NATIONAL MARTIAL ARTS GOVERNING BODY LOSES PATIENCE OVER CRIMINAL CHECKING PROCEDURES WHICH COMPROMISE CHILD SAFETY

Submitted by: NAKMAS Press and Media
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National Chair of The National Association of Karate and Martial Art Schools (NAKMAS), Joe Ellis, is concerned that since the coalition government, changes were made within the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which are adversely affecting child welfare; a concern brought to the forefront with the recent shock sex abuse scandal by former pro-footballers, supported by the Football Association (FA). Sadly the new government did nothing to improve matters.

NAKMAS is a registered body for Disclosure Scotland, and the DBS (formerly CRB) whereby advanced disclosure checks are undertaken on all its instructors and club staff. Until a few years ago, checks were sent to both applicant, and to the registered body for clearance from the DBS. The current procedure sees only the applicant being sent a copy of the check.

Ellis said, "we have been bringing up this issue time and time again since the DBS procedure was first changed, and nothing has been done. It is clear that it is not working and I won't stop campaigning until it changes. Children are at risk, which is why I won't rest".

NAKMAS Director of Operations, Dr Sandra Beale-Ellis, said "this newer procedure puts children and young people at risk. It is now up to us as a registered body, and employer, to chase applicants for their checks. Not only does it drain valuable staff resources; we receive no funding, it allows applicants who have something to hide, time to delay being found out. This change of procedure has been a complete nightmare for us. In contrast Disclosure Scotland continues to send us copies for which we are grateful".

The disclosure check service is invaluable to national governing bodies. Only last year a martial arts instructor was jailed for 15 years for abuse and rape. When he eventually is released, a new disclosure check may be the only thing to prevent him teaching again. If national governing bodies do not know what is on the check immediately, child welfare is inevitably compromised, and every child in the UK is at risk.

Ellis has written to his local MP, Sir Roger Gale, for help in changing these procedures which have been running unsuccessfully, in his opinion, for a few years. Other national governing bodies are also concerned and the matter was discussed just a couple of months ago, at a meeting of the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA), the 'trade body' for sports, games and physical activities.

A request for the SRA to step in and deal with this problem has been made on numerous occasions, but so far the quest has been unsuccessful.

Ellis makes a direct plea to the government to sort this out before another child gets hurt.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Find out more about NAKMAS at http://www.nakmas.org.uk

NAKMAS is registered as a British Standards Institute BS EN ISO 9001:2008 organisation for its Quality Management System.

NAKMAS has secured the Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport. To find out more about Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport http://equalityinsport.org/

The National Association of Karate and Martial Art Schools (NAKMAS) National Governing Body is a non-funded national governing body and is a member of Sport & Recreation Alliance. With its Head Office based in Kent, NAKMAS governs all forms of traditional and modern martial arts and has over 65,000 members within the UK.

NAKMAS is also signed up to the Voluntary Code of Good Governance. Find out more at

http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/governance/voluntary-code-of-good-governance

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