



**SOUTH AFRICAN RUGBY  
LEAGUE FEDERATION**

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**SARL: JUDICIARY**

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**SENTENCING GUIDELINES  
&  
PROCEDURES**

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*In this document the following abbreviations shall mean:*

1. SARL ( South African Rugby League)
2. RLIF (Rugby League International Federation)
3. RLEF (Rugby League European Federation.)
4. MRP (Match Review Panel)
5. CDC ( Championship Disciplinary Committee)
6. FIC (First instance Committee)
7. DAC ( Disciplinary Appeal Committee)
8. HAC ( Higher Appeal Committee)
9. CJ (Chief Justice)

THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS, ESTABLISHED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE *South African RUGBY LEAGUE FEDERATION (SARL)* SHALL APPLY TO ANY AND ALL CONTENTIOUS ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SPORT OF RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL AND ITS ORGANISATION.

## **1 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND BODIES**

### **1.1 COMMON PROVISIONS**

#### **1.1.1 Delegation of Powers**

The SARL: Judicial Branch (and all its organs) shall receive from the: SARL Board the authority to rule, opine and decide on matters arising out of, or in connection with, the conduct of competitions and their outcome. They shall provide the final homologation of matches played, undertake the investigations in relation to reprehensible infringements that are committed during a match, and subsequently investigate any issue relating to the failure to abide by permanent rules and procedures established by the SARL, as well as the common rules of ethics in sports, inclusive of the rules as established by the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF) and/or the Rugby League European Federation (RLEF) which have been ratified and adopted by the SARL.

#### **1.1.2 Nature and Number of Organs**

There shall be one (1) investigative organ named as a "SARL DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE", two (2) first-instance organs named "Committees", as well as two (2) appeals organs named "Commissions", that will have the disciplinary authority to sanction persons and entities affiliated to the, SARL as well as connected persons or entities with the latter. Each organ shall be composed of three (3) members selected from persons having an established legal knowledge, knowledge of the game, and with sound ethics. The organs shall be composed of a majority of members who are independent from the executive authorities of the SARL. Member of the SARL Board or SARL Executive Board (e.g. the President of the SARL or the Chief Executive Officer) cannot be a member of any disciplinary organ. No person may be a member in more than one organ, with the exception of the SARL Disciplinary manager who maintains leadership oversight of all organs as an independent and non-voting observer

The term of the mandate of the organs shall originally be set to four (4) years. The members of the judiciary organs shall be determined by a resolution of the SARL Board upon the suggestion of the SARL Disciplinary Manager. In the event that a member of one organ is impeached or unable to preside their duties, the SARL Disciplinary Manager shall assume the role *ex officio*, and continue as such until the Board SARL resolves the appointment of a new member in case the impeachment is permanent, or until such time that the member is able to resume their functions in case the impeachment is for a temporary period. If a member is permanently impeached from performing their duties, a new member is designated by a resolution of the SARL Board under the same conditions of the remaining members and for the remaining term of the organ.

##### **1.1.2.1 Investigative Organ: Match Review Panel**

The initial investigation and decision on whether a player should be charged with a misconduct is made by the Match Review Panel ("MRP"), as detailed below in Article 2.1.

##### **1.1.2.2 First-Instance Organs: Championships Disciplinary Committee &- First Instance Committee**

The Championships Disciplinary Committee ("CDC") has the authority to approve and homologate the results of the SARL Championships and to resolve on all disciplinary issues related thereof. In particular, it has authority to investigate and rule on matters pertaining to assaults on the Match Officials (whether verbal, physical or moral), as well as investigating a player's sanctions as the case may be; all in accordance with the sentencing guidelines laid out in Article 5, below.

The First Instance Committee (“FIC”) is competent to resolve on all off-field matters related to players actions and/or behaviours that transpire outside of the Playing Area, as well as matters affecting the breaches by the clubs and/or teams related to their duties in a given championship within which they are registered. It may sanction a player or club/team to be: (i) excluded from a championship and/or fixture, (ii) demoted to a lower division, (iii) suspension, and/or (iv) deduct championship points.

Decisions rendered by First-Instance Organs are appealable in accordance with the provisions of these rules.

### 1.1.2.3 Appeals Organs: Disciplinary Appeals Commission & Higher Appeals Commission

The Disciplinary Appeals Commission (“DAC”) receives the appeals in relation to sentences rendered by the Championships Disciplinary Committee.

The Higher Appeals Commission (“HAC”) receives the appeals in connection with the breaches to the game and to the rules of the SARL, as in relation to sentences rendered by the First Instance Committee.

The appeals organs may be asked to resolve on matters that have been fully investigated, or on matters that are still subject to investigation.

## 2 ON-FIELD COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

### 2.1 MATCH REVIEW PANEL

#### 2.1.1 *Composition and Process*

The decision on whether a player should be charged with misconduct is made by the Match Review Panel (the “MRP”).

The MRP is made up of the SARL Chief Justice ( here in after reverred to AS CJ) (who chairs the MRP as an observer) and three members drawn from people with appropriate knowledge and expertise (such as former players, referees and coaches). The CJ shall request all supportive documents (*i.e.* team rosters, score sheets and match film) from the SARL Executives, who shall provide this without delay.

In relation to each fixture of the SARL] or CRL [Collegiate Rugby League] or SRL [Schools Rugby League] (or 9s SARL Tournament matches involving clubs/teams), every incident placed “On Report” by the MOD [Match Officials Department], and/or Red Card issued by the Referee, are reviewed in full by an independent member of the MRP to identify incidents which should be considered by the MRP. These incidents are then considered by the MRP within 48 hours following that fixture, and the MRP shall decide what action should be taken in relation to the relevant player(s).

If a Club/Team wishes to bring any on-field incidents of alleged misconduct to the attention of the MRP, they must notify the SARL CEO through an official written request no later than 24 hours from the recorded kick-off time of the fixture within which the incident took place. The SARL CEO will then forward the written request to the CJ without delay, who will in turn activate the MRP for their review and conclusions within 48 hours.

#### 2.1.2 *Options Available to the MRP*

In relation to each Player considered, the MRP has the following options:

- Charge the Player and refer the matter to the Championships Disciplinary Committee through notification to the CJ.
- Caution the Player – in which case, subject to the Player’s “right of appeal” to the Championship Disciplinary Committee, the Caution will be placed on the Player’s record.

- Decide there is no case to answer (in which case the MRP may still send the Player a warning/advice letter).
- Where a Player has been dismissed from the field of play, deem the Referee's decision to send the player from the field of play sufficient punishment and place this finding on the Player's record.
- Refer the matter to the SARL CJ for further investigation.

*All decisions of the Panel will be logged and published on the SARL website.*

### **2.1.3 Charge Letters**

If a Player is charged he will receive a detailed charge letter via his club/team. The charge letter will include:

- The Law of the Game the player is alleged to have breached
- The detail of the alleged Offence
- The Grade of the Offence (*see below*)
- The normal suspension range for that Grade & whether the SARL CJ will be advising the Championships Disciplinary Committee to step outside that range (*see below*)
- The evidence the SARL CJ will be relying on
- Whether the Player has the opportunity to enter an Early Guilty Plea
- The date of the hearing
- A summary of the Player's rights at that hearing

### **2.1.4 Cautions**

If a Player is cautioned he will receive a caution letter via his Club, which will include:

- The Law of the Game the MRP consider the Player has breached
- The detail of the alleged Offence
- The evidence the MRP has based its decision on
- Details on how a Player may appeal the MRP's decision to the Championships Disciplinary Committee (including the 7 day deadline for doing so)

### **2.1.5 Early Guilty Plea**

A Player who has:

- been charged with an Offence of Grade A-C; *and*
- who has not been found guilty of any other charge of misconduct before the First-Instance Organs, or by submitting a previous Early Guilty Plea, in the 12 months preceding the date of the Match in which the alleged Offence took place; *and*
- who has not been permanently sent from the field in a Match in the 12 months preceding the date of the Match (unless subsequently found not guilty of such an offence), ...

... may elect to make an Early Guilty Plea by informing the SARL Executive Board of his intention to do so before 11:00 am on the day of any scheduled hearing. This will result in the lower end of the suspension range for the Grade of Offence set out in the Charge Letter being imposed. (*e.g.* for a Grade B offence a one match suspension will be imposed.)

A player making such an Early Guilty Plea will not be subject to any fine but will forfeit the right to any hearing. For the avoidance of doubt, the right to make an Early Guilty Plea only applies to First-Instance Organs, and *not* to any Appeals Organs.

For the avoidance of doubt if a Player has previously used an Early Guilty Plea, the date from which the 12 month period starts will be the date on which the previous suspension started, and not the date on which he entered the Early Guilty Plea.

## **2.2 HEARING AT THE CHAMPIONSHIPS DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

### **2.2.1 *Composition and Process***

Appointments for hearings at the Championships Disciplinary Committee (the “CDC”) will be made pursuant to notification of a case by the SARLCJ.

A secretary shall be nominated for the meeting, and the designated secretary could be taken from outside the CDC based upon the CJ’s suggestion. The secretary shall only record the minutes, and shall take oath to maintain the confidentiality of the minutes. The decisions of the CDC shall be taken by the majority of the members present, and in the event of a tie the CJ shall have a casting vote.

### **2.2.2 *Options Available to the CDC***

The CDC shall determine:

- Whether an Offence has been committed
- If so, the Grade (see below) of the Offence
- Where a Player has been found guilty of an Offence, the appropriate sanction (in accordance with the Sentencing Guidelines)

If the SARL CDC does not consider that it can reach a decision on the evidence before it, it may refer the incident to the Chief Justice for further investigation.

### **2.2.3 *Order of Proceedings:***

The CJ will determine the order of proceedings; however usually:

- The CJ will read the charge to the CDC
- The Player or his representative will admit or deny the Offence (and the Grading of the Offence)
- The CJ will present the case for the Panel
- The Player or his representative will present the Player’s case
- If the Player denies the Offence the CDC will consider whether the Offence was committed and the Grade of any such Offence (the Player will retire while this decision is made) and only if the CDC finds that the Player has committed an Offence will it then go on to consider the appropriate sanction
- If the Player admits the Offence or if the CDC decides that an Offence was committed then both the CJ and the Player will have the opportunity to make submissions to the CDC in relation to the appropriate Sanction. The CDC will then determine the appropriate sanction in accordance with the Sentencing Guidelines
- There will be the usual use of video graphic, photographic and written reports, to assist proceedings.

### **2.2.4 *Nature of Hearings:***

The hearings at any level before any organ are private. However, the SARL Chief Justice may *ex officio*, or pursuant to the request of one of the parties in the proceedings, allow access of the public to the room for all

or part of the session, and such for the best interests of public policy when items pertaining to the respect of privacy are at stake.

#### **2.2.5 Secrecy of Deliberations:**

Members of any First---Instance Organ are strictly prohibited to participate in deliberations of such organ in matters where they can justify and direct or indirect relationship of any nature whatsoever to the matter at hand. In the course of the same case, a member in the Appeal Organ cannot take part in the deliberations if he has previously taken part in the deliberation of the matter in the First---Instance Organ.

#### **2.2.6 Duty of Confidentiality:**

The members of the First---Instance Organs and the secretaries are bound by absolute confidentiality in relation to act, facts and information that might have come to their knowledge as a result of the exercise of their functions. Any breach to the confidentiality provision shall consequently result in the immediate termination of the functions.

### **2.3 ADJUDICATIONS**

The CDC's adjudications will:

- Be published in full
- Include all aggravating and/or mitigating factors taken into consideration
- Explain any deviation from the sentencing guidelines
- Give clear and full reasons for the decision

## **3 SPECIFIC PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE FIRST---INSTANCE COMMITTEE**

### **3.1 AUTHORITY TO INITIATE**

The disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by the SARL Chief Justice, or the SARL President, or by any person designated by the latter to this effect. A representative in charge of the investigation of disciplinary matters shall be designated from within the SARL to investigate matters and present the case to the relevant organ with the findings and recommendations.

### **3.2 PROCEDURE**

The person in charge of the investigation shall produce, within two months starting from the date where the case is duly referred, a report detailing the outcome of their investigation. The report shall be sent to the First---Instance Committee with copy to the SARL Chief Justice, only. The investigator may recommend the closing of the matter, or to take the matter before the committee. The investigator shall not have the capacity to close and investigation by themselves.

The club/team representatives and/or (as the case may be) the indicted person (or the legal guardians of minors) shall be called before the First---Instance Committee by the LRLF Chief Justice. The call shall be formulated in the form of a mail in which they mention the grievances, no less than seven (7) days prior to the date of the hearing. The call shall indicate the rights that the person has, by virtue of the present regulations.

The indicted may be represented by a qualified attorney, and one or more persons of their choice may also assist, providing that they inform the LRLF Chief Justice at least 24 hours prior to the hearing date. In case the indicted does not understand, or poorly understands the English language, they may ask to be assisted by

a person who would be capable of translating the proceedings. The indicted, or their retained counsel, may consult, before the hearing, the entirety of the file and the report made by the investigator.

The indicted may ask the organ to hear persons he designates as witnesses. He shall then be required to transmit a list of these persons to the SARL Chief Justice, no later than four (4) days prior to the hearing's date. The SARL Chief Justice shall have the discretionary authority to approve or reject the list in whole or in part, especially if such list appears to conceal an abuse of defense.

The delay of the call may be reduced to two (2) days in the event of urgency, and such upon the request of the SARL Chief Justice. In this case, the process of listening to witnesses shall be made without any delay. Exceptionally, the urgency delay may be further reduced in the case where the indicted is involved in the final phases of a Championship.

### **3.3 POSTPONEMENT**

In an emergency / exceptional case, as reference in Article 3.2 above, and safe for any case of force majeure, the adjournment of the case may not be requested. In all other cases, and safe for events of force majeure, the adjournment of the proceedings may be asked only one time, no later than 48 hours before the date of the hearing, and the hearing can be adjourned for no later than twenty (20) days.

### **3.4 PROCEDURE WHEN CASE IS EXEMPTED FROM INVESTIGATION**

When, in the application of Article 3.2, the matter is exempted from investigation, the SARL Chief Justice shall start with exposing orally the facts and stating the proceedings. In all other cases, the Chief Justice or the person in charge of the investigation shall start with the presentation of the report orally.

The SARL Chief Justice shall then ask any person who may have relevant information to present their information. The defendant (or their representative) will be the last person to speak.

### **3.5 DELIBERATION**

The First---Instance Committee shall then start its deliberations; which shall always be done in private quarters. The defendant or their representation, or the investigating person, cannot attend these deliberations. At the end of the deliberations, the First---Instance Committee shall reach a verdict, which will be rendered in writing, and executed by the SARL Chief Justice and the secretary. The decision shall be notified to the SARL Executive Board and the defendant immediately, by the organ's secretary (or by the SARL Chief Justice, in case no secretary was appointed). The award shall also mention the conditions of the appeal and shall mention if it has been unanimously rendered, or by a vote of majority, and in the latter case it should also mention the reasons for the minority to oppose the award.

### **3.6 DURATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

The First---Instance Committee must reach an award by no later than three (3) months starting from the date when the proceedings first commenced. If the hearing has been adjourned pursuant to the provisions of Article 3.4, the term shall extend accordingly.

In case the First---Instance Committee fails to reach an award within the ascribed time frame, it shall cease to look into the matter, and the matter shall be transmitted to the Higher Appeals Court.

## **4 APPEALS ORGANS**

### **4.1 APPEALS AUTHORITY**

The Appeals Organs are defined as:

- Disciplinary Appeals Commission: to receive, adjudicate and resolve the appeals in relation to sentences rendered by the Championship Disciplinary Committee (CDC).
- Higher Appeals Commission: to receive, adjudicate and resolve the appeals in connection with the breaches to the game, to the rules of the SARL, and those sentences rendered by the First-Instance Committee.

The Appeals Organs may be asked to resolve on matters that have been fully investigated, or on matters that are still subject to investigation. The same rules of proceedings mentioned for each form of First-Instance Committee shall apply for the appeals, except that the Appeals Organs shall not be bound by the time frame to reach decisions.

#### **4.2 PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO APPEALS AUTHORITY**

The award rendered by the First-Instance Organs may be subject to an appeal to be lodged by either:

- the person sanctioned by the award
- the Chairman of the Club(s) / Team(s) concerned by the matter
- the SARL Chief Justice
- the SARL President .

The delay of the appeal is fifteen (15) days, starting from the next day of the date of the award. The appeal is subject to the payment of a non-refundable fee of R 1 000.00

Unless otherwise decided by the appeals organ, the appeal shall serve to suspend the effect of the First-Instance Organ's award.

Upon the receipt of a request for appeal, the organ shall proceed with the notification of all the other parties involved in the First-Instance proceedings. The notification shall contain the reference to the delay within which the notified persons will have to submit their observations to the appeals body.

The appeals organs look into the matter as a last and final resort. It bases its decision on the grounds of the file of the First-Instance Organ, and any new facts that may be brought to it by the parties, and it shall apply the principle of listening to both parties.

The SARL Chief Justice shall designate a deciding member who will establish to the Appeals Organ a report detailing the facts and drawing the conduct of the proceedings. This report shall be orally exposed during the appeals hearings.

#### **4.3 DELAY AND CONSEQUENCE OF SUSPENSION OF THE AWARD**

The Appeals Organs must reach its decision within a time frame of six (6) months from the start of the proceedings. In case of failure by the latter to reach a decision, the SARL Chief Justice will inform the SARL Board to allow for an extension of time. In case the SARL Board resolves not to extend the time, the matter shall be reviewed and resolved by the SARL Board.

In cases where the appeals has suspended the enforcement of the decision of the First-Instance Organs, and it resulted that the defendant's appeal was unfounded, the Appeals Organ shall be compelled to apply a more severe sanction; representing double the initial penalty decided by the First-Instance Organ.

#### **4.4 PUBLICATION OF THE AWARD**

The appeals award shall be published and rendered public. It shall be final and binding, and cannot be subject to any form of contestation.

## 5 SENTENCING GUIDELINES

### 5.1 UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- Rugby League is a hard, fast, contact sport played at professional level by athletic players.
- In a sport with high speed collisions there will always be injuries and players take part with this knowledge.
- Disciplinary system is not intended to sanitise the sport.
- However there is no place in the game for players who jeopardise the safety of others by intentional, dangerous or malicious acts.
- The disciplinary system must support and protect match officials

### 5.2 LEGAL SYSTEM

- All sentencing should be carried out on the basic tenets of South African Law.
- Everything should be taken into account.
- Each case must be judged on its merits.
- Committees will apply judgement & discretion.
- In determining the appropriate sanction the Committees will take into account all relevant aggravating and mitigating factors (*see below*).

### 5.3 AGGRAVATING FACTORS

- **Previous Record**
- **Violence**
- **Retaliation**
- **Injury Caused**
- **Incident Not Part of Play**
- **Other Aggravating Factors**

#### 5.3.1 *Previous Record*

- Player has record of the same or a similar offence in the past --- should result in a higher penalty than would otherwise be the case.
- Player has a disciplinary record for dissimilar offences – not necessarily taken into account unless the player’s record is such that it shows a general disregard for the safety and welfare of other players.
- Players who regularly commit acts of foul play – should receive ever-increasing suspensions that may lead to a period suspension. (*i.e.* a player with a serious record may receive a substantially longer suspension than a player with no record for an offence of the same nature.)

#### 5.3.2 *Violence*

- No place for acts of intentional violence or thuggery.
- Includes head butting, vicious attacks with fists, intentional high tackles, kicking a prone opponent, an assault on an opponent from behind, gouging.
- Unprovoked violent assaults punished severely & period suspensions considered.

**5.3.3 Retaliation**

- When retaliation is calculated and intentional it is an aggravating factor.

**5.3.4 Injury**

- If the Misconduct has caused injury to an opponent, this may result in a higher penalty than if no injury had occurred.
- Organs may consider the length of time an injured opponent is likely to be out of the game when passing sentence.

**5.3.5 Incident Not Part of Play**

- Where an incident is not part of play (*i.e.* off the ball or in back play) then this may be an aggravating factor.

**5.3.6 Other Aggravating Factors**

- The Organs shall be entitled to take into account other aggravating factors as they reasonably think appropriate in the circumstances of an individual case.

**5.4 MITIGATING FACTORS**

- Previous Good Record**
- Provocation**
- Technique or Fitness** (*in some cases*)
- Genuine Remorse**
- Other Mitigating Factors**

[**NB:** THE FACT THAT NO INJURY WAS CAUSED IS NOT USUALLY A MITIGATING FACTOR]

**5.4.1 Previous Record**

- Where a player has a good previous record this may be treated as a mitigating factor.
- Must have been playing the game at semi-professional level (*i.e.* CRL or LRL or higher) for long enough to have established a good record. (*e.g.* at least three years)
- Where a player has a previous record but has not committed a similar offence for a period of at least five years his previous record may be discounted.

**5.4.2 Provocation**

- An immediate reactionary retaliation to foul play by an opponent may be a mitigating plea as it may be seen as self-defence.

**5.4.3 Technique or Fitness**

- Rarely a valid defence at the LRL or CRL (Division 1) level.

- A player who does not have the appropriate technique or fitness levels may be a danger to other players.
- At CRL (Division 2) and/or SRL level some consideration may be given to these factors when accompanied by genuine remorse and intention to resolve the problem.

#### 5.4.4 *Genuine Remorse*

- Genuine remorse for the Offence and formal apologies to his opponent may be mitigating pleas.

#### 5.4.5 *Other Mitigating Factors*

- The Organs shall be entitled to take into account other mitigating factors as they reasonably think appropriate in the circumstances of an individual case.

### 5.5 LAWS OF THE GAME

#### **The Laws of the Game On-Field Misconduct offences are:**

- 15.1(a) Trips, kicks or strikes another player
- 15.1(b) When tackling or attempting to tackle makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent
- 15.1(c) Drops knees first on an opponent on the ground
- 15.1(d) Uses a dangerous throw
- 15.1(e) Intentionally & continuously breaks the Laws of the Game
- 15.1(f) Uses offensive or obscene language
- 15.1(g) Disputes a decision of the Referee or Touch Judges
- 15.1(h) Re-enters the field of play without the permission of the referee or touch judge
- 15.1(i) Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game
- 15.1(j) Intentional obstruction of an opponent not in possession

Breaches of the Operational Rules, which take place on-field, are not included in these Sentencing Guidelines.

### 5.6 GRADING & DESCRIPTION OF OFFENCES

All offences are graded in six grades A – F where Grade A is the lowest level of offence and Grade F the most serious.

The commonest offences are listed in the sentencing guidelines with a description to assist all those concerned in referring to incidents in a standardised manner. It is accepted that there will be incidents not covered by the guideline descriptions and each sub section of the laws includes Other Offences which can be graded from A to F.

5.7 SENTENCING GUIDELINES

Law No	Charge	Grade	Guideline Description	
5.7 (a)	<b>Trips, kicks or strikes another player</b>			
	Trips	A-B	Reaction trip	
		A-D	Intentional trip	
	Kicks	B-D	Kicks opponent – light contact	
		E-F	Kicks opponent --- makes full contact in aggressive violent manner	
		B-D	Intentionally stands on	
		D-E	Trampling	
		E-F	Stamping	
		Strikes	A-D	Strikes with hand, arm or shoulder – reckless
	D-E		Strikes with hand, arm or shoulder – intentional	
	B-C		Strikes with elbow/forearm – dropping on player	
	B-C		Strikes with elbow/forearm – ball carrier – reckless	
	C-F		Strikes with elbow/forearm – ball carrier – intentional	
	C-E		Strikes with elbow/forearm – tackling – reckless	
	D-F		Strikes with elbow/forearm – tackling – intentional	
	C-E		Strikes with elbow off ball reckless	
	E-F		Strikes with elbow off ball intentional	
	Strikes --- knee		A-C	Raising knee in tackle
			B-C	Strikes with knee – reckless
			D-E	Strikes with knee – intentional
		D-F	Strikes with knee violent & aggressive	
	Strikes --- head butting	A-B	Head Butting – makes light contact	
		C	Head butting – makes full contact	
		E-F	Head butting – makes full contact in aggressive violent manner	
	Strikes – punching	A-B	Reaction to opponent – lashing out	
		A-B	Punching – self defence	
		A-B	Punching – one on one – minor	
		C-D	Punching – sustained, repeated or violent	
		E	Punching – sustained, repeated, violent & aggressive	
		C-D	Running in & punching	
	Other Striking offences	E-F	Running in & punching – opponent off guard	
		A-F		
	5.7 (b)	<b>When tackling or attempting to tackle makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent</b>		
Careless		A-B	Careless – flat hand off balance	
		A-B	Careless --- Ball carrier dips	
		A-B	Careless --- Stepped and reaching	
		A-B	Careless – initial contact with ball or chest	
		A-B	Careless – second tackler in – wrapping tackle up	
		Reckless	B-C	Reckless – tackler in control
B-C			Reckless – tried to tackle but reckless about outcome	
Intentional			D-F	Intentional – clenched fist – intent to make contact with head
		D-F	Intentional – stiff arm tackle – no attempt to tackle legitimately – violent	
Other Tackling offences		A-F		

<b>5.7 (c)</b>	<b>Drops knees first on an opponent on the ground</b>		
	Drops knees first	A-F	
<b>5.7 (d)</b>	<b>Uses a dangerous throw</b>		
	Dangerous throw	B-C	Other tackler's actions were part of the problem (only applies where Player is not aware of other tackler's actions)
		B-C	Ball carrier's actions were part of problem
		B-D	Lifting & dropping player
		D-E	Throwing player into ground
	Spear tackle	E-F	Driving player into ground on head or neck
	Other Dangerous Throw	A-F	
<b>5.7 (e)</b>	<b>Intentionally &amp; continuously breaks the Laws of the Game</b>		
		A-F	
<b>5.7 (f)</b>	<b>Uses offensive or obscene language</b>		
		A-B	Foul language
		B-C	Foul & abusive language
		B-C	Foul or abusive language towards a Match Official
		D	Foul and abusive language towards a Match Official
		B-F	Questioning the integrity of a Match Official
		E-F	Verbal abuse based on race, colour, religion, gender, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin
	Other offensive or obscene language	A-F	
<b>5.7 (g)</b>	<b>Disputes a decision of the Referee or Touch Judges</b>		
		A-B	Disputes decision
		C-F	Disputes using aggressive language or body language
		C-F	Disputes using aggressive language & body language
	Other disputes decision	A-F	
<b>5.7 (h)</b>	<b>Re-enters the field of play without the permission of the referee or touch judge</b>		
		B-C	
<b>5.7 (i)</b>	<b>Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game (includes Dangerous Contact)</b>		
		E-F	Gouging
		E-F	Biting
		E-F	Spitting
		F	Testicles – attacking
		D-F	Raking with studs
		F	Threatening words or actions towards match officials
		A-E	Deliberate physical contact with a match official (e.g. placing hand on arm to attract attention)
		F	Physical assault of a match official (e.g. pushing / shoving)
		F (Top end)	Violent and aggressive physical assault of match officials (e.g. punching)
		A-F	Other contrary behaviour
		A-D	Defending player, in or after effecting a tackle, uses any part of his body forcefully to bend or apply unnecessary pressure to the head and/or neck and/or spinal column of the tackled player so as to keep the tackled player at a disadvantage in or after the tackle.
		A-D	Defending player, in or after effecting a tackle, forcefully and unnecessarily grasps (or jerks, or pins or twists) the head or neck of the tackled player.
		A-D	A defending player, in effecting a tackle, forcefully makes contact with the supporting leg or legs of an attacking player who has been held in the tackle and who is deemed to be in a vulnerable position, in a way that involves an unacceptable risk of injury to that player.

		A-D	Defender uses any part of his body forcefully to twist, bend or otherwise apply pressure to the limb or limbs of an opposing player in a way that involves an unacceptable risk of injury to that player.
		A-D	Defender attempting to charge down a kick from an attacking player makes contact with the leg or legs of an attacking player who has kicked the ball, in a way that involves an unacceptable risk of injury to that player.
Save where otherwise prescribed in the Laws of the Game attempted foul play will be dealt with under 15.1(i).			
5.7 (j)	<b>Intentional obstruction of an opponent not in possession</b>		
		A-F	

**5.8 SENTENCING GUIDELINES FOR EACH GRADE OF OFFENCE**

GRADE	NORMAL SUSPENSION RANGE (Season Length ≤ 15 Games)
A	NFA – 1
B	1 – 2
C	2 – 3
D	3 – 5
E	4 – 8
F	8+ or period suspension

**5.9 NORMAL SUSPENSION RANGES – GUIDELINES ONLY**

Players and Clubs/Teams should be aware that the normal suspension ranges are guidelines only and the Judicial Organs have the discretion to step outside of the normal ranges in the following three circumstances:

- If the SARL Chief Justice has advised the Player that, in the light of specified aggravating factors, he is going to seek a higher sanction and the First---Instance Organ agree that such factors mean a higher sanction should be imposed;
- If the Organ has previously advised the Player that it will apply a higher sanction next time that Player is found to have committed a misconduct Offence; or
- If the Organ feels that in the light of the aggravating and mitigating factors present it is appropriate to step outside of the normal suspension range (irrespective of whether this has been requested by the Compliance Manager).

**5.10 FINES – GUIDELINES ONLY**

The First---Instance Organs may continue to impose fines on players found guilty at hearings.

## 5.11 DEFINITIONS

### 5.11.1 *Zero Tolerance*

- Defined in the Operational Rules as the SARL policy of not tolerating racist or other “unacceptable behaviour” of any type and imposing severe penalties with no exceptions.
- Policy to be applied to player found guilty of racist behaviour on the field of play.
- Severe penalties to be applied.

### 5.11.2 *Definitions of Intentionally (Deliberately), Recklessness and Carelessness*

#### **Intentionally (Deliberately):**

A person acts intentionally with respect to a result (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) when: (i) it is his purpose to cause it; or (ii) although it is not his purpose to cause that result, he is aware (or should be aware) that it would occur or almost certainly occur in the ordinary course of events if he were to succeed in his purpose of causing some other result (for example stopping a player).

A person who intends to harm a person and harms another person instead shall be deemed to have intended to harm the other person.

An intention need not necessarily be planned before or during a match; an intention may be formed on the spur of the moment, just before (or even during) the contact or other event (for example during a tackle).

#### **Recklessness:**

- a) something is caused recklessly if the person causing the result (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk that acting or failing to act in a particular manner will bring about that result but nonetheless acts or fails to act in that manner where a reasonable person would not do so;
- b) a person acts recklessly with respect to a circumstance or as to a possible result of an act, if the person is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk that the circumstances exist, or that the result will follow, but nonetheless acts where a reasonable person would not do so.
- c) a person acts recklessly if the person is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk of dangers or of possible harmful results (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) in so acting but nonetheless acts where a reasonable person would not do so.

In showing that a person has acted recklessly the SARL Chief Justice need not show that the person intended or wished for a particular result to occur.

A person may become aware or ought to have been aware of an obvious risk just before (or even during) the contact or other event (for example during a tackle).

#### **Carelessness:**

A person acts carelessly if his conduct falls below the standard expected of the ordinary reasonable player. The test is objective, based on the hypothetical player, and involves the person either doing something the reasonable player would not do, or not doing something that the reasonable player would do. It does not matter that the person was unaware that the result of his act/omission might happen, if the reasonable player would have realised the risk and taken steps to avoid it.

In showing that a person has acted carelessly, the SARL Chief Justice need not show that the person intended or acted recklessly in relation to the result.