

Date: June 1, 2018

To: Continental Federations
National Associations

Re: **New Officials Panel Structure ready to launch at the end of May.**

Attached:

- a. Grading Guidelines for International Officials with effect from 1st June 2018.
- b. New Application Form for International Officials (NA to CF)
- c. New Continental Officials application sheet (CF to FIH)

Dear hockey friends

This document serves as a briefing to you about the changes regarding the organisation of our FIH officials from the 1st June 2018.

Background

Our volunteer FIH Officials have served our game very well with a high degree of quality, loyalty and integrity for many years.

However, the FIH Hockey Revolution strategy and the new event portfolio will have significant impact to the environment in which our FIH Officials will operate. We need to field our best officials to serve the game in a professional way and at the same time be fully committed to develop the officiating talent that will serve our sport in the future.

The organisation of umpires with our current panels is not optimal for the future. We have seen people from our top list, the World Panel, not being selected for Olympic Games or World Cups because their current performance level was not satisfactory for our top events. So the current panel structure does not take into account current performance level, only historical reputation, which has meant panels for these events have been made up from umpires from the World Panel, World Development Panel and Grade 1 panel. Of course this has led to confusion and frustration.

Also, it has been almost impossible to fast-track high potential umpires because they would have to climb the ladder step-by-step which often took lengthy periods of time.



The organisation of technical officials is conducted in a different way than the umpires with a rigid system allowing only few people to emerge to international status and thus making it very difficult for the FIH to spot talented young officials. Needless to say, we need to increase the flow of young talent to serve our game not only now but also for the future.

Overall, in order for our officials to support the Hockey Revolution strategy effectively, we need to change the way we operate.

What will change now?

With effect from 1st June 2018 we will implement the New Panel Structure. The main changes compared to the current system will be:

- The names of the panels will be the same regardless of officials category.
- Appointments will reflect current performance and availability, and therefore allowing for movement (up/down) between panels to serve hockey in the best possible way.
- Adapting the criteria for entry-level officials making it possible to celebrate international status for more officials.
- Allowing fast-tracking of high potential officials.
- Introducing education & training through FIH Academy directly linked to panels as a mandatory requirement to maintain status.
- Increasing SIGNIFICANTLY the talent identification and development of younger officials in partnership with the continental federations.
- The current 47 age limit for on-field umpires will remain and there will be a 65 year overall retirement age for all categories of officials. The 65 year retirement age will have effect from 31st December 2019 allowing CF's to plan over the course of 2019 for a smooth transition into the new set-up.
- Increased fitness requirements for umpires on our top panels as well as introducing fitness requirements to all panels.
- The International Panel (see below) will be governed by the CF. The application process for being upgraded from national official to International panel will happen from NA to CF, and then to the FIH as with the current set-up.

New Panel Structure 2018

The new Panel Structure has its primary focus to increase our quality of officiating as well as offering officials a transparent structure. The new panels are:

Talent Development Panel: The panel for the younger talents in all categories of officials. Should be able to reach Pro League Panel within 6 years. A special education program is dedicated to this group of officials at CF level.

International Panel: The entry-level international panel. Mostly used at continental level.

Advancement Panel: The panel for the high potential officials with potential of reaching the Pro League Panel or International Elite Panel within 3 years.

International Elite Panel: The panel for the very experienced official that can operate at both continental and global level.

Pro League Panel: Our very best officials with a commitment to high performance and serving the Hockey Pro League. The Pro League Panels consist of:

- 40 Technical Officials
- 20 Umpire Managers
- 30 umpires female
- 30 umpires male

The World Cup Panel: Populated by the best Pro League Panel Officials to serve the FIH World Cups. Only populated from appointment to the World Cup and until the tournament is over. The officials then return to their original panels.

The Olympic Games Panel: Populated by the best Pro League Panel Officials to serve the Olympic Games. Only populated from appointment to the Olympic Games and until the tournament is over. The officials then return to their original panels.

Implementation

The Officials Committee has produced new development & evaluation tools and planned an education strategy to support the New Panel Structure.

We are aware of the fact that this is a significant change to all our hard-working volunteer FIH Officials and as a consequence have planned for a communication and implementation plan to smoothen the transition. Online information meetings will be held during the week of 21-25 May 2018 and led by the CF reps on the Officials Committee in their respective CF's. Invitations will go out soon.

We have planned for articles and press releases as well as introduction & online education for our officials during the month of May. How the individual officials fit into the different panels will be released at the same time.

The Process of entry onto the International Panel

When a national official meets the requirements of entry onto the International Panel, the NA forwards a filled-out application form to the CF (Attachment b). Please note for umpires, there need to be a completed and monitored Yo-Yo test that reaches the required level.

If the CF agrees to the upgrade to the International Panel, the CF forwards all qualified applicants in the 3 categories (UM, TO and Umpire) to the FIH using the application sheet (Attachment C) on a monthly basis.

We are indeed enthusiastic about the new approach, which we are convinced will raise our performances even higher and will motivate officials to a higher level.

If there are any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the FIH Officials and Appointments Manager Craig Gribble (craig.gribble@fih.ch).

Best regards



Henrik Ehlers

Chairman, Officials Committee