



# NZC Warrant of Fitness

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# NZC Warrant of Fitness

## Overview

This document is the official Warrant of Fitness (WOF) for conditions required for International and Domestic cricket between New Zealand Cricket (NZC), New Zealand Cricket Players' Association and the facility provider – The WOF applies to:

- International men's and women's fixtures
- Plunket Shield
- Ford Trophy
- Super Smash men's and women's fixtures (special conditions may apply)
- Hallyburton Johnstone Shield

The NZC WOF is a set of minimum standards for International, Domestic cricket and selected cricket events governed by NZC and should be read in conjunction with the NZC Playing Conditions and domestic cricket Operations Manual.

In relation to Plunket Shield, Ford Trophy, Super Smash and Hallyburton Johnston Shield matches, the host Major Association shall be responsible for ensuring the compliance of the venue with this WOF.

## Venue Minimum Requirements

### Pitch

NZC's pitch and ground report provides six categories for the match referee in consultation with captains to assess the pitch: The ground authority will put in place all measures to assist the turf managers in preparation of the facilities. The criterion for assessment of playing surfaces is as follows.

VERY GOOD - Good carry, limited seam movement and consistent pace and bounce. Little or no turn initially but responsive to spin later in the game "acceptable levels of variable bounce (Plunket Shield only) where as: bounce gradually getting lower or more variable over the course of the match. Acceptable levels of variable bounce exclude deliveries that unpredictably rise sharply off a good length or keep unpredictably low. These conditions are relevant to areas on the pitch that are NOT affected by bowler or batsmen foot marks (variations from foot marks should be ignored in this assessment)." (Plunket Shield only)

GOOD - Above average carry, limited seam movement and consistent pace and bounce. Little or no turn initially but responsive to spin later in the game "acceptable levels of variable bounce (Plunket Shield only) where as: bounce gradually getting lower or more variable over the course of the match. Acceptable levels of variable bounce exclude deliveries that unpredictably rise sharply off a good length or keep unpredictably low. These conditions are relevant to areas on the pitch that are NOT affected by bowler or batsmen foot marks (variations from foot marks should be ignored in this assessment)." (Plunket Shield only)

Responsive to spin later in the game (Plunket Shield only). Not quite meeting the criteria for carry, pace and bounce expected from a "very good" pitch.

SATISFACTORY - Lacks good carry, and/or bounce and/or occasional seam movement. Some degree of turn but slow turn and average bounce for spinners. Falling significantly short of "very good" with

respect to pace, carry and bounce or if regarded as over batter friendly and unresponsive to bowlers the entire game

BELOW AVERAGE - Either very little pace, carry and/or bounce and/or more than occasional seam movement or more than occasional variable bounce or carry or if regarded as over batter friendly and unresponsive to bowlers the entire game. If a pitch demonstrates these features, then it cannot be rated in a higher category regardless of the amount of turn the pitch displayed at any stage of the match.

POOR - The pitch may be rated poor if it offered excessive seam movement or displayed excessive uneven bounce or it offered excessive assistance to spin bowlers.

Plunket Shield fixtures - the pitch may also be rated as poor if it is regarded as over batter friendly and unresponsive to bowlers for the entire game.

UNFIT - If the pitch was considered dangerous then it may be rated unfit.

A pitch rating of “below average” – “unfit”, will be considered “not up to Domestic cricket standard”.

#### **A “Good” Pitch is one that:**

##### Ford Trophy and Super Smash Pitches

Is consistent in pace and bounce over the duration of a match allowing equality of conditions for both teams. There should be little or no turn and little or no seam movement.

##### Plunket Shield Pitches

Provides good pace and bounce with limited seam movement and the pitch ideally wears gradually as the match progresses encouraging spin bowlers and some acceptable variable bounce later in the match to come into effect. Overall, the pitch should provide for an event contest between bat and ball on each day of the match.

#### **Pitch App**

Turf managers must load pitch preparation information/updates and match data into the NZC pitch app at the times instructed by NZC. Failure to do so will be deemed non-compliance with the NZC WOF and may incur sanctions

#### **Audit of Turf Condition**

The venue will be responsible for providing NZC with an annual independent audit tracking the condition of the turf. This will include:

##### **Outfield:**

- a) Outfield infiltration rates
- b) Surface levels
- c) Organic matter levels
- d) Turfgrass species composition
- e) Soil nutrient analysis

##### **Cricket Blocks**

- a) Turf grass quality
- b) Surface levels

- c) Organic matter levels measured in 25mm incremental section to 100mm
- d) Soil profile
- e) Turf disease

## Risk Analysis Dashboard

This report must be completed annually and submitted to NZC Head of Turf Management prior to the first week of September. Any variation to this date will require approval of NZC – failure to complete the turf condition audit in the specified timeline will mean the venue will be in Non-compliance of the NZC WOF.

## Outfield

- (a) Outfield should be smooth, and well grassed with stable footing allowing fielders to safely perform skills at pace. Grass cover that is conditioned to ensure the batman earns value for good cricket shots. All endeavours must be made to ensure the ball runs across the outfield in a fair manner in the spirit of cricket – slow outfields due to long grass or damp surfaces from excess water or alternately fast outfields due to drought like conditions are not acceptable.
- (b) Outfield must at all times have access to sufficient irrigation during periods of dry weather. Can be either pop up or static or travelling irrigators.
- (c) Outfields must have a drainage system capable of removing precipitation at a rate of > 50 mm per hour – On all International venues the surface shall be a minimum of a sand slit sand carpet construction with drainage capacity of > 50 mm per hr. This shall be quantified prior to the start of the season as part of the independent turf condition audit using standard infiltration tests
- (d) On soil based grounds used for Domestic cricket without a sand construction or slit / sand carpet system - a coring / vertical drain machine should be considered (in consultation with NZC Head of Turf Management) on the outfield a minimum of one week before match day to encourage movement of surface water from excessive precipitation away from surface into sub ground drainage.
- (e) It is recommended that a soil penetrant wetting agent program is implemented to ensure water penetration into soil sub surface. Application shall be recorded in the NZC Pitch app
- (f) Dew formation at certain times of the year that might impact the start of play or affect day/night cricket must be controlled using a registered chemical. This should be applied in consultation with NZC Head of Turf Management and should be applied to both the outfield as well as surrounding embankments. Application shall be recorded in the NZC Pitch app

## Boundary

- (a) NZC require a continuous definition of the playing area at all venues. Definition of the playing area may be determined by grass embankments, a fence (picket or similar), boundary signage or netting.
- (b) In order to comply with the above, where there is no grass embankment or permanent fence (picket or similar), a temporary feature must be put in place for the duration of the match. Any temporary feature must be approved by NZC no later than 2 days prior to a match commencing.
- (c) The height of all temporary features must be between 0.5 and 1.2 m.
- (d) It should be noted that any feature, whether permanent or temporary, is not intended to stop balls travelling in the air, as this is an unavoidable issue at venues.

- (e) Boundaries must be defined by a rope sitting a minimum of 2.74m inside any perimeter fence or signage.

## Boundary Size

The following shall apply in addition to Law 19.1:

- a) The playing area for Domestic cricket shall be:

	Men	Women
Maximum distance from the centre of the pitch	82 metres	65 metres
Minimum straight from the centre of the pitch	64 metres	55 metres
Minimum one side from the centre of the pitch	60 metres	55 metres
Minimum other side from the centre of the pitch	77 metres	55 metres

## Scoreboard

Permanent or moveable scoreboards are permitted. The following is the minimum amount of information required on the scoreboard:

- (a) Total runs
- (b) Wickets fallen
- (c) Overs bowled
- (d) Previous innings
- (e) Current batsmen and runs for each
- (f) Current bowlers with brief analysis
- (g) Overs left in the day (Plunket Shield) and DLS Par score (Ford Trophy and Super Smash)
- (h) Sufficient operators are required to keep up with rapid changes in score, particularly in the Ford Trophy and Super Smash matches. Changes must be made ball-by-ball.
- (i) The minimum size of lettering is determined by the fact that it can be read from the most distant playing surface point on the ground.

**NOTE:** As a guide for an LED screen minimum size – a screen should typically be no smaller than 12 square meters.

## Sightscreens

- a) There must be sightscreens at all matches.
- b) Sightscreens need to be able to be both black (Ford Trophy and Super Smash) and white (Plunket Shield) and must not be transparent.
- c) They must be positioned outside of the playing area, as per NZC's Playing Conditions.
- d) Sightscreens should extend in height to cover the release point of all bowlers and, if unable to be moved, be wide enough to cover the angled run up of all bowlers. Moveable sightscreens must have a minimum of two attendants to move them.
- e) For venues considering new permanent sightscreens, a structure approx. 5.5 – 6.0 m high by 12-15m wide is recommended. Sign off on any new sightscreens is required by NZC.

## Covers

- a) Covers must be used at all matches and must cover the whole block, bowlers' run-ups and practice areas. With regard to the actual pitch to be used for the respective match - covers

must be elevated above the lowest point of water runoff. Hessian (scrim) sheets (or any other NZC approved material) must be used to protect the pitch from sweating.

- b) As per NZC's Playing Conditions, covers must adequately protect the pitch and also the pitch surrounds, 5 metres either side of the pitch (or to the point of drainage) and any worn or soft areas on the outfield, and the bowlers run-ups to a distance of at least 10 x 10 metres (unless agreed by match umpires or NZC).
- c) ICC approved matting may be used during a match to protect any pitch being prepared for a future match or any pitch that has been re-sown for use later in the season. This must be properly secured and signed off by NZC Head of Turf Management and the match officials (match referee and umpires) 2 hours prior to the start of play – if it is agreed by the match officials that the security of the matting is deemed unsafe, the match officials can request the matting to be re-secured or removed.

## Signage

Each venue must be capable of displaying signage either on a fence or free standing. This signage must be unobstructed from view during the course of the match.

## Ground Staff

All grounds hosting International and Domestic cricket must have the following minimum resources either on site, or able to be hired in for the preparation/duration of the match:

- a) At international and Domestic cricket venues, a minimum of four staff shall be available at all times leading into and during preparation of the venue and during the match – the exact number for each ground to be determined on a case by case basis by NZC Head of Turf Management. Of these ground staff, a minimum of two staff must be qualified and/or experienced in preparing Domestic cricket pitches, the others may be contract staff or volunteers.

## Equipment

All International and Domestic venues should have the following minimum resources either on site, or able to be hired in for the preparation/duration of the match:

- a) An outfield mower equipped with catchers, which is capable of mowing the outfield two hours prior to the start of play.
- b) Rollers available to prepare the pitch and for rolling the pitch between innings or the morning of a match (noting that rolling during the match may only be undertaken by rollers weighing no more than 1.5 tonnes).
- c) A super-sopper which must be ride-on or tractor pulled.
- d) A wicket block mower with groomers and/or brush unit.
- e) A verticutter.
- f) A vacuum or brush unit.
- g) A line marker.
- h) Pitch marking equipment.
- i) Sawdust or zeolite.
- j) In ground or travelling irrigation.
- k) Hessian cloth and rope for moisture removal off the grass leaf.
- l) A spray unit capable of spraying outfield prior to or after match days.
- m) Aerification equipment e.g. vertidrain, phantom corer, spiker etc.
- n) Dry, screened wicket soil.

## Player and Spectator Safety

In order to ensure the safety of players and spectators there must be a minimum of 2.74 metres between the boundary rope and any perimeter fencing or signage. Any variation to this must be signed off and approved by NZC as part of the event management plan.

## Technical Support

### Clock

There must be an official ground clock at all matches that can be seen by players and umpires unless an electronic scoreboard is being used that displays a clock.

### PA System

A PA system must be in place for Super Smash. The PA system must provide for even distribution of sound around the ground and legible audio.

In relation to Ford Trophy and Plunket Shield, in the event there is no PA system an alternative must be available to ensure emergency announcements can be made to all parts of the ground.

## Practice Facilities

### Pre Match

Net facilities (with two pitches) for all matches must be available for both teams (when required):

- a) For a minimum of two days prior to each match, and on the morning of the match. There must be a pre-match throw-down area, a pre-match bowling area and a pre-match fielding area available on the field of play for both teams prior to each day of the match.

The net facilities must comply with the criterion for assessment of playing surfaces as described in the first section of this document ("Pitch").

### During the Match

- a) Net facilities (with a minimum of two pitches) for Plunket Shield, Ford Trophy, Super Smash and Hallyburton Johnstone Shield matches must be available off field (when required) for both teams during play.
- b) Netting must be provided for all throw-down areas used prior to each day's play during the match. This netting must be a minimum of 3m in height and 15m in length and one net is required to be made available to each team.
- c) Where possible, in consultation with the turf manager - bowlers should be able to bowl on the block (i.e. a used strip) prior to play.

## Player / Team Facilities

### Changing Rooms

There should be two changing rooms provided, one for each team which are large enough to comfortably accommodate a team of 15 persons including their gear.

The following should be provided in each individual changing room:

- a) One seat per player.



- b) Two clothes hooks per player.
- c) Hot and cold running water.
- d) Towels and soap.
- e) Non slip flooring.
- f) Fans or air-conditioning (where conditions require)

In addition:

- a) Each team should have access to: (i) at least two toilets and two showers that are not accessible to the public; and (ii) a fridge.
- b) Changing rooms (players and umpires) must be able to be locked overnight and during play and gear bags must be able to be securely left in the changing rooms overnight.
- c) There should be a players' viewing area, with seating, and a view of the ground separated from the public.
- d) For venues considering new player and team facilities, a minimum of 60sq/m (not including toilets/showers) is recommended.

## Support Structure

### Umpires Room

- a) There should be a separate changing area for the umpires.
- b) The room must be able to be locked during the match.
- c) There must be access to a toilet and shower.

The room should contain the following:

- a) Seating
- b) At least two clothing hooks per umpire.

A view of the playing surface where possible.

### Third Umpires Room

For televised matches, the following must be provided:

- a) Private 3rd umpire area with a view of the whole ground and scoreboard.
- b) Table and chair
- c) Coloured television monitor with a Spark feed

### Match Referee

- a) There must be an enclosed area with a table and chair for the Match Referee. This facility must be lockable, remain dedicated for Match Referee use (where applicable, alongside the video analyst) during each match and should have a full view of the ground and the main scoreboard. Sufficient air-conditioning and heating facilities are required in these spaces.
- b) A dedicated hardwire or wireless (Wi-Fi) internet connection must be available in the Match Referee's position and the network and password details must be provided to the Match Referee well in-advance of the match start time. This must be the same network that the scorers and team analyst have access to.

### Scorers

- a) There must be a separate and enclosed private area with a table and chair for each scorer. At grounds with a permanent scoreboard, this facility must remain dedicated for scorer use at all matches. The score box should have a full view of the ground and the main scoreboard(s).

- b) There must be an effective and separate communication system in place between the scorers and the umpires, the scorers and the match referee and third umpire, and between the scorers and the scoreboard operators (when the scorers are not operating the scoreboard themselves).
- c) There must be access to a printer during and at the end of each match for the printing of the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern Par Score sheets and the electronic scoresheets, if required.
- d) The scorers' box must include at least two power points for the internet scoring laptop and Duckworth-Lewis printer. If the scorers' box is north facing and does not have an inbuilt blind, it must be protected from direct sunlight by shade cloth or similar for scorer comfort and performance and to shield electronic equipment.
- e) A dedicated hardwire or wireless (Wi-Fi) internet connection must be available in the scoreboard or scorers' position, and the network and password details must be provided to the scorers well in-advance of the match start time. This must be the same network that match referees and team analyst have access to.

### Performance Analyst

- a) There must be an enclosed private area with a table and a chair for the performance analyst, within the scorer's position. The analyst should have a full view of the ground and an adequate view of the scoreboard. They should be in a room easily accessible by both teams.
- b) The performance analysts' position must include at least two power points for their electronic equipment. If the analysts' camera is unable to be positioned on a permanent structure (with a minimum height of 7m) directly behind the pitch a temporary scaffolding platform (with a minimum height of 7m) must be installed for the duration of the match.
- c) The video analyst must have access to a dedicated hardwired (preferred) or robust wireless (Wi-Fi) connection, that can manage minimum upload speed of 12mbps and download speed of 20mbps. This must be the same dedicated network that scorers, match referee and team analysts have access to.

Performance Analysis workstation at the ground must meet H&S requirements in terms of computer ergonomics,

- a) If the video analysts' position is north facing and does not have an inbuilt blind, it must be protected from direct sunlight by shade cloth or similar for analyst comfort and performance and to shield electronic equipment.

### Public Facilities

- a) There must be toilets at each ground capable of catering for spectators without the need for extensive waiting and must be kept tidy and clean throughout the duration of the game.
- b) There should be a food and drink outlet at the ground for Ford Trophy and T20 matches (this can be a portable)

## Medical Rooms

There must be a designated First Aid or medical room at the venue which should be appropriately stocked with medical supplies and equipment.

## Sanctions

### Non-Compliance with NZC Warrant of Fitness

The NZC WOF is a set of minimum standards for International, Domestic cricket and selected cricket events governed by NZC. Every ground that hosts an International, Domestic cricket or other selected cricket events must comply with the minimum standards contained herein.

For venues that may not comply with minimum facility requirements outlined in this document, these must be identified with NZC and a plan developed to show the timeline in which the venue will fully comply with the NZC WOF.

If it is determined by NZC (in its absolute discretion and upon consultation with the NZCPA) that a ground has not met the minimum standards of the NZC WOF, NZC has the following rights:

1. NZC may decline the granting of an NZC WOF. Such refusal may be on terms and conditions as may be prescribed by NZC in its absolute discretion; and/or
2. NZC may remove an NZC WOF from a ground. Such removal may be on terms and conditions as may be prescribed by NZC in its absolute discretion; and/or
3. NZC may impose a penalty on the relevant Major Association for not meeting the minimum standards of the NZC WOF.

A fine will range from \$0-\$5000.00 (plus GST). Such fine will be determined by NZC (in its absolute discretion) based on the level of NZC WOF non-compliance.

ENDs.