

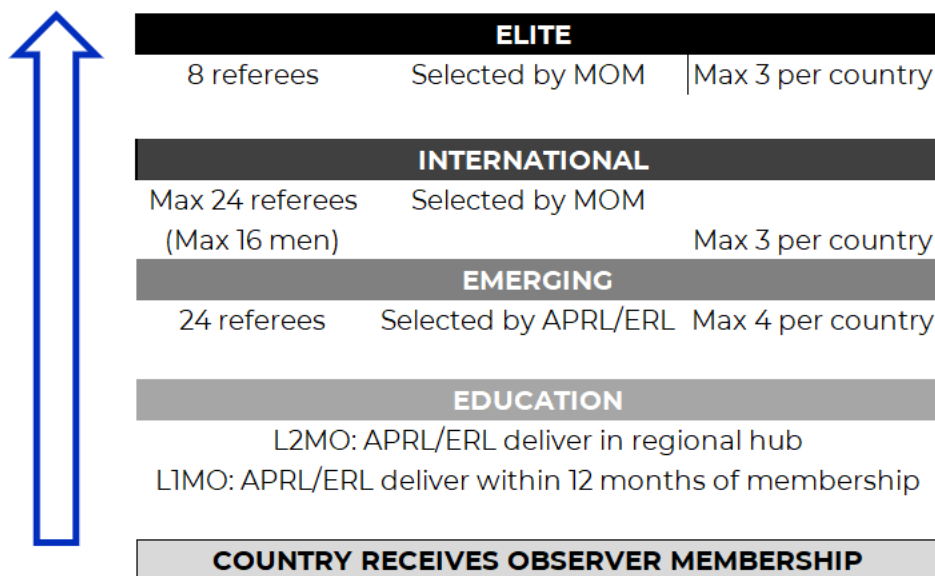
MATCH OFFICIALS PATHWAY AND STRUCTURE

1. PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 To explain the match official pathway to IRL members.
- 1.2 The 'Categories Framework' is attached to support this paper.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 IRL is providing an enhanced leading role in managing the match officials function for international rugby league matches and competitions. It will do so in close collaboration with the confederations and national federations.
- 2.2 A principle of the new system is to develop and provide opportunities for a greater international spread of match officials than currently exists, including the promotion of female officials. This will be achieved by the implementation of a squad system, where selected officials are mentored and centrally evaluated by the IRL Match Officials Manager. A centrally managed squad system is common to international sports federations.



3. THE SQUADS

3.1 Elite Match Official squad (EMOS)

The top squad comprises eight officials with no more than three officials from any one nationality. Only officials in this squad will referee in men's bilateral games between the top four nations, Oceania Cup, European Championship and world cup. Their position will be assessed each year along with their national manager before being offered a position for the following season.

3.2 International Match Official Squad (IMOS)

The second tier squad comprises 16-24 officials, of which no more than 16 will be men, who will referee bilateral games between nations outside the top 4, Euro/Oceania B level, and some junior Internationals. Only officials who have officiated in this squad will be eligible to progress to EMOS when a vacancy arises. Positions will be assessed



each year along with their national manager before being offered a position for the following season. IMOS is also intended to accelerate the cultivation of female referees at the international level.

3.3 **Emerging Match Official Panel (EMOP)**

Squad members will officiate in bilateral games between lower ranked countries, Euro/Oceania C/D competitions as well as some junior internationals. Competitions are the ideal place to develop these officials as they can be coached over a period while in camp. Promising officials will progress to the International squad. This panel will be selected by the IRL in conjunction with APRL and the ERL who will overseas the appointments at this level.

3.4 **Touch judges**

The above squads are for referees only. Touch judges for international matches will be appointed locally following liaison between International Rugby League, confederations and local appointing officers. Touch judges may be appointed from any of the above International refereeing squads or from the local competition if it is deemed that they have sufficient experience and ability. Touch judges for major competitions may be appointed entirely from the IRL referee squads listed.

4. **SELECTION & PROGRESSION**

4.1 ***How will officials be selected?***

Member nations and confederations will be asked to nominate their referees for the panels at the end of the 2020 domestic season. A nomination form will offer guidance as to which squad they should be aiming to get their referees on, however if an official is nominated for the wrong squad they will still be considered for the squad most suitable to their level. IRL will communicate with APRL and ERL ahead of this process.

4.2 ***How will officials progress?***

On performance in their International games and showing that they are better than someone in a panel above them. Referees might come off the list for a variety of reasons and a vacancy could arise allowing someone to move up. Poor performance in domestic leagues would trigger a conversation between the IRL and the relevant domestic manager who, collectively, might decide to remove them from the panel, creating a gap.

4.3 ***What level should officials aim for initially?***

Guidance will be in the nomination form. The referee needs to be performing at the top of their national panel or regularly in one of the main leagues in the world to be considered for Elite. This could include, NRL, Super League, NZRL, FFRXIII and PNGRFL. It is about their performance domestically that gets the nomination for the panel but the nomination has to come from their home nation (e.g. A New Zealand NRL referee must be nominated by NZRL, not ARLC) or confederation.

4.4 ***Will officials be demoted if their performance does not merit retaining their place in their current squad?***

A discussion will take place between the Match Officials Manager, the referee, and the referees home country to see whether there is any value in that referee moving to a lower level. A referee moving down a grade should not block the progress of one moving up.

Should you require further information please contact Stuart.Cummings@intrl.sport.

