

The "Hellenic Federation of Sports Coaches and Trainers" (POPA), was founded in 2010 as an attempt to organize and coordinate the activities of coaches of all sports, Olympic and non-Olympic, on the basis of their common problems. Members are Coaches Associations from Sailing, Swimming, Weightlifting, Canoe-Kayak, Badminton, Fencing, Cycling, Boxing, mountain and sea Skiing, Tennis, Archery, Coaches of disabled athletes and Olympic Taekwondo.

Not all the sports in Greece have coach associations. From a total of 17 coaches Associations POPA has 13 of them as members.

Since its foundation, POPA lodged a list of proposals of important matter, of which it regards that there must be an intervention of legislative procedures. Our view of proposals, crucial for the positive development of many aspects of the sport is "THE VOICE OF THE COACH" to be heard. Coach is the person on whom the whole existence of sport is founded, a fact that seems to be forgotten systematically from the athletic and sports bodies. Just as the existence and operation of schools depends on teachers and professors, therefore there cannot be any sport without the specific coach. Moreover, it cannot be possible for decisions concerning coaches to be taken without their ability of them to express certain opinions on a permanent basis.

From the nature of his profession, the coach not only deals with the preparation and implementation of training programs but, with a host of other items that affect and concern in his profession. So, his opinion is of importance and can contribute to making the right decisions!

***For these reasons, we believe, it is imperative for the coach to participate in decision-making in sport!***

## **FIELDS OF LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANCE - SPORTS COACHES**

### **WORKING ARRANGEMENTS - LEGALITY OF COACHES**

Today there are thousands of coaches, who work in various sports and clubs or associations and are not paid regularly. Many of them get money as travel fees, no insurance or contracts and must be satisfied on that basis. Also, in all sports, coaches working as individuals devoid of any legitimate prerequisite for this purpose, i.e. professional coach license.

Given the present state of affairs in the workplace of coaches, should in our opinion:

- A) Determine the exact employment status of coaches and
- B) Establish a specific way to control the legality of coaches working in clubs and National teams.

Specifically, in order to become part of the economic activity of our country, they must have:

- a) The right to work under minimum fee per coach category, along with mandatory procurement, as provided in Article 31 par. 6, law 2725/1999 (work contracts)
- b) Be eligible for the insurance and
- c) The right to retirement.

### **LEGALITY CONTROL OF COACHES WORKING IN CLUBS AND NATIONAL TEAMS**

Following the previous question, and to ensure that only legitimate coaches will find work (coach professional license holders) must be, finally, controlled and, therefore, implementation and penalties for offenders to be applied.

Therefore, we propose POPA to be responsible to review the legality of the coaches of the clubs, by the formation of a binary control group, consisting of a representative of POPA and a representative from the coach Association in the sport that is to

be tested. Any case of a coach that is employed without having a coach professional license and coach ID card will be reported to the General Secretariat of Sports in order penalties to be applied. The same committee will control the coaches of the clubs participating in the Hellenic National championships of every sport.

## **INTRODUCTION ROLES - TERMS DETERMINATION**

Legislative action is required in response to the current reality in the provision of sport services and the economic conditions, to describe and to safeguard the distinct forms of service as follows:

### **A) Coach:**

Coach: Coach is the person who has acquired in accordance with applicable law and typical merits of athletic preparation, education, training and coaching athletes of every level and age. Who will also provide professional service to sports clubs, local associations, sports teams or sports federations. To prepare athletes for all kinds of games and activities for the sport concerned.

2. The profession of coaching in Greece standing to pursue those who hold a professional license issued by the General Secretariat for Sport after submitting notification of exercise of the profession of the person concerned and his enrolment in the special file of coaches. The award decision is notified to the relevant sports federation.

3. The legal practitioners coach in Greece, as in force subject to the specific provisions of the existing regulations as coaches in the sport for which offer their specific services

4. Each coach is contracted in writing with the mandatory athletic organization which provides services with full, partial or periodic employment of employees or independent service providers. The contract to be valid it is required to be submitted to the competent Tax authority.

5. Coach obliged to employ for training athletes or learning the sport in sports academies: 1) sports federations and sports clubs, 2) the sporting public companies and departments of paid sportsmen, 3) clubs which cultivate Olympic sport, 4) clubs that operate and organize learning schools of any recognized or not in non-sport athletes whether to supply it or not paid tuition, 5) sports clubs that cultivate individual non-Olympic sport, and have athletes under the age of 18 years.

6. All issues of Labour disputes of coaches in the exercise of their profession will be resolved by the Higher Council for Sports Issues. Its sole purpose is to provide a quick resolution.

### **B) Trainer:**

Trainer is the person who has acquired in accordance with applicable law typical and essential qualifications for teaching the sport to persons not having the status of the athlete, providing services as an independent person or working with vector - sport learning provider.

## **CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS WORKING IN TOURISM AND THE «PERSONAL TRAINING»**

It is necessary to provide high quality services to trainees by sports teachers / trainers, working in the field of sports tourism, to have a procedure to their examinations, their certification and is integrated in the professional body for their registration and control.

As the sports teach teachers / trainers have substantial degree of risk (e.g., climbing, skiing, mountain skiing, canoeing - kayaking on the river, etc. - examples of accidents in the course of such activities are unfortunately numerous) should these people have certified expertise, which ensure the provision of services with a high level of security.

Another great wound to the sports field, and private gyms, is that people are shown and work as coaches or personal trainers,

without holding a degree or a certification by a competent body, posing a great risk to athletes and exercisers. To eliminate such phenomena, it is absolutely necessary the legislative determination of the necessary skills and knowledge, and the certification process for those who are going to work in these areas, to ensure the health of athletes and to whom their services are provided.

### **ATHLETES AGE LIMIT**

The current Greek sport law in Article 31 (The Coach), paragraph 5D states:

"Sports clubs are obliged to provide a coach when they cultivate individual sports for athletes under the age of eighteen (18) years."

Our view is that the law should state explicitly that the clubs cultivating individual sport must employ coach regardless of the age of the athletes. The coaching process, only under the supervision of the legal coach can be performed, as the only expert who can guarantee the proper and safe preparation of athletes of all sports and all ages!

### **COACH SCHOOLS**

POPA had proposed the establishment of "National School of Coaches" as an institution of tertiary education, modelled on the curriculum of Physical Education, but with specificity in any sport. However, the current economic conditions in Greece require working out an alternative. The basic principles of that are:

a) Improve the level of knowledge provided, b) operation of schools where there is an identified need for new coaches, covering existing real requirements, c) schools will have specific curriculum, d) to provide appropriate time as well as accurate and comprehensive knowledge, e) practice, f) reliable examinations and g) appropriate education personnel.

The schools should be established by the GSS and supervised by a committee consisting of representatives of the GSS, the relevant sport federation and POPA.

Alternatively we recommend that the schools of coaches should be entrusted to the Ministry of Education, since:

A) It is a learning process, and

B) Sports Federations and GSS are not in any way educational institutions.

Note: There are sports that do not receive specificity in the Department of Physical Education and Sports in the Hellenic National University. Therefore, it is essential that coaches of these sports are highlighted by the Coaches Schools, but on the basis of criteria that will be provided in advance and will relate, first, to the entrance of candidates in Schools, and secondly, required knowledge, testing and certification.

Necessary, of course, is the continuous training of coaches, through seminars, which are held every two years either by GSS or by POPA.

This procedure is recommended to apply as a prerequisite for the renewal of professional license of coaching.

In Greece coaches are produced by the following sources: 1) from the coaches' schools of general sport secretariat, 2) from the faculties of science of physical education and sport of the country's universities by which physical education teachers specializing in a sport are graduated, 3) from private universities and 4) of the vocational training institutions. Our proposal is to create a common framework of studies of all these institutions so that students take the same knowledge level.

## **COACHES LEVELS**

In Greece there are only three levels of coaches: Level C as club coaches, Level B as club coaches and National Team Assistant Coaches and Level A as National Team Head Coaches and club coaches. Here I would like to address the representative of the European Commissioner of sports for a recommendation on the application in all European countries of the same level of coaches with corresponding qualifications at each level as these are described by the International Coaching Framework published by the ICCE.

## **COACHES REGULATION**

In Greece there are coaches' regulations only in 7 or 8 sports. POPA is willing to submit detailed proposals for the establishment of a single regulation, which will define the general issues regarding coaches, namely:

1. Conditions to practice the profession of sport coaching
2. Qualifications
3. Coach categories
4. Employment
5. ID coach card
6. Obligations of clubs to hire a coach
7. Conditions of hiring foreign coach
8. Incompatibility to practice the profession of sport coach
9. Validation of coaches

The regulation also states that coaches will be the case for issues relating to special requirements of each sport. I will not mention the details here. The question of the specific requirements of each sport, should be considered by the legislative committee of the GSS

We emphasize again that the most crucial issues are:

1. Coach Regulation should be applied by prescribed control groups.

2. In order the appliance of the regulation to succeed penalties should be given.

## **SPECIFIC ISSUES**

### **SELECTION OF COACHES FOR NATIONAL TEAMS**

In Greece every sports federation selects the National Coach or assistant coaches with no opportunity to participate in an open selection process of the coaches who wish so. Our view is that Coaches of each sport should have the right to participate to the selection process. The selection has no meaning without an opinion of their colleagues.

To the selection process should:

- a) Have the right to participate every coach as candidate
- b) Establish the qualifications needed by the candidates
- c) The selection must be made by a committee composed of representatives of the relevant federation, the GSS and the coaches association of the sport.

In this way, there will be a transparent, valid, reliable and objective selection of the most efficient coaches.

### **COACHES' BENEFITS**

Regarding benefits provided to athletes who achieve exceptional sporting discrimination, exactly the same should apply for the coaches because the coach plans the training program, is responsible for the preparation of the athlete, lives with the athlete and whatever success has the coach as an architect. Therefore, coaches must enjoy the same benefits as athletes, in order: to restore the injustice against them, their role to come out of the shadows, but also in recognition of their contribution to Hellenic sport.



## **ATHLETES' HEALTH CONTROL COVERAGE**

To avoid untoward incidents during the participation of national teams in international competitions and above all to preserve the life and health of athletes, the athletes of the national teams, before their departure to participate in them, must pass full medical check-up to verify the perfect condition of their health.

Incident like that of the death of canoeing champion, Andreas Kilingaridis in May 2013 during competitions in Poland, should not be allowed to be repeated by the Greek state!

## **ATHLETES ANTI DOPING CONTROL**

In order to preserve the health of our athletes and the dignity of our sport, we need to perform doping control to all our national teams before any participation in international competitions.

POPA notes due to lack of money controls are not being made.

Checks can be made by the staff of the National Centre of Sports Research or the Hellenic Anti-Doping Council.

## **PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL TEAMS TO PREPARATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS**

The departure of national teams for the participation in international competitions and preparation in Greece and abroad, should not be approved without the accompaniment of:

1. Head of Mission,
2. Doctor and
3. Legal Coach.

They are responsible for the safety, health and proper functioning of a mission.

## **CONTROL, NOT A SIMPLE SUPERVISION OF SPORTS FEDERATIONS BY THE GSS.**

The practice so far has made evident the need to change the mode of GSS from supervisor to controller of sports federations. So, GSS must control the operation of the Federations under the laws and regulations and to impose specific penalties for each violation, in order laws and regulations to fulfil the purposes for which they were created. The control of federations by the GSS, based on the fundamental fact of state financing, means no simple supervision but complete and thorough control on all of the related federations. Any sport federation wishing to invoke the 'self rule', must choose self-financing and not the public support of Greek taxpayers money. Finally, let the state and lawmakers contemplate, on the one hand the morbid condition which exists because of existing legislation, and on the other hand because of the non-enforcement of the law, in other cases on this issue.

For all these reasons, we imperatively believe, the coach must participate in decision-making in sport institutions participating in Board meetings to make decisions with the right to speak, right of documentation and right of voting!