



Report to
Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of
Canada

In this matter of

Sport Environment Assessment: Wrestling Canada Lutte
Monitoring Phase Report

Submitted by Jennifer Hawkins
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March 9, 2026

Introduction/Background

I prepared a Sport Environment Assessment (“**SEA**”) report for Wrestling Canada Lutte that was published on August 22, 2024 (the “**SEA Report**”). The SEA Report is online at https://sportintegritycommissioner.ca/files/2024-08-22_OSIC_Sport_Environment_Assessment_Report_Wrestling_Canada_Lutte.pdf.

I was initially engaged in December 2024 to work with Wrestling Canada Lutte (“**WCL**”) in a one-year monitoring phase (the “**Monitoring Phase**”); however, that was put on hold as the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner of Canada (“**OSIC**”) was ultimately dismantled. The Monitoring Phase was reinitiated by the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada in October 2025.

Mandate

I was asked to prepare a short monitoring report, with observations regarding progress and effective implementation of the SEA Report’s recommendations.

During the Monitoring Phase (October 1, 2025, until February 28, 2026), my mandate included the following:

- Helping to review and consult on WCL’s commitment statement and implementation plan where needed
- Facilitating regular check-ins with WCL to ensure accountability and cooperation by WCL to implement committed-to recommendations set out in the SEA Report
- Gathering information, facilitating feedback opportunities, and tracking progress and effective implementation of the SEA Report recommendations
- Ensuring performance of the Monitoring Phase in accordance with the Monitoring Phase Mandate and the OSIC Policies & Procedures
- Producing a monitoring report
- Acting as primary point of contact with the OSIC (and subsequently the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada) and WCL throughout the Monitoring Phase

Methodology

During the Monitoring Phase, I met regularly with WCL. WCL prepared a chart that outlined the recommendations, status of completion and date, examples or links to reference documents, and next steps. This was a “working document,” and I added a column with requests for information or additional questions, which the Sport Organization provided before the end of the Monitoring Phase.

Rather than conducting additional surveys, I chose to meet with various stakeholder groups to request their feedback and observations from the year following the SEA. I met with the following:

1. WCL’s Board of Directors (the “**Board**”)

2. The Sport Organization staff (including the high-performance director)
3. The Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations (“PTSOs”) representatives
4. The Independent Third Party for the Sport Organization

I completed the Coaching Association of Canada (“CAC”) Safe Sport Training that is mandatory for those who participate in the Sport Organization’s sanctioned activities so as to be informed of the current content of the training. Finally, I reviewed several documents:

The Canadian Sport Governance Code	WCL revised draft Policy
The Board of Director’s Manual, updated March 2025	Sample Training Centre MOU
The Board of Director’s Orientation Manual	

Executive Summary

WCL took the process seriously and immediately implemented recommendations. The Board advised the executive director regularly reported on WCL’s progress in implementing the SEA recommendations throughout the last year and a half.

While the 18 recommendations in the SEA Report were grouped under the three distinct portions of my mandate (Bennett Report¹ outcomes and gaps; WCL’s ability to prevent and address misconduct; systemic issues of maltreatment), the recommendations focused on the following areas:

- Communication
- Early intervention and alternative dispute resolution
- Training
- Uniformity in approach between WCL and PTSOs

WCL has made great strides in achieving those recommendations that were entirely within its control. Specifically, WCL met the recommendations surrounding communications, setting expectations for information sharing, and transparency. The Bennett Report recommendations and progress were posted on WCL’s website on July 26, 2024. The website continues to be a well-used source of information on safe sport matters, disciplinary decisions, and other relevant information. Also, WCL communicates safe sport expectations monthly with PTSOs.

WCL has made efforts to support mediation and early prevention where possible, as has the Independent Third Party (“ITP”). It was confirmed that funding for arbitration could be used to mediate, if the parties

¹ David Bennett, “Report Concerning Independent Review of Coaching Culture for Wrestling Canada Lutte” (2018), online (pdf): WCL <<https://wrestling.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/FINAL-WCL-Report-for-Release-December-2-2018.pdf>>.

were open to it and alternatives to arbitration are embedded in the policy. I learned of one example where coaches did participate in mediation. The ITP said mediation had typically been declined over the past year, which could be the result of certain personalities or the nature of the dispute.

The last two categories of recommendations (Training and Uniformity in approach between WCL and PTSOs) were adopted in principle by WCL, but the successful implementation is dependent on funding and external stakeholders (provincial governments, leadership in provincial sport organizations).

The mandatory CAC Safe Sport Training covers topics in a general way, in line with the proposed recommendations, such as de-escalating conflict and how to be a good bystander. The training adequately outlines reporting obligations and helps the learner to understand the importance of speaking up. The learner is asked to consider what “advocacy” might look like to them in the context of their sport, and maltreatment in sport. Leaders in the sport talk about the importance of speaking up and adopting a preventative approach. The training offers examples specific to WCL and, indeed, profiles Paul Ragusa (coach with the Canadian national team) and Erica Wiebe (Canadian Olympic champion, freestyle wrestling). This training is tracked in a database and integrated with the WCL licensing database.

There are additional resources through the CAC Sport eLearning series, such as “Bystander Empowerment” and “Modelling Healthy Relationships,” which touch on topics identified in the recommendations. Given limitations on funding, where additional training is ever required, these resources could be used.

Coordination and consistency between the WCL (National) and PTSOs is ongoing. A Reciprocation Policy exists, and provincial suspensions are reciprocated and posted on WCL’s website. Alignment between WCL policies and the PTSOs’ policies is “in progress” as specific requirements of provincial and territorial governments currently prevent full alignment. Alignment exists between WCL and the PTSOs in terms of the triage process.

Stakeholders I met with during the Monitoring Phase spoke positively about the sport environment, and their feedback confirmed the concrete steps WCL has taken to move forward in alignment with the SEA recommendations.

The chart below briefly outlines WCL’s progress with respect to each of the SEA recommendations and WCL’s plan to address the remaining recommendations.

All of which is respectfully submitted.



Jennifer Hawkins*

Dated: March 9, 2026

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Chart of WCL's Progress on SEA

Bennet Report: Outcomes and Gaps

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples/Notes
1	WCL should post the "Bennett Report Recommendations – November 2023" chart (attached at Appendix C) on its website.	Completed July 26, 2024	Posted on website: https://wrestling.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Bennett-Report-November-2023.pdf .
2 & 3	WCL to post and share information on their website/via email and consider expanding communications to various social media platforms. WCL should also encourage its community members to visit these resources.	Completed	WCL continues to post important safe sport information on its website. WCL provides a reminder about WCL safe sport activities to the PTSOs at its monthly PTSO council meetings. Interview of PTSOs revealed website is "well laid out and useful." The Monitoring Assessor reviewed WCL's website and confirmed policy and process information was user friendly and easy to navigate. A review of the website statistics for the safe sport pages revealed declining trends: - Views of "Canadian Safe Sport Program" and "Safety in Sport Resources" decreased between 2024 and 2025 (though this could be related to any number of factors). - In 2025, there were approximately 602 unique user views of the "Canadian Safe Sport Program" pages and 127 unique user views of the "Safety in Sport Resources."

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples/Notes
4 & 5	Consider offering self-advocate workshops. Some Participants (including coaches and athletes) indicated a desire for workshops to give athletes the tools to advocate for themselves in various situations, including in circumstances when a coach pushes an athlete to continue training through injury. Consider opportunities to revamp current training to incorporate Participant feedback, including: *Review how training is offered (format/platforms) to ensure it meets the needs of the WCL community.	In progress	WCL last updated the training, screening & consent requirements in February 2025. The requirements are clearly laid out in a chart online: https://wrestling.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Safety-in-Sport-Training-Screening-Consent-Requirements-February-2025.pdf. All participants with a WCL licence (participating in WCL-sanctioned activities) must complete CAC Safe Sport Training every 4 years. Other tiers of participation are also required to complete CAC's Make Ethical Decisions every 4 years. The training is comprehensive and well-tracked online. The Monitoring Assessor completed the training and determined it was comprehensive. Course completion is tracked in the Locker (CAC database). The information is integrated with WCL's licensing database and is an excellent way to ensure completion of the training: • 2023 WCL licences: 1562 • 2024 WCL licences: 1385 • 2025 WCL licences: 1627 Board member feedback to the Monitoring Assessor in December 2025 included that training is burdensome when required to repeat. PTSOs also advised when interviewed that Safe Sport training has been comprehensive and plentiful such that it is almost crossing the line of too much. While some participants in the SEA proposed additional areas that would be useful, such as gaining knowledge and tools to support self-advocacy in the safe sport context, absent additional funding WCL is not able to offer something like this on a broad scale. If there are opportunities at training camps to include topics like these— beyond the basic training regarding maltreatment—I encourage WCL to keep it in mind and/or to canvass participants.

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples/Notes
6 & 7	Ensure that the Board receives training regarding its role, and the type of information it can expect to be privy to, and information or decisions that are within WCL's purview. Establish clear expectations between the Board and WCL of the type of information that must be shared with the Board and the timing	Completed	The Board of Director's Manual was updated in March 2025. The Canadian Sport Governance Code, applicable to NSOs, sets out best practices to improve organizational performance and upgrade governance practices. WCL has adopted the Code. The Code includes provisions regarding the composition of the Board, required education for the Board, and expectations regarding transparency. WCL confirmed all directors are required to complete the Sport Integrity Canada Governance Essentials e-module training program. WCL confirmed it is also compliant with all Sport Canada governance requirements for funding. The Board receives a summary on complaints, appeals, etc., during in-camera meetings. The Monitoring Assessor interviewed the Board in December 2025. Feedback corroborated that Board members received appropriate training regarding their role, and sufficient information regarding safe sport matters so as to allow Board members to make appropriate governance decisions.

WCL's Ability to Prevent and Address the Misconduct

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples/Notes
8	Develop a resource to support complainants at the very beginning of the complaint process before ITP Sport is engaged. Resources should include information on when the respondent learns of the complaint, and at what point information in the process could become public.	In progress	WCL has posted on its website a guide to complaints: WCL-Complaint-Infographic.jpg (1256x2261). The infographic outlines the jurisdiction, and option for alternative dispute resolution (“ADR”). The Monitoring Assessor interviewed the ITP, who confirmed WCL’s communications were “a strength” and “it appears complaints are being filed in the right place.” Additional detail to this infographic, or a secondary resource, would still be helpful to specifically direct where a complaint should be filed, and at what point information becomes public.
9 & 10	Efforts should be made at all levels to try to resolve interpersonal conflict before they escalate. While the Discipline & Complaints Policy, within the Safe Sport Policy Manual, contemplates ADR methods, it appears to be used infrequently. WCL and ITP Sport could connect with one (or more) experienced mediators and have this resource ready. WCL should consider whether funding that otherwise goes towards adjudications could be used towards mediation if the parties agree.	Completed Evergreen	Challenges exist in holding participants accountable for this/encouraging participants to do this in the daily training environment. WCL’s updated policies emphasize ADR. The ITP also confirmed they propose ADR where appropriate. The Monitoring Assessor’s interview with the ITP in January 2026 revealed the following: • Mediation is sometimes not an option depending on the allegations and/or the participants • ITP has seen success using mediation ITP has access to mediation resources and confirmed WCL would fund mediation rather than adjudication if the parties agreed to it.

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples/Notes
11	A Reciprocity Policy exists within the Safe Sport Policy Manual and should be enforced to ensure that sanctions are imposed consistently.	Completed Evergreen	The Reciprocity Policy is online: Safe Sport Policy Manual-April-2025.pdf Provincial suspensions are reciprocated and posted on WCL's website: https://wrestling.ca/reports-resolutions/ . The PTSOs are aligned on codes of conduct and a centralized triage process.
12	WCL must ensure a safe work environment for staff and must address issues of misconduct (including harassment) towards WCL staff members.	Completed Evergreen	The Monitoring Assessor met with staff in January 2026. Staff confirmed they know what to do if they have concerns about how they are being treated, including by the executive director. They advised the executive director "insulates" them from certain challenging interactions or discussions.
13	WCL must ensure complaints pertaining to the treatment of officials are treated consistently as those involving athletes. Coaches and athletes must be held accountable for misconduct towards officials.	Completed Evergreen	WCL policy includes ITP services and independent discipline panels. ITP reviewed files and did not find any in the past year pertaining to officials/referees. The ITP noted these may fall under Sport Integrity Canada's jurisdiction.
14	Consistency could be better achieved if the PTSOs and clubs have safe sport policies in alignment with the NSO's/WCL's policies, and also have access to ITP Sport.	In progress	See comments in recommendation 11 above. This issue is being contemplated by the Future of Sport in Canada Commission. Requirements by provincial and territorial governments continue to be a factor that prevents full alignment.
15	In respect of the other forms of legal action and retaliation, it will take time for these complaints to work through the adjudicative systems.	Completed	WCL continues to encourage ADR and mediation where possible, as per policies. The ITP noted there was a particularly litigious group within WCL and historical complaints and lawsuits continued to work their way through the system.

Systemic Issues of Maltreatment

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples
16	WCL's Code of Conduct & Ethics requires at section 15 e) that "coaches and athlete support personnel support the coach and athlete support personnel of a training camp provincial team, or National Team" should an athlete qualify for participation in one of these programs. There is an expectation that coaches will work collaboratively with other coaches and athletes. To minimize incidents of isolation and rumours, WCL must hold them to account when this does not occur.	Completed	See sample training centre MOU for various accountabilities. WCL noted there are limitations on enforcement in the daily training environment. The Assessment Monitor received feedback on this topic from the high-performance director ("HPD"). The HPD advised he did not observe there to be any current specific issue with coaches. He noted the coaching role can be "combative" as coaches defend the program. The HPD noted one particular conflict between coaches where an outside mediator had success in supporting a resolution.
17	Continued focused training on prevention of physical forms of maltreatment helps all community members to understand what is permissible and what is not. Training that focuses on athlete empowerment and tools to support all community members to speak up (on their own behalf and on behalf of others) is also important in addressing these concerns.	Completed	See comments in recommendations 4 & 5.

	Recommendation	Status	Links/Examples
18	WCL's continued commitment to creating an environment that encourages reporting of safe sport issues and effectively addressing any concerns of retaliation is necessary to fostering more reporting. Continued communications about OSIC (now Sport Integrity Canada) and ITP Sport, while seemingly repetitive, may be necessary to achieve improved reporting rates.	Completed	WCL's continued commitment is exemplified in: - its monthly communication updates to PTSOs, the Board, and staff about safe sport matters; - transparent and comprehensive website content; and - required repeated training.