



Health and Safety Policy

'Safety first – then fence'

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Health and Safety Policy

Statement of Intention

Fencing New Zealand (FeNZ) declares that the safe enjoyment of all participants in the sport of fencing is paramount. FeNZ wishes to ensure, through this Policy, the personal safety of fencers, referees, coaches, officials and spectators at all competitions, camps, practice bouts and training exercises. It seeks to instill a prevailing attitude, across all fencing activities of ‘Safety first – then fence’.

The FeNZ Board views these guidelines as a minimum standard and encourages all involved in fencing to think safety first and to pro-actively plan, action and educate all fencers to be safety conscious.

Fencing is a combat sport between competitors armed with swords. To protect them :

- a. Special clothing and equipment is required to be worn.
- b. Sword fighting skills and discipline must be learned.
- c. Specific technical rules are applied, at the direction of the referee and competition officials.
- d. All participants involved any fencing activity, must be conscious of and purposefully act to protect the safety of themselves and others, at all times under the adage “Safety first – then fence”.

This Policy applies to all tournaments, competitions, classes, training camps and other activities organised directly or on behalf of FeNZ, and any of its four regions¹. The FeNZ Board further directs that appointed coaches and tour managers will apply and enforce this Safety Policy at all fencing activities, when travelling and attending international tournaments or training camps

Affiliated clubs should develop and update their existing health and safety plans, drawing on this Policy to formulate their own tailored standards and requirements. Again, the guidelines in this document are standards, which clubs should seek to develop or better, according to the interests of their members, the club’s resources and personnel.

The Policy is a living document, always under review for improvement and continuously applied. It is not a document to be left, either figuratively or physically, on the bookshelf and only referred to when answering an enquiry about whether or not FeNZ has a health and safety policy.

Application

All FeNZ Board members, members of regional executives and councils, team managers, coaches and club officials should be aware of the contents of this policy document and understand how the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 operates and applies to voluntary sporting organisations.

Fencing coaches and referees play vital safety roles. They should pro-actively work together and individually to guide and critique fencers and others involved to act safe, including to insist protective clothing and equipment is worn and used at all times and directing bouts be fought in a manner that avoids injury or harm. Should an incident or near-miss occur, the fencers involved should be penalised or sanctioned, and instructed over how to avoid repetition.

¹ Either of Fencing North, Fencing Central, Fencing Mid South and Fencing South

Resources

This Policy has been prepared with reference to the following information and sources :

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

WorkSafe New Zealand

Sport Canterbury Health and Safety Guidelines

Sport New Zealand : <https://sportnz.org.nz/managing-sport/search-for-a-resource/guides/health-and-safetyfor-clubs>

British Fencing Health and Safety Guidelines 2017: <http://britishfencing.com>

Australian Fencing Federation :

[http://www.ausfencing.org/home/attachments/article/4798/AFF%20First%20Aid%20Policy%20\(2015\).pdf](http://www.ausfencing.org/home/attachments/article/4798/AFF%20First%20Aid%20Policy%20(2015).pdf)

FIE Rules for Competitions 2017

FIE Tournament Handbook 2013

FeNZ – Appointment and Recognition of Tournament Officials Policy 2017

FeNZ Equipment standards : www.fencing.org.nz/safety

FeNZ Code of Conduct

Safety Officer

Recognising the importance of Health and Safety the FeNZ Board has appointed a Safety Officer, who sits as an adviser to the Board and is part of the FeNZ Officiating Commission. The current Safety officer is identified at www.fencing.org.nz/safety and may be contacted at safety@fencing.org.nz.

The Safety Officer is responsible for implementing, maintaining and improving the FeNZ Safety Policy and ensuring tournament organisers, officials, referees, coaches and fencers generally operate in accordance within or better the Policy guidelines. The Safety Officer bears specific responsibility for ensuring that hazard inspections and risk registers are completed by or on behalf of the tournament organisers for each national and regional competition and will encourage similar approaches at all competitions within regions. The Safety Officer will also receive, either directly or through the Secretary of the FeNZ Board, all incident reports involving accidents or near misses, particularly if injuries or illness are involved, and will report to the Board on health and safety matters, including implementation of and adherence to this Policy within the regions and by affiliated clubs, incidents notified, and safety initiatives and developments.

The Safety Officer will also :

- a. Be the ‘champion of safety’ at FeNZ Board meetings and activities.
- b. Take responsibility for assessing and reporting on all FeNZ policies and position descriptions, technical and equipment rules and regulations, when notified or proposed, from a health and safety perspective.
- c. Be available as an adviser to regions and member clubs for advice on implementation of this Policy, formulation of clubs’ safety plans, and guidance on improvements to their organisation and practices to better protect club members.
- d. Be available as an adviser to tournament organisers and officials, coaches and tour managers for all health and safety matters.
- e. Regularly, at least annually, review this Policy and ensure that all appendices are up-to-date.

- f. Ensure all current FIE regulations or publications involving tournament organisation and management, technical rules and equipment regulations, are loaded on to the FeNZ website under the Safety folder and notified with guidelines (if appropriate) to fencing regions and affiliated clubs, as soon as practicable after introduction.

Safety of fencers

Clothing and Protective equipment

General

FeNZ has issued standards for fencing clothing and apparel to be worn by fencers at, and minimum equipment standards applying to, all FeNZ tournaments and regional fencing competitions taking place within New Zealand. For all current FeNZ standards visit : www.fencing.org.nz/safety.

Unless otherwise specified, the requirements now set out apply to fencing with steel weapons; a separate section deals with foam and plastic weapons.

Fencers are personally responsible for ensuring that their fencing clothing and protective apparel is properly worn, is fit for purpose, and is in good and safe condition. The guiding adage is “Safety first – then fence”. Coaches and referees must draw a fencer’s attention to any issues with the standard of their clothing or apparel. If a fencer does not act to address the issue when requested or addressed with them, then the coach and/or referee must take pro-active steps to prevent the fencer from further participating until the item of clothing or apparel is fixed and able to be worn or used in a safe and proper manner. Fencers must also take responsibility for looking out for other fencers and drawing their attention to any item of clothing or apparel which is unsafe, worn or in need of repair. If necessary, a fencer should feel able to intervene to stop a bout or activity whenever needed to protect either or both participants, or to warn a coach, referee or tournament official should another person’s safety be at risk.

Coaches need to set an example themselves by wearing protective clothing and apparel appropriate for the training session or instruction activity carried out. **Coaches giving individual instruction with weapons must wear at least a fencing master’s plastron as well as a fencing glove and a mask.** Clubs who supply weapons, equipment and apparel to novice or young fencers must ensure the gear is in good and safe condition, commensurate with the activity undertaken.

It is expected that fencers will wear full protective clothing when competing or sparring, whether in New Zealand or when participating in an overseas tournament, in accordance with the FeNZ standard or the operative FIE or other requirements for the tournament or training camp.

Masks

The fencers must wear masks for all competition, practice, and training bouts where swords are used. Fencers and coaches must be particularly vigilant about this minimum safety standard.

All masks worn must securely fit the head of the fencer and conform to all requirements of the minimum FeNZ safety standard. Transparent masks cannot be used for fencing bouts with steel blades.

Masks must be regularly checked by a fencer for weaknesses and defects, particularly in the lead-up to a tournament or competition event. A fencer should expect their mask will be closely and carefully checked by weapons control at a FeNZ or regional tournament.

Particular points to pay attention to include :

- Any damage or weaknesses to the steel mesh, including holes or excessive deformation.
- Whether the bib is attached properly, or is curling or fraying, or revealing gaps between the bib and mask.
- Poor or inadequate fit to the head of the fencer, either because it is not the right shape or has been deformed, or any one of the three points of strapping with tension are loose or damaged.

If a mask does not fit properly, is damaged or produces gaps between it and protective clothing, then it must not be used by the fencer or the coach.

Jackets and Breeches

For all tournament, competition or practice bouts each fencer must wear a jacket and breeches that conform to minimum standards : www.fencing.org.nz/safety.

Special training jackets may be worn for practice bouts, sparring using swords or training drills and exercises, but again must meet minimum FeNZ standards. FeNZ encourages all fencers to wear breeches for practice bouts and training drills with swords. Where breeches are not available, the fencer should wear full length tracksuit pants or similar attire that provide effective protective cover. The level of dress for club training activities needs to be specifically addressed by clubs as part of their health and safety policies, and by coaches and club captains.

For competitions, there must be a minimum of 10 centimetres overlap between the jacket and breeches, when the fencer is standing *en garde*. Jackets should fasten on the opposite side to the sword arm or at the back. Breeches should reach and stay below the knee on both legs of the fencer, during a competition or practice bout. Breeches must not be used if damaged, with visible tears or weaknesses through wear or penetration by a sword or other object.

If both fencers are using non-electric foil blades, or size 3 or smaller blades for foil, épée or sabre, full length tracksuit pants, or similar, may be worn instead of breeches, provided the pants (are of sufficiently strong material to resist penetration by a sword blade and provided all pockets and openings are securely sewn or taped closed).

Plastron

Fencers must wear a plastron of appropriate size and fitting, conforming to the FeNZ standard for tournaments, competition or practice bouts, and sparring.

Chest guards

It is compulsory for female fencers to wear rigid chest protection for tournaments, competition or practice bouts, and sparring. It is recommended that female fencers wear rigid chest protection either shaped or flat, from the age of 10 or from the onset of puberty, if earlier. Chest protectors must conform with applicable FeNZ equipment requirements for competitions.

Gloves

Fencers must wear a glove on their fencing hand in all tournaments, competition or practice bouts, and sparring. A glove must comply with the FeNZ minimum standard and be fit for purpose and in good and safe condition.

A fencer's hand and lower arm are naturally risk points. Gloves must not have any opening, tear or weakness other than for the purpose of threading the body wire. The gauntlet must be long enough to cover approximately half of the forearm and fit over the sleeve of the fencing jacket when the fencer is *en garde*. Referees, fencers and coaches must be particularly vigilant about these minimum safety standards.

A fencer should regularly inspect their glove for any damage by accident, wear and tear, or penetrative incident.

Socks and shoes

A fencer should wear specialist fencing shoes or indoor trainer type shoes to ensure a secure grip, whilst on a piste or on wooden or other flooring, during fencing or training activity.

FeNZ recommends that long, thick material socks should always be worn, covering the bottom of the breeches, so that no bare skin is showing when the fencer is *en garde*. The socks should have sufficient elasticity or other holding mechanism to prevent the socks slipping with movement.

Fencing with foam or plastic weapons

Where fencing with foam or plastic weapons, a plastic face mask specifically designed for the purpose, or a regular fencing mask, must be worn. A long-sleeved top and track pants, or similar, covering down to at least knee level, may be worn instead of a fencing jacket and breeches.

Weapons

General

The greatest risk of serious physical injury with fencing is from penetration by a broken or fractured sword blade, with a combination of inattention, recklessness, misuse or inadequate protective clothing. Being a weapon, a sword if used incorrectly can cause injury or harm to other fencers, referees or other persons involved in a competition or training bout, or other fencing activity, including spectators or persons passing near or close to a piste.

FeNZ has adopted FIE weapon standards : www.fencing.org.nz/safety.

All fencers must be fully conversant with the current operative standards for a tournament and regularly check and maintain their weapons to ensure they are fit for purpose and in a good and safe condition. That personal duty applies to tournaments as much as training activities. For Olympic and Commonwealth tournaments, Youth championships and National championships, special weapon and equipment standards may apply. Fencers and coaches need to carefully check the operative standards before each tournament to ensure compliance.

Weapon checks

For national and regional tournaments, tournament organiser must ensure comprehensive and effective equipment control and weapon checks, under a 3-stage format :

- General weapon checks prior to the tournament or before the start of competition for individual weapons.
- Verification by the presiding referee during poules and the preliminary rounds of direct elimination.
- Verification by the presiding referee on the piste before each bout of the table of 16, and before each finals' bout.

For club and minor regional competitions, it is the decision for the competition organiser whether general weapon checks should be staged. As a minimum, all weapons and equipment that might be used need to be checked and verified by the presiding referee on the piste before the commencement of the first bout and ideally again before the preliminary rounds of direct elimination and before the finals.

Blades

Each fencer must take personal responsibility to check and maintain their weapons to keep them fit for purpose, in a good and safe condition, and ideally at competition standard.

Coaches and club captains are encouraged to create an environment where fencers take pride in the maintenance and standard of their weapons and equipment. Instruction classes on care and repair of weapons, wires and equipment are important for safety, fencer development, and fostering club spirit.

Each fencer should habitually inspect and test their weapons to ascertain if any portion of the blade displays obvious deformation or kinks or excessive plasticity, that may lead to a break; such as an irregular or uneven curve which is not able to be corrected by usual straightening methods.

If blades develop sharp edges or splinters, these should be smoothed-off using emery cloth. FeNZ encourages use of maraging steel blades, which are more durable and of higher quality than conventional steel blades, for all weapons including at regional and club competitions.

The blade tips on foils and épées must be securely in place. If a foil or épée blade is perceptively loose, then it must be tightened and rechecked before use. The end of a sabre blade must have a square or rectangular section of 4mm x 4mm minimum.

Child or young fencers should fence with weapon blades commensurate with their age and size. FeNZ accepts that is a matter of personal choice and discussion with coaches, but cognisant of tournament or competition rules.

Weapon guards

Guards are an important protective device. Frequent use can leave sharp edges around the circumference of the guard, or dents and buckling. Damaged guards must be repaired before use, particularly before tournaments or training activities. Sharp edges can injure the fencers involved in a bout or other persons adjacent to the area of use. A dented guard is a potential hazard to a fencer's fingers or could potentially trap an opponent's sword point.

Coaches and Trainers

Coaches, fencing instructors and fitness trainers have a central role in the development and encouragement of fencers of all ages. They have a special obligation to ensure that all fencing activities are conducted safely and without injury or harm to participants or observers. Fencing coaches should always be on the lookout for actual hazards or potential risks and ensure that the fencers understand and apply their responsibilities to check and maintain their weapons, equipment and protective apparel, to fence and train safely, and generally to fence or train without causing injury or harm to themselves or others.

All coaches, instructors and trainers should operate their classes or training sessions in accordance with the Safety Guidelines set out at Appendix B. FeNZ encourages all affiliated coaches to hold a current first aid certificate. Club head coaches and senior coaches as a minimum should hold a current first aid certificate. A club may direct its coaches to undertake regular first aid instruction or refresher courses, and to hold such certificates or qualifications set out in the club's health and safety policy.

Fencing New Zealand will maintain a register of affiliated coaches, that includes details on their coaching qualifications and experience, first aid training status, and the date of their last FeNZ organized Police vetting check.

Coaches working with children

For this section, 'children' means persons 16 years or younger.

Coaches, instructors and trainers who work with children must be qualified to teach fencing, in accordance with the applicable regional or club protocols, and be approved by the club and parents of the children attending the class as a coach, instructor or trainer. They should :

1. Regularly submit themselves to Police vetting checks, organised through FeNZ, updated every 2 years.
2. Conduct classes, or coaching sessions with one adult, plus the coach himself/herself, actively present for the duration.

3. Never allow themselves to be alone in a separate room with any child or children; the door to such room must always be left open and unlocked.
4. Disclose to the school or club, or parents of children within the class or session, any criminal conviction or infringement, physical or mental impediment, or personal incapacity that means they should reasonably not teach fencing to the children as a group, or any child, or requires the instruction/training to be conducted under special supervision or support. This is a pro-active obligation on each individual coach/instructor/trainer. A failure to disclose any infringement, conviction, impediment, or incapacity known to the coach, or one that should have been known and identified, may result in the coach being suspended from coaching.
5. Ensure they have current first aid qualifications and have ready access to a well-stocked first aid kit for first instance treatment of an injury.
6. Always carry or have direct access to a cell phone, to call for assistance in the event of an emergency.
7. Never leave a class or session unattended and without active supervision.

Fencing tours

The appointed Team Manager, including assistant managers, for any FeNZ designated 'managed tour' are responsible for the health and safety of participating fencers and accompanying coaches, referees or other officials.

The Team Manager's specific health and safety responsibilities, including first aid, will be laid out in the position description for each managed tour and which will cover as a minimum :

- a. Development and implementation of a tour management plan - that will be approved by the Board, or its nominated sub-committee, that includes a health and safety risk assessment and risk management plan.
- b. Ensuring appropriate supervision arrangements are in place for all unaccompanied fencers in the Tour Manager's care from the time they leave New Zealand until their return home.
- c. Gathering and holding on a confidential basis fencers' passport and flight details, emergency contacts, health status and any medical conditions and treatment requirements.
- d. Ensuring first aid and medical treatment protocols for injuries or sickness on tour are in place and, where they apply to an under 17 fencer, are agreed with the fencer's parent or guardian prior to departure.
- e. Ensuring all fencers on tour are aware of and commit to upholding the FeNZ Code of Conduct.
- f. Ensuring the welfare and safety of the team at the tournament venue, accommodation, and outside of the venue where fencers are under the care of the Team Manager.
- g. Reinforcing the need for appropriate behaviour by team members at the tournament venue, accommodation, and outside the venue where fencers are in the care of the Team Manager.
- h. Ensuring any inappropriate behaviour, injuries or illnesses are addressed and where necessary parents, caregivers and FeNZ President or Secretary General are informed.

FeNZ will ensure all team managers responsible for under 17 fencers have undergone a Police vetting check.

Referees

Referees have a special and individual responsibility to ensure the safe conduct of and the enjoyment of the participant competitors. Deliberate and careful attention to the standard and condition of weapons, clothing and protective apparel used or worn by fencers is required at every tournament or competitive bout refereed.

Referees must apply current fencing rules, as applicable to the activity, and actively encourage and educate when involved in training bouts fencers to avoid (non-weapon) impact with opponents, overly-aggressive or reckless fencing.

Tournament officials

Tournament organiser

The organiser of the tournament, together with officials, has responsibility for ensuring the premises are fit for purpose and provide a safe and secure environment for the competition, applying the adage “Safety first – then fence”. In particular, the tournament organiser should :

- a. Conduct a risk assessment of the venue and complete a hazard register; a sample Hazard Register form is at Appendix C.
- b. Ensure the competition venue is well-lit, without blinding light for the pistes and other areas where practise bouts and training will be conducted.
- c. Ensure a prevailing ambient temperature at the venue, with heating or air conditioning as required, to maintain a suitable level for physical activity with comfort.
- d. Check electrical wiring, power boards, outlets, appliances and portable equipment are electrically safe and secure.
- e. Make sources of clean drinking water readily available.
- f. Arrange for pistes and passage areas for fencers and thoroughfare for competitors, officials and spectators to be well-marked and at safe distance from the pistes, or other areas where practice bouts and other fencing activity will be conducted.
- g. Provide clean, functioning and secure toilets and cloakrooms.
- h. Organise weapons control, first aid and referees.
- i. Consider, if the venue makes announcements difficult, providing a suitable public-address system for the supplying of information to all participants simultaneously.
- j. Identify emergency exits and notify the emergency fire, earthquake or natural disaster plan to manage the safe exit of all persons involved in the tournament is in place.
- k. Ensure a telephone service is immediately available in the event of a significant injury or emergency.
- l. Organise on-hand first aid treatment, ideally a medical doctor or qualified nurse, or St Johns, Red Cross or similar, or as a minimum, a trained first aider with medical kit.

Directoire Technique

The Directoire Technique (DT) should be positioned near to the competition area. In addition to computers and equipment to manage the competition, the DT should have immediate access to a telephone in the event of emergency or significant injury.

The DT should liaise with referees, coaches and tournament officials to check whether any fencer or other participant is injured, unwell or in need of assistance. If discovered, the DT should consult with first aid, the Head Referee or tournament organiser as appropriate.

In the event of an accident, injury or withdrawal for illness, the DT will arrange for and check on the competitor, ensure an incident report is completed by the officiating referee, in liaison with the Head Referee and tournament organiser.

Head Referee

The Head Referee will be responsible for ensuring appropriate officiation at the tournament or other event.

The Head Referee will regularly liaise with other referees, DT and the tournament organiser to check for any fencers who are injured, unwell or in need of assistance and will speak with any affected fencer in consultation with their coach to ensure attention has been received and a decision made over participation.

In the event of an injury, onset of illness or other incapacity affecting a fencer's ability to participate, the Head Referee with the DT will determine whether the fencer continues to participate in the event, after consultation with the fencer, his/her coach, the referee officiating the bout when the injury was sustained or illness or incapacity identified, the person or persons who administered the first aid, or medical assessment and first instance treatment, and the tournament organiser. The same process will apply to any official who is injured, becomes ill or incapacitated at a tournament, or competition event.

In the event of any injury, or other incident of harassment, violence or bullying, the Head Referee will report to the tournament organiser.

Fencing activities

Venues

All venues for fencing activities, club and competition premises, should be well lit but without blinding light at the pistes, and kept at a reasonable ambient temperature during use. Practice bouts and training activities must be conducted in designated and safe areas with adequate margin for coaches, observers and other fencers to keep at a safe distance. Club captains and competition organisers should adopt the approach of "Safety first – then fence", and ensure :

- a. At least a basic first aid kit is stored and readily accessible, sufficient to provide first instance treatment of injuries.
- b. The location of a defibrillator (AED), whether at the venue or close by, is identified and personnel instructed in the use of the AED available at short notice in the event of an emergency. Visible signage should be readily accessible to guide persons attending a victim in the event of such emergency or incident with serious injury.
- c. Ensure all pistes are cleaned and securely installed and subjected to regular checks.
- d. All electrical wiring, power boards, outlets and appliances are electrically safe.

- e. An incident report form is accessible and, if there is an accident or injury, a written report completed and lodged with the club captain, tournament organiser and FeNZ Safety Officer : refer *Incident Reporting* below.
- f. Coaches are encouraged to look out for injury, illness or signs of harassment, bullying or violent behavior.
- g. The club members and fencers should pro-actively encourage safe but competitive fencing and offer instruction on weapons maintenance and equipment checking.
- h. Incidents of reckless, overly aggressive or threatening fencing are stopped and acted upon to ensure the other party is protected and made safe; where necessary, the perpetrator disciplined in accordance with the applicable disciplinary protocols for the competition or club event.

Incident reporting

In the event of any injury or illness occurring during a FeNZ tournament or regional or club competition, or other fencing activity, an incident report in the approved FeNZ form, must be completed as soon as practicable. The completed form must be lodged with the club captain, where the fencer or other participant or member is involved, or with the Tournament Organiser, if the incident occurs at a tournament. If the injury concerns the head and/or incapacitates the fencer from further participation in fencing, then a copy of the incident report must be supplied to the FeNZ Secretary General or Safety Officer.

The most senior coach, referee or other official present has the responsibility for ensuring the incident form is completed and lodged in accordance with this Policy.

The purpose of the incident reporting procedure is to ensure accurate and detailed information about fencing accidents and injuries are reported, which will enable FeNZ to address identified hazards, direct coaching instruction to individual fencers or the fencing community as a whole, and to help prevent repetition.

The FeNZ Board encourages affiliated clubs, in their individual health and safety plans, to report of all accidents or near misses, whether an injury or illness is involved or not. Only incidents that involve actual injury or illness need be reported to FeNZ.

Any incidents of violent or reckless fencing, harassment or bullying of any person within the fencing community must be immediately reported to the Head Referee, DT or a tournament organiser, or if time is of the essence, to the nearest coach or senior tournament official, who is duty-bound to respond and intervene.

Head injuries

One particular area the FeNZ Board is concerned to address is head injury or concussion. Although fencers wear protective masks, and do not often come into heavy contact, head injuries and concussion may occur.

Referees have a critical role in ensuring fencers fight competitively, but safely. The technical rules should be applied for the protection of the competing fencers. In the event of heavy or forceful contact with the head during a bout, or if a fencer communicates with the referee during or after the bout that they are under difficulty, or where concussion is suspected as a possibility, urgent first aid and / or medical assessment is required.

Tournament organisers and competition officials should be thoroughly familiar with the head injury and concussion guidelines.

Coaches should instruct fencers as part of training and in preparing for competition, to fence in a manner which avoids heavy and forceful contact with the head or the body of an opponent fencer. They should manage and educate fencers who develop overly aggressive or unsafe practices when training or competing.

In a tournament or other competition, the following FeNZ Guidelines should apply:

- a. If a head injury or concussion is suspected by the fencer, referee or any other observer of the bout, the victim should be removed from the piste or training activity and immediately assessed by first aid, or if possible, a medical doctor. Concussion more often than not occurs without loss of consciousness. Particular caution is required for child or adolescent fencers. The touchstone should be that if concussion is thought to be a possibility, action must be taken directly even if a head injury is not actually established or diagnosed.
- b. Referees, coaches and tournament officials have a central role in recognising the signs of head injury and the symptoms of concussion, recognizing that it may take several hours post-impact for some or all of the symptoms of concussion to emerge. Further, concussion may present in a similar manner to other catastrophic conditions with delayed onset.
- c. If concussion is diagnosed, or suspected, the victim should not compete again on the day of the incident or circumstance which caused the effect and may only return to the event once assessed by a medical doctor and cleared to continue in the competition; a written report or record of that advice, signed by the medical doctor must first be provided to the DT.
- d. If, despite suffering a head injury or impact to the head region, a fencer insists on continuing with the bout, and/or participating in the tournament or competition event, the Head Referee and DT have authority to decide whether the fencer will continue to participate, in accordance with the special provisions set out under the section Directoire Technique and Head Referee above.

Harassment

FeNZ regards harassment of any kind involving fencers, coaches, referees, officials or visitors to a tournament, club or other fencing venue, or the activities of any fencing organisational body, as wholly unacceptable. FeNZ and fencing regions encourage all participants in the sport to take such actions as necessary to prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of harassment situations.

Harassment means any form of unwelcome, unsolicited or improper behaviour by a person or group which might offend, humiliate or intimidate another person, and which interferes with their right to participate in the fencing competition or activity in a non-threatening environment.

Harassment can take different forms including verbal, written or physical. An individual circumstance may not of itself constitute improper behaviour, but such behaviour is considered harassment if it is repeated with the consequence that it has a detrimental effect on the victim's ability to engage and participate in fencing activity.

If any person witnesses or becomes aware of another person being harassed, whether by another fencer or at the action of a person(s) inside or outside the fencing community, that incident or circumstance must be reported directly to a senior official, whether club captain, referee, coach or, if necessary, an officer of the fencing region, with responsibility for that location or event. If necessary or appropriate, the report may be made directly to the Safety Officer or President of FeNZ.

All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously by FeNZ. The primary purpose, when dealing with such allegations or complaints, will be to stop the harassment and to protect the victim(s) by responding promptly and substantially and to prevent further harassment occurring.

If any member of the fencing community is concerned that they have been harassed, or that another person that they know of is suffering such harassment, then they should feel able to contact any regional office holder, the club captain, any coach or other official; contact can also be made to the FeNZ Safety Officer in confidence at safety@fencing.org.nz.

Appendix A – Incident form

Incident and Injury Report : www.fencing.org.nz [available for download]

To be completed by the officiating referee or Directoire Technique, as appropriate

1. Person affected

Name:
Address:
Contact Details/Email:

Age if under 18	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
Male	Female	R Handed	L Handed		
Fencer	Coach	Referee	Official	Spectator	Other

[please tick]

2. Person completing form (if different from above)

Name:					
Address:					
Contact Details:			Email:		
Coach	Parent	Official	Other		

Signature: _____

Date: _____

3. Description of Incident

Date : _____ Time : _____

Place: Club	School	Competition Venue	Other
Brief Address:			
Weapon	Foil	Épée	Sabre

Circumstances: eg during competition, lesson, practise bout

--

Nature of Injury

Please tick part(s) of body affected. Please put the type of injury under details e.g. cut, bruise, sprain etc.

Part of Body	Tick	Details + R or L if appropriate
Head		
Face		
Eye		
Ear		
Neck		
Chest		
Back		
Abdomen		
Pelvis		
Shoulder		
Upper arm		
Elbow		
Forearm		
Hand/Wrist		
Thigh		
Knee		
Lower leg		
Ankle		
Foot		
Other		

How did the injury happen? Please identify the protective apparel worn at the time

Action/Treatment – immediate and later. Identify first aider or medical officer, and briefly state treatment or advice received.

First assessment :

Further consultation(s) :

Was the fencer, official or other person, able to continue to participate? – Please detail

Your suggestions of how to prevent this type of accident/injury in future?

Date :

Signed by **Directoire Technique**

Date :

Signed by **Head Referee**

Please return completed form to secretary@fencing.org.nz and/or safety@fencing.org.nz (copies of this form can be obtained from www.fencing.org.nz).

Thank you for taking the trouble to complete this form; it is very important that FeNZ knows about safety incidents and all fencing injuries and illness. The form will be held by FeNZ for the purpose of managing and implementing its health and safety policy, to protect the safety of fencers and others involved in the sport. If an incident is investigated by FeNZ, your form may be reviewed by the FeNZ Board or an investigator appointed on its behalf. At any time, you may request access to information held by FeNZ about you, and if there is any inaccuracy or omission, you may request a correction or present additional material information, under the Privacy Act 1993.

[FeNZ administration only]

Date :

Receipt acknowledged by

FeNZ Safety Officer

Actions Noted :

Appendix B – Safety Guidelines

FeNZ Safety Guidelines

The following guidelines are recommended by FeNZ as a minimum standard for conduct of fencing classes, training sessions and other fencing activities :

1. Coaches, instructors and trainers, or club captain if present, must check the premises for hazards and, where possible, remove such hazards before activity starts.
2. No fencers should begin or continue fencing if their clothing, protective apparel or weapon is damaged, or inappropriate. Each coach or instructor must take individual responsibility for ensuring that the fencers in their class or session are properly dressed and equipped.
3. All fencers must, when they are not fencing or practising on near a piste, must carry their weapons either by the pommel with the blade pointing towards the floor, or by gripping the end point with the pommel hanging vertically down towards the floor. Swords should never be recklessly or playful waved around or near others.
4. All fencers must be taught not to put their masks on using both hands whilst holding a sword; the mask must be placed on the head first.
5. No direction to begin a fencing bout, at competition or practise, may be given without a prior check that all fencers are wearing their masks and other protective equipment correctly.
6. If a mask falls off or is dislodged, or a blade breaks or bends unsafely, or any point or button falls off, both fencers must stop fencing or the coach or referee must direct an immediate cessation.
7. No training activity with or without the coach, should be conducted with weapons unless masks are worn by both participants and the exercise is conducted a safe distance from other persons, including people passing by, near or adjacent to, the piste or place of exercise.
8. Coaches, instructors and trainers must pro-actively look out for unsafe practices or developing hazards during their class or session, including those that effect spectators or visitors not directly involved in the class or session.
9. Clubs and schools are encouraged to consider adopting their own special safety rules for individual class instruction and training sessions. Such rules should be prominently displayed at the club and all members encouraged to be aware of and apply those rules. The guiding message for a club should be “safety first – then fence”.

Appendix C – Hazard Register

Hazard Register – sample : www.fencing.org.nz [available for download]

HAZARD	RISK	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Fire	Burns/Smoke	Participants	Tournament organiser and floor manager to ensure that emergency exits are obvious. Tournament organiser and DT to be aware of the correct evacuation procedure.
Earthquake	Injury / Distress	Participants	Tournament organiser to ensure that emergency exits are obvious. Tournament organiser and DT to be aware of the correct evacuation procedure.
Inadequate or sub-standard Protective Equipment	Penetration causing minor or major injury	Fencers and Referees	Weapons control pre-tournament. Referees to check protective clothing and weapons before bout
Broken Blades	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers and Referees	Weapons control to check blades have no obvious kinks, weaknesses or burrs. Fencers and referees to be reminded of the danger of broken blades and to remain vigilant when fencing.
Disposal of broken blades	Minor Injury	Participants and bystanders	Broken blades to be disposed of and removed from venue. Not to be left in rubbish bins where public access.
Drugs and Alcohol	Minor / Major Injury Harassment of others	Participants	Consumption of alcohol and/or non-prescription drugs at the venue is prohibited. Anyone who arrives intoxicated will not be allowed to participate
Obstacles / Trip hazards	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers and Referees	Pistes to be laid in formation away from obstacles. Recommend to fencers to use footwear with reasonable grip. Observation of rules regarding the fleche – attacking fencer must pass to their opponent's non-sword arm side.
Referees and Spectators caught up in on piste action	Minor / Major Injury	Participants / Observers	Referees and spectators to keep a safe distance from fencing bouts and training. Fencers and referees must always be aware of their surroundings. Floor manager to ensure space allowed between pistes for referees. Referees to check areas adjacent to pistes are clear of obstacles. Power cords and leads to be taped to floor and marked.
Incorrect weapon handling	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers, Referees, Participants	Fencers to take personal responsibility in designated areas for training. Coaches and officials to be vigilant.

Water or food spills	Minor / Major Injury – slip hazard	Participants	Tournament organisers and referees to be vigilant and ensure surface is clean and fit for purpose before the commencement of activities. Spills to be cleaned up directly.
Storage of fencing kit	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers and Coaches	Tournament organisers to remind fencers that fencing bags are to be stored in designated areas. Fencers to be aware of the risk precariously balanced fencing bags can pose, both when storing and retrieving their kit.
HAZARD	RISK	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Medical conditions	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers	Fencers to be reminded that it is their duty to inform their coaches and the DT of any relevant known medical condition.
Hard hitting	Minor Injury Harassment	Fencers	Protective clothing will be worn by all fencers. Correct technique instructed by coaches and referees. Referees to be conscious of younger, less experienced fencers and to sanction offenders.
Injuries sustained while training or bouts	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers and Coaches	Coaches should issue clear instruction over warm ups and technique. If any injury occurs, follow procedure in the FeNZ Safety Policy and tournament protocols.
Personal kit security	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers and Coaches	Fencers reminded that any kit stored should be secured.
Insufficient lighting	Minor / Major Injury	Fencers	Tournament Organiser and floor manager to ensure lighting sufficient before activities commence. Plan to be prepared to deal with any power outage.
Mains Electricity	Injury / Fatality	Fencers and participants	Fencers and referees to be reminded of the risk posed by mains electricity and to be vigilant when using any of the mains boxes.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RISK REDUCTION

ACTION	WHEN	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETED
DT, weapons control and referees to be reminded to check that fencers are wearing correct clothing and equipment before competition.		Safety Officer	
In-person safety briefing to be given to floor manager, DT, referees and coaches, with a record made of who has attended the briefing		Tournament Organiser and Safety Officer	

The following sign to acknowledge that they have reviewed the above document and agree to comply with it while they hold their current position on the Committee:

Tournament Organiser Date:

Safety Officer Date :

Head Referee Date:

FeNZ Tournament Health and Safety Inspection Form at

Venue :

www.fencing.org.nz [available for download]

Venue		Event		Date	
Access		Comment		Amenities / Lighting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear/accessible <input type="checkbox"/> Thoroughfares <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency exits				<input type="checkbox"/> Clean fresh water <input type="checkbox"/> Catering facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate natural / artificial lighting	
Fire Prevention		Comment		Emergency Procedures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers / in date <input type="checkbox"/> Tested / in date <input type="checkbox"/> Clear access <input type="checkbox"/> Floor manager briefed				<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response Plan <input type="checkbox"/> On site induction <input type="checkbox"/> Site / evacuation maps <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency phone	
Electrical		Comment		First Aid	

<input type="checkbox"/> RCDs required? <input type="checkbox"/> Building Electrical Certificate current? <input type="checkbox"/> Recent 'test and tag' check of portable electrical equipment : AS/NZS 3760 <input type="checkbox"/> Cables covered / taped <input type="checkbox"/> No cables in walkway areas		<input type="checkbox"/> First aid stations suitably located <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly signed / accessible <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Location of nearest defibrillator unit identified	
Flow through Arena	Comment	Signage	Comment
<input type="checkbox"/> Spectator / Pedestrians separated from pistes Safe passage <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate signage <input type="checkbox"/> Non-slip mats at entrance (if wet) <input type="checkbox"/> Taped/covered power cords etc		<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate signage (entry, exit, toilets) <input type="checkbox"/> No pedestrian access areas <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid station <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers	
Building	Comment	Referees, Weapons Control and Floor Manager	Comment
<input type="checkbox"/> Current Certificate of Fitness		<input type="checkbox"/> Induction conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Details stored on site <input type="checkbox"/> Head Referee, DT and Floor Manager identified <input type="checkbox"/> FeNZ incident report forms to hand	

Signed by **FeNZ tournament organiser or safety officer** Date :