

# Advice & Directives



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## Advice

### THE ROLE of the 4TH OFFICIAL

Acknowledgement: Initially this document was prepared by Kevin Docherty in 2008. It has been edited and updated by Jim Ouliaris for FFV Referees.

#### PRE GAME:

- Arrive at the ground sixty (60) minutes prior to kick off
- Check that all the match balls are at the desired pressure that the referee requires
- Complete a pitch inspection with the other three match officials
- Ensure team sheets arrive on time and are filled out correctly. If team sheets aren't filled out correctly then notify the team who hasn't filled out the team sheets correctly immediately and get them to amend the team sheets as soon as possible
- Check to see what colours the goal keepers shirts are to be for both teams
- Get changed with other three (3) match officials and do a warm up with the other three (3) match officials. Once a warm up is complete take out your score board, paper work, etc to your table and chairs
- Do a last minute check of the technical area, ensuring that everything is in its correct position.
- Head back into the change rooms for pre match instructions
- Give the referee his match ball
- The 4th official should monitor the door of the referee's room and be the first point of contact for anyone entering the referees change room. This should occur before & after the match.
- When standing in the players race just prior to kick off check to make sure that the goal keepers are wearing their correct designated coloured top for match day

#### DURING GAME:

After coin toss with team captains the last shake of the hands by the match officials and as assistant referees are checking the nets and referee is getting ready for kick off.

- **The 4<sup>th</sup> official shakes hands with both coaches of the two (2) teams.**  
**REASON:** The 4<sup>th</sup> official shakes hands with both coaches of the two (2) teams to break the ice, ease the tension, show the two (2) coaches that the 4th official has a personality, let the two (2) coaches know if they have any problems that you are approachable, reasonable and prepared to listen to them. At half time and at full time the 4th official should ensure the players, subs & team officials leave the Technical Area in a safe & confrontation free manner.
- **The fourth official should NEVER sit down at his / her table and chairs.**  
**REASON:** If the 4th official sits down at his / her table and chairs the reaction time to any major blow up in the technical area is severely reduced by the mere fact that the 4th official must get out of his chair, move away from the table then get to the incident and then attempt to diffuse any hostile situation that has occurred around the technical area.
- **The 4<sup>th</sup> official stands next to or reasonably close to each technical area.** Standing next to each technical area for approximately five (5) minutes at a time and then rotating this movement from one bench to the other and then back to the table and chairs where the 4th official stands for five (5) minutes as well.

e.g. Stand next to the HOME technical area for five (5) minutes then stand next to the AWAY technical area for five (5) minutes then, stand next to the table and chairs where the 4th official stands for five (5) minutes. Attempt this rotation throughout the entire duration of the game.

**REASON:** With the fourth official standing reasonable close to the technical areas you have an actual physical presence of authority and you must convey this in your body language e.g. stand up tall and straight, have a serious facial expression on your face, give a glance or glair if required at the appropriate time to ensure that you are aware of what is going on around you.

If the 4th official stands next to or reasonable close to each technical area and is not sitting down at his or her table and chairs then the 4th official can clearly identify who the trouble makers are to the referee if the referee requires to take further action to the offending people in the technical area.

**REASON:** If the 4th official stands next to or reasonable close to each technical area then the 4th official can easily determine who is yelling, shouting, swearing and abusing the match officials etc. If the fourth official is sitting down then he or she may not be able to clearly identify who the individuals are committing all the abuse.

- **The 4<sup>th</sup> official is part of the team.** On and off the field of play. The 4<sup>th</sup> official must still actively participate in the team environment as much as possible. The 4<sup>th</sup> official maintains good eye contact with the referee when required  
e.g. 50/50 balls that shotguns over the touch line from a 50/50 challenge or a ball takes a slight deflection in the vicinity of the 4th official's area, a fourth official can assist the referee and assistant referee in the decision making process if they have both missed the slight deflection or didn't get a good look at whom the ball last came of in the 50 /50 challenge by giving discrete hand signals across the chest or lower stomach region, indicating the way in which the thrown in should be taken.  
**REASON:** Maintain excellent eye contact, team work which enhances an excellent team environment  
**RESULT:** GETTING THE DECISION CORRECT

- **Looking for infringements at a corner kick**

When a team takes a corner kick the 4th official should be looking for certain circumstances or infringements that the referee may miss or isn't looking for. The 4th official should be attempting to look for such acts from certain players and looking out for certain teams tactics. These team tactics and acts from certain players must be dealt with and these sorts of infringements must be culled from our game.

**REASON:** The 4th official needs to pick up on these certain tactics and inform the referee of any incident that occurred. The offending team needs to be punished for not playing the game in the right spirit and these sorts of cunning acts must be eliminated from the game.

- **Looking for infringements near the penalty area**

The 4th official's role here is very similar to that of when a corner kick is taken. When a free kick is taken from near the penalty area the 4th official should be looking for similar infringements that may occur when a corner kick is taken. The 4th official should be looking for serious infringements not in the view of the referee or Assistant Referee. The 4th official should be looking for such infringements that the referee may miss or isn't looking for.

**REASON:** When a free kick is taken from near the penalty area the 4th official at times may be standing on the opposite side of the field of play when this actually free kick is taken and subsequently may have a better peripheral view of play when the free kick is taken from around the penalty area, therefore seeing an infringement that the referee may potential miss due to his positioning and peripheral view at the time that the free kick near the penalty area was taken.

- **Looking for infringements with Free kick in the 4th officials area**

Again the role that the 4th official plays here is very similar to that of when a corner kick is taken and when a free kick is taken near the penalty area. If the referee gives a free kick in the 4th official's area sometimes the 4th official may be the closest match official to the free kick and may have the best view or angle to see the free kick.

It is very important for the 4th official to be watching play in his area as he may clearly have the best position to clearly identify to the referee what actually happened in the incident or challenge.

It is also very important for the 4th official to maintain eye contact on play in his area especially when active play is occurring and play is moving away from the referee and towards the 4th official area, the fourth official will then certainly have the best view at active play and the 4th official can GREATLY HELP the referee in these situation as it is very difficult for a referee to determine how severe a challenge is, or at what speed and intensity the challenge is made at, whether studs went in first, how aggressive the challenge was WHEN PLAY IS MOVING AWAY FROM THE REFEREE and towards the official.

**REASON:** With the fourth official maintaining eye contact on active play in his area and as play moves away from the referee and towards the 4th official, the 4th official can have a very good idea to what type of challenge was made for the ball e.g. careless, reckless, excessive force and be able to give a very accurate analysis of the challenge to the referee if required.

- **Looking for infringements with challenges in front of the 4th official area**

Again the 4th official's role is very similar here to that of a corner kick been taken, free kick near the penalty, free kick near the 4th officials area. The 4th official may sometimes be the closest person to the actual incident or challenge OR EVEN have the best view or angle of the incident or challenge therefore the 4th official can clearly and easily identify to the match referee what occurred in the incident or what type of challenge it was. e.g. careless, reckless, with excessive force, studs first, late, high foot, use of the arms and elbows etc.

- **Second, third and fourth phase of play behind the referee's back**

During the game if there is a fair challenge by both players for the ball and the fair challenge for the ball from both players was hard, firm but fair and the two players fall to the ground or tangle with each other upon attempting to get up of the ground and the ball is kicked up the field of play away from the original hard, firm, but fair challenge the referee will watch where the ball goes and he will never take his eyes off the ball and he will follow where play is with the ball,

The 4th official should be looking at the second, third, fourth phase of play behind the referee's back as in when the two players are getting up of the ground after the hard, firm but fair challenge to ensure that no player has a brain snap and attempt to trip, spit on the player, stand on the players arm or hand, hit, punch, elbow, knee the player in the head, push the player over, provoke the player verbally or physically etc as one of the players is getting up of the ground and attempting to get back involved in play after the hard, firm, but fair challenge

The 4th official should be looking out for all these potential blow ups in the second, third and fourth phase of play behind the referee's back as the referee is watching the second, third, fourth phase of play where the ball is and the referee has his eyes on the active play and not what is going on behind him.

**REASON:** If the three (3) other match officials misses an incident that occurs behind the play as the three (3) of them are concentrating of the game and on the ball and on their jobs during the game then the 4th official takes control of his role and watches out for any controversial incidents behind play.

- **Injured players**

Trainers need to be monitored when there is an injured player. You as the 4th official must monitor the trainers and ensure that they don't just run onto the field of play when they fell like it. The trainers must stay in their designated technical area. By doing this they avoid possible collision with the assistant referee.

- **Correct procedure of substitution**

The 4th official must ensure that the correct procedure is applied when making a substitution. e.g. The player coming of the field of play is completely off the field of play before the player coming on the field of play enters the field of play. Also the 4th official can do a last

minute jewellery check as well. The 4<sup>th</sup> official should double check that the correct numbers are displayed on the electronic score board before displaying them to the crowd and both teams

- Subs to wear bibs.**

When a substitution has been made the 4<sup>th</sup> official must ensure that the sub coming of the field of play, when he sits down in his technical area he must put on a bib for two reason.

1. He is clearly identified to the referee and assistant referees as a substitution and
2. He is not interfering with the assistant referee on the far side with his offside decision making process if the substitution is wearing a bib.

## Implementing the Ask-Tell-Remove Policy

- Speaking to persons in the Technical area**

Leave an impression when you have spoken to them that if this person comes over again that there is going to be serious consequences. If you are carrying out a role of a 4<sup>th</sup> official, this requires you speaking to the people that are located in the technical area from time to time. Three main points when dealing with people in the technical area is that

1. You as the 4<sup>th</sup> official must be FIRM, SERIOUS and POLITE
2. The best way to do this is to use the Ask-Tell-Remove Strategy. See below:
3. Also when dealing with people in the technical area, when speaking to people in a firm, serious and polite manner you want to leave an impression in their minds that this person is serious and if he comes over again that there is going to be serious consequences.

### Process to use the Ask-Tell-Remove Policy

|               |                 |  |
|---------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>Step 1</b> | <b>Pre-Tell</b> | The 4 <sup>th</sup> official (or the referee) is able to use their presence and use non-verbal action such as Positive Body Language for example the use of hands, eyes (stare), moving forward (presence)   |
| <b>Step 2</b> | <b>Ask</b>      | 4 <sup>th</sup> Official uses the terminology of 'ASK'.<br>The 4 <sup>th</sup> official moves into Technical Area Zone and 'Ask' the perpetrator (Coach or otherwise) to behave.   |
| <b>Step 3</b> | <b>Tell</b>     | <b>Either...</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Official asks the referee to hold up play and the 4 <sup>th</sup> official delivers the 'Tell'. It would be good if the referee pointed to Technical Area or supported the 4 <sup>th</sup> Official with their presence.<br><b>Or...</b> The 4 <sup>th</sup> Official calls the referee over and the referee delivers the 'Tell'. |
| <b>Step 4</b> | <b>Remove</b>   | Referee is informed by the 4 <sup>th</sup> Official to remove the perpetrator (Coach or otherwise).<br>At this point the referee SHOULD remove the occupant and not shirk his/her responsibility. This is about supporting the 4 <sup>th</sup> Official.   |

### Ask-Tell-Remove Policy applied to typical technical area behaviour

Ask-Tell-Remove Policy is similar to the 'Steps Theory' or 'Roadblock Theory' whereby it is not a 3 strikes policy just because it is the technical area. The following case studies should give clear guidelines as to what constitutes an 'Ask', 'Tell' or 'Remove':

| <b>Managing the Technical Area Scenarios</b> |  | <i>Ask</i>                     | <i>Tell</i>                     | <i>Remove</i>                     |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Scenario 1                                   | The coach yells out, "Come on ref there are two teams out there. You are not giving us anything."  | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>ASK | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Tell | 3 <sup>rd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 2                                   | The Assistant Coach yells out, "Come on ref there that's a free kick. You are not giving us anything." Dissent only.   |                                | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>Tell | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 3                                   | The coach yells out, "Fucking Hell ref, moves out of technical area and waves arms".   |                                |                                 | Immediately<br>Remove             |
| Scenario 4                                   | The coach yells out, "That's not a free kick. You are a joke referee".   |                                | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>Tell | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 5                                   | The coach yells out, "You a Fucking Idiot ref".  |                                |                                 | Immediately<br>Remove             |
| Scenario 6                                   | A named substitute visibly shows dissent at the referee's decision and yells out 'Come On, give us a go'.  |                                | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>Tell | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 7                                   | While the ball is in play, as a substitute you throw an object e.g. footwear or a bottle at an opposing player.  |                                |                                 | Immediately<br>Remove             |
| Scenario 8                                   | While the ball is in play the coach uses 'gestures' or 'negative body language to demonstrate defiance or dissent at your decision e.g. aggressively throwing down water bottles |                                | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>Tell | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 9                                   | Other people on the bench such as a trainer, goal keeper coach, physio visibly shows dissent at the referee's decision and yells out 'Come On, give us a go'.                    |                                | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>Tell | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Remove |
| Scenario 10                                  | A coach or assistant coach consistently leaves the technical area and does not get back when asked.  | 1 <sup>st</sup> offence<br>ASK | 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence<br>Tell | 3 <sup>rd</sup> offence<br>Remove |

# Advice & Directives

A 4th official should try and avoid continually going over to each team's technical area when there is something minor going on. Your actual physical presence standing near the technical area on a rotation basis should be adequate enough to diffuse any minor situation. If the fourth official continually goes over to the technical area for every minor incident and enters into a debate, argument, discussion over every minor incident then the 4th official loses his authority status. If occupants of the technical area see the 4th official come over again and again and again the technical area just think that he is only going to tell them off and not do anything about it at all and that he is just been a pain and walking over here at telling them to settle down and remain quiet. Too many Asks are ineffective!!!

As a fourth official when you approach the technical area in a firm, serious and polite manner you want to deliver your simple message in a firm, serious and polite manner and get out of there and not loiter around to enter into a debate, argument or discussion and when you walk away from the technical area you want to leave an impression in their minds that this guy is serious and that he is not afraid to follow through with his comments and that you want the technical area thinking in their minds that if the 4th official comes over here at any stage during the rest of the game that there is going to be serious consequences.

## POST GAME:

- The role of the 4th official should be first to ensure the players, subs & team officials leave the TA in a safe & confrontation free manner.
- Then he or she should walk off the ground with the other match three (3) match officials as a team
- Bring in score boards, balls, paper work, etc with you as you are leaving the ground with the other three (3) match officials
- Lock change room doors as all of you would like privacy and time to cool down and unwind after the game and not have people barging in every minute asking question and wanting things
- Monitor the door. If someone knocks on the door then the 4th official answers it, as the other match officials are unwinding down from the game
- Fill out all the relevant paper work (NEAT, TIDY and CORRECT)
- Double check that all the paper work is correct
- Get the referee to confirm details are correct on the relevant paper work
- Once all paper work is correct, checked and signed by match referee then get the paper work fax off to the relevant authorities

## Advice

## Pitch Inspections

Although Law 1 makes no comment about the quality of surfaces this is left to the referee's discretion. It is the Victorian Technical Committee's recommendation that the following advice be used when assessing the field of play.

### The Authority of the referee to do a Pitch Inspections for the Laws of the Game 2018

It is assumed from the Laws of the Game in Law 5, that each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match, which includes the guidelines to Law 1.

In Law 5, under the 'Liability of Match Officials', dot point 6 states that the condition of the field of play or its surrounds or that the weather conditions are such as to allow or not to allow a match to take place. This also assumes that referees will do an appropriate pitch inspection.

### Our Advice re Pitch Inspections...

Referees must arrive at a time which allows them to conduct a proper and efficient ground inspection. Introduce yourself to both team officials before the game. Pitch inspections must be carried out with purpose. Avoid doing a pitch inspection whilst a game is in progress. This can be done during the half time break in the reserves game (E.g. senior game 60 minutes prior or junior game 45 minutes prior).

Is there anything on the ground, which might constitute a danger to players (eg. Glass, Sprinklers, Marking in lime, pegs, etc). Avoid giving your opinion, keep comments to the facts and if you find any problems approach the ground official politely, and ask for the problem to be corrected, if possible. If player safety is compromised, do not start the game. Submit a report to the Football Federation Victoria.

### Key Points Pitch Inspections...

When inspecting the field of play look for the following:

- ⚽ Clear boundary markings including the technical area
- ⚽ Clear goal area markings
- ⚽ Clear penalty area markings
- ⚽ Goal posts secure and upright
- ⚽ Goal nets secured all round
- ⚽ Corner flags
- ⚽ Corner arcs correctly marked
- ⚽ Check pitch for glass, large sticks, etc,
- ⚽ Check for clear marking
- ⚽ Check for a stretcher
- ⚽ Check the Extreme Weather Policy for further information in this area

### Wet Weather Pitch Inspections

There are a number of considerations a referee must take into account when making judgement on whether to cancel a match or not.

- ⚽ The Referee at the venue is the only person who can determine whether the ground is suitable for play. This also includes the situation where the game commences and the conditions deteriorate, he/she has full discretion to terminate play and submit a report to Football Federation Victoria.  
The main priority is obviously the safety of the players (and officials).  
**Note:**
  - A council, council officer or similarly empowered worker can also close a ground at any stage. As all winter tenant clubs are subject to council control on ground usage, and issues include noise, parking, alcohol usage, protection of the surface, complaints etc as well as their testing of the ground surface are subject to council regulations.
  - In the absence of an official referee a club official can also decide that a ground is unplayable and cancel (postpone) a match.
- ⚽ Just because a pitch is muddy and churned up, it is not necessarily unsafe so a thorough pitch inspection is crucial.
- ⚽ In regard to any pitch, natural or synthetic another consideration is whether the ball is able to roll on the surface. The easiest thing to do is to take a ball out on the pitch and roll it in a number of areas. If it is only rolling a couple of metres, then there is every possibility that the game will become a farce.
- ⚽ Heavy rain, wind and cold should not come into consideration, however, should there be thunder and lightning or hail stones then you should consider temporarily halting the match, get the players off the field and then make a call, at, we suggest a 15 minute delay as to whether the game continues. The difficulty with this is that if it is a reserve game or an afternoon game and the club has no floodlights, then the main game has priority and failing light would have to be a consideration.
- ⚽ Never forget, you need to keep assessing the playing conditions throughout the game and if the pitch does, in your opinion, presents a danger at a later stage, and then you must act accordingly. One important aspect in this area is that the pitch markings must be visible throughout. Regardless of the weather conditions match officials should ALWAYS re check the markings and goal nets after half time.
- ⚽ What may constitute unfit for play? In the opinion of the referee, the safety of players and/or officials is at risk as a result of excessive water on the field, exposed sprinkler heads on the field, dangerous field surfaces (e.g. exposed holes or chopped surface following previous matches) or no lines marked as a result of rain or water on the field of play.

# Advice & Directives