



**FOOTBALL
VICTORIA**

Discipline

End of Season Report

2019

HOW WE PLAY

RESPECT

Valuing ALL

- We collaborate positively
- We listen to each other and welcome new ideas
- We are punctual, prepared and present (professional)
- We are polite and courteous
- We respect the game and ALL the people involved in it

INTEGRITY

Doing the right thing

- We are honest and transparent with each other
- We trust each other
- We do what we say
- We are fair and consistent

UNITY

United for the good of the game

- We collaborate with each other
- We work together to achieve goals
- We will lead a unified football community

LEADERSHIP

Inspiring vision of the future

- We celebrate success
- We are willing to have difficult conversations
- We are role models for the behaviours we want to see
- We are disciplined and focused on the big picture
- We are courageous enough to stay the course

INCLUSIVE

Together we are stronger

- We value diversity in ALL that we do
- We encourage and embrace a sense of belonging
- We leverage individual differences as a competitive advantage
- We acknowledge and celebrate our past, present and future

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Legal & Integrity Department is responsible for applying Football Victoria's Grievance, Disciplinary and Tribunal By-Law (GDT). The department investigates on-field and off-field misconduct with serious incidents referred to an independent Tribunal.

Ahead of the 2019 season, FV launched a new Respect the Game campaign by asking club presidents to sign a pledge, committing to stamp out anti-social behaviour at their club. This campaign was initiated to bring awareness of the issues we all need to work on to keep our game strong, and to provide a safe, enjoyable environment that protects participants, match officials, club administrators as well as volunteers and spectators.

Whilst a large number of clubs aligned themselves with this campaign, sadly many didn't and we still saw players and club associates engage in significant misconduct through violent conduct, as well as abusive behaviour, largely directed towards match officials. A concerning amount of this behaviour was discriminatory in nature including particularly on the basis of sexuality, race and ethnicity.

As a result, 2019 saw a range of serious sanctions including as follows:

- A number of lengthy suspensions including three life bans (none in 2018), one 10-year ban (one in 2018) and ten 2-year bans (three in 2018).
- A total of 84 points were deducted from teams (not including suspended penalties) - a 75% increase from 48 in 2018 - with some affecting league championships and promotion.
- Fines for misconduct/Tribunal in the amount of \$103,475.

Towards the close of the season, we were encouraged to see clubs responding to the Respect the Game campaign through an increase in reported behaviour, swift acknowledgement of wrongdoing and improved cooperation with investigations. We aim to continue this improvement during the 2020 season.

That being said, in 2020, we will continue to take a stand against behaviour that breaches the rules of the game by calling on a variety of sanctions to punish offenders. We will also be considering further sanctions as part of our end of season review of the GDT, particularly to address the spike in discriminatory behaviour. Finally, FV will continue to put an onus on clubs to provide a safe environment for all Victorians to unite through football.

David Carrington
General Counsel – Legal & Integrity

OVERVIEW

The objectives of the GDT are as follows:

- *ensure that all Club Associates and Match Officials observe the Laws of the Game, the FV Constitution, Statutes, Regulations, By-Laws, Rules of Competition and Policies as are applicable from time to time (in this By-Law referred to collectively as Laws)*
- *ensure that Football is played competitively and fairly in a sporting fashion and in accordance with the Laws*
- *encourage participation in Football and to improve and advance Football as a spectator sport, and to provide a safe and secure playing and spectating environment*
- *provide a system which sets out processes, procedures, guidelines and penalties for any Club Associate(s) who breaches the Laws*
- *ensure that any charges brought against a Club Associate(s) at a Tribunal and any appeal from a Tribunal decision or any charges against a Match Official are conducted fairly and in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.*

The four key functions of the Legal & Integrity Department are as follows:

1. Misconduct - the investigation of reports of misconduct and the laying of charges as a result.
2. Tribunal - the provision of administrative support to FV's independent Tribunal and Appeals Board.
3. Cards - the management of reports of red and yellow cards including the grading of red card offences with associated penalties.
4. Records - the collation of match records.

This report will focus on the first three of these key functions.

To give context to the statistics contained within this report, there were approximately **40,000** matches fixtured by the FV Competitions Department in the 2019 season. The breakdown of these fixtures is as follows:

Competitions			
Age Group	79% Junior	21% Senior	
Competitions	87% Community	12% NPL	1% Cup
Gender	82% Men / Boys	18% Women / Girls	

MISCONDUCT

- **Total of 360 Misconduct charges**
- **70% increase in Misconduct charges heard at Tribunal**
- **Only 29% of charges against players**

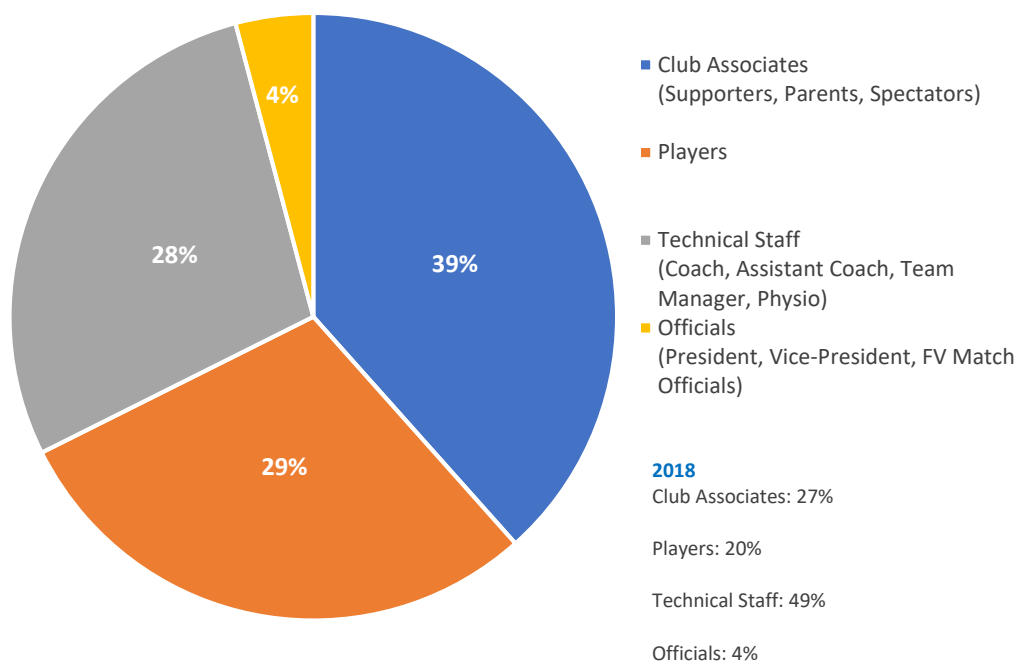
The Legal & Integrity Department receive a range of misconduct reports including from match officials, clubs and participants throughout the season. Each report goes through an investigation process to determine any breaches of the GDT. Breaches can result in a Misconduct Penalty Offence (Misconduct charge), which is either dealt with administratively by the Department (Administrative charges), or, in the case of serious incidents, referred to an independent Tribunal hearing (Tribunal charges).

From a trending perspective, 2019 saw a similar number of Misconduct charges compared with 2018. However, there was a significant increase in the number of Misconduct charges that were referred straight to a Tribunal hearing due to their serious nature. This number increased 70% from 97 in 2018 to 165 in 2019.

This increase was as a result in part due to rule changes requiring automatic referrals to Tribunal for charges attracting more than 12 match suspensions, but also due to a spike in severe and/or significant violent conduct in 2019. This resulted in more MP10 charges for bringing the game into disrepute. Alongside this, clubs were also found guilty of more violent melee charges. These increases are extremely concerning with the majority of these melees occurring at junior fixtures.

It was interesting to note a decrease in Administrative charges from 254 in 2018 to 195 in 2019. The main driver was the introduction of Yellow Cards to Team Officials in the NPL Competition. This led to a decrease in Team Officials being charged with an MP9A or MP9B for their expulsion from the Technical Area as they were visibly warned for their misconduct prior to being expelled. This impact demonstrates the real potential for rule changes to impact directly on behavior.

WHO ARE THE OFFENDERS?



BREAKDOWN OF CHARGES

Charge	Misconduct Offences	2019		2018	
		Tribunal	Admin	Tribunal	Admin
MP1	Engaging in misconduct and/or action(s) involving flares and/or flammable object(s).	3	1	-	-
MP2A	Encouraging and/or supporting any other person(s) to engage in Misconduct.	-	-	-	-
MP2B	Aiding, procuring, coaching or arranging with any other person(s) to engage in Misconduct.	-	-	-	-
MP3	Abandonment of a fixture due to Misconduct.	1	3	3	4
Melees or Violent Conduct					
MP4A	Participating in a Melee (non-violent) and/or demonstrating behaviours as described in either R5_1 and/or R6_2.	4	21	-	9
MP4B	Violent conduct behaviour as described in R5_2.	1	3	-	5
MP4C	Violent conduct behaviour as described in R5_3 and/or R6_3.	2	2	3	-
MP4D	Serious violent conduct and/or instigating or participating in a Melee (violent) as described in R5_4.	30	8	30	1
MP4E	Severe and/or significant violent Conduct as described in R5_5.	17	-	N/A	N/A
Club Associate Misconduct					
MP5A	Inappropriate behaviour by Club Associate(s) at a Match or other FV event.	2	35	1	36
MP5B	Offensive behaviour by Club Associate(s) at a Match or other FV event.	2	6	1	18
MP5C	Failing to control Club Associate(s).	20	15	10	40
MP5D	Club Associate(s) use of language, gestures and/or behaviours as described in R6_4.	16	7	6	3
MP6A	Spitting as described in R4_1.	-	1	-	-
MP6B	Spitting as described in R4_2.	-	-	-	-
Offences against Match Officials					
MP7A	Failing to abide by or comply with a direction of a Match Official.	-	4	-	2
MP7B	Non-violent offence(s) as described in R8_2.	1	13	2	11
MP7C	Non-violent offence(s) as described in R8_3.	2	9	1	4
MP7D	Violent offence(s) as described in R8_4.	-	1	-	2
MP7E	Violent offence(s) as described in R8_5.	3	-	3	5
MP7F	Spitting as described in R8_6.	-	1	-	2
MP7G	Violent offence(s) as described in R8_7.	1	-	1	-
MP7H	Violent offence(s) as described in R8_8.	1	-	-	-
Entering Field of Play					
MP8A	Entering the Field of Play when not permitted.	1	2	2	7
MP8B	Entering the Field of Play when not permitted and engaging in Misconduct.	3	2	5	1
Expulsion from Technical Area					
MP9A	Expulsion due to minor infringements.	-	57	-	91
MP9B	Expulsion due to serious infringements.	2	1	2	5
Other Misconduct					
MP10	Bringing the game into disrepute.	23	2	8	6
MP11	Prejudicial or defamatory Media or Social Media dissent.	-	1	1	1
MP12	Inappropriate physical conduct.	-	-	-	-
MP13	Registration violation.	-	-	-	1
Total Misconduct Offences		135	195	79	254
Red Card Appeals		9		17	
Red Card Determinations		21		N/A	
Referee Misconduct (Part of MP10 Charge)		4		1	
FV Imposed Penalty - Ineligible Players		-		1	
Total Charges heard at Tribunal		165		97	

INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL

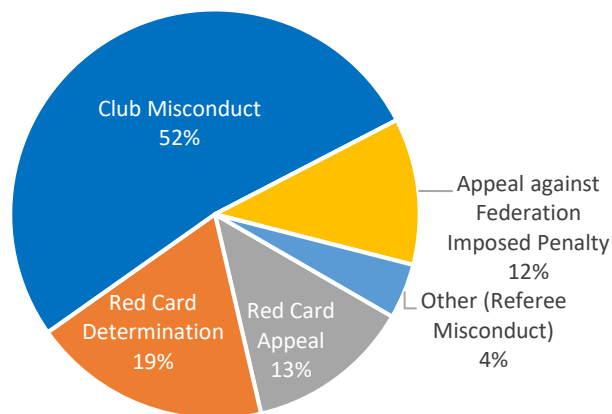
- **54% increase in the number of Tribunals held**
- **37% of incidents at junior fixtures**

The Legal & Integrity Department provides administrative support to an independent Tribunal made up of legal professionals, business professionals, ex-referees and ex-club administrators. Tribunal hearings were held throughout 2019 to hear serious matters referred to it by FV, appeals against Administrative charges, as well as red card appeals and determinations (where the offence is so serious that it is automatically referred to the Tribunal).

There were 63 separate Tribunals held in the 2019 season (up from 41 in 2018) which considered 165 charges (up from 97 in 2018).

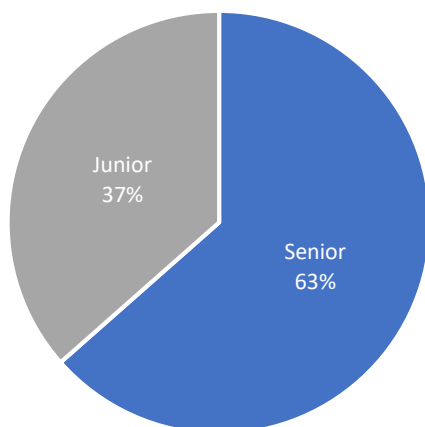
From a trending perspective, the increase in the number of charges (up 70% as referred to earlier) is stark, as is the fact that over a third of matters referred to the Tribunal involved incidents which occurred at junior fixtures – an increase from 27% in 2018 to 37% this year. The end of season GDT review will focus on how we can reverse these dramatic declines, particularly at a junior level.

TRIBUNAL - WHAT TYPE OF CASE WAS HEARD?



TRIBUNAL - SENIOR/JUNIOR

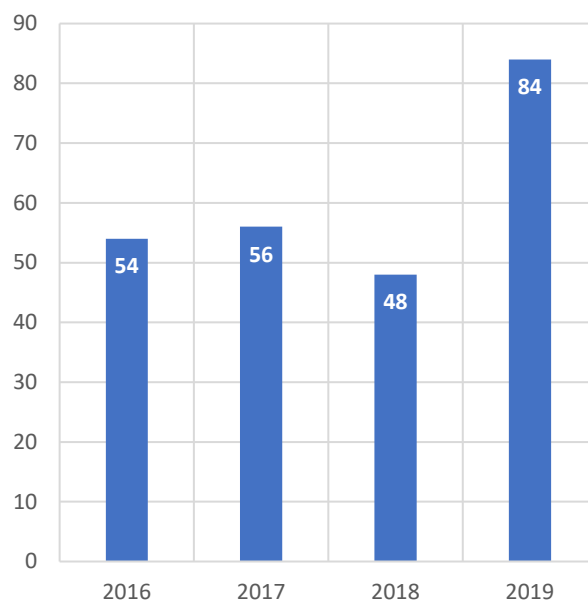
Total 63 Cases



2018

Junior: 27%
Senior: 73%

TRIBUNAL - POINT DEDUCTIONS



RED CARDS

- **31% increase in offensive, insulting, abusive or intimidating language or gestures**
- **21% decrease in the number of offences against match officials**

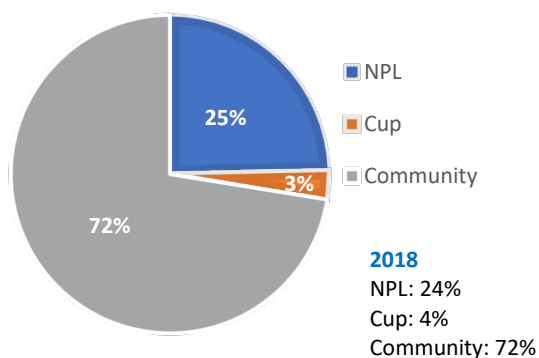
The GDT provides a range of red card gradings, which are applied by the match officials and, in certain circumstances, the Legal & Integrity Department. The below table shows the breakdown of the grading for each red card received.

Code	Description	2016	2017	2018	2019	# Change	% Change
R1	Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity - Handball	39	42	47	44	3	-6%
R2	Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity - Foul play	111	86	102	108	6	6%
R3	Serious foul play	104	107	131	150	19	15%
R4	Spitting at an opponent or any other person.	12	8	6	5	1	-17%
R5	Violent conduct	342	355	352	342	10	-3%
R6	Offensive, insulting, abusive or intimidating language and/or gestures	210	198	84	110	26	31%
R7	Received a second caution in the same Match.	507	572	591	692	101	17%
R8	Offences against Match Officials			189	150	39	-21%
Total		1325	1368	1502	1601	99	7%

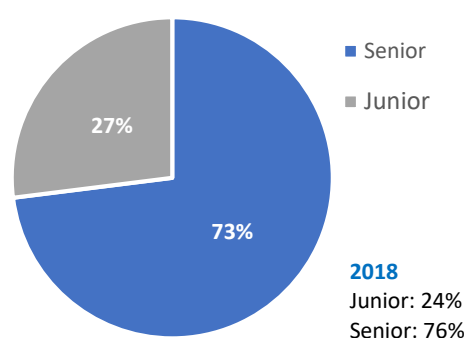
2019 concerningly saw a 7% increase in the number of red cards issued. Encouragingly though, there was a 21% decrease in the number of offences against match officials. A decrease in these numbers can be credited to successful changes in the GDT over the past 18 months which has introduced harsher penalties for these types of offenders. These changes alongside the Respect the Game campaign were vital in making Clubs more aware of this important value and eliminating abuse towards match officials. However, this number is still alarmingly high with effectively one in ten red cards relating to an offence against a match official. Football Victoria will continue to take a stand against abusive and violent behaviour against towards Match Officials.

The biggest percentage change comes from an R6 offence (Offensive, insulting, abusive or intimidating language and/or gestures) with an increase of 31% from 2018. The end of season GDT review will focus on what sanctions or education may be appropriate in order to seek to limit this behaviour in 2020.

RED CARDS DISTRIBUTION
1601 TOTAL OFFENCES

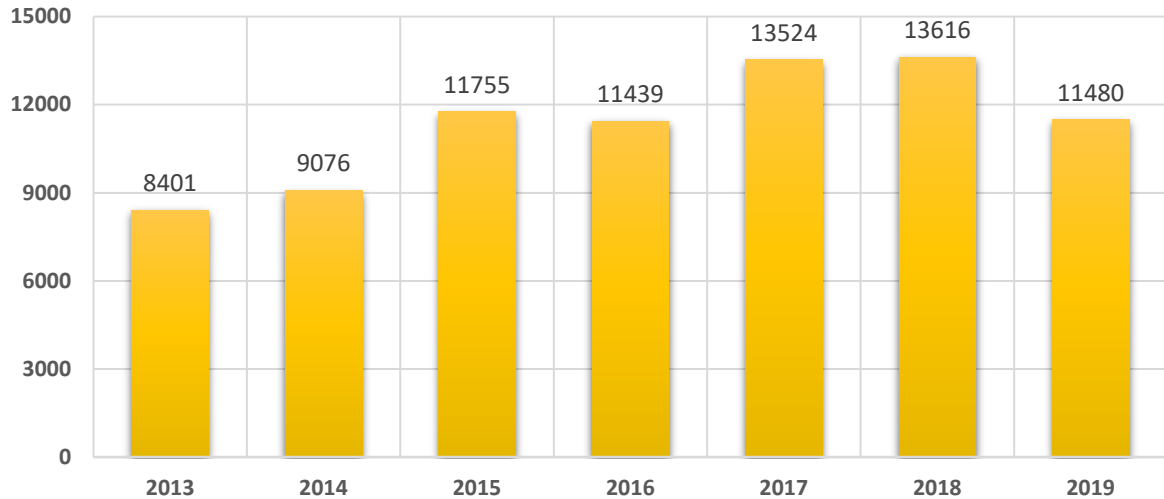


RED CARDS - SENIOR v JUNIOR
1601 TOTAL OFFENCES



YELLOW CARDS

- 11,480 yellow cards
- 16% decrease in yellow cards

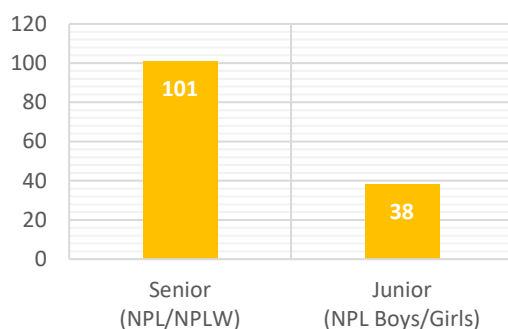


The above 16% decrease in yellow cards is on face value pleasing. However, this figure is likely explained in part by a recorded drop in match records submitted (14% in Men's State Leagues and 15% in Women's State Leagues).

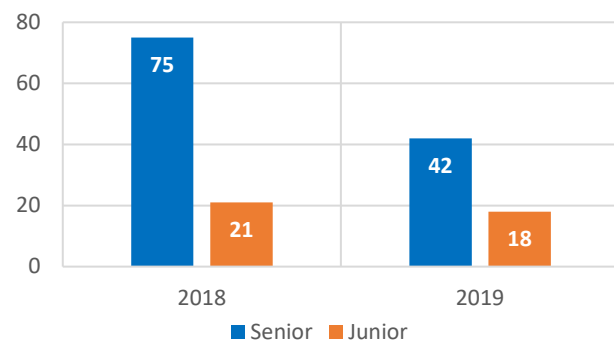
Finally, note that 2019 saw the introduction of yellow cards for Team Officials in NPL. As a result there has been a reduction in MP9 administrative charges given to team officials (96 in 2018 – 60 in 2019).

NPL TEAM OFFICIAL - YELLOW CARDS

139 Total Offences



MP9 - EXPULSIONS FROM TECHNICAL AREA



The above NPL statistics again demonstrate the potential to influence behaviour through changes to the rules of the game.