

National Squad Introduction Handbook

Adult Squad

- Senior
- Junior
- Cadet

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1. What do you need to do now?

- Read this National Squad Introduction Handbook carefully
- Undertake your individual Performance Plan worksheet
- Understand the different types of events (State, National, International types)
- Familiarise yourself with the HPP and weapon calendars for 2024/25
- Familiarise yourself with the Selection and Rankings Policies
- Understand the Selection process and its timing (Selection Dates)
- Complete compulsory Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) e-learning
- Contact AFF to arrange an opportunity to obtain referee accreditation
- Supply Personal Photo to Portal
- If you have any queries, write to the High Performance Commission at hpc@fencing.org.au

2. Official Communication

Throughout your time on the National Squad, the AFF and the High Performance Commission will communicate with you in a number of ways. Primarily, official communication will be sent to you via email. This is where you will be informed of selection, substantive changes to the program, and other information.

This will be from hpc@fencing.org.au for all matters of substance and admin.hpc@fencing.org.au for administration matters. The HPC will also invite you shortly to an **Australian Fencing National Squad WhatsApp Community** where you can check Squad information and where information on updates will be posted.

3. National Squad Management and National Coaching Team

The National Squad and its High Performance Program is managed by the High Performance Commission. The High Performance Commission has established the National Coaching Team to work together in the delivery of the Program.

The National Coaching Team includes technical coaches and program coaches as follows:

- National Technical Directors (Foil and Sabre, and Epee) – *These positions will be filled during the 2024/25 season.*
- National Program Coaches (Strength and Conditioning, Nutrition, Mindset)
- National Assistant Coaches (Foil, Epee, and Sabre)

We will also discuss and work with you to integrate other specialist coaches you may already be working with.

You can view the **High Performance Management Structure and National Coaching Team** [here](#).

4. Individual Performance Plan (IPP)

As part of the High Performance Program, Adult National Squad Members will undertake an IPP which is available here [convert word IPP to Jotform]. You should complete your IPP during the first National Squad camp while working with the National Coaching Team including Mindset, Nutrition and S&C.

Information collated from this IPP will be used to provide you with program support and track how you are performing against your goals.

5. High Performance Program Scope and Event Calendars

The scope of the High Performance Program is ever-evolving as we seek to improve the performance of athletes. Your view of your needs is important to us. We think it's essential for you to be voicing your ideas to us throughout the program so that we can evolve together.

Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPP • WhatsApp Community • Goal-setting
Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Seminars • In person competition support (at selected European competitions) • 1-1 Mindset Coach
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodized Athletic, Strength and Conditioning Program • Engagement with National Physical Performance Coach • Athlete wellbeing monitoring
Nutritional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional Framework • Nutritional Program (Adults) • Nutritional Options
Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Review and Discussions with Personal Coach and National Coaching Team • Distribution of Strategic Video • Performance Analysis (competition and training)
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with National Technical Director and National Assistant Coaches • Online instruction and explanation • Distribution of technical assessments and reviews • Referee Accreditation and Online Education
Camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four (4) Camps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All National Squad – 30 March to the 1 September at the AIS, and 21 to 23 March at the AIS. ○ Adults, Junior and Cadet – pre-tour camp in December and pre-Worlds camp in June (at National Centres in NSW, VIC and QLD)
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for Selection • HPC Designated Events and Tours • Performance Review (Training/Competitions)
Mobility Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend National Squad training sessions in NSW (foil and sabre), and Victoria (epee and foil).

Event and Training Calendars

This document sets out dates for **camp**s, **workshops**, **tours** and **competitions**.

National Squad Calendar Links:

- [Women's Epee Calendar](#)
- [Women's Foil Calendar](#)
- [Women's Sabre Calendar](#)
- [Men's Epee Calendar](#)
- [Men's Foil Calendar](#)
- [Men's Sabre Calendar](#)
- [National Squad Integrated Calendar, including International Championships and HPC Designated Events](#)
- [Selection Dates Calendar](#)

It is important to note that you are not obliged to attend every international event. You will form a schedule that suits your specific circumstances.

National Squad training sessions will run concurrent to State Squads. For the specific schedules please see the [National Squad Training Calendar](#).

6. Mobility Program

Under the Mobility Program, Members of the National Squad Members will be able to travel to National Squad Training Sessions in both Melbourne and Sydney at no cost to the athlete for up to 7 days at any one time, and no more than 20 days. If a National Squad Member exceeds 20 days the State may, at their discretion, request a per day attendance fee.

Athletes must meet the following conditions when training at the National Squad Sessions in other states:

- They are current members of National Squad;
- They remain resident in their home state, and fully paid-up members in that state (condition for National Squad); and
- They advise admin.hpc@fencing.org.au prior to attending any session in Sydney or Melbourne and we will inform your nominated person.

In arranging to attend any of these interstate training sessions please contact and inform us of your plan to train admin.hpc@fencing.org.au **prior to traveling to another state and attending a session**, and we will assist you to arrange.

It is our intention to develop the Mobility Program to assist athletes who are willing to travel to National Squad Sessions in Melbourne and Sydney.

7. State Events

The continued development of fencing in Australia requires your support of State-based Events. Your involvement increases the standard and competitiveness of local and state fencing, improving your training.

8. Domestic Events (National)

There is a focus on developing the competitiveness and importance of domestic competitions. As a member of the National Squad, you should compete in as many of the AFF National Competitions that are relevant to your age and fit with your plan. This approach will enhance the competitions which is to your benefit.

National Rankings require a **minimum of at least one domestic event**, without fencing in at least one domestic event, an athlete cannot form a valid ranking. The number of points for domestic events has also been increased relative to International to mirror increased importance.

We have also designed the National Competitions Calendar to avoid national senior events coinciding with international fencing championships and first-tier events, wherever possible. This allows both the emerging fencers to fence with elite athletes, and elite athletes not to be disadvantaged by representing Australia overseas. This is an important principle in developing all levels of fencing within Australia and will be deployed in the future.

Please find a link to **National Competitions Calendar** ([here](#)).

9. Types of International Event for Selection

It is important you familiarise yourself with the definitions for International Events in the **Selection Policy** ([here](#)). Essentially there are the following events:

International Championships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition: "Any one of the Asian Championships, World Championships, Commonwealth fencing Championships, Asian Games, or any other event the HPC nominates as an International Championship"
HPC Designated Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition: means an event that is designated by the High Performance Commission for participation in by National Squad Members See: Integrated Calendar; National Squad Weapons Calendar; National Selection Dates Calendar;

International (Non-Designated Events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition: An FIE World Cup or Grand Prix (FIE A Grade) that has not been nominated by the HPC as an HPC Designated Event or nominated by the HPC as an International Championship and is usually an FIE Grand Prix or similar. An International Event (Non-Designated) can also be known as International Event (non-HPC Designated) and the terms are interchangeable
International Event (Other)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition: Any International Event that is an FIE Satellite Event (FIE B Grade) determined by AFF, or any other International Event, to be outside the scope of other definitions and includes events

10. Selection Process for International Events

You are automatically considered for these events as a National Squad member:

- International Championships,
- HPC Designated Events and
- International Event (Non-Designated),

If you are selected for one of these events, you will receive an email from AFF that sets out instructions on how to accept your selection.

What happens if I don't receive a selection email at the selection date?

If you do not receive a selection email or text message at the selection date, first check your email junk folder. Secondly, reach out to admin.hpc@fencing.org.au as soon as possible to let the HPC know that you did not receive a selection email. It is important that you are keeping on top of competitions you are expecting to be selected for and communicate this with the HPC so technical issues can be resolved.

In most cases, selection emails are not sent because an athlete has not uploaded their documentation like a **passport to OnePoint** or they have an **outstanding debt with the AFF**.

What happens after I have accepted selection?

After you have accepted selection, the HPC will notify the team selected for the competition and request any information required for entries or tour arrangements. Athletes that have not been selected will be identified as reserves for the competition. It is important that you accept selection as a reserve so if an athlete withdraws you can be moved into the group of selected athletes.

11. Selection Timing and Selection Date Calendar

Selections for **International Championships** are made at specific times determined by the High Performance Commission and published on the AFF website ([here](#)).

HPC Designated Events will be selected at least 2 months prior to the event, or as otherwise notified by the HPC and published on the AFF Website. Allowances for missing the selection date are only made when a technical issue has occurred with a fencer receiving the selection email or text messages.

If you have missed selection for a Senior World Cup which is (a) not part of a tour, and where (b) Australia does not have all entries completed you may email admin.hpc@fencing.org.au to register.

International Events (Non-Designated) will be selected at least 35 days prior to the event, potentially longer, and published on the AFF Website.

International Events (Other) will be selected at least 35 days prior to the event, potentially longer, and published on the AFF Website.

Please see the **Selection Date Calendar** ([here](#)) that outlines the selection dates for all events slated for selection in 2024/25 selection.

12. Preparing for International Events

a. FIE/ECF Licenses

If you have the intention to fence at an FIE International Event in 2024/25 please apply for an FIE license ([here](#)). You will need the requisite passport scan, and other documents on the portal in order to apply.

If you are a cadet and intend to fence in European Cadet Circuit, you will need an ECF License. Please apply ([here](#)).

We cannot enter you to compete in these events without the relevant license so please complete these as soon as possible.

b. Withdrawals from events

The HPC assumes that if an athlete has accepted selection for a competition that they will be attending the competition. Where an athlete needs to withdraw from an event due to a change in circumstance they may do so, however, for most international events there is a cut off imposed by organisers. If an athlete withdraws after the cut off, they need to provide a medical certificate for withdrawal, otherwise they will be liable to pay a financial penalty imposed by the FIE.

13. National Squad Tours

a. Designated tours

Tours are a series of competitions designated as a tour by the HPC. Tours are designed to give a wider group of National Squad athletes experience of travelling as a team whole competing and training internationally.

The key tours for the 2024/25 season are designed to fit into the School and University holidays over January to March to give the largest possible chance of athletes attending.

Tour coaches and managers

The HPC allocates National Assistant Coaches to tours based on a number of considerations, including the number of minors attending a tour, their availability and the proportion of their students attending the tour.

The following tour numbers are considered for allocating tour coaches and tour managers:

- Over 5 attendees in one weapon – tour coach appointed.
- Over 10 attendees in one weapon – 2 tour coaches appointed.
- Over 10 attendees overall – tour manager appointed.
- Large proportion of attendees being minors – tour manager appointed.

Coaches with students on the tour and parents with children on the tour will not be appointed as tour managers.

How we organise tour training

We organise tour training through our contacts overseas, whether through the HPC or through the contacts our National Coaching team have. All tour training must be organised and confirmed by the HPC, particularly where training is taking place with other National Federations.

Tour Communications

The HPC will communicate any tour updates via the admin.hpc@fencing.org.au email. It is your responsibility as an athlete to respond promptly to tour communications – this is important as the HPC requires information to assist with booking accommodation and travel arrangements for tours.

Prior to the tour starting a WhatsApp group will be set up with athletes (over 18), parents, coaches and tour manager (if applicable) to manage day to day communications on the tour.

b. Applying for personal coaches for tours

Athletes may apply to have personal coaches accompany them on a tour, where tour coaches have been appointed by the AFF.

Athletes are responsible for the costs of their personal coach attending the competition/tour and will still be liable for tour costs including tour coaching and, where applicable tour management levies.

Personal coaches must follow the [International Representation and Tour Rules](#) when coaching in a tour.

c. Withdrawals from tours

Where an athlete withdraws from a tour they will be refunded their deposit, minus a \$160 administration fee.

14. International Competition Support Program (ICSP)

ICSP funding is available to the categorised (NSO and AIS) athletes competing at international events designated as ICSP events. ICSP Funding Allocations are provided to the top two AFF Ranked Categorised athletes for these events. Where there is not a full quota taken up ie there is not 2 categorised athletes competing in that event, the funding is allocated as follows:

- Same event - same weapon/gender - next in line by categorised athlete ranking; e.g. if Men's Epee allocation, then next highest ranked categorised athlete in Men's Epee

- Same event - next in line in any weapon/gender - highest categorised athlete; e.g. if no categorised athlete is left in specific weapon, i.e. mens epee, then to next highest ranked categorised athlete in any weapon/gender (only applicable at Championships)
- Same event - equally across each participant who is receiving funding for that event (irrespective of weapon/gender). Only applicable for International Championships.

Excess funding

Where there is excess funding in an event, then the balance of the funding should normally go to any athlete attending even if only one, or the HPC reserves the right to reallocate those funds rather than automatically paying them to the single athlete attending (i.e. double payment to that athlete).

Unused Amounts

Where there is money unused in a particular event, this needs to be placed back into a poule to be re-allocated to other events. The HPC will need to determine how to allocate unused amounts in line with the grant.

15. Strength & Conditioning (S&C) Program

1-1 S&C

1 to 1 sessions are mostly held remotely with our S&C coaches per your periodised program, and these are accessed through the Team Builder app.

In person sessions

1 to 1 Sessions are held every Monday, Thursday and most Saturdays (when not affected by competition or camps) in Melbourne, and by scheduled dates in Sydney. Our S&C coach also attends our camps at the AIS to conduct group sessions with the National Squad.

16. Mindset Program

1-1 Mindset sessions

Funded 1 to 1 sessions are available to the top two ranked categorised athletes per weapon per gender, and where this is not taken up by an athlete, the next highest ranked categorised athlete. These sessions are held remotely, and it is the athlete's responsibility to arrange these sessions.

Athletes can contact the HPC to arrange for paid sessions with our Mindset coach or for a list of recommended Mindset coaches available to support them in their Mindset work.

In person sessions

We work with our Mindset coach who is located in Europe to attend competitions in person where our athletes are competing. This is usually arranged during designated tours in Europe. Access during these competitions will be communicated to athletes in advance of the tour.

Group sessions

Group mindset sessions are available to all HPP athletes and will be conducted during the AIS camps either remotely or in person.

17. Nutrition Program

1-1 sessions

Athletes can contact the HPC to arrange for paid sessions with our Nutrition coach or for a list of recommended Nutrition coaches available to support them.

Group sessions

Group nutrition sessions are available to all HPP athletes and will be conducted during the AIS camps either remotely or in person.

18. National Squad Camps

Camps for all of the National Squad are held twice a year, at the beginning of the season and prior to Junior and Cadet World Championships and Asian Championships. These camps are for all weapons and are located at the AIS.

Camps for Adult only (Senior, Junior and Cadet) are held in December prior to the January/February tours and in June prior to Senior World Championships. These camps are held per weapon and located at the National Training Centres in NSW, VIC and QLD.

For athletes under 18 parents should accompany their children to the camps.

19. Refereeing Accreditation

All members of the National Squad are **strongly encouraged** to develop the skills necessary and apply for a National referee accreditation.

We have a strong focus on the development of refereeing skill sets for fencers. In particular, the **understanding of priority** for the priority weapon National Squad Members. This is fundamental to a fencer's ability to compete and understand the perspective of the referee in seeing priority. Part of this is understanding the continuously evolving convention.

Obtaining your Accreditation

If you are not currently accredited at National level, please consult with your State Referee Director as to your readiness for National Accreditation and notify the AFF of your desire to be accredited.

We encourage the accreditation assessment to occur at AFC and AYC tournaments. You can register your interest to be assessed at any of these events. This can even occur on the day you are fencing but must occur one round later than your elimination, or in another event on the same day, and at the discretion of the Head Referee for that tournament. You will need to register your interest in advance when the AFF Operations Manager calls for Expressions of Interest.

20. Sponsorship and Assistance with Funding

The AFF and the HPC may enter into sponsorship arrangements with various entities. As a National Squad Member, you will be bound by that sponsorship and any requirements.

If you wish to explore any individual sponsorship you must first let us know who you wish to engage to ensure compatibility with the AFF's sponsorship aims.

In most instances, we will be able to support your efforts to gain further support, whether this is through sponsorship or grant funds. Indeed, the HPC is actively working with athletes, and on behalf of athletes, all the time to gain access to additional funding for athlete development. If you wish to discuss any aspect of funding, please free to contact us.

21. Personal Photo

Please ensure that your AFF Portal has a headshot photo of the following proportions:

File type: jpeg

Aspect: 355px x 469px (portrait) (minimum size)

Size: Long edge 469px

If you do not have a photo in the AFF Portal then none will be able to be uploaded to the website as a National Squad Member.

22. Financial Payments

All National Squad fees are to be paid by Direct Debit, and the details to be provided for the Direct Debit are contained in your Athlete Agreement.

If you would like to pay your National Squad fees up front instead of by Direct Debit you are eligible for an 8% discount on your fees – please reach out to financeofficer@fencing.org.au to arrange an upfront payment.

If you have an outstanding debt >30 days owed to the AFF, a financial block will be placed on your profile and you will be unable to register for domestic and international competitions/tours.

Financial Hardship

If you are experiencing financial hardship you may apply to the HPC for a payment plan to put in place. Acceptance of a payment plan is in the HPC's sole discretion and factors such as previous outstanding debts and size of debt will be taken into consideration. If you wish to apply for a payment plan due to financial hardship please email admin.hpc@fencing.org.au with supporting documentation.

23. Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) Education

The AFF has recently implemented SIA's suite of National Integrity Framework (NIF) policies, and athletes on the National Squad are required to complete the online education courses listed below. <https://elearning.sportintegrity.gov.au/login/index.php>

Anti Doping Courses

- Anti-Doping Fundamentals
- Annual Update
- Whereabouts

Integrity Courses

- Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport Induction
- Competition Manipulation & Sports Gambling
- Introduction to Illicit Drugs in Sport