

Press Release



To: News/Sports Editors
Immediate Release

SkillsActive

05 November 2007

Need for funding for sports volunteers' qualifications now greater than ever

The CCPR^[1], the umbrella body for national organisations for sport and recreation, and SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning, have welcomed the announcement by the Conservative Party that it will invest directly in local sports clubs and their National Governing Bodies.

The Conservative Party's policy to offer sports clubs financial incentives to provide schoolchildren with two hours a week of extra-curricular coaching as part of a plan to create a club based sporting culture has greatly pleased many in the sport and recreation sector, as it will enable them to provide quality sport and recreational opportunities for millions of young people and channel them into community sport.

However, the policy announcement has highlighted the current disagreement over government funding of sports volunteers' qualifications. If governing bodies and their clubs are to provide high quality coaching and superior sporting environments for increased numbers of young participants it will require many volunteers to undertake additional qualifications; if the status quo regarding qualifications funding remains, this will place an extra financial burden on both clubs and the volunteers.

The Government has indicated that in the future it will only fund the qualifications of those sports volunteers without other recognised qualifications. The CCPR and SkillsActive believe that it is essential that volunteers are provided with the opportunities to improve and enhance their skills, so that in turn they can provide excellence within the voluntary sport and recreation sector. To deny volunteers access to funding because they are too qualified in other aspects of their lives is preventing the sector from developing and improving.

The CCPR is currently assisting in the move towards QCA recognition for governing body qualifications; however, this much needed step towards recognised qualification standards across the sport and recreation sector is hampered by the continued failure of the government to guarantee the funding necessary for future success.

Stephen Studd, SkillsActive Chief Executive, said: "We would welcome any move to give more financial support to sports clubs as we believe it is essential to maintain club based sporting culture and promote their links to schools.

"However, if this is to be a sustainable policy, the role of volunteers has to be recognised and properly accounted for. Without greater access to free training it will be impossible to recruit the number of skilled volunteers to make this work."

ENDS

This week saw the launch of the CCPR Challenge, for more information visit www.ccpr.org.uk

1. The Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) is the umbrella body for the national governing bodies of sport and recreation. Its role is to protect and promote the interests of voluntary sector sport and recreation.

For enquiries related to this press release, please contact Judith Wood on 07867 501 712 or 020 8870 9088.

2. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Sport and Recreation, Health and Fitness, Playwork, The Outdoors and the Caravan industries.

3. SkillsActive's mission statement is: "To ensure best quality, best business and best value within the Sector to achieve its economic and social potential."

4. SSCs are employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector throughout the UK. SSCs provide employers with the opportunity to provide leadership to meet their sector's skills and business needs. In return they receive substantial public investment and greater dialogue with government departments across the UK.

5. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ www.skillsactive.com

