



To: **Secretaries/Chief Executive Officers of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership of the IRB**

From: **David Carrigy
Head of External & Member Relations**

Date: December 21, 2009

Re: **Technical Zone Protocol**

Council at its Interim Meeting 2009 has approved an amended Technical Zone Protocol (*Section 2(a) has been amended*) which is to be implemented immediately.

Please find the revised Technical Zone Protocol attached.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Carrigy', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

**David Carrigy
Head of External & Member Relations**

Technical Zone Protocol

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 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 persons (certified doctors or physiotherapists only) and two water carriers (who may not be the head coach) per team are permitted to operate from the technical zones.
- b. No other person (or players) 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.
- d. The second medically trained personnel 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. 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 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.
- 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 fourth and fifth 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

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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 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 Protocol

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

Technical Zone:

