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# WELCOME TO REFEREEING

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## OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to assist new referees to get started and as an ongoing reference for all referees.

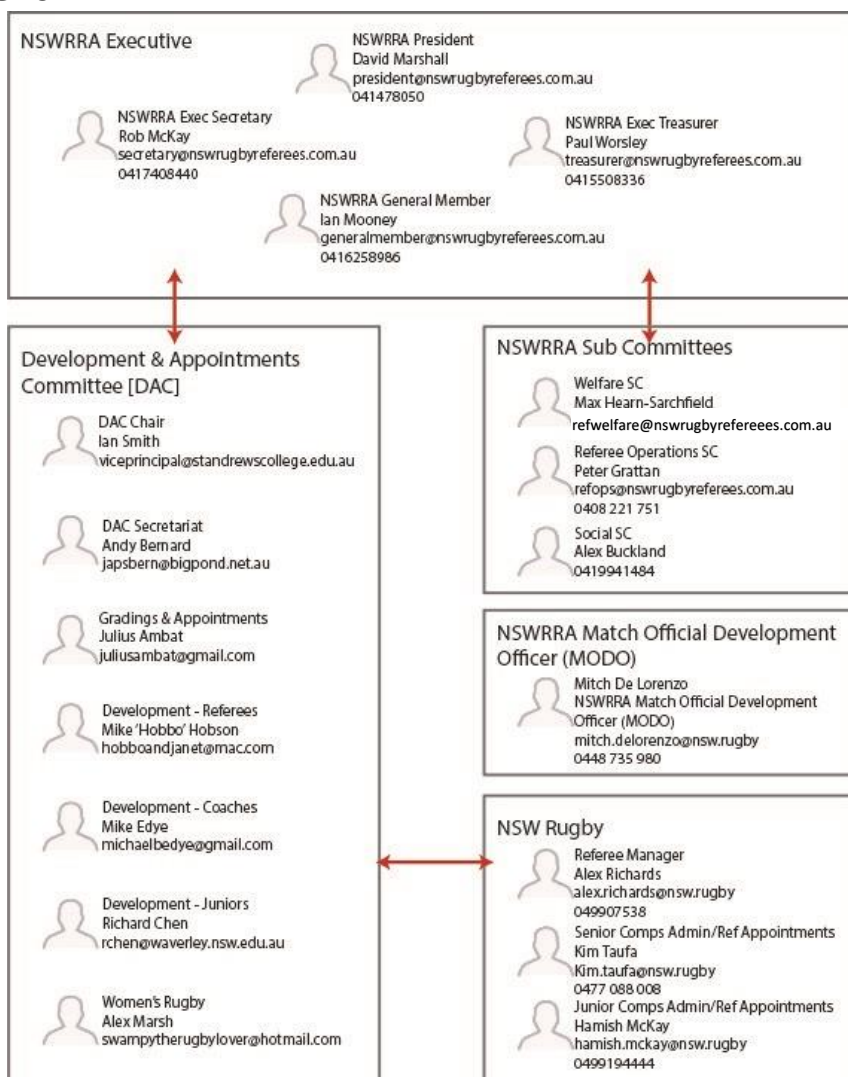
This document will be updated regularly as necessary.

## NEW SOUTH WALES RUGBY REFEREES ASSOCIATION (NSWRRRA)

NSWRRRA is an association registered under the NSW Associations Incorporations Act. NSWRRRA was established in 1892 and is the peak body for rugby union match officials servicing all competitions within the greater Sydney area. Each week during the season we provide match officials to over 150 Sydney Premiership (Shute Shield), Sydney Women (Jack Scott Cup), NSW Suburban, Sydney School, and Sydney Junior matches. Our members include current and former international referees.

## ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

### THE STRUCTURE



## CONTACTING THE DAC

### The Chair:

- Match Officials (MOs) and Match Official Developers (MODs) – overall strategy and performance.

### Grading & Appointments:

- MO – Grading and Relegation processes including application for regrading and queries regarding any decisions (but NOT week-to-week appointment information).
- MOD – Contact for sighting requests and as part of the referee regrading process.

### Referee Development and Pathways:

- MO – Education & development information, interchanges, tournament opportunities, Development Squad information, and general guidance.
- MOD – Assistance with Development Squad education program, reports on individual members, and referee development opportunities including budget requests and tournaments. All coaches can also provide talent ID feedback.

### Referee Coach Development and Pathways:

- MO – Assistance on the pathway to transition from MO to MOD.
- MOD – Personal development as a referee coach, overall coach education program, and coaching development opportunities including interchanges and tournaments.

### Juniors Development and Pathways:

- MO – Opportunities for Junior referees including assistance with transitioning to Senior Rugby.

### Women's Development and Membership:

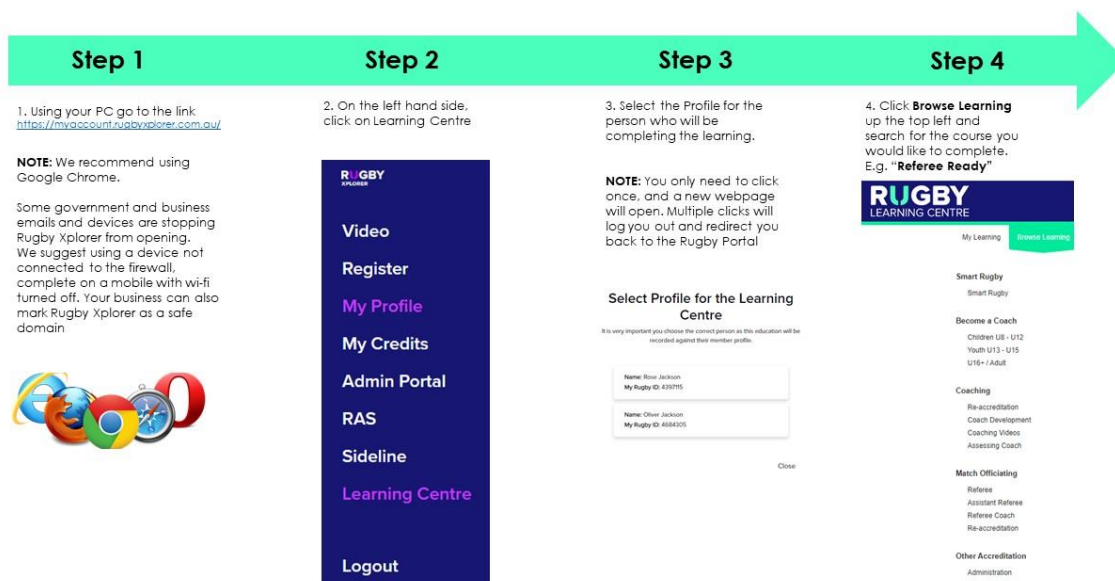
- MO – Opportunities and support for female referees.

## GETTING STARTED

### ACCREDITATION AND EDUCATION

As a minimum, both MOs and MODs are required to complete Smart Rugby, which requires renewal every two years. Similarly, you are required to complete Season Ready every year to ensure your underlying accreditations remain current. In each case, the expiry date of these accreditations is 1<sup>st</sup> April in the relevant year.

These courses can be found in the Learning Centre of RX:



You should also complete the Referee Ready course which leads to accreditation as a Level 1 Referee. This can also be found in the Learning Centre. Once you have completed the course, the associated online components, and the Law exam, you will be ready to be field tested.

## GEAR

### GEAR POLICY

We will support our members with appropriate kit to fulfill activities on behalf of our Association.

We are proud of the reputation that is associated with match officials wearing our kit and expect all wearing our colours to deliver on expectations that external stakeholders have on those that wear our kit.

There is no cost to our members for the kit entitlement, however members should be aware it represents one of the largest expenses of the Association.

Members will wear the current active kit when representing NSWRRRA and any older versions will only be worn in an emergency.

The kit is provided to fulfill activities on behalf of NSWRRRA so only wear the kit when representing NSWRRRA. Free replacement of kit due to wear and tear may otherwise be denied.

In return for the free entitlement, Members will support NSWRRRA by fulfilling a reasonable level of activities.

Members should endeavour to take only what they need to fulfill their level of activity.

## GEAR DISTRIBUTION




NSWRRA manages the ordering and replacement of gear through our online shop.

The shop indicates a cost for items, but if they fall within an entitlement then coupon codes will be issued to members for the appropriate discounts.




Collection of any orders is available by appointment at NSWRU HQ (Daceyville) or at NSWRRRA Education events. Should you be unable to attend in person, a flat rate shipping option is available at members' expense.

The shop can be found here: [www.nswrugbyreferees.com.au/shop](http://www.nswrugbyreferees.com.au/shop)

## ON FIELD KIT

ON FIELD KIT – 2024-26		MEMBER ENTITLEMENT	EXTRAS	REPLACEMENT EXCEPTIONS
		1x (ONE) Match Polo OR Match Jersey per sponsor cycle (i.e. one for 2024 to 2026)	1x (ONE) if consistently: • Multiple appointments in a day • Multiple appointments in a weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities (considered unlikely before 50 fixtures)</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Match Polo	Match Jersey			
2XS-4XL, F8-F22	2XS-4XL, F8-F22			
		1x (ONE) per sponsor cycle (i.e. one for 2024 to 2026)	Case by case approval by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities (considered unlikely before 50 fixtures)</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Match Short				
2XS-4XL, F8-F22				
		1x (ONE) annually	Case by case approval by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Match Socks				
2-7, 8-11, 12-14				

## OFF FIELD KIT

OFF FIELD KIT – 2024-26		MEMBER ENTITLEMENT	EXTRAS	REPLACEMENT EXCEPTIONS
		1x (ONE) Until redesign or replacement exception met	Case by case approval by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Association Polo	2XS-4XL, F8-F22			
		1x (ONE) <b>EITHER</b> Sport Jacket + Track Pants	Case by case approval by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Sport Jacket	Track Pants			
		<b>OR</b> Rain Jacket Until redesign or replacement exception met	Case by case approval by Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• damage</li> <li>• fair, wear and tear from Association activities</li> <li>• junior members outgrowing</li> </ul>
Rain Jacket	2-7, 8-11, 12-14			
		Associations may apply a minimum game thresholds prior to distribution		

## NEW MEMBER REFEREE KIT

NEW REFEREE KIT – 2024-26	MEMBER ENTITLEMENT
	As per On-Field Kit Entitlement
<b>ON-FIELD KIT</b>	
	As per Off-Field Kit Entitlement
<b>OFF-FIELD KIT</b>	
	1x (ONE) Acme Thunderer 58,5  1x(ONE) Referee Card Set
<b>NEW REFEREE PACK</b>	

## FIELD TESTING

You are now ready to step onto the field for the first time. You will be appointed to a match that suits your age, fitness, and experience and a match official developer (MOD) will be appointed to assess you.

This may involve meeting the MOD before the match, wearing communications equipment so the MOD can hear you, and then a post-match debrief with the MOD.

The MOD will then report to the Development and Appointments Committee (DAC), who will provide you with a grading. This grading will then determine the level of your future appointments. Gradings are reviewed regularly, with an updated list published once or twice per year. Your grading will also appear in your profile in RX under the "Availability" tab and will be a letter. "A" represents the top level of referees (Test, Super, World Series 7s, top of Premiership) and then steps down from there. Like referees, matches are graded, so when appointments are made, the DAC will attempt to match referee gradings with match gradings. However, there is some flexibility in this process to accommodate referee logistics, coaching, learning opportunities, and weekly availabilities.

The latest match gradings for senior matches (2023) look like this:

2023 MATCH RANKINGS & REFEREE APPOINTMENT GROUPS as at 15 May 2023		
COMPETITION	RANKING	APPOINTMENT GROUP(S)
Shute Shield - 1st Grade	1	A
Colin Caird Shield - 2nd Grade	2	B
Colts 1	3	A,B,C
GPS 1	4	A,B,C
CAS 1	5	B,C,D
Henderson Shield - 3rd Grade	6	C
Kentwell Cup	7	B,C
Barraclough Cup	8	D,E,SDP
Henderson Cup - 4th Grade	9	D,E
Colts 2	10	D,E,SDP
Clark Cup	11	E,F,SDP
McLean Cup	12	E,F,SDP
Burke Cup	13	E,F,SDP
Jeffrey Cup	14	E,F,G
Women's Div 1	15	E, F, SDP
Colts 3 (U19)	16	F,G,STP
Stockdale Cup	17	F,G,SDP
ISA 1 (Div 1 and 2)	18	E,F,G
GPS 2	19	G,SDP
CAS 2	20	G,SDP
Barbour Colts - Div 1	21	H,STP
Robertson Colts - Div 2	22	H,STP
Whiddon Cup	23	H,STP
Nicholson Colts - Div 3	24	H,STP
GPS 3	25	I,STP
ISA 2 Div 1	26	I
Radford Colts	27	I,STP
Farrant Cup	28	I
Women's Div 2 (Tens)	29	I
Grose Cup	30	J
Blunt Cup	31	L
Judd Cup	32	Sub
Halligan Cup	33	Sub
Joy Johnson Cup (Women's 7s)	34	Sub

**PLEASE NOTE: The above Appointment Groups and Match Rankins are indicative only.**

**All matches are appointed based on a variety of appointment factors as outlined in the NSWRRR Referee Grading Policy.**

## TRAINING

As part of your membership subscription, NSWRRRA provides free weekly fitness training to all members. The program is tailored to suit all levels of fitness and age, assists preparation for fitness testing, and provides an informal forum for mixing with your refereeing colleagues. Our website also includes tailored exercise videos.

- WINTER SEASON (post daylight savings): 18:15 start, every Wednesday, Boronia Park, Ryde Road, Hunters Hill NSW. Training runs for one hour.
- SUMMER PRE-SEASON (during daylight savings – check our socials for the latest details): Every Wednesday and Sunday.

## REFEREE ETIQUETTE AND TIPS & TRICKS

**Know your Competition Rules.** Each competition has its rules which deal with issues such as match duration, subs, time out for injury, and related issues.

**ALWAYS finish your match on time.** The trickle-down effect of matches running behind can be significant, especially with an increasing number of games being broadcast. Shorten up the halves, shorten halftime, and adjust. The match following yours **MUST** start on time.

**NEVER “no-show”.** A “no-show” is where a referee is appointed but does not turn up and there is no advice to the contrary. If you cannot make it to your match, you **MUST** let Kim Taufua (senior matches) or Hamish McKay (junior matches) know.

**Unappointed Matches.** If you step in to referee a match to which you are not appointed, notify Kim Taufua (senior matches) or Hamish McKay (junior matches). This will cover you for insurance and ensure you are reimbursed.

**Be Positive.** If you think you should be refereeing the World Cup Final, but instead find yourself refereeing a 4<sup>th</sup> grade Subbies match, look for the positives (easier travel and you finish earlier in the day).

**Arrive Early.** Absolutely no later than halftime of the match before yours, but ideally, before that. Weekend traffic is only getting worse, and parking at some grounds is scarce. Better to be early and hang out with referees from earlier games, than run onto the field frazzled and agitated. Allow even more time if you are being coached, or in a team of three with communications equipment.

**Know Your Grounds.** Some grounds have annoyingly similar names or multiple fields with different parking and access issues. Do not be caught out!

**Back Up.** If there is a match after yours, and you, or anyone else, is not appointed to AR that match, hang around in case the following referee is



injured. It is also a good opportunity to mix with others – you never know whom you may meet or what you may learn!

**Comms Kits.** Rule of thumb, AR2 in a match with “team of three” communications equipment will be responsible for setting it up, as AR1 will be going straight from refereeing to AR, and the match referee will be involved in pre-match and warm-ups. Know how the kit works, and how to set it up and put it on. If you are not sure, just ask.

**Just Ask.** There is a lot to learn, but plenty of resources to help with that too. Find a face you know, talk to your colleagues on match day, or contact any of those listed here, and you will be pointed in the right direction.

Plenty more can be found in the “Refereeing in Practice” handbook, 2020 edition (which remains the current edition). See below for the link.

## APPOINTMENTS

NSWRRA is responsible for appointing to the following competitions:

- Sydney Rugby Union Premiership
- Sydney Women’s Rugby Union
- Suburban Rugby Union
- Sydney Junior Rugby Union
- AAGPS, CAS, ISA Opens (1XV, 2XV, 3XV).

Appointments are made by the DAC, considering referee gradings, match gradings, referee coach feedback, availability, logistics, and other factors.

During the winter season, these appointments will usually be sent to members on the Tuesday before the weekend’s matches, by Kim Taufu (senior matches), or on Thursday by Hamish McKay (junior matches).

For summer, 7s, tournaments, representative matches, and other fixtures, appointments are made on an ad hoc basis but also in consultation with the DAC.

## AVAILABILITY

Although appointments are only advised the week of the match, planning of appointments has at least a two-week lead time. Therefore, as a courtesy to the volunteers planning appointments, please block out any unavailability at least a fortnight in advance.

If something comes up within that fortnight window, please contact Kim Taufu (senior matches) or Hamish McKay (junior matches) immediately.

To block out unavailable dates, log in to RX, scroll down the menu on the left-hand side (if on a computer), click on “Availability” and follow the prompts.

A good habit is to review this weekly as your diary and commitments change.

The Availability portal can be found here:

<https://myaccount.rugbyexplorer.com.au/referee>

## RefReview

RefReview, formerly RefLIVE, is the tool used for referee coaching. Referees being coached will be advised at the time of their appointment and will be expected to complete a "Community Referee Self Review". After the match, the referee coach can provide feedback.

To access RefReview, log in to RX. It is the menu item above "Availability".

Ideally, have your "Self Review" completed no later than close of business the day before your match, to provide your RC with time to read it and prepare.

RefReview can also be used to provide Match Feedback – please do so. This provides data about the behaviour of teams and clubs.

## SEND-OFFS

Send-offs (red cards) and blue cards need to be reported to the appointing officer. In most cases, this will be Kim Taufua (senior matches) or Hamish McKay (junior matches).

**In each case, message Kim/Hamish as soon as you can.** For red cards, complete a Send-Off Report by close of business Sunday. The Send-Off Report can be found in RX, under "Appointments". Find the match you were refereeing, click on the "Send-Off Report" button, and fill in the fields.

**HOT TIP:** Before you leave the ground, you will need the following:

- Player's name (red and blue card)
- Player's number (red and blue card)
- Score in the match (red only)
- The signs and symptoms observed (blue card only – also ensure the player's manager has been told the signs and symptoms)
- It also helps to know the following:
  - Where on the field the incident occurred (red only); and
  - The time during the match when it occurred (red only).

## TECHNOLOGY

### COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The use of communications equipment for our match officials has transformed match official development. NSWRRRA has invested heavily in this area, and we now have a fleet of over 20 sets of Team of 3 (To3) equipment and all Referee Coaches have a coaching kit to listen in to the Referee.

As a result, all Shute Shield, Prem Colts 1, Kentwell and Barraclough Cup games are covered with the use of Team of 3 (To3) communications.

The logistics and locations of the equipment is managed and tracked through the following document.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dP2m9N0Fh1TWMID9nAPoeC7C2YuXCix14OKdDOTgm4c/edit?usp=sharing>

Any questions or issues please contact [refops@nswrugbyreferees.com.au](mailto:refops@nswrugbyreferees.com.au)

## **EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS**

The Referee is primarily responsible for sourcing obtaining communications gear for their To3.

If NSWRRRA ARs are appointed, you should be using comms kits if available (Shute, Prem Colts 1, Kentwell, Barraclough).

The referee is responsible for each kit and should note they have a value of either \$6,000 or \$2,000 to replace.

Holders of the kit will update the logistics management sheet in a timely manner and as a courtesy to all.

Holders of the kit will promptly advise RefOps of any issues with the equipment.

Failure by a member to take these expectations seriously will cause the use of comms kits by that member to be reconsidered by the Executive.

## **GAME REVIEW TECHNOLOGY**

A significant part of our focus on continuous improvement is for our match officials to own their own development.

NSWRRRA seeks to strongly support this with the provision of, and access, to tools and technology for match officials to review their performance.

This is provided in addition to the people based coaching and squad structures that are in place.

Should you have any questions or issues with respect to accessing the available tools, please contact [refops@nswrugbyreferees.com.au](mailto:refops@nswrugbyreferees.com.au)

Where match footage is stored on the Hudl platform (primarily SRU) members will be provided with access to review their games.

A significant number of Seniors fixtures are streamed via NSW Rugby TV and available to review.

If no coach is on ground, some Referee only Comms kits are available to allow comms to be heard with vision. Please contact Ref Ops should you wish to use these kits.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

In addition to the initial education requirements, NSWRRRA runs regular Education Nights throughout the season.

The locations rotate between our home at Daceyville and other rugby venues around Sydney, such as schools and clubs.

Members are strongly encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible, and those with aspirations to improve should make the utmost effort to do so.

## THE THIRD HALF

Rugby would not be rugby without the “third half”. Just as it is for the players, the social fabric of the game is an integral part of match officiating.

With matches across the Sydney basin, connecting with each other can be a challenge. Therefore, in addition to our monthly Education Nights, we organise regular social events throughout the year, such as:

- Season Launch – the season kick-off!
- “Pub of the Month” – a Saturday night each month at a family friendly venue. Watch some rugby, talk some rugby, review some rugby, all in a social setting.
- Test Referee function. We host the incoming international referees for the Sydney Test matches. An all member function with mingling, nibbles, a Q&A and a catch-up.
- Annual Presentation Evening. Our night of nights, celebrating all that was good about our year.

If you would like to be involved with our social activities, please contact Alex Buckland from the Social Sub-Committee.

## RESPECT RUGBY AND REFEREE WELFARE

Fortunately, rugby has a particular culture and crowds are generally well behaved. However, that is not always the case and everyone in the rugby world wants to stamp out negative behaviours.

The first step in doing so is to report it. This serves three purposes:

- It deals with the immediate perpetrators;
- It paints a picture and pattern of where the behaviour exists; and
- It increases the chance of preventing it from happening to one of your colleagues.

If you are not sure whether to report an incident, speak with a colleague, your referee coach, or anyone from our executive, and they will help you through the process.

A link to the reporting mechanism is below.

Referee welfare is paramount, so to support that, there are several referee welfare protection and behavioural policies to protect both our referees and our game. These can be found on our website under the Resources page. Please ensure you are familiar with these policies.

If you need further support, please contact the Chair of Welfare SC.

## EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

### REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS

NSWRRRA has negotiated rates for the match official services that we provide across all our competitions. All income collected for the provision of referee services from regular and ad hoc fixtures is distributed to our members.

The negotiations with each competition differ with respect to their requirements but the intent is that, with just a few exceptions, all our match officials are equitably reimbursed for their effort and cost.

NSWRRRA underwrites the base amount in the table below as the minimum for the upcoming season. During July/August the income collected across the season is reviewed and, if available, top up reimbursements are approved to the items with a \*.

At this stage, we do not reimburse match officials for trials or finals matches. The Executive is working to amend this for future seasons.

FIXTURE	ROLE	BASE REIMBURSEMENT
SRU - Shute Shield	Referee	\$130
	Assistant Referee	\$30
SRU - 2s, Colts 1	Referee	\$60*
	Assistant Referee	\$20
All other Senior Fixtures	Referee	\$45*
	Assistant Referee	\$10*
SJRU - Junior Fixtures	Referee	\$32.50*

### REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENTS

NSWRRRA reimbursements are calculated on a quarterly cycle and are paid in the month following the end of the quarter.

Members also have the option for payments to be made quarterly, at the end of the winter season or, should they wish, via tax deductible donation back to NSWRRRA.

If this is your first season, email the Treasurer with your option and provide appropriate banking details (Account name, BSB, Number).

If your chosen option is to differ from last season, please also notify the Treasurer by email.

## DONATIONS

NSWRRA works with the NSW Positive Rugby Foundation and the Australian Sports Foundation (ASF) to facilitate tax-deductible donations to our Association.

Members donating \$100 or more through this process will also have their 2024 Registration fee refunded.

Members receive a tax receipt from ASF for the full donation to claim on their tax return. 95% of the funds donated are then held by NSW Positive Rugby Foundation for the sole use of NSWRRA.



## RESOURCES & LINKS

- NSWRRA website (<https://nswrugbyreferees.com.au/>). The source of all truth, this provides many resources and links including:
  - Latest Appointments
  - Wet weather information
  - RX login
  - Laws
  - Game Management Guidelines (GMGs)
  - Competition Rules (Premiership/Suburban/Schools/Women)
  - Webinars
  - Fitness videos
- Facebook:
  - Private group, so you will need to request to join: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/4458427166>
  - Page – **most commonly used**: <https://www.facebook.com/NSWrugbyrefs>
- Instagram: @nswrugbyrefs
- Twitter: @nswrugbyrefs. NB Although the account exists, it is dormant, so ignore it
- Reporting a Concern: <https://australia.rugby/about/codes-and-policies/reporting-a-concern>
- Respect Rugby (Match Official Abuse): <https://australia.rugby/about/codes-and-policies/reporting-a-concern/rugby-case?n=moa>

- “Refereeing in Practice” handbook, 2020 (current edition – scroll down and then download from here). Similarly, Game Management Guidelines and law variations:  
<https://australia.rugby/participate/referee/laws>
- National Webinar Series:  
<https://australia.rugby/participate/referee/videos/webinars>

## **GLOSSARY**

- AR – Assistant Referee
- GPR – Game Plan Review
- DAC – Development and Appointments Committee
- MO – Match Official (referee)
- MOD – Match Official Developer (referee coach)
- NSWRRRA – New South Wales Rugby Referees Association
- RA – Rugby Australia
- RX – Rugby Xplorer