

Radio & Electronics Association of Southern Tasmania Incorporated (R.E.A.S.T) Child Protection Policy

Preamble

R.E.A.S.T.'s purpose is the encouragement, development and education of radio communication and electronics techniques in all its forms with special reference to licensed radio amateurs. This purpose and associated activities will involve young people and REAST is committed to providing an environment that is safe for their participation, not only to reduce the potential for injury but also to meet legal requirements under "duty of care". On this basis children should be free to participate without undue exposure to the risk of abuse.

Child protection and the proper reporting of allegations has become a major social justice issue. When raised, the topic of child sexual abuse often stirs much unease within organisations. Knowledge followed by action is the best solution to these reactions. By understanding the underlying nature of this criminal offence and identifying vulnerable situations in which a child may be placed at risk, an organisation is able to design intervention safeguards that are specifically tailored to its needs.

Definition/Interpretation

Abuse in this policy has the same interpretation as that specified in the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* section 3(1) namely:

"**abuse or neglect**" means –

(a) sexual abuse; or

(b) physical or emotional injury or other abuse, or neglect, to the extent that –

(i) the injured, abused or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person's wellbeing; or

(ii) the injured, abused or neglected person's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy –

Child/Young Person/Youth means person under 18 years of age;

Unacceptable Behaviour - The following are examples of unacceptable behaviour

- placing self or other person in unsafe circumstances;
- abusive comment;
- criticism without constructive comment;
- coarse language;
- aggressive, physically distressing or sexually provocative activity;
- sexually suggestive comments about or to a youth;
- inappropriate or intrusive touching of a youth.

Policy

- R.E.A.S.T. will not tolerate the abuse of others, especially the criminal act of child sexual abuse. This occurs when a child is exposed or subjected to sexual behaviours or acts which are exploitive and/or inappropriate to his or her developmental level. Such behaviour involves a wide range of sexual activities which exploit children and includes forcing, tricking, bribing, threatening or pressuring a child into sexual activity.
- This Child Protection Policy is about minimising risk exposure and conveys a message to members and prospective members, engaging in Association activities, particularly those involving young people. All members, especially those organising activities, have a responsibility to consider and provide a safe environment and safeguards dedicated to the well being of young people.
- The abuse of youth members, or other young people participating in Association activities, is not acceptable and R.E.A.S.T. encourages all incidents of such abuse as described above to be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

Safeguards

1. Youth membership of R.E.A.S.T. requires that the proposer and seconder each take personal responsibility for the technical development and welfare of the youth member.
2. Parental approval in writing must be given for youth involvement in R.E.A.S.T. activities whether they are members or not. Particular activities involving travel or nights away from home must be given separate parental approval. Preferably this will be in writing. If verbal it is to be diarised. The nature of the activity and the circumstances, e.g. travel and accommodation arrangements, must be made clear to the parent/guardian.
3. One on one (adult / youth) situations should be minimised. Where they do occur, e.g. Targa Tasmania deployments, modest and non-intrusive behaviour must be maintained. The organiser of activities where such situations may arise, or other situations where adult members may be in close contact with youth members or other youth e.g. Jamboree On The Air (JOTA), must satisfy the REAST Committee that the members concerned are fit to carry such responsibility.
 - 3.1. Unless the member is the parent or guardian of the youth member, the committee has the option to ask the person to undergo a National Police Record Check which is to be shown to two Committee members. The content of the Police Check will be kept strictly confidential.
 - 3.2. Only the outcome of the police check will be recorded by the committee and all police check paperwork will be returned to the member, no copies will be made. The outcome of the committee members' deliberations on the police check will only be discussed with the member.
 - 3.3. If the committee members raise a concern about the police check then the full committee will convene to consider the concern. The member will be given a chance to address the concerns either in writing or in person.

All members participating in activities that involve youth and/or youth members are expected to:

- show respect to all other members;
- keep themselves safe and look out for the safety of others, especially youth or other inexperienced members;
- accurately report inappropriate behaviour or risky situations to the appropriate authorities;
- respond to youth members' concerned about alleged abuse;
- ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are upheld;
- report suspected abuse to the appropriate authority;
- not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually; and,
- maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.