

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Board of Fencing New Zealand Incorporated**

<b>DATE</b>	07 September 2025
<b>START/FINISH</b>	7.09 – 10.15 pm
<b>LOCATION</b>	Teams
<b>CHAIR</b>	David Elder
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	David Elder (President FeNZ), Jules Congalton (Treasurer), Will Bishop (Fencing Central), Hamish Clarke (representing President Fencing Mid-South), Amanda Hopkins (Secretary), Kyle MacDonald (Selectors Commission), Grant Moro (Independent Board Member), Peter Butler (President Fencing North), Kate Brill (Independent Board Member), Alex Dong (President Fencing South), Simone May (National Development Officer), Claire Cooper (Athletes Commission), Heather Claydon (Officiating Commission), Caroline Birdsall (National Fencing Administrator)
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Grant Tweedle

	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>INFORMATION AND RESOLUTIONS</b>
1.	<b>Quorum</b>	Quorum of 5 required – 9 Voting members present - approved. Advised that meeting was being recorded for accuracy of Minutes
2.	<b>Conflicts of interest</b>	No conflicts
3.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>	<p>Minutes of meeting 5th August 2025 – taken as read. Moved David – Seconded Grant. <b>Accepted and carried unanimously.</b></p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <p>3.1 The FeNZ 2026 Selection Policy is not appearing on the website. Carol confirmed it has been published under Documents/Our Documents/Policies. David requested that it also be published as a News Item. Action required.</p> <p>3.2 Board Strategy meeting dates/times/venue:</p> <p>16 Attendees</p> <p>Proposed Dates: 23rd and 24th October Final Agreement: Meeting to be held Thursday 23rd October (starting 2:00 PM), with a follow-up on Friday morning (24th October) Thursday afternoon session (approx. from 2:00 PM) Friday morning session (9:00 AM–12:00 PM)</p> <p>Venue Options, still TBC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Waipuna</b> – Heather to look at venue</li> <li>• <b>Tennis Centre, Merson Rd</b> – Amanda to approach via her connections)</li> <li>• <b>FeNZ President’s office boardroom</b> (backup if smaller numbers)</li> </ul>

4.	<b>Financials</b>	<p><b>Treasurer reports, taken as read</b></p> <p>4.1 Treasurers Report – 29<sup>th</sup> August 2025</p> <p>4.2 Financial position and report (Balance Sheet &amp; Project and Loss)</p> <p>4.3 Jules provided an update on insurance. The current insurance coverage has been extended to <b>31 October 2025</b>, with revised costs expected to reduce overall expenditure once final invoices are confirmed. Discussion included clarification of professional indemnity/public liability and material goods coverage, along with questions regarding depreciation of equipment and ownership of donated fencing gear (to be clarified further).</p> <p>Moved Jules – Seconded Amanda  <b>Accepted and carried unanimously.</b></p>
5.	<b>Event &amp; Operational Items</b>	<p>5.1 Membership Discussion</p> <p>No change in membership numbers since last meeting.</p> <p>Proposal for rolling 12-month memberships raised to make joining easier, especially for new school fencers. Constitutional change required; can only be considered at AGM.</p> <p>Cost barriers highlighted: high upfront fees deter families. Suggestions included lowering base affiliation and adding small levies to competitions, or using novice competitions for first-time fencers.</p> <p>Upgrading memberships (recreational → competitive) currently problematic; system improvements needed.</p> <p>Veteran data (30+) reporting requested; Jules to provide separate analysis.</p> <p>Membership structure and fee model to be further explored at the Strategy Meeting, with fees due to be set by 30 November and paid by 31 March.</p> <p>5.2 Referee Per Diems</p> <p>Grant presented a paper with recommendations and the current policy. Clarified the policy applies to tournament officials beyond referees (DT, Assistant DT, Head of Weapons Control; discussion also noted the policy extend to Safeguarding and First Aid roles).</p> <p><b>Discussion (key points)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two remuneration options were discussed, either setting the rate at \$120 per day or \$100 per day with a \$50 half-day rate. Both options remain below FIE and Australian benchmarks, but the goal was to strike a balance between recognising and valuing officials while keeping costs manageable, with the possibility of gradually raising rates in the future.</li> <li>• The policy sets officials’ remuneration, with projected entry fee increases of \$12–\$18. Offsetting measures include boosting participation, securing sponsorship, and publishing timetables earlier to cut travel costs.</li> </ul>

- Some concern raised about higher costs for fencers; counterpoint that better-remunerated officials improve event quality.
- Regions noted variability in current practice and budgets; training needs flagged if fencers are encouraged to also referee.
- That the National Tournament Officials Appointment and Remuneration Policy be updated and published on the FeNZ website by the Officiating Commission, with the inclusion of the safeguarding role, and that new per diem rates apply from 1 January 2026.

#### **Resolutions**

1. Increase officials' expenses remuneration (policy scope as above).

Moved: David Seconded: Jules

**Accepted and carried unanimously.**

2. Set per diem at \$100/day (or \$50 half-day) for national tournaments (7 in total), effective 1 January 2026.
3. Update and publishing of the National Tournament Officials Appointment and Remuneration Policy, including the safeguarding role, with new per diem rates effective 1 January 2026.

Moved: David Seconded: Grant

**Accepted and carried unanimously.**

#### 5.3 World Champs Report

##### **Discussion Key Points**

The World Championships report was received as read. Simone described the event as a positive experience, noting improved athlete support. Amanda confirmed an Oceania subsidy would be distributed to athletes. Discussion focused on team management: Simone suggested accredited supporters could assist in lieu of a manager, while Grant raised concern about sending young teams without official support. Claire cautioned against accrediting parents due to potential conflicts, and Simone agreed but noted the financial barriers of appointing more officials. Amanda added that international accreditation processes are complex and vary by event.

##### **Conclusion**

The Board acknowledged the positive outcomes from the World Championships while noting issues around team support, accreditation, and costs. Broader questions on team management policy and appointments were flagged for future discussion at the Strategy Meeting.

#### 5.4 Management & Coaching Support for NZ Senior Teams

The Board discussed whether senior teams need formal management and coaching support. Some felt senior fencers prefer to minimise costs and are capable of self-managing, while others stressed the importance of proper support for performance and duty of care. Financial constraints were a key concern. The matter was deferred for more detailed consideration at the upcoming Strategy Meeting.

#### 5.5 Australian U15/17 Management Report

Taken as read

##### **Discussion Key Points**

The report was taken as read. The President noted it contained several valuable recommendations and was well prepared and received. Simone agreed to take responsibility for reviewing and following up on the report's suggestions.

##### **Discussion Key Points**

The President reported that FeNZ has again received an FIE equipment grant from Oceania, with equipment already in storage. It will first be used at the Oceania event in six weeks, after which distribution of four boxes and three sets of spools and wires within New Zealand will need to be arranged.

##### **Conclusion**

The Board noted receipt of the 2025 FIE equipment grant and agreed that the equipment will be used first at the Oceania event before arrangements are made for distribution of the remaining boxes and spools. No issues were raised.

#### 5.7 2026 Junior Olympics – Update

Amanda advised that expressions of interest for the 2026 Junior Olympics have been submitted, but the selection process remains unclear. Allocation of places is decided by the FIE based on rankings and regional quotas, with Oceania usually receiving one spot. Changes to eligibility rules and the new system create uncertainty, and no confirmation has yet been received on whether New Zealand will be able to send athletes.

#### 5.8 National & Regional Tournament & Events Calendar 2026

The Board agreed the 2026 National and Regional Tournament Calendar must be finalised promptly. Heather will coordinate a meeting with regional representatives to resolve outstanding date conflicts, with a confirmed timetable due by 21 September. North and South Islands are already set, leaving Mid-South and Central to confirm.

#### 5.9 FeNZ Overseas Managed Tours – 2026 Calendar & Guidelines

##### **Discussion Key Points**

Grant proposed clearer calendars and updated policies for overseas tours. Simone and Amanda backed this but stressed flexibility, while Kate highlighted preparation and cultural expectations. Alex opposed managed support for senior athletes, preferring athlete responsibility. The group agreed Grant would draft proposals for wider consultation.

##### **Action:**

The Board agreed to accept Grant's recommendations to:  
Establish an Overseas Managed Tour Calendar for 2026–27.  
Review and update guidelines for tour managers/coaches, risk management, and athlete participation agreements.  
Engage a working group (Grant, Simone, Amanda, Kate, and an Athletes Commission representative) to prepare a draft for consultation.

		<p>5.10 Commonwealth Senior &amp; Veteran Fencing Champs 2026, Nigeria</p> <p>The Board discussed the Commonwealth event planned for Nigeria. Members expressed serious safety concerns, with several noting they would not attend or endorse athletes travelling under FeNZ's name. While the Commonwealth aims to develop fencing in Africa with strict lockdown arrangements, the risks, costs, and travel advisories were seen as prohibitive.</p> <p><b>Decision/Actions:</b> FeNZ will not endorse attendance at this stage. The President and Amanda will write a strongly worded letter to the Commonwealth Fencing Federation, supported by Oceania, seeking their formal risk assessment and management plan. The Board will review this before making a final decision, with emphasis on athlete safety as the top priority.</p>
6.	<b>Regional Reports</b>	<p>6.1 The North and Central regional reports were taken as read. Kate acknowledged North for including entry numbers, noting it provided a clear picture of activity on the ground. No further comments were raised on the Central report.</p>
7.	<b>Other Business</b>	<p><b>7.1 India Trip (Asian Fencing Federation(AFF) -funded invitation)</b></p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> AFF emailed offering support financially for two athletes and one coach to attend an event in India, but there's been no further detail. Concerns raised about reliability (recent late cancellations), location logistics (flood-affected area; 5.5-hour drive from Delhi), and the admin load of constant portal checks. Mixed views: some favour offering the opportunity with strict caution; others prefer to decline until information is solid.</p> <p><b>Decisions:</b> Continue to offer the opportunity but <b>advise no flights are purchased</b> until formal confirmation is received.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amanda to monitor the AFF portal daily and update the Board.</li> <li>• Communication to nominees: do not book travel until green-light is issued.</li> </ul> <p><b>7.2 Athletes' Commission – New Members</b></p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> Three EOIs received (Bowie Wang – Foil; Charlie Bioletti – Épée; Daisy Hutton – Sabre). Adding them improves weapon and youth representation; one current member will step down once onboarded.</p> <p>Moved: Claire Seconded: Dave <b>Accepted and carried unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Athletes' Commission to onboard new members and update public listings.</p>

### 7.3 Welfare / Child Safety Matter (from recent Secondary Schools event)

**Discussion:**

Reports of concerning behaviour by a coach; Athletes' Commission stressed police referral where child harm is alleged, and broader upskilling on child protection. Board confirmed the matter is being fast-tracked via Welfare/Complaints processes.

**Decisions:**

Anyone with first-hand information should **submit a formal complaint or incident report** to enable prompt action.

- Potential police referral remains on the table depending on facts established.

**Actions:**

- Claire to liaise with **Liz Stewart (Welfare Chair)** about engaging **Kidpower** for education/upskilling; President to connect them by email.
- Welfare Committee to continue expedited handling and report back.

### 7.4 Oceania Championships – Selections & Management

**Discussion:**

Event is approaching; need athlete selection and team management/coach appointments.

**Actions:**

**Kyle & Amanda** to initiate the nomination and selection process; **Simone** to coordinate coaching appointments.

### 7.5 Referee Development – FIE B-Grade Exams (Wuxi)

**Discussion:**

Three referees self-funded to sit B-grade exams. Strong support to contribute given strategic need for high-level referees; finances are tight (forecast ~\$20k deficit; ~\$100k reserves). Past years included OFC and occasional government support; OFC request pending. COI noted by Kate regarding one candidate.

**Decision:**

**In principle approval** to contribute **\$1,000 per person** (three referees), with the amount to be finalised by email once OFC support is confirmed.

**Actions:**

- President to seek OFC contribution; Board to confirm final FeNZ contribution by email vote within a week.
- Ask returning referees to share learnings (e.g., a joint Zoom seminar).

**Meeting closed 10:18pm**