families in your commnity?
Accountability and Leadership	Understanding the accountabilities and leadership (influence) of stakeholders within the hockey ecosystem; What does an effective commitment from leadership look like to achieve well-being and a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience with strong accountability and safeguarding mechanisms in place?	o What actions can Hockey Canada take to visibly demonstrate its commitment to addressing maltreatment internally? oHow can participant and public trust in Hockey Canada be strengthened through improved accountability, listening and communicating transparently on plans and progress? oHow can complaint mechanisms and/or sanctions for bad behaviour on the part of any participant in a Member Branch or Hockey Canada be more effectively applied (for example, a stepwise process) to ensure Hockey Canada and participants are accountable to policies and commitments? oHow can a restorative approach for incidences of maltreatment be effectively implemented, with a goal of repairing harm and preventing future harm? oWhat factors and dynamics allow for improving safety systems, reporting and safeguarding behaviours? (ie// strengthened ITP with restorative, educational and dialogue based approaches as well as sanctions) oIs there a research or data gathering strategy around collecting relevant maltreatment information in a way that is comparable and consistent over time, year over year, in a robust, statistically reliable way? (for example, the Hockey Canada 2023 Maltreatment Report) oWhat steps are needed to ensure that there is learning from the data collected and analyzed, to translate to meaningful action? oWho (Member Branches, Hockey Canada, other) would implement changes in each respective area?	o How are incidents of harm or maltreatment handled in (your, your child's team)? Are formal complaints made? Is there dialogue or efforts made to repair harm or prevent future incidents? o Have you received data on maltreatment incidents in your Branch from Hockey Canada, what steps were taken to learn from this information and translate it into action?
Communication and Education	Understanding the communications and educations approach in the hockey ecosystem; how can gaps be addressed to build a unified and consistent approach to communication, education, and training to prevent maltreatment in hockey?	oWhat mechanisms are in place or can be established for Hockey Canada to effectively report on progress on initiatives to prevent maltreatment and support safety? (including the Hockey Canada EDI Path Forward and the Action Plan, implementation of Cromwell Report recommendations, and other approaches in Sport Safety, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?) oHow clear is it to Member Branches and their participant organizations what initiatives are underway to prevent maltreatment and support well-being? oWhat are opportunities for dialogue between Hockey Canada, Member Branches, and athletes and stakeholders to share their experiences, learn from initiatives that are working and enact change? oIs the UCCMS, to which Hockey Canada is a signatory, widely understood across Hockey Canada's Member Branches and the hockey ecosystem? To what extent are the rights of athletes and resulting obligations in the document understood? oWhat is working and what is not working when it comes to coordinating the approach to communication, education, and training to prevent maltreatment across the participant organizations? oHow can coach education better integrate a culture of well-being alongside technical skills? oWhat tools are effective at the team/minor hockey level in preventing maltreatment (ie // Team charters, education that focuses on how maltreatment incidents might affect others on a personal/human level, coach audit at minor hockey level)? oWhat resources and training can be provided to parents to influence their children's conduct to align with a culture of well-being	oHave you had the opportunity to discuss at your Member Branch or minor hockey association your experiences or lessons about what is working and what is not re sport safety and well being of players? oTo what extent are coaches in your teams or organizations educated in order provide an environment that supports well-being alongside technical skills? oWhat tools do you see as effective at the team/minor hockey level in preventing maltreatment (ie // Team charters, education that focuses on how maltreatment incidents might affect others on a personal/human level, coach audit at minor hockey level, other)? oHave you come across ay resources and training can be provided to parents to influence their children's conduct to align with a culture of well-being?
Cultural Change	Understanding the culture in respective parts of the Hockey ecosystem and potential opportunities for change; How can the hockey community across the country establish a shared sense of purpose (collective attitudes - people and performance dimensions) and responsibility to strive towards a culture of well-being, that prevents maltreatment?	oWhat cultural initiatives can unify all Hockey Canada Member Branches and minor hockey leagues to shift towards a culture that supports well-being? oHow can the existing relationships and participant engagement strategy between Hockey Canada and participant organizations be used to ensure a coordinated approach to culture change throughout the system? oCan the Action Plan be revisited as a shared approach together with participants? oHow effectively are Hockey Canada, Member Branches and grassroots hockey organizations signaling that hockey welcomes participants from all backgrounds? oTo what extent does a pervasive focus on performance contribute to maltreatment? oWhat balance can be achieved between performance goals and maltreatment prevention to foster a healthier sporting environment? oWho (Member Branches, Hockey Canada, other is responsible for what when it comes to culture change? Who is in the best position to make culture change in each respective area?	oHow does your organization signal that it welcomes participants from all backgrounds? oTo what extent do maltreatment incidences increase or stay the same in recreational hockey compared to competitive hockey? oWhat balance can be achieved between performance goals and maltreatment prevention to foster a healthier sporting environment? oHow do you as a (local, provincial) organization work to create a culture that supports pyschological and physical safety? Have you seen any changes in recent years? oAre the policies that help you promote safety and well being in your organization or team accessible to use day-to-day when encountering an issue and needing to engage with it (for example, a complaint process)?
Policy Development, Clarity and Effective Implementation	How can policy gaps be addressed to establish greater policy clarity, in order to provide thought leadership and consistency to all Member Branches?	oWhat is an enabler or a barrier to a common set of Safe Sport policies from being adopted by Member Branches? (aligned with UCCMS). oWhat steps can be taken to identify and close policy gaps and ensure consistency and clarity across member branches? oAre the policies accessible and consistent for Member Branches and participants to use day-to-day when encountering an issue and needing to engage with it (for example, a complaint process)? oIs Hockey Canada's policy development process: ⬜Effective? ⬜Transparent? ⬜Effectively involving Member Branches, with clarity on how their participation shaped the respective policy? oHow can the gap between policy development related to the UCCMS and achieving results on the ground be bridged? oHow can Hockey Canada implement system learning to identify gaps and regularly improve policies and practices related to maltreatment? oWho (Member Branches, Hockey Canada, other) is responsible for addressing respective policy gaps? Who implements changes in each respective area?	

Appendix E

Hockey Sport Environment Assessment
Hockey Évaluation du Milieu Sportif

Hockey Canada and Hockey in Canada

Sport Environment Assessment

Who is this document for?

Hockey Canada Member Branches.

What is this document for?

This is a briefing document for Hockey Canada Member Branches. Specifically this document will be used to inform a discussion <u>with two asks</u> for the September 6, 2024 session.

What is OSIC?

The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) administers the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) as part of the Abuse-Free Sport program. The OSIC operates as an independent division of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) which is empowered through Federal Bill-C-12.

What is a Sport Environment Assessment (SEA)?

SEAs serve a dual function in both addressing and preventing maltreatment, discrimination and other prohibited behaviour related to the UCCMS. A SEA is designed to identify and remedy alleged systemic issues in a sport.

All national sports organizations in Canada, including Hockey Canada, are signatories to OSIC and may be subject to an SEA. These Assessments are carried out by experienced third-party neutrals who are Members of the Abuse-Free Sport Unit of Independent Assessors.

Who is the OSIC-assigned Assessor of this SEA?

Kyra Hudson has been appointed as the Lead Assessor for this SEA. Kyra is a lawyer, mediator, and investigator focused on supporting the development of respectful, high-functioning organizations. She has served in the Abuse-Free Sport Unit of Independent Assessors since 2022 and will be supported by a small SEA team.

What is the purpose of this SEA?

The sport of hockey plays a significant role in Canadian culture and communities, shaping the lives of millions of Canadians each year — as we all know.

While there has been considerable work undertaken in recent years to improve the sport's culture and practices, the SEA is an opportunity to comprehensively examine and understand the experiences of Canadian hockey participants, in different parts of the hockey eco-system.

By identifying systemic issues that contribute to, or prevent maltreatment, the SEA aims to inform and recommend actions that support well-being as part of a safer sport environment in hockey.

SEA Phase One: Scoping

Phase One aimed to assess the current hockey landscape and existing efforts to prevent maltreatment. This phase involved:

- Reviewing relevant literature, policies, and documents.

- Engaging a group of hockey experts (the "Guidance Group") to: Inform the development of questions for the SEA and to identify the appropriate audience for these questions.

The Guidance Group will continue to provide input at key points throughout the SEA process

Phase One of the SEA has been completed. OSIC published a summary report of this phase on its website on July 3, 2024.

The diagram below sets out the steps in Phase 2 of the SEA.

Hockey Canada & Member Branches Assessment Survey

Grassroots + Youth Assessment Survey

Semi-Structured Interviews

Confirmation Workshops

Guidance Group

**SEA Report
Process, Observations,
& Recommendations**
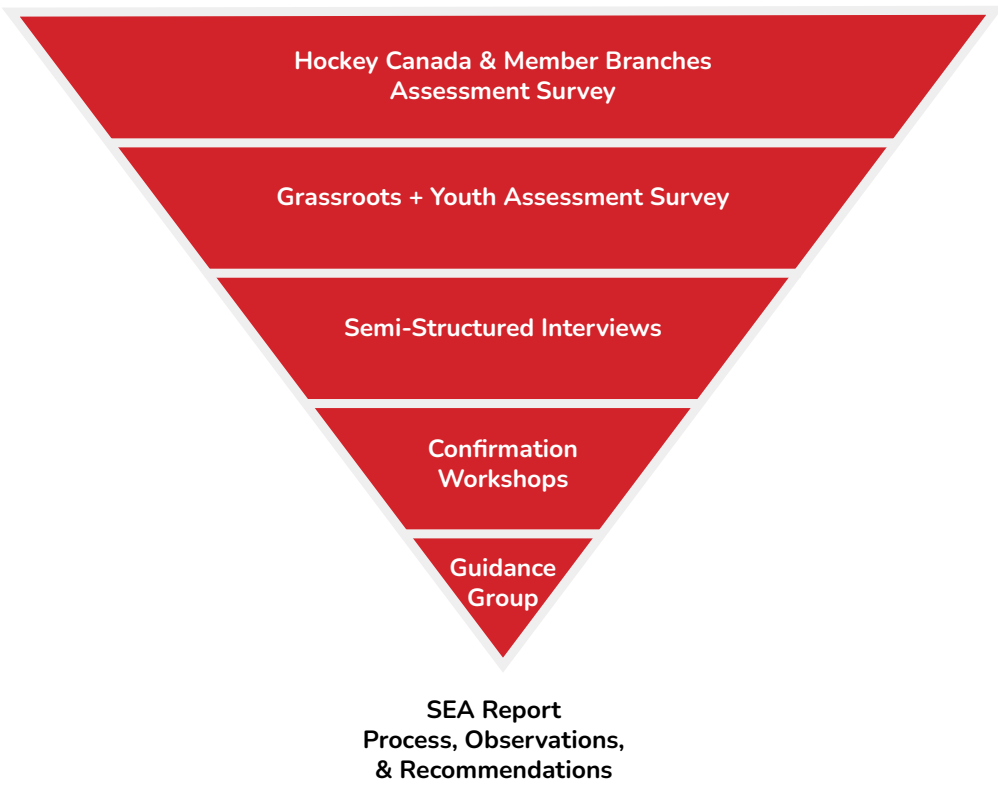
SEA Phase Two: Engagement

Phase Two began in July 2024, following the insights gained from Phase One. This phase aims to engage extensively with the Canadian hockey community.

As reported to Member Branches in May, the engagement process consists of five stages designed to gather and understand experiences from participants at all levels of Canadian hockey.

The engagement stages will include three surveys, all field tested in other sport enviroments and customized for this SEA:

1. **The Hockey Culture Index – Hockey Canada.**
   This survey aims to understand organizational culture within Hockey Canada by targeting participation from employees and Board Members (September 2024);

2. **The Hockey Culture Index – Member Branches.**
   This survey aims to understand organizational culture within each Member Branch across Canada (October 2024); and

3. **The Hockey Participant Culture Index.**
   This survey is designed to capture the perspectives and experiences of grassroots hockey participants and youth (late October 2024)

Why are we doing surveys as part of the SEA?

The SEA team has partnered with Innerlogic, a leading Canadian culture analytics provider with extensive experience in sport, to customize their organizational culture survey tools for hockey.

These surveys have been developed by experts in organizational behaviour and performance psychology to understand the collective attitudes in each organization's environment.

Versions of the surveys have been already been used in other sport environments. They help reveal the core cultural characteristics of each organization.

This provides insight into opportunities for achieving healthy, high performance. Culture predicts a range of factors including well-being, retention, engagement and long-term performance.

The Innerlogic approach looks at two main dimensions: **Performance** – aspects of effective, excellence oriented and developmental culture; and, **People** – aspects of supportive, safe and inclusive culture.

What are we asking from the Member Branches?

#1 Take a specially designed survey: The Hockey Culture Index - Member Branch survey will be coming to you from Hockey Canada on October 1st, 2024.

Please prepare for all employees and Board Members at your Member Branch to fill in the survey – your insight and experience is essential.

As Member Branch leadership, you, your executive and your respective boards represent the diverse landscape of hockey across our nation.

Your participation will ensure that the SEA accurately reflects the views and the realities of hockey at all levels and in all regions of Canada.

This Hockey Culture Index – Member Branch survey is designed by Innerlogic in collaboration with the SEA team, and adapted for hockey to understand:

1. People dimension in the organization – the degree to which people feel empowered, valued, connected, inspired and safe; and,

2. Performance dimension in the organization – an emphasis on transparency where people can succeed and be effective.

The 30-35 questions in the survey will take 12-20 minutes to complete

#2 Give your consent to Hockey Canada to provide a different specially designed survey: The Hockey Participant Culture Index directly to registered participants from each of your branches (late October 2024):

The insights from participants across the diverse hockey ecosystem will directly inform strategies to prevent maltreatment and support well-being in hockey. Participants and communities at all levels have a role to play in creating a healthy culture in the sport – it is a shared responsibility.

We are asking your permission to allow Hockey Canada's member engagement team to disseminate a Hockey Participant Culture Index survey directly to the registered participants from each of your branches. This Hockey Participant Culture Index survey is designed by Innerlogic in collaboration with the SEA team. It is adapted for hockey's grassroots settings, to understand and enhance the sporting environment in a youth specific context.

What we consider "participants" using the Hockey Canada definition:

Participants of any club, team, association, league, accredited school or other similar entity registered with a Member Branch, participating in games or activities organized by the Member Branch; this can include:

- Players
- Parents and Guardians of Players
- Coaches
- Officials
- Volunteers
- Administrators and operators of minor hockey associations

Youth Participation:

The Hockey Participant Culture Index is designed for ages 14 years and up. For participants 14 to 17 years old, we recommend that the participant fill out the survey with a parent or guardian present.

Two examples of the style of questions are:

On a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree):

1. "In our sports environment, there is a sense of belonging whereby everyone, no matter their background is respected."

2. "In our sports environment, Coaches support the whole person."

.

This survey is adapted from Innerlogic's Youth Sport Culture Index. It was developed through collaboration among experts in organizational behavior and sport psychology, as well as input from the sporting community. The Hockey Participant Culture Index is a user-friendly way to understand and improve youth sport culture in hockey. The survey looks at the extent to which the environment provides support for:

- People: psychological safety, inclusion, integrity, positive values guiding action and behaviour, and physical safety.

- Performance and Sport Development: how accessible and barrier free is the sport, the degree to which quality holistic coaching is available, extent to which the environment enables people to reach their potential to excel, opportunities for competitive pathways, growth and development.

Privacy and Confidentiality:

With your permission, Hockey Canada will send the Hockey Participant Culture Index surveys directly to registered participants at each Member Branch.

Hockey Canada is not able to view the results or responses.

The information collected will be managed and hosted by Innerlogic. All survey responses are completely anonymous and will not be attributed to any individual.

This also ensures that all participants, regardless of their role within hockey, feel comfortable contributing to this SEA freely and directly, without fear of retribution.

Therefore, the privacy of the SEA participants and the confidentiality of their personal contributions

(data), whether formally or informally, is extremely important and a significant priority for the SEA team and OSIC.

- All participant contributions (formal or informal via the surveys, or in later stages for interviews, or otherwise) will be kept anonymous and not linked to individual identities.
- Hockey Canada, Member Branches, minor hockey associations, coaches, staff or others will never have access to individual responses or names of participants.

Participants' survey contributions (data) will be collated, analyzed, and presented in a final report. The SEA team will paraphrase participant quotes to highlight information and humanize the final report without attribution. This will be carried out while ensuring that individual participants are not identifiable.

Questions?

There is an opportunity to discuss this further at the September 6th Member Branch call. In the meantime, do not hesitate to look at the SEA website or reach out to us directly if you have questions.

SEA Team Contact:

Assessment website:
www.sea-hockey-ems.ca

Toll-free line:
+1-833-974-1281
English and Français

Email:
info@sea-hockey-ems.ca

Appendix F

Corporate Version

Demographic Questions

Role - Which role do you currently hold in this organization?

- Board of Directors Member
- Senior Leadership Team
- Employee

Tenure – How many years have you been involved with Hockey Canada in your current role?

- Less than 1 year
- 2 - 4 years
- 5 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years

- 11 - 19 years
- 20+ years

Age - How old are you?

- 18 - 24 years old
- 25 - 30 years old
- 31 - 40 years old
- 41 - 50 years old

- 51 - 60 years old
- 61 - 70 years old
- 71+ years old
- Prefer not to say

Geographic location – Which region of Canada do you currently live in?

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia

- Nunavut
- Ontario
- PEI
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan
- Yukon
- I do not currently reside in Canada

Gender Identity - What is your gender identity?

- Female (girl/woman)
- Male (boy/man)
- Gender fluid
- Non-binary

- Prefer not to say

Corporate Version

Sexual Orientation - What is your sexual orientation? Would you say you are:

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Two Spirit
- Another sexual orientation
- Prefer not to say
- I don't know

Race/Ethnic Origin - Which of the following racial/ethnic groups best describes you?

- Black
- Caucasian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Indigenous
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin American
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- West Asian
- Multiple Races/Ethnicities
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Indigenous Identity - Do you identify as Indigenous?

- Yes, First Nations (North American Indian)
- Yes, Métis
- Yes, Inuk (Inuit)
- No, I do not identify as indigenous
- Prefer not to identify
- I don't know

Bilingualism - Which of the following best describes your language proficiency?

- Fluent in English only
- Fluent in French only
- Fluent in both English and French
- Fluent in English and a language(s) other than French
- Fluent in French and a language(s) other than English
- Fluent in English, French, and another language or languages
- Not fluent in English or French
- Prefer not to say

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Survey</u> Question Sequence

The survey questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 - strongly disagree to 10 - strongly agree. This qualifying statement preceded each question: In this culture…[1]

---

[1] Please note, for the purpose of this appendix, the associated culture factor has been added in brackets after each survey question

Corporate Version

1. People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard). *[psychological safety]*
2. We hold each other accountable for the goals we set. *[accountability]*
3. Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background. *[belonging]*
4. Roles & responsibilities are well defined. *[clarity]*
5. There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in). *[values alignment]*
6. We understand the mission and vision of Hockey Canada. *[mission & vision]*
7. Communication is transparent (e.g. open). *[communication]*
8. The connection between our work and Hockey Canada's broader objectives is clear. *[impact]*
9. Mistakes are shared and discussed to enable others to learn from them. *[learning]*
10. We maintain high ethical standards in our decision-making processes. *[governance/leadership]*
11. Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences. *[psychological safety]*
12. We hold ourselves to the highest possible standards. *[accountability]*
13. Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect. *[belonging]*
14. Performance expectations are clearly outlined. *[clarity]*
15. A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated. *[values alignment]*
16. We are deeply committed to Hockey Canada's mission and vision. *[mission & vision]*
17. Information (e.g., changes and key initiatives) is communicated clearly and promptly. *[communication]*
18. There is an understanding of how our day-to-day work fits into Hockey Canada's mission and vision. *[impact]*
19. Seeking to understand is encouraged. *[learning]*
20. Decision-making processes include relevant stakeholders (e.g. Member branches, community members etc.). *[governance/leadership]*
21. It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues. *[psychological safety]*
22. Performance expectations are upheld. *[accountability]*
23. Diversity is celebrated and embraced. *[belonging]*
24. There is clarity on how objectives are achieved. *[clarity]*
25. There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors. *[values alignment]*
26. Hockey Canada's mission and vision serves as a roadmap in how we approach our work. *[mission & vision]*
27. Opportunities for open dialogue are prioritized. *[communication]*
28. We understand how our work impacts the broader hockey community. *[impact]*
29. Failures are treated as learning opportunities. *[learning]*
30. We are responsive to the concerns and suggestions of others (e.g., athletes, coaches, staff, and other stakeholders). *[governance/leadership]*

Corporate Version

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Outcome</u> Question Sequence

The outcome questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 – very poor to 10 – excellent.

1. I would rate my overall well-being in the Hockey Canada environment as…
2. Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in the Hockey Canada environment as…
3. Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in the Hockey Canada environment as…
4. Overall, I would rate the sense of alignment between Hockey Canada and the Member Branches as…

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Open-ended</u> Question Sequence

1. How can Hockey Canada effectively communicate and report progress to the wider hockey community on initiatives (e.g. The Hockey Canada EDI Path Forward, the Action Plan, the implementation of Cromwell report recommendations etc.) to prevent maltreatment and support safety?

2. Please describe what you believe are the best ways for Hockey Canada, Member Branches, participants, and other relevant stakeholders to engage in open dialogue, share experiences, and drive change toward a healthy sport culture.

3. Based on your experience, what is an enabler and/or barrier for Member Branches to adopt a common set of Safe Sport policies? Please explain in detail.

Member Branches Version

Demographic Questions

Role in organization - Which role do you currently hold in this organization?

- Board of Directors Member
- Leader/manager
- Employee

Tenure – How many years have you been involved with your Member Branch in your current role?

- Less than 1 year
- 2 - 4 years
- 5 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years
- 11 - 19 years
- 20+ years

Age - How old are you?

- 18 - 24 years old
- 25 - 30 years old
- 31 - 40 years old
- 41 - 50 years old
- 51 - 60 years old
- 61 - 70 years old
- 71+ years old
- Prefer not to say

Gender Identity - What is your gender identity?

- Female (girl/woman)
- Male (boy/man)
- Gender fluid
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

Sexual Orientation - What is your sexual orientation? Would you say you are:

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Two Spirit
- Another sexual orientation
- Prefer not to say
- I don't know

Member Branches Version

Race/Ethnic Origin - Which of the following racial/ethnic groups best describes you?

- Black
- Caucasian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Indigenous
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin American
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- West Asian
- Multiple Races/Ethnicities
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Indigenous Identity - Do you identify as Indigenous?

- Yes, First Nations (North American Indian)
- Yes, Métis
- Yes, Inuk (Inuit)
- No, I do not identify as indigenous
- Prefer not to identify
- I don't know

Hockey Organization – Which hockey organization are you currently a part of?

- BC Hockey
- Hockey Alberta
- Hockey Saskatchewan
- Hockey Manitoba
- Hockey Northwestern Ontario
- Ontario Hockey Federation
- Hockey Eastern Ontario
- Hockey Québec
- Hockey New Brunswick
- Hockey P.E.I.
- Hockey Nova Scotia
- Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador
- Hockey North

Location type - How would you describe the area where you currently live?

- Urban (e.g., large to small cities, suburbs)
- Rural (e.g., small towns, hamlets, agricultural areas, countryside)
- Remote (e.g., isolated settlements or communities, sparsely populated regions)

Member Branches Version

Bilingualism - Which of the following best describes your language proficiency?

- Fluent in English only
- Fluent in French only
- Fluent in both English and French
- Fluent in English and a language(s) other than French
- Fluent in French and a language(s) other than English

- Fluent in English, French, and another language or languages
- Not fluent in English or French
- Prefer not to say

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Survey</u> Question Sequence

The survey questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 - strongly disagree to 10 - strongly agree. This qualifying statement preceded each question: In this culture…[1]

1. People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard). *[psychological safety]*
2. We hold each other accountable for the goals we set. *[accountability]*
3. Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background. *[belonging]*
4. Roles & responsibilities are well defined. *[clarity]*
5. There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in). *[values alignment]*
6. We understand the mission and vision of our Member Branch. *[mission & vision]*
7. Communication is transparent (e.g. open). *[communication]*
8. The connection between our work and our Member Branch's broader objectives is clear. *[impact]*
9. Mistakes are shared and discussed to enable others to learn from them. *[learning]*
10. We maintain high ethical standards in our decision-making processes. *[governance/leadership]*
11. There is commitment to mutual respect (e.g. being fair and honest) *[integrity]*
12. There is a strong focus on continued improvement (e.g. getting better every day) *[improvement]*
13. Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences. *[psychological safety]*
14. We hold ourselves to the highest possible standards. *[accountability]*
15. Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect. *[belonging]*
16. Performance expectations are clearly outlined. *[clarity]*
17. A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated. *[values alignment]*
18. We are deeply committed to our Member Branch's mission and vision. *[mission & vision]*

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[1] Please note, for the purpose of this appendix, the associated culture factor has been added in brackets after each survey question

Member Branches Version

19. Information (e.g., changes and key initiatives) is communicated clearly and promptly. *[communication]*
20. There is an understanding of how our day-to-day work fits into our Member Branch's mission and vision. *[impact]*
21. Seeking to understand is encouraged. *[learning]*
22. Decision-making processes include relevant stakeholders (e.g. minor hockey associations, community members, etc.). *[governance/leadership]*
23. Fairness is upheld. *[integrity]*
24. Everyone realizing their full potential is highly prioritized. *[improvement]*
25. It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues. *[psychological safety]*
26. Performance expectations are upheld. *[accountability]*
27. Diversity is celebrated and embraced. *[belonging]*
28. There is clarity on how objectives are achieved. *[clarity]*
29. There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors. *[values alignment]*
30. Our Member Branch's mission and vision serves as a roadmap in how we approach our work. *[mission & vision]*
31. Opportunities for open dialogue are prioritized. *[communication]*
32. Our work has a significant impact on the broader hockey community. *[impact]*
33. Failures are treated as learning opportunities. *[learning]*
34. We are responsive to the concerns and suggestions of others (e.g., athletes, coaches, staff, and other stakeholders). *[governance/leadership]*
35. People are honest and sincere. *[integrity]*
36. High standards are embedded in all that we do. *[improvement]*

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Outcome</u> Question Sequence

The outcome questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 – very poor to 10 – excellent.

1. I would rate my overall well-being in this environment as…
2. Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in this environment as…
3. Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in the environment as…
4. Overall, I would rate my awareness of the initiatives underway to prevent maltreatment and support well-being in hockey as…
5. Overall, I would rate the sense of shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) between Hockey Canada and my Member Branch as…
6. Overall, I would rate the sense of shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) between Hockey Canada and my Member Branch as…

Hockey Canada Culture Index <u>Open-ended</u> Question Sequence

1. Overall, I would rate the sense of shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) between Hockey Canada and my Member Branch as…

Member Branches Version

2. Please describe what you believe are the best ways for Hockey Canada, Member Branches, participants, and other relevant stakeholders to engage in open dialogue, share experiences, and drive change toward a healthy sport culture.

3. What has or hasn't worked in coordinating the approach to communication, education and training to prevent maltreatment for all registered participants in your member branch? Are there any strategies that have been helpful for parents? Please provide details:

4. In your experience, how accessible and consistent are the policies for Member Branches and participants to use day-to-day when encountering and addressing issues (e.g. a complaint process). Please provide examples if possible.

Participant Version

Demographic Questions

Role - Please select your role below and complete the rest of the survey based on this selection:

- Player 14-18 with the support of a Parent/Guardian
- Parent/Guardian of a child under 14 years old
- Parent/Guardian of a player perspective (i.e., from perspective of you as the parent/guardian)
- Player 19 years old or older
- Coach
- Official
- Volunteer
- Administrator or operator of Minor Hockey Association

Member Hockey Organization - Which provincial member hockey organization are you (or your child) most affiliated with?

- BC Hockey
- Hockey Alberta
- Hockey Saskatchewan
- Hockey Manitoba
- Hockey Northwestern Ontario
- Ontario Hockey Federation
- Hockey Eastern Ontario
- Hockey Québec
- Hockey New Brunswick
- Hockey P.E.I.
- Hockey Nova Scotia
- Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador
- Hockey North
- Other

Tenure - How many years have you (or your child) been participating in hockey programming?

- Less than 1 year
- 2 - 4 years
- 5 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years
- 11 - 19 years
- 20+ years

Age Division - Please select the age division you (or your child) currently fall into from the options below:

- U7
- U9
- U11
- U13
- U15
- U18
- U21
- Junior
- Senior
- Multiple age divisions
- Not captured in these options

Participant Version

Level - Please select the level of hockey you (or your child) are currently participating in:

- Recreational/ community
- Competitive
- Both recreational and competitive

Certification - What is your highest certification level? **NOTE:** This question is for **coaches or officials** only, please select "not applicable to me" otherwise.

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Member High Performance
- National High Performance
- Not applicable to me

Age - How old are you?

- Under 19 years old
- 19 - 24
- 25 - 29
- 30 - 34
- 35 - 39
- 40 - 44
- 45 - 49

- 50 - 54
- 55 - 59
- 60 - 64
- 65 - 69
- 70+ years old
- Prefer not to say

Gender Identity - What is your gender identity?

- Female (girl/woman)
- Male (boy/man)
- Gender fluid
- Non-binary

- Prefer not to say
- I don't know

Race/Ethnic Origin - Which of the following racial/ethnic groups best describes you?

- Black
- Caucasian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Indigenous
- Japanese
- Korean

- Latin American
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- West Asian
- Multiple Races/Ethnicities
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Participant Version

Indigenous Identity - Do you identify as Indigenous?

- Yes, First Nations (North American Indian)
- Yes, Métis
- Yes, Inuk (Inuit)

- No, I do not identify as indigenous
- Prefer not to identify
- I don't know

Location Type - How would you describe the area where you currently live?

- Urban (e.g., large to small cities, suburbs)
- Rural (e.g., small towns, hamlets, agricultural areas, countryside)
- Remote (e.g., isolated settlements or communities, sparsely populated regions)

Bilingualism - Which of the following best describes your language proficiency?

- Fluent in English only
- Fluent in French only
- Fluent in both English and French
- Fluent in English and a language(s) other than French
- Fluent in French and a language(s) other than English

- Fluent in English, French, and another language or languages
- Not fluent in English or French
- Prefer not to say

Hockey Participant Culture Index <u>Survey</u> Question Sequence

The survey questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 - strongly disagree to 10 - strongly agree. This qualifying statement preceded each question: In this culture…[1]

1. Access to appropriate training facilities is available. *[access]*
2. People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard). *[psychological safety]*
3. There is a well-defined sport pathway from grassroots to elite levels. *[pathway]*
4. Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background. *[belonging]*
5. There are tools and resources for the growth and development of all. *[growth and development]*
6. There is commitment to mutual respect (e.g. being fair and honest). *[integrity]*
7. Coaches and/or leaders provide clear guidance and direction. *[coaching/leadership]*

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[1] Please note, for the purpose of this appendix, the associated culture factor has been added in brackets after each survey question

Participant Version

8. Physical safety protocols are in place for training and competition. *[physical safety]*
9. There is a strong focus on continued improvement (e.g. getting better every day). *[improvement]*
10. People help and support one another through emotional hardships (e.g. tough times). *[empathy]*
11. Success is defined by more than just winning. *[winning]*
12. Access to quality competition exists. *[access]*
13. There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in). *[values alignment]*
14. Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences. *[psychological safety]*
15. There is a pathway to develop exceptional athletes and coaches. *[pathway]*
16. Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect. *[belonging]*
17. Emphasis is placed on long-term growth and development. *[growth and development]*
18. Fairness is upheld. *[fairness]*
19. Coaches and/or leaders lead by example (e.g. live the values and behaviors they expect from others). *[coaching/leadership]*
20. Consistent efforts are made to prevent and/or minimize accidents and injuries. *[physical safety]*
21. Everyone realizing their full potential is highly prioritized. *[improvement]*
22. Open and supportive conversations regarding feelings and emotions are welcomed. *[empathy]*
23. The idea of winning at all costs is discouraged (e.g. winning by doing things that are unfair or playing through injury). *[winning]*
24. A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated. *[values alignment]*
25. Access to appropriate coaching is readily available. *[access]*
26. It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues. *[psychological safety]*
27. Selection criteria is clearly communicated. *[pathway]*
28. Diversity is celebrated. *[belonging]*
29. Future leaders are actively nurtured and developed. *[growth and development]*
30. People are honest and sincere. *[integrity]*
31. Coaches and/or leaders support the whole person. *[coaching/leadership]*
32. Attention is placed on preventing all potential forms of physical harm. *[physical safety]*
33. High standards are embedded in all that we do. *[improvement]*
34. Caring for each other is emphasized. *[empathy]*
35. Winning is important, but not at the expense of your mental and/or physical health. *[winning]*
36. There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors. *[values alignment]*

Participant Version

Hockey Participant Culture Index <u>Outcome</u> Question Sequence

The outcome questions below were asked in the following order on a scale of 0 – very poor to 10 – excellent.

1. I would rate my overall well-being in this environment as…

2. Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in this environment as…

3. Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in this environment as…

4. Overall, I would rate my enjoyment / fun in the hockey environment as…

Hockey Participant Culture Index <u>Open-ended</u> Question Sequence

1. Please describe specific reasons that influenced your rating of "how well our current tools prevent harm/maltreatment". What led you to give that rating?

2. Please give one example of one safe sport program or initiatives that is available and commonly used in your hockey organization (i.e., Code of Conduct, education or training, dressing room policy, formal complaint system, other).

3. In your experience, please describe how incidents of harm or maltreatment are handled in your hockey organization (e.g., formal complaints? Is dialogue or efforts made to repair harm or prevent future incidents?).

4. Is there an initiative you would like to see to support well-being that is not currently in place? Please explain.

Appendix G

Appendix Item

*Reference = Short form of questions found in charts. **Not Issued = Index question not issued to this group.

Prime Risk Factor	Reference*	HC Index	Member Index	Grassroots Index
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Clear Role Definition	Roles and responsibilities are well defined.	Roles and responsibilities are well defined.	Not Issued
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Ethical Decision-Making	We maintain high ethical standards in our decision-making processes.	We maintain high ethical standards in our decision-making processes.	Not Issued
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Goal Accountability	We hold each other accountable for the goals we set.	We hold each other accountable for the goals we set.	Not Issued
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	High Standards	We hold ourselves to the highest possible standards.	We hold ourselves to the highest possible standards.	Not Issued
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Honesty and Sincerity	Not Issued**	People are honest and sincere.	People are honest and sincere.
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Leadership by Example	Not Issued	Not Issued	Coaches and/or leaders lead by example (e.g. live the values and behaviors they expect from others).
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Leadership Development	Not Issued	Not Issued	Future leaders are actively nurtured and developed.
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Leadership Guidance	Not Issued	Not Issued	Coaches and/or leaders provide clear guidance and direction.
1. POWER DYNAMICS AND INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP	Mutual Respect	Not Issued	There is commitment to mutual respect (e.g. being fair and honest).	There is commitment to mutual respect (e.g. being fair and honest).
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Care Emphasis	Not Issued	Not Issued	Caring for each other is emphasized.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Clear Development Pathway	Not Issued	Not Issued	There is a well-defined sport pathway from grassroots to elite levels.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Clear Selection Criteria	Not Issued	Not Issued	Selection criteria is clearly communicated.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Communication Transparency	Communication is transparent (e.g. open).	Communication is transparent (e.g. open).	Not Issued

Prime Risk Factor	Reference*	HC Index	Member Index	Grassroots Index
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Embedded High Standards	Not Issued	High standards are embedded in all that we do.	High standards are embedded in all that we do.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Emotional Openness	Not Issued	Not Issued	Open and supportive conversations regarding feelings and emotions is welcomed.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Emotional Support	Not Issued	Not Issued	People help and support one another through emotional hardships (e.g. tough times).
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Excellence Development Path	Not Issued	Not Issued	There is a pathway to develop exceptional athletes and coaches.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Holistic Support	Not Issued	Not Issued	Coaches and/or leaders support the whole person.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Learning from Mistakes	Mistakes are shared and discussed to enable others to learn from them.	Mistakes are shared and discussed to enable others to learn from them.	Not Issued
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Long-term Development Focus	Not Issued	Not Issued	Emphasis is placed on long-term growth and development.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Open Dialogue Priority	Opportunities for open dialogue are prioritized.	Opportunities for open dialogue are prioritized.	Opportunities for open dialogue are prioritized.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Safe Problem Discussion	It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues.	It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues.	It's ok (e.g. safe) to talk about problems or issues.
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Speaking Up Encouraged	People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard).	People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard).	People are encouraged to speak up and/or ask questions (e.g. feel heard).
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Stakeholder Inclusion	Decision-making processes include relevant stakeholders (e.g. Member branches, community members etc.).	Decision-making processes include relevant stakeholders (e.g. minor hockey associations, community members, etc.).	Not Issued
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Stakeholder Responsiveness	We are responsive to the concerns and suggestions of others (e.g. athletes, coaches, staff, and other stakeholders).	We are responsive to the concerns and suggestions of others (e.g. athletes, coaches, staff, and other stakeholders).	Not Issued
2. FIXED VERSUS TRANSPARENT SPORT ENVIRONMENT	Understanding Encouraged	Seeking to understand is encouraged.	Seeking to understand is encouraged.	Not Issued

Prime Risk Factor	Reference*	HC Index	Member Index	Grassroots Index
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Anti-Win-At-All-Costs	Not Issued	Not Issued	The idea of winning at all costs is discouraged (e.g. winning by doing things that are unfair or playing through injury).
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Balanced Success Definition	Not Issued	Not Issued	Success is defined by more than just winning.
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Competition Access	Not Issued	Not Issued	Access to quality competition exists.
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Development Resources	Not Issued	Not Issued	There are tools and resources for the growth and development of all.
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Health Over Winning	Not Issued	Not Issued	Winning is important, but not at the expense of your mental and/or physical health.
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Potential Development	Not Issued	Everyone realizing their full potential is highly prioritized.	Everyone realizing their full potential is highly prioritized.
3. ELITISM CULTURE	Universal Respect	Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect.	Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect.	Everyone, no matter their background, is treated with respect.
4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING	Coaching Accessibility	Not Issued	Not Issued	Access to appropriate coaching is readily available.
4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING	Community Impact Understanding	We understand how our work impacts the broader hockey community.	Our work has a significant impact on the broader hockey community.	Not Issued
4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING	Diversity Celebration	Diversity is celebrated and embraced.	Diversity is celebrated and embraced.	Diversity is celebrated.
4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING	Training Facility Access	Not Issued	Not Issued	Access to appropriate training facilities is available.
4. INCLUSION AND WELCOMING	Welcoming Environment	Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background.	Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background.	Every individual is welcomed regardless of their background.
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Clear Objective Achievement	There is clarity on how objectives are achieved.	There is clarity on how objectives are achieved.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Clear Organizational Values	There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in).	There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in).	There are clearly defined values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in).
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Clear Performance Expectations	Performance expectations are clearly outlined.	Performance expectations are clearly outlined.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Mission as Roadmap	Hockey Canada's mission and vision serves as a roadmap in how we approach our work.	Our Member Branch's mission and vision serves as a roadmap to how we approach our work.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Mission Commitment	We are deeply committed to Hockey Canada's mission and vision.	We are deeply committed to our Member Branch's mission and vision.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Mission Understanding	We understand Hockey Canada's mission and vision.	We understand the mission and vision of our Member Branch.	Not Issued

Prime Risk Factor	Reference*	HC Index	Member Index	Grassroots Index
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Objective Alignment	The connection between our work and Hockey Canada's broader objectives is clear.	The connection between our work and our Member Branch's objectives are clear.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Performance Standards	Performance expectations are upheld.	Performance expectations are upheld.	Not Issued
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Values Communication	A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated.	A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated.	A shared set of values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) are regularly communicated.
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Values-Guided Behavior	There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors.	There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors.	There are shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) that we use to guide our behaviors.
5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	Work-Mission Alignment	There is an understanding of how our day-to-day work fits into Hockey Canada's mission and vision.	There is an understanding of how our day-to-day work fits into our Member Branch's mission and vision.	Not Issued
6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION	Continuous Improvement	Not Issued	There is a strong focus on continued improvement (e.g. getting better every day).	There is a strong focus on continued improvement (e.g. getting better everyday).
6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION	Injury Prevention	Not Issued	Not Issued	Consistent efforts are made to prevent and/or minimize accidents and injuries.
6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION	Learning from Failure	Failures are treated as learning opportunities.	Failures are treated as learning opportunities.	Not Issued
6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION	Physical Harm Prevention	Not Issued	Not Issued	Attention is placed on preventing all potential forms of physical harm.
6. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION	Safety Protocols	Not Issued	Not Issued	Physical safety protocols are in place for training and competition.
7. ORGANIZATIONAL BLINDSPOTS AND REPORTING	Clear Information Sharing	Information (e.g. changes and key initiatives) is communicated clearly and promptly.	Information (e.g. changes and key initiatives) is communicated clearly and promptly.	Not Issued
7. ORGANIZATIONAL BLINDSPOTS AND REPORTING	Fairness	Not Issued	Fairness is upheld.	Fairness is upheld.
7. ORGANIZATIONAL BLINDSPOTS AND REPORTING	Safe Feedback Environment	Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences.	Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences.	Honest feedback and suggestions are welcomed without fear of negative consequences.
9. RATING	Well-being Rating	I would rate my overall well-being in	I would rate my overall well-being in this environment as	I would rate my overall well-being in this environment as...

Prime Risk Factor	Reference*	HC Index	Member Index	Grassroots Index
		the Hockey Canada environment as		
9. RATING	Inclusion Rating	Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in the Hockey Canada environment as	Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in this environment as	Overall, I would rate how included and welcomed I feel in this environment as...
9. RATING	Safe Rating	Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in the Hockey Canada environment as	Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in the environment as	Overall, I would rate how safe I feel in this environment as...
9. RATING	Alignment Rating	Overall, I would rate the sense of alignment between Hockey Canada and the Member Branches as	Overall, I would rate the sense of shared values (e.g. things we all see as important and believe in) between Hockey Canada and my Member Branch as	Not Issued
9. RATING	Enjoyment Rating	Not Issued	Not Issued	Overall, I would rate my enjoyment / fun in the hockey environment as...
9. RATING	Initiatives Rating	Not Issued	Overall, I would rate my awareness of the initiatives underway to prevent maltreatment and support well-being in hockey as	Overall, I would rate how well our hockey organization, current tools prevent harm/maltreatment as (some examples may include: team charters, education, coach audit at minor hockey level, etc.)

Appendix H

These sources informed the development of the HSEA's risk factor framework:

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Understanding Organisational Risk Factors for Child Maltreatment (section 5.4) as well as *Vulnerability of Adult Elite Athletes* strongly informed the HSEA's draft risk factors framework.