



NSWRRRA Finals Appointments Policy 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the principles and process used by the Development and Appointments Committee (DAC) when making Finals appointments on behalf of the NSW Rugby Referees Association (NSWRRRA).

It provides members with a clear understanding of how Finals and Grand Final appointments are determined, together with the respective responsibilities of the DAC, the Match Official Development Team (MOD Team) and Convenors throughout the Finals Series.

2. Philosophy

The NSWRRRA is committed to appointing the right Match Official to the right game.

Every Finals appointment will be made in the best interests of the game and the participating competitions.

The successful delivery of the Finals Series depends upon the ongoing contribution of Match Officials in both referee and assistant referee appointments. Accordingly, the Association seeks to maintain the engagement of the broader Match Official group throughout the Finals Series.

The number of Match Officials capable of successfully controlling Finals rugby will typically exceed the number of available referee appointments. Accordingly, not every eligible Match Official can referee in every week of the Finals Series.

Throughout the season, Match Officials are coached and observed using the Rugby Australia Referee Profile. The Finals Series does not introduce any new assessment criteria or coaching framework. Match Officials continue to be coached and observed against the Rugby Australia Referee Profile throughout the Finals Series. The only difference is that those observations are also used to inform evidence-based recommendations for Grand Final appointments.

3. Guiding Principles

Finals appointments are made in accordance with the following principles:

- the interests of the game and the participating competitions remain paramount;
- appointments are made on merit and are based on demonstrated capability;
- every participating Match Official is afforded an equitable opportunity to earn a Grand Final appointment;
- appointments are evidence-based and informed by multiple observations and sources of information; and
- decisions are made fairly, consistently and transparently.



4. Finals Structures

The Association services competitions operating under a variety of Finals structures.

These include two-week and three-week Finals Series, together with finals formats involving four or more teams. Regardless of the format, the appointment philosophy remains consistent.

5. Appointments Process

The Finals appointments process consists of three distinct stages.

Stage	Responsibility
1. Initial Finals Appointments	DAC
2. Match Official Assessment and Grand Final Recommendation	MOD Team
3. Grand Final Appointment	DAC

Assessment, recommendation and appointment are deliberately separated to ensure decisions are informed by multiple perspectives while maintaining clear accountability for every appointment.

6. Initial Finals Appointments

The DAC will make the initial Finals appointments by:

- determining the order of Finals Series;
- establishing the order of eligible Match Officials based upon their season's body of work;
- matching Match Officials to Finals appointments, making adjustments where necessary to ensure the right Match Official is appointed to the right game; and
- appointing the MOD Team and Convenor responsible for each Finals Series.

7. Grand Final Appointments

Once the Finals Series commences, responsibility for assessing Grand Final candidates transfers to the appointed MOD Team.

Throughout the Finals Series, the MOD Team will:

- observe every candidate;
- assess each Match Official against the demands of their appointment;
- assess the quality of contributions made in both referee and assistant referee appointments;
- consider each Match Official's contribution to the effectiveness of the Match Official team;
- compare candidates against their peers within the same Finals group;



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- discuss and calibrate observations;
 - formulate recommendations for Grand Final appointments; and
 - submit those recommendations to the DAC.

8. Communications

MO communications may be used during the Finals Series to support coaching, observation and the recommendation process, provided they can be implemented consistently and equitably across the relevant Finals Series.

Team of 3 (To3) communications will only be used where:

- sufficient communications equipment is available to enable To3 communications to be implemented consistently throughout the relevant Finals Series;
- the appointed Assistant Referees are familiar with, and competent in, its operation; and
- its use will not disadvantage any Match Official or compromise the equity of the recommendation process.

The Finals Series is not an environment for introducing unfamiliar technology or trialling new operating practices. Team of 3 communications will only be used where they can be implemented consistently throughout the relevant Finals Series and are appropriate to the level of competition.

9. Grand Final Appointment

The DAC considers the recommendations together with any other relevant information before making the Grand Final appointment.

10. Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, the DAC may appoint a Match Official from outside the relevant Finals group where it is satisfied that no candidate within that group has demonstrated the capability required to successfully control the anticipated Grand Final.

Such appointments will be exceptional and will only be made after careful consideration of the recommendations of the MOD Team and all other relevant information available to the DAC.