



RGBI Protection Policy – Frequently Asked Questions

This information sheet aims to give the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions in relation to the RGBI Protection Policy.

1. Why is it necessary for each club to have a formal statement of policy? Is this a legal requirement as a result of legislation or government guidelines or is it RGBI legislation or guidelines?

In the Home office document 'Safe from harm' all organisations working with children were recommended to have a protection policy. Subsequently through several items of legislation and regulation, that included the establishment of the CRB and Disclosure Scotland, the recommendation became an obligation.

Any organisation, including those in the voluntary sector working with children on a regular basis, is obliged to have a policy that deals with the 13 aspects outlined in the original Home Office document. The RGBI Protection Policy does that.

Similar, though less strong, legislation and regulations surround the work with the vulnerable. It is necessary for each club to have its policy, as the club is an autonomous unit. Of course there will be some clubs that do nothing with the two groups and in those cases a policy would be unnecessary.

2. What exactly are the club's protection officer's obligations, duties and liabilities on behalf of each member (and invited non-Rotaractor helpers) when coming into contact with children and vulnerable adults on each and every Rotaract occasion or activity?

The duties and responsibilities of the Rotaract Club Protection Officer (RCPO) are detailed in the policy on Page 10 (February 2006 edition). Safeguarding and protection is the duty of all working with children and the vulnerable under the aegis of Rotaract. The RCPO is the person who advises and assists those with responsibility for organising and running events with children and the vulnerable. Two significant activities that are very much the realm of the RCPO and the RCPO alone are the administration work with the criminal record checks and making contact with the local agencies, principally social services in England and Wales, that deal with protection issues. The RCPO is not responsible for the actions of the club members and helpers. Each individual is responsible for what he or she does.

3. What is the present policy of RGBI with regard to clubs who refuse to make a statement of policy and/or appoint a Rotaract Club Protection Officer?

A club that refuses to adopt a policy or to take action to appoint a person or a group to deal with protection issues and continues to work with children and the vulnerable is operating outside legislation and regulation.

The Association's insurance cover is predicated on the assumption that the club will do its best to operate within the law and according to regulation. Not to do that would make the club and the individuals vulnerable: accidents when a seat belt is not worn may be an interesting parallel. In the event of an accident or an allegation then the club would be on its own. From recent examples with teachers who have operated outside guidelines, the implications could be serious for the Rotaractors and the club.

4. Should we require all club members to be CRB checked as a condition of membership?

That is simply not permissible under the CRB arrangements and completely misses the point of the checks that are activity specific and part of the process of selecting someone to do a job. It should be remembered that all the CRB check will do is provide information about something that has already happened. For example, it cannot provide information about offences that have not been detected. CRB checks should be carried out as part of the selection process and for a specific activity.

5. Can clubs require prospective members to undergo a CRB check (or complete any of the RGBI Protection Policy forms) as part of the election to membership process?

No. The election for membership process is set out in the Constitutional documents and cannot be changed or varied in any way to include such a requirement by clubs. Any club that did so would be acting unconstitutionally. See also No. 4 above about the timing of CRB checks.

6. How do I get hold of a copy of the RGBI Protection Policy?

In March 2006 every Rotaract District Protection Officer (RDPO) was sent sufficient copies to give one to every club in their district. If you have not yet received your copy please contact your Rotaract District Protection Officer.

Further copies can be obtained from the RGBI Protection Officer. Please note that the policy must not be copied or distributed or given in any other form to non-Rotaractors without the express permission of the RGBI Chairman. The policy was written specifically for RGBI, for Rotaract activities and Rotaractors and may not be appropriate for others.

7. Is the policy available electronically?

For the copyright reasons stated above in No. 6, the policy is currently not available electronically.

However, the following extracts have been made available electronically on the RGBI website, www.rotaract.org.uk to download:

- The RGBI Policy
- Model policy for a district
- Model policy for a club
- Blank risk assessment form
- All of the loose leaf forms provided in the inside back cover of the policy.

8. Is any training available for Clubs and Club members?

Every Rotary District Protection Officer can provide training. Please contact them for details.

9. Does RGBI have someone who has overall responsibility for this subject and can they give advice?

The RGBI Protection Officer is the current RGBI Community Officer, their contact details are in the RGBI Directory and on the RGBI website (www.rotaract.org.uk). In addition every District has its own Protection Officer who is also available to give advice and assistance.

10. Is there any other information available?

Information sheet entitled 'The RGBI Protection Policy – Club Members Summary' provides an outline summary to the comprehensive policy and is available from the website or upon request from the RGBI Protection Officer.

The RGBI website (www.rotaract.org.uk) has a section for the RGBI Protection Policy where up to date information and advice is available, including the extracts to download. Please refer to the website on a regular basis to keep your RGBI Protection Policy up to date.