



Technical Zone Protocol

[Trial elements underscored]

1 Dimensions of the Technical Zone

- a. For International Matches, two Technical Zones shall be provided within the playing enclosure on the same side of the pitch, each one on either side of the half-way line and outside the field-of-play.
- b. These Technical Zones must be marked on the ground.
- c. The line nearest the touch line must be parallel to the touch line.
- d. The Technical Zones commence a minimum five metres and a maximum of ten metres from the half-way line. The Technical Zones must not exceed ten metres in length and three metres in width and must not be less than two metres from the touch line (see attached schematic).
- e. Wherever practically possible the zones should be behind advertising hoardings with easy access to the field of play.

2 Personnel permitted in the Technical Zone

- a. No more than two medically trained personnel (certified doctors or physiotherapists only) and two water carriers (who may not be the head coach but may be assistant coaches), a total of four per team are permitted to operate from the Technical Zones.
- b. No other person (or player) is permitted in the Technical Zones.
- c. One of the medically trained personnel permitted to operate from the Technical Zone, as listed in (a) above, may be positioned on the far side of the playing area on the touch line opposite the Technical Zone, and may move along the touch line.
- d. The second medically trained person permitted to operate from the Technical Zone as listed in (a) above may be positioned on the near side of the playing area on the touch line, and may move along the touchline. The two medically trained personnel may not be together on one touch line.



- e. Where practically possible the medical personnel must stay outside the advertising hoardings. The medical personnel may keep up with play, but must pay due regard to the needs and rights of players, Match Officials, spectators, broadcasters and commercial partners.
- f. The medical personnel may enter the field of play in accordance with Law at any time a player is injured. They must not obstruct, interfere or aim comments at Match Officials.

3 Roles of personnel in the Technical Zone

- a. Water may only be taken on to the field during stoppages in play for injuries in the playing area, and when a try has been scored.
- b. The two water carriers are not permitted in the playing area during penalty kicks at goal.
- c. The water carriers must remain in the Technical Zone at all times unless they enter the playing area to provide water, or when ONE enters to provide a kicking tee to a kicker at a penalty kick. Water carriers must not obstruct, interfere or aim comments at Match Officials.
- d. Players may come to the touch line adjacent to the Technical Zone to receive water.
- e. Water bottles must not be thrown on to the field of play.

4 Management of the Technical Zone

- a. All personnel permitted in the Technical Zones must have some distinguishing mark e.g. arm bands/vests.
- b. The Number 4 and 5 Officials will manage the Technical Zones. If there is a transgression of the protocol, the matter will be reported to the Match Referee.
- c. The Match Referee may caution any offender or at his discretion expel the person(s) from the playing enclosure for any breach of the protocol.



- d. Any breach of the protocol may be reported to the Designated Disciplinary Official who shall be entitled to undertake investigations and lodge Misconduct Complaints pursuant to IRB Regulation 17.21 against the Union(s) and/or person(s) concerned.
- e. Should any person be expelled from the playing enclosure for a breach of the protocol they must be reported by the Match Referee to the Designated Disciplinary Official, who shall be entitled to undertake investigations and lodge Misconduct Complaints pursuant to IRB Regulation 17.21 against the Union(s) and/or person(s) concerned.

5 Personnel outside of the Technical Zone

- a. The replacement bench and the location of the coaches should, wherever possible, be outside the playing enclosure.
- b. If replacements require to warm-up and there is not an area outside the playing enclosure, they may warm-up in the opposition in-goal area but must not use balls or any other rugby equipment in their warm-up. Balls and hit shields may be used where there is a designated warm-up area away from the in-goal area. All other equipment for the purposes of warm-up must only be used outside the playing enclosure or another designated area away from the playing enclosure.

The playing enclosure is defined as per the Definitions Section of Law 1 (The Ground).

6 Players temporarily suspended

- a. When a player has been temporarily suspended (sin binned) that player is to be situated in the designated sin bin area which must not be in the Technical Zone and must remain there for the duration of the Temporary Suspension with the exception of 6.c.
- b. The player may be given water and the provision of warm clothing. If halftime occurs during the sin bin period, the player may go to his team's changing room but must return directly to the sin bin for the remaining time of his suspension when the second half resumes.
- c. A one minute warm-up period is permitted prior to the temporarily suspended player returning to the field of play.



7 Management of Replacements and Substitutions

- a. The management of the replacement and substitution process is the responsibility of the Number 4 and 5 Officials. Replacements and substitutes are only permitted to enter the field of play after the 4 or 5 has communicated to the Referee and this has been acknowledged by the Referee.
- b. When a replacement or substitution of a player is going to take place, the team manager or person administering replacements and substitutions on behalf of a team, must present a completed substitution / replacement form to the Number 4 or 5 Official that clearly indicates the number of the player leaving the field of play, the reason for a player leaving the field of play and the number of the player who will be entering the field of play in that player's place, once permitted to do so by the Number 4 or 5.
- c. The Number 4 or 5 will escort the player entering the field of play to the touch line at the halfway line and will only let that player enter the field of play when the player leaving the field of play has crossed the touch line, the touch in goal line or the dead ball line and is off the field of play.
- d. A replacement player may be allowed to enter the field of play before the player leaving the field of play crosses the touch line, the touch in goal line or dead ball line if the player leaving the field of play is injured such that it necessitates the player being escorted from the field of play by medical personnel. In such cases the Number 4 or 5 will indicate to the replacement player when they are permitted to enter the field of play.
- e. If for any reason there are more than fifteen players on the field of play during play, the Number 4 or 5 Official(s) will make contact with the Referee and inform him of the situation. The Referee will apply Law 3.2 and order that the Captain of the offending team removes the extra player(s) from the field of play and will award a penalty kick to the non offending team.

8 Management of Protocol

- a. The management of this Protocol will be the responsibility of the Number 4 and 5 Officials or of the appointed Match Commissioner or Match Manager.



b. The job description for the Number 4 and 5 Officials is attached as Appendix 1.



Appendix 1

Draft Job Description – Number 4 and 5 Official

Objective

To manage all aspects of the Technical Zone, replacements and substitutions in accordance with the Technical Zone protocol ensuring compliance with the Laws of the Game and the protocol.

Accountabilities

Replacements and Substitutions

- Establishes positive relationships with the relevant team manager or the person administering the replacements and substitutions for a team.
- Receives the replacement/substitution cards from the team manager and checks that it has been fully completed and confirms whether the change is a replacement for injury or a tactical substitution.
- Resolves issues where a team has indicated a tactical substitution when the player is obviously injured. Involves the match doctor where one is present and the matter cannot be resolved.
- Communicates with the match Referee that a player is being replaced or substituted and receives acknowledgement from the Referee that this may occur.
- Ensures that players entering the field of play do so from the half-way line.
- Utilises the signal boards for the benefit of spectators.
- Ensures that a player entering the field of play does not do so until the player leaving the field of play has crossed the touchline, touch in goal line or dead ball line (save for seriously injured players).
- Maintains records of replacements and substitutions to ensure compliance with Law.
- Reports any actions contrary to Law or the Technical Zone protocol to the match Referee.
- After the match reports any acts of misconduct to the Referee/Match Commissioner/Match Director as appropriate.
- Ensures that replacements/substitutes warm up in the correct in-goal area and do so without balls or equipment (save when there are additional warm-up areas when balls and equipment may be used).
- Keeps time (actual time) in regard to temporary replacements for blood.

Management of Temporary Suspensions

- Ensures that the suspended player sits in the position assigned.
- Keeps time (playing time) for the temporary suspension.



- Communicates with the match Referee that a suspended player is returning to the field of play and waits for the signal from the Referee.
- Maintains a record of the temporary suspension.

Technical Zone

- Establishes positive relationships with the permitted Technical Zone personnel.
- Ensures that the water carriers remain in the Technical Zone save for when they are permitted on the field of play.
- Ensures that medical personnel roam on the permitted sides of the pitch in accordance with the protocol.
- Ensures that water is provided to players in accordance with the Technical Zone Protocol.
- Ensures personnel not permitted in the Technical Zone do not enter.
- Manages any breaches of the protocol. If breaches continue reports the matters to the match Referee.
- After the match reports any acts of misconduct to the Referee/Match Commissioner/Match Director as appropriate.