



**USOPC  
NGB AUDIT**

# **UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION**

**ADDENDUM REPORT**

January 8, 2024

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background, Scope, and Objectives<sup>1</sup>

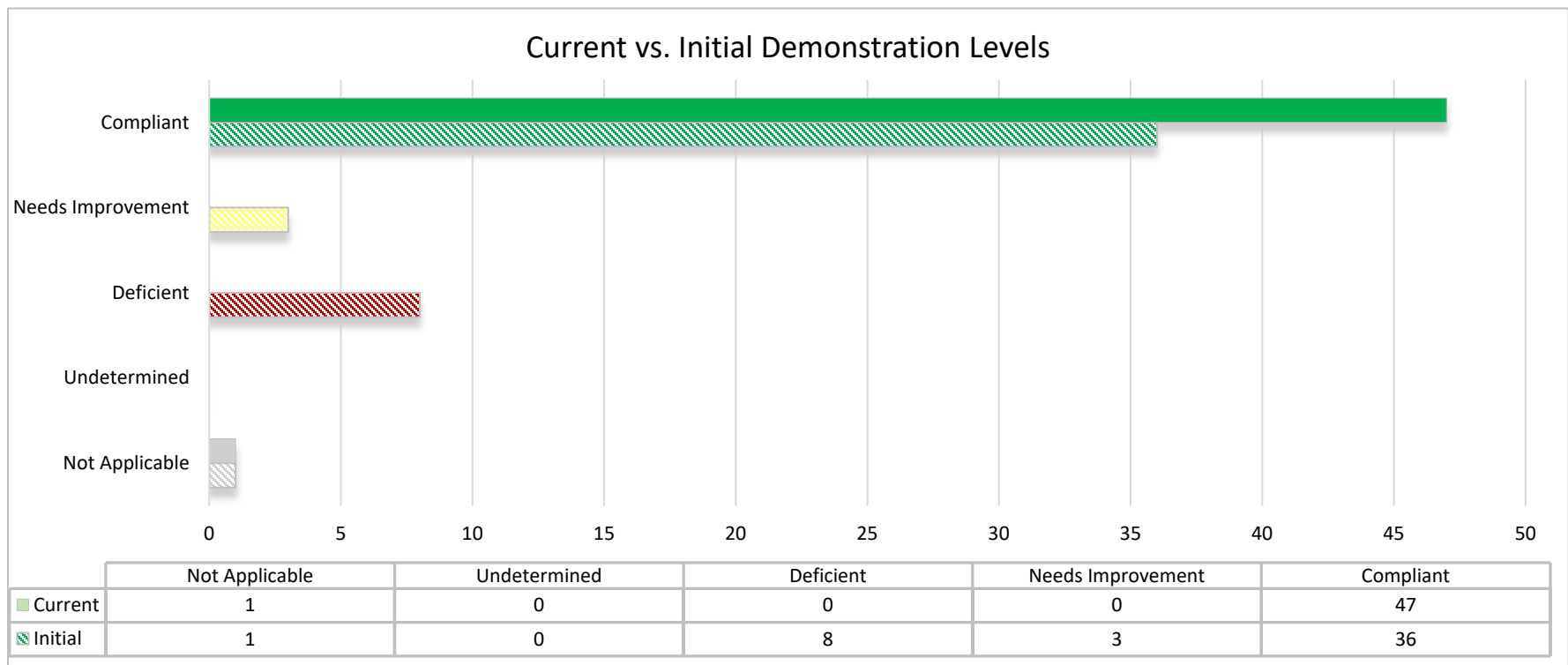
The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee’s (USOPC) NGB Audit department (Audit) completed an audit of the United States Fencing Association (USA Fencing) on February 24, 2023. Following the audit, NGBs have 120 days, unless otherwise specified, to provide evidence of remediation to Audit. Based on the evidence provided, Audit has assigned a Follow-up Demonstration Level<sup>2</sup> of Compliant, Needs Improvement, or Deficient. Details are provided in the findings below.

## Follow-up Summary

Based on the evidence of remediation provided, USA Fencing has remediated all findings. As of December 18, 2023, USA Fencing is 100% compliant with applicable standards. Additional details are outlined below.

## DEMONSTRATION LEVEL COMPARISON

The below chart presents the updated distribution of compliance demonstration levels<sup>2</sup>. For further details not provided in this addendum report, please refer to the Audit report posted on TeamUSA.org.



<sup>1</sup>For additional information on the background, scope, and objectives, please see the initial audit report

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix A

## NGB AUDIT FINDINGS - FOLLOW-UP STATUS

All Standards are evaluated against the 2022 Implementation Guide for Audit Standards. Bylaws references are based on the USOPC Bylaws approved in March 2021.

### GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

#### Subsequent Update

#### Standard A.1 a & b – Athlete Representation

The report issued in February 2023 included a Needs Improvement finding on Athlete Representation. The NGB Audit Team reevaluated the underlying issues and determined the assessment should have been compliant, given that USA Fencing is meeting all athlete representation requirements in practice. Additionally, USA Fencing’s Bylaws appropriately reference the USOPC Bylaws. The finding was adjusted to reflect a compliant status.

Deficient		
1	Board Development – A.3 b	Management Action Plan
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing does not have a formal onboarding process for new board or committee members.</p> <p>Additionally, there were two board members who did not complete the USOPC training.</p> <p>While management confirmed that CEO evaluations are conducted annually, no evidence of a written performance evaluation was provided.</p>	<p>USA Fencing has implemented an onboarding process for all committee and board members. Additionally, newly appointed board members will participate in a virtual onboarding session. The most recently appointed Board members completed this session on December 19, 2022.</p> <p>USA Fencing will ensure the newly onboarded and active Directors complete the USOPC training.</p> <p>On December 16, 2022, the USA Fencing Board of Directors approved a Compensation and Review Group which will conduct a written CEO evaluation annually and an interim review every 6 months. A written CEO evaluation was provided on February 16, 2023.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> August 31, 2023</p>
	<b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b>	
	USA Fencing has implemented a formal onboarding process for new board and committee members. In addition, the members of the board completed the required USOPC training. Lastly, evidence of a written evaluation of the CEO was provided to Audit.	
2	Code of Conduct – A.5 a	Management Action Plan

	<p><b>FINDING:</b> There are elements missing from USA Fencing's Code of Conduct in the areas of organizational expectations, reporting, resolution, policy owner, and resources.</p>	<p>USA Fencing Board of Directors will review an updated member code of conduct on April 16, 2023. Once approved, the code of conduct will be posted on the website.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> April 30, 2023</p>
<p><b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b></p>		
<p>USA Fencing updated the code of conduct to meet requirements.</p>		
3	<p>Conflict of Interest Policy – A.6 b</p>	<p>Management Action Plan</p>
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> There are elements missing from USA Fencing's Conflict of Interest Policy in the areas of applicability, disclosures, and resources.</p> <p>USA Fencing did not have anyone in the organization complete a conflict of interest disclosure form in the past year.</p>	<p>An updated Conflict of Interest Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. Once approved, the policy will be posted on the website.</p> <p>USA Fencing hired an Athlete Safety and Compliance Manager with responsibilities that include oversight of the conflict of interest process. USA Fencing has started the process to ensure all conflict of interest forms for the 2022-23 season are obtained, reviewed, and actioned according to the updated Conflict of Interest Policy and compliance requirements.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> June 30, 2023</p>
<p><b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b></p>		
<p>USA Fencing updated the conflict of interest policy to meet requirements. In addition, all required individuals have completed conflict of interest disclosures which followed an appropriate review process.</p>		
4	<p>Gifts and Entertainment Policy – A.6 c</p>	<p>Management Action Plan</p>
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing does not have a gift and entertainment policy.</p>	<p>A Gift &amp; Entertainment Policy was approved by the Board of Directors on February 16, 2023. The policy has been submitted to NGB Audit and posted on the website.</p>
<p><b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b></p>		
<p>USA Fencing implemented a gifts and entertainment policy that meets the requirements.</p>		

## FINANCIAL STANDARDS AND REPORTING PRACTICES

<p><b>Deficient</b></p>		
5	<p>USOPC Funding – B.1 c</p>	<p>Management Action Plan</p>

<p><b>FINDING:</b> There were numerous expenses tested that lacked appropriate support and/or evidence of approval. Additionally, two transactions were completed prior to approval.</p>	<p>USA Fencing has had significant employee turnover within the last two years, particularly within the finance team. The current team has implemented improved systematic grant-tracking processes. These changes will allow for appropriate document retention including approvals.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> September 30, 2023</p>
<p><b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b></p>	
<p>USA Fencing improved their approval process to ensure that needed documents and proper approval is obtained before expenses are paid.</p>	

## ATHLETE PROTECTION AND RIGHTS

Needs Improvement		
6	USOPC Athlete Safety Requirements – C.3 a	Management Action Plan
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing does not have a written process to notify the Office of Athlete Safety related to allegations that occur at an Olympic &amp; Paralympic Training Center or a USOPC Delegation Event.</p> <p>There are elements missing from USA Fencing's Background Check Policy, including applicable individuals, the timing of background checks, and requirements for individuals at training sites.</p>	<p>USA Fencing will add the required process to notify the Office of Athlete Safety to the FenceSafe Handbook.</p> <p>USA Fencing will update the background check requirements in the FenceSafe Handbook.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> June 30, 2023</p>
<p><b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b></p>		
<p>USA Fencing updated the FenceSafe Handbook to include a written process to notify the Office of Athlete Safety as required, and include all requirements for background checks.</p>		

## SPORT PERFORMANCE

Needs Improvement		
7	Event Sanctioning – D.3 b	Management Action Plan
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing's sanctioning documents need minor improvements to fully comply with the requirements.</p>	<p>USA Fencing's Regional Tournament Requirements will be updated to reflect the necessary changes and posted to the website by March 1, 2023.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> March 1, 2023</p>

<b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b>		
USA Fencing updated the sanctioning document to include all required elements.		
<b>Deficient</b>		
8	Paralympic Classification – D.3 c	Management Action Plan
	<b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing does not have national classification policies and procedures.	National classification policies and procedures will be written and posted on USA Fencing’s website.  <b>Due Date:</b> June 30, 2023
<b>Follow-up Level:</b>		
USA Fencing worked with US Paralympics to implement the required national classification policies and procedures.		

## OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

<b>Needs Improvement</b>		
9	Equal Opportunity – E.7 c	Management Action Plan
	<b>FINDING:</b> USA Fencing has not finalized the equal opportunity policy.	An Equality Policy was approved by the Board of Directors on February 16, 2023. The policy was provided to NGB Audit.
<b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b>		
USA Fencing implemented the Equality Policy, which meets requirements.		
<b>Deficient</b>		
10	Grievance Procedure – E.4 a & b	Management Action Plan
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> The USA Fencing Grievance Policy reviewed is in a draft form and is not posted on the website.</p> <p>Out of the grievance cases reviewed, the following significant issues were identified:</p> <p>There were multiple cases where a hearing was not provided within a reasonable time. In addition, there was one complaint where notice to the respondent was provided 394 days after the complaint submission.</p> <p>USA Fencing was unable to demonstrate appropriate processes were followed, including providing the notice to respondents,</p>	<p>USA Fencing hired a full-time compliance manager and has noted improvements with documentation and communication.</p> <p>An updated Complaint and Hearing Procedures Policy and the creation of a Grievance and Disciplinary Committee was approved by the Board of Directors on February 16, 2023. The policy was provided to NGB Audit and will be added to USA Fencing’s website. The updated procedures outline timelines for the grievance process. Going forward, USA Fencing will follow the updated policy, ensuring that hearings and communications are conducted in a reasonable timeframe and documents are appropriately retained.</p>

	communicating the decision to all parties, disclosing hearing panel members, and confirming the absence of conflicts among the hearing panel.	<b>Due Date:</b> June 30, 2023
<b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b>		
USA Fencing updated the grievance policy to include the required elements and posted the policy to its website. In addition, follow-up testing identified no issues with the execution of the grievance process.		
11	<b>Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy – E. 5 a</b>	<b>Management Action Plan</b>
	<p><b>FINDING:</b> There are elements missing from USA Fencing's Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy in the following areas: applicability, content and expectations, and reporting.</p> <p>The Whistleblower and Anti-Retaliation Policy has not been finalized and is not posted on the website.</p>	<p>A Whistleblower &amp; Anti-Retaliation Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. Once approved, the policy will be posted on the website.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> June 30, 2023</p>
<b>Follow-up Level: Compliant</b>		
USA Fencing updated the whistleblower policy to meet requirements and posted the policy on its website.		

We would like to thank the USA Fencing staff for their cooperation throughout the audit process.

## APPENDIX A – DEMONSTRATION LEVEL DEFINITIONS

<b>Compliant</b>	The NGB, through its written policies and procedures, as well as its execution of those policies and procedures, mostly demonstrates that it is meeting the elements of the standard.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The NGB, through its written policies and procedures, as well as its execution of those policies and procedures, demonstrates that it meets many elements of the standard, but changes or improvements are necessary to fully meet the standard.
<b>Deficient</b>	The NGB, through inadequate written policies and procedures and/or poor execution of those policies and procedures, demonstrates that it is not meeting several elements of the standard.
<b>Not applicable/ undetermined</b>	Not applicable indicates the standard does not apply to the NGB and will not be evaluated. Undetermined indicates a reason a determination cannot be made at this time; however, the standard will be evaluated at a later date. Additional details are provided as necessary.