



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**MR No.: 013/22**

### **PROACTIVE APPROACH TO IMPROVE SAFETY IN SPORT PARTICIPATION**

New Code of Practice for Sport Safety outlines guidelines and best practices in mitigating risks and overcoming challenges

**Singapore, 15 March 2022** – With growing interest in sport, it is imperative for the sport sector to ensure a safe sport environment for all. Organisations with vested interest in sports and fitness, or companies managing large sports facilities must respond to the evolving challenges of risk management by staying abreast of the good safety practices in the sector, and achieving the societal expectations for safer sports and recreational play.

2. Sport Singapore (SportSG) along with the Singapore Standards Council launched the new “SS 681: 2022 Code of Practice for Sport Safety” on 15 March 2022. Developed by a multi-stakeholder Working Group<sup>1</sup> that was appointed by the Singapore Standards Council, this Code of Practice (COP) is a set of safety guidelines to mitigate and manage risks in sport.

3. Announcing the launch in a virtual webinar conference, Guest-of-Honour, Mr Eric Chua, Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth & Social and Family Development, said “Through sport, people from all walks of life bond and build community. Participating in sport enhances our physical health and promotes our mental well-being. But we can only reap the full benefit of sport, if we participate in it safely. Sport safety is an obligation not only to ourselves but also others. I hope that the SS 681 COP will be a valuable tool for keeping sport safe.”

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<sup>1</sup> Key stakeholders in the Working Group comprises Changi General Hospital, Health Promotion Board, KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Ministry of Home Affairs, Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, SAFRA National Service Association, Singapore Rugby Union and Sport Singapore. The Working Group was led by Convenor, Delphine Fong, Director of Sport Safety at Sport Singapore.

4. The SS 681 COP builds on earlier guidelines<sup>2</sup> developed by the Sports Safety Committee formed in 2005. The Working Group, which comprised stakeholders from the public and private sectors, embarked on a two-month public consultation to gather feedback from the industry, and developed this national guide. This was after the Working Group took reference from the Sports Safety Committee Report (published in March 2019), which had outlined recommendations related to sport safety, as a foundation to develop this new standard. This comprehensive safety review was conducted to ensure that sports competitions, and recreational play in Singapore remain inclusive, trusted and most importantly safe for all age groups.

5. Chief Executive of Sport Singapore, Mr Lim Teck Yin, said “The new SS 681 COP is positioned to help build an improved understanding of safety while practising or engaging in general sports. Whether you are an event organiser, a coach of a school or club, the COP allows one to proactively ensure that sport and recreation are safer and more inclusive for all. With the necessary safe practices in place, it will provide an ease of mind to anyone who wants to get active, and this can lead to an increase in sports participation.”

6. “Moving forward, SportSG will collaborate with our National Sports Associations and partners to explore using this COP as a base to develop other sport-specific standards such as COPs cycling, climbing and abseiling. We have started to develop a Working Group for Open Water, in addition to strengthening and supporting other areas of the sport safety ecosystem, namely training and inspections,” added Mr Lim.

7. Ms Choy Sauw Kook, Director-General (Quality & Excellence), Enterprise Singapore, said: “The Singapore Standards Council, overseen by Enterprise Singapore, is proud to have worked with SportSG and other stakeholders to enhance sports safety for the general public. SS 681 COP will provide practical guidelines in the planning and management of sport events, with a focus on safety. We look forward to partnering with SportSG and the industry to promote adoption of the standard.”

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<sup>2</sup> The Sports Safety Committee, who was appointed by SportSG, released a comprehensive report in March 2019 with detailed findings on safety standards and systems taking reference from international best practices with a view to improve safety measures in organised and recreational sports.

## **Deployment of SS 681: 2022 COP for Sport Safety across the sector**

8. This COP for Sport Safety places emphasis on the roles and responsibilities of individual participants, athletes, coaches, sport officials, volunteers, educational institutes, and event organisers in various aspects of sport safety. It makes recommendations for key responsibilities to be assigned to specific personnel in risk monitoring and review, as well as communication and training of other team members on risk management. The COP provides clear guidelines allowing organisations and individuals to systematically identify sources of risks and thereby help to prevent mishaps from happening. Organisations can use SS 681: 2022 COP for Sport Safety to update their existing safety protocols or to establish new ones. The COP is also written and designed with clear and straightforward information, to ease adoption and is structured to be easy to use. The COP is intended to build on the work a sporting organisation already has in place regarding sport safety.

9. The annex included in this media release summarises a selection of key guidelines and best practices to improve sport safety in a wide range of settings, including competitive and school sport, as well as recreation and fitness activities. The goal is to foster a culture of continuous improvement to safety that is practical in its application and guides a user to be proactive in planning risks, leading to safer sport participation for everyone. The SS 681: 2022 COP will be available for purchase on the Singapore Standards [e-Shop](#).

### **Annex: Fact Sheet on Key Requirements of the Standard**

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### **About Sport Singapore**

As the national sports agency, Sport Singapore's core purpose is to inspire the Singapore spirit and transform Singapore through sport. Through innovative, fun and meaningful sporting experiences, our mission is to reach out and serve communities across Singapore with passion and pride. With Vision 2030 – Singapore's sports master plan, our mandate goes beyond winning medals. Sport Singapore uses sport to create greater sporting opportunities and access, more inclusivity and integration as well as broader development of capabilities. At Sport Singapore, we work with a vast network of public-private-people sector partners for individuals to live better through sports.

To find out more, visit our websites [www.sportsingapore.gov.sg](http://www.sportsingapore.gov.sg) and [www.myactivesg.com](http://www.myactivesg.com). Follow us at [www.facebook.com/myActiveSG](https://www.facebook.com/myActiveSG) and [www.youtube.com/SingaporeSports](https://www.youtube.com/SingaporeSports).

### **About Enterprise Singapore**

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development. We work with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise. We also support the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups and build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.

Visit [www.enterprisesg.gov.sg](http://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg) for more information.

### **About Singapore Standards Council**

The Singapore Standards Council (SSC) facilitates the development, promotion and review of Standards and Technical References in Singapore. This work is done through partnerships with the industry, academia and government organisations, under the national standardisation programme overseen by Enterprise Singapore.

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

#### **Sport Singapore**

Mohamed Badrulhisham

badrulhisham\_nasir@sport.gov.sg

Mobile: 9092 7046

#### **Enterprise Singapore**

Haley Chan

haley\_chan@enterprisesg.gov.sg

Mobile: 9179 3505

## ANNEX

### **Fact Sheet on Key Requirements of the Standard**

1. Singapore Standard SS 681 : 2022 Code of Practice for sport safety covers a wide range of settings, including competitive and school sport, recreation and fitness activities, and addresses the risks and challenges to good safety practice that were encountered in recent years. The code of practice will help to shorten the learning curve and establish a common understanding among the sporting industry on the safety risks and safe sporting practices. Selection of key safety areas covered in the COP includes:

#### **Pre-Participation Screening Prior to Start of Event**

2. The risks associated with any physical activity during exercise is dependent on an individual's fitness and medical condition. Pre-Participation Screening is aimed at identifying medical conditions that may be aggravated by exercise or may predispose individuals to injuries and sudden death. Depending on the risk factors, Pre-Participation Screening comprises declaration of one's health history and has been credited for identifying many silent conditions such as history of coronary and artery diseases.

3. A Pre-Participation Questionnaire (PPQ) can help to identify individuals with known conditions as well as those without any prior history of medical illness but who have symptoms or a history of chest pain, breathlessness, fainting, dizziness, or palpitations. The Standard provides guidelines to individuals and organisers on performing Pre-Participation Screening (e.g., recommended frequency and approaches in administering the screening and recommends the use of a self-administered questionnaire).

4. The type of screening should fit the competition level, type of sport and individual's risk-level. All individuals involved in sport shall take personal responsibility for their own health and to make use of these simple-to-use, self-administered Pre-Participation Screening questionnaires. Individuals should routinely complete at the least, the Pre-Participation Questionnaire prior to joining a club (e.g. gym), competition, course, or organised sport activity. Reporting

and acting on early warning symptoms may prevent injury and harm during strenuous physical activity.

**Emergency Equipment - Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) Plan**

5. Sport organisations, associations, clubs, facility owners and operators, educational institutions and event organisers should deploy Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) within their facilities with the goal for any casualty to get access to an AED within 3 minutes of a call. A notice highlighting the availability of an AED at the facility (or nearby with the directions) should be prominently displayed near entry to the facility. AED signage(s) should follow the Singapore Resuscitation and First Aid Council (SRFAC) guidelines.

6. In larger facilities, directional arrows provide additional visual cues when there is no direct line-of-sight of the AED. The standard provides recommendation on the emergency equipment to be considered for different type of facility as shown in the Table below.

Type of Facility	Unsupervised Exercise (room/park)	Single Exercise Leader (e.g., personal trainer)	Fitness Centre for Healthy Individuals	Fitness Centre Serving Clinical Populations	Medically Supervised Clinical Exercise program
<b>Emergency Equipment recommended</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone in room (or parks)</li> <li>• Signages</li> <li>• <u>Encouraged:</u></li> <li>• PAD plan with AED as part of the composite PAD plan in the host facility (e.g., hotel, commercial building, apartment complex, park)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone in room</li> <li>• Signages</li> <li>• <u>Encouraged:</u></li> <li>• Blood pressure kit</li> <li>• PAD plan with AED</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone in room</li> <li>• Signages</li> <li>• <u>Encouraged:</u></li> <li>• Blood pressure kit</li> <li>• Stethoscope</li> <li>• PAD plan with AED</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone in room</li> <li>• Signages</li> <li>• Blood pressure kit</li> <li>• Stethoscope</li> <li>• <u>Strongly recommended:</u></li> <li>• PAD plan with AED</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone in room</li> <li>• Signages</li> <li>• Blood pressure kit</li> <li>• Stethoscope</li> <li>• Oxygen</li> <li>• Defibrillator</li> <li>• Crash cart</li> </ul>

**Adult Supervision of Young Children at Aquatic Facilities**

7. Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers shall be under constant adult supervision when they are in and around water. The adult/caregiver should be familiar with the child's

capabilities and equip the child with personal floatation devices, if necessary. Even with floatation devices, constant supervision of children is necessary to ensure their safety. This enables adults to pull the children out of water in the event of an emergency. During swimming lessons under the supervision of coaches, parents/caregivers should help with supervising their children by staying close and in direct line of sight of the children.

8. Surveillance and rescue efforts may be supported by technology. Installing surveillance systems ease the process of supervision in aquatic facilities and can possibly reduce the risk of drowning.

9. Water safety awareness programmes should be organised by facility owners and operators (including educational institutions) to advocate key areas of action covering (but not limited to) the following topics:

- CPR/AED usage
- Drowning and near-drowning case studies
- Lifesaving and rescue equipment
- Use of Pre-Participation Questionnaire
- Prevention of shallow water blackouts
- Stretching and warm-up exercises
- Swimmers' behaviours and identification of swimmers in distress
- Swimming and water survival skills

### **Heat Injury Awareness**

10. Sport participants, athletes, coaches, instructors and event organisers should be aware of heat injury prevention techniques such as gradual conditioning and acclimatisation to heat. Inadequate conditioning and heat acclimatisation, recent illness, cumulative fatigue and overtraining can increase the risks of heat injury especially during strenuous physical activities.

11. Knowing one's own state of health and conscious of the risks when exceeding the threshold for safe sport participation is important. When in doubt if one should participate in any sport activity or strenuous exercises, please consult a medical practitioner with relevant experience in heat injury prevention.

12. Attention should also be given to fluid replacement and the principle of gradual

progression when exercising. Education on how to recognise the early signs of heat injury and how to activate an emergency medical responder should be constantly observed.

Symptoms of heat injury includes (experienced by athletes):

- i. Giddiness and dizziness
- ii. Headache
- iii. Light-headedness, fatigue, drowsiness
- iv. Nausea
- v. Numbness, cramps, weakness of extremities
- vi. Shortness of breath even at rest

Signs of heat injury includes (observed by onlookers):

- i. Altered mental status (confusion, disorientation, combativeness)
- ii. Ataxia (inability to maintain balance, frequent falling)
- iii. Hyperventilation
- iv. Loss of consciousness
- v. Seizures or
- vi. Vomiting

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