



## Critical Match Incident Marking National Assessment Program

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This policy is applicable to **all**  
National Referees and National Referee Candidates.  
*It may be used as a guideline for other levels of officials.*

In deciding the final mark or scoring of a match official, the assessor must consider the overall performance as well as the accuracy and credibility of “critical match” decisions. If a **key error** is detected, the assessor **must** consider whether the “critical match” decision should have reasonably been expected to be seen by at least one (but maybe more than one) match official.

If the “critical match incident” is missed due to a **serious and/or obvious** error of judgment and/or lack of control **and** the assessor decides that the error should have been “reasonably expected to be seen or dealt with correctly” by an official working that level of game, then the match official must receive an unacceptable performance rating and no mark/score higher than 69.

### **Reasonably Expected to be Seen or Dealt with Correctly: Definition**

An assessor must make a fair and common sense judgment as to whether the match official should have seen or should have dealt correctly with a “critical incident.” In other words, should any match official assigned that particular game be reasonably expected to see or deal with the critical situation? The assessor must consider the situation and the scenario surrounding the judgment. The assessor should ask:

“Should a referee at this level be reasonably expected to see or deal with the situation correctly?”

If the answer is “yes,” then the performance must be judged to be unacceptable and no mark higher than 69 may be given.

Examples:

- Not automatic failure: A “critical match situation” that occurs outside the view of the match officials and reasonable officials, working that level of game, would not be expected to see.
- Not automatic failure: A “critical match situation” that can only be seen via video replay.
- Unacceptable performance: A “critical match situation” that occurs outside the view of the match officials but is missed due to poor positioning, failure to anticipate or read the game, improper attention, poor mechanics, poor fitness or some other match official-controlled situation.
- Unacceptable performance: A serious and/or obvious misapplication of the Laws of the Game.

- Unacceptable performance: The missing of a serious and/or obvious decision, that effects/impacts the outcome of the game, that a match official working that level of game should reasonably be expected to get correct.

### **Critical Match Incidents: Definition**

If a match official fails to deal with any of the “critical match incidents” listed below and such failure results in “the outcome of the game being affected,” then the performance of the official(s) should be judged to be unacceptable and no score higher than 69 may be given the match official(s).

A “Critical Match Incident” must be one of the following:

- Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity (DOGSO) dealt with incorrectly;
- A clear and obvious serious foul play/violent conduct send off not correctly dealt with;
- Not calling a penalty kick that is obvious or incorrectly awarding a penalty kick that is clearly not;
- Incorrectly allowing a goal that should be disallowed or not allowing a goal that should be given (including offside decisions for assistant referees);
- Not sending off a player after he/she has received a second yellow card;
- Incorrect application of the Laws of the Game;
- Any other incident that has a significant affect on the match that requires further examination on the part of the assessor.

Not recognizing and/or correctly dealing with the aforementioned “critical match incidents” includes those “critical match incidents” that *should have been seen/observed and dealt with (by any referee working that level of game) or were seen/observed but dealt with incorrectly.*

Affecting the Outcome of the Game:

- “Affecting the outcome of the game” often times depends upon the final result of the game and the timing of the critical match incident. For example, if an obvious and clear penalty kick is missed in a game which at the time the score is 4-0, the “affect” on the game may be lessened. Although this may not be judged as a “critical match incident,” it does not minimize the impact of the missed call on the referee’s overall match performance rating when evaluating the overall mark. If the “critical match incident is missed early in a close match, it may be considered to have affected the outcome of the game regardless of the final score. *Rationale: A match official who has been of high standard throughout the game misses a penalty kick decision (that is clear/obvious and should have reasonably been dealt with correctly by a match official at that level) when the score is 4-0 could still have an acceptable mark but the failure to get the decision correct should be reflected in the written report. Conversely, a game may end as 3-0 but, early in the game with the score 0-0, the referee misses a “critical game situation” which*

*then possibly affects the outcome of the game for the losing team. In this case, the assessor must reasonably use discretion.*

- In some instances, the failure to correctly address one of the aforementioned factors when the outcome of the game is NOT affected, may also lead to an unacceptable performance given the referee's overall performance and/or the significance of the error in performance.

#### Collective Responsibility:

- There may be occasions where there is collective responsibility by match officials in missing a "critical match incident." In such cases, two or more match officials could be culpable and all their final marks should reflect this. In a case where a player is shown a second yellow card and is not dismissed from the field of play, ALL four officials are to be held responsible as this is a referee team event.

### **Marking/Scoring**

If a "critical match incident" is missed, the match official may not receive a mark/score higher than 69. This is the maximum mark and assessors are required to mark the overall performance within the revised scale. *Rationale: Once an assessor has detected a "critical match incident," 69 becomes the maximum mark and the assessment has to be reflected within that scale. Therefore, if the match official does everything else well, the 69 may in fact be the mark; however, if the referee has also demonstrated poor positioning, failure to anticipate or read the game or some other similar issue, those areas of improvement need to be reflected in the resulting mark.*

### **Critical Match Incident Reporting**

For professional matches in which a video, DVD, or replay of the "critical match incident" is available, the assessor must view the incident prior to making the decision that the performance was not acceptable.

In situations where a video, DVD, or replay is not available, the assessor must make his/her decision based upon the view the assessor had of the "critical match incident" as well as the obvious/serious nature of the incident. The assessor may also take into consideration the match official's interpretation of events.

#### Not Acceptable Performance Assessments:

- For professional matches in which the assessor has been assigned by the National Office, a "not acceptable" performance assessment (whether it involves a "critical match incident" or not) may not be released until the assessment has been reviewed and subsequently approved by the National Office and the assessor has received confirmation for its release.

Notation on the Assessment Form:

- When deciding a performance is not acceptable due to a “critical match incident” being missed, the assessor must specifically state in the “Overview” section of the assessment form that the performance reflects the match official(s) failure to correctly deal with a “critical match incident.” This must be accompanied by a description of the incident, how it met the criteria and whether it has been captured on the DVD/tape or via video review.