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**Annual Referees Report**

**Season 2019/2020**

I am proud of both the continued growth and competency of our refereeing roster this season.

With marginal growth experienced from the previous year in the Junior ranks (around 15%), it was pleasing to see around a 40% increase within the senior ranks. The encouraging aspect of this, was the promotion of a number of juniors capable of officiating senior games, so we now have 22 junior referees and 23 senior referees.

The flow on effect of this was that the majority of teams were not required to provide duty referees during a season where over 400 Junior games and over 300 Senior games were played. There were also a number of Gala Days and State Cup tournaments that our referees officiated at.

We continued to conduct Referee Competency Assessments for the majority of our Junior refs and provide positive feedback to assist them in their continual growth and improvement. It is pleasing to see them grow in confidence over the last few seasons. We will continue to provide guidance, especially to our Junior referees, with a number of our senior referees gaining certification as Referee Coaches.

The challenge is to ensure we maximise our retention rate. Whilst our remuneration rates for referees compare positively with other touch associations, other strategies include encouraging and financially supporting the attainment of official certification levels through Touch NSW.

We still require support from other associations or NSW Touch for representative tournaments (especially the Junior State Cup) which in turn increases the cost of playing representative touch. The representative Committee is doing a great job trying to identify representative referees and the appointment of Patrick Branley to the representative Committee in the role of Representative Referee Coordinator. A big thank you to Patrick.

Finally, although I believe there has been a reduction in the number of incidents of referee abuse, our goal is to reduce this even further by continuing to reinforce the zero-tolerance policy for referee abuse.

I would like to thank the Board for their ongoing support of the referees, especially Bill Calleja for his overall assistance, including his organisation of the referees for our representative commitments.

Doug Vail

Referees Director

Ryde Eastwood Hawks Touch Football Association Incorporated