

Multi-year policy plan

2025-2030

Handbalvereniging "De Cirkeltijgers"
Blauwborgje 16
9747 AC Groningen
KVK-nummer: 40023841
+31503638086
bestuur@cirkeltijgers.nl
www.cirkeltijgers.nl
www.instagram.com/hvdecirkeltijgers

Written by:
Marissa van der Spek
Anne Waninge
Sannelis Postma
Duco Westerdijk

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Mission and vision	4
3. Identity	5
3.1 International identity	5
4. Organisation within the association	6
4.1 Board structure	6
4.2 Committees	7
4.2.1 The international Cirkeltijgers tournament	7
4.3 Trainers and coaches	8
5. Teams, technical committee and extra rules	9
5.1 Teams	9
5.2 Team composition and technical committee	9
5.3 Extra rules	10
5.3.1 '22- rule'	10
5.3.2 Dispensation cards	10
6. Finances	11
6.1 Cash audit committee	11
6.2 Key figures	11
6.3 Ways to address budget deficits	13
6.3.1 Sponsors	13
6.3.2 Donors	13
6.3.3 Contribution	13
6.3.4 Mandatory team contribution	13
6.3.4.1 Fundraisers	14
6.3.4.2 Sponsors and donors	14
6.4 Parameter change	15
7. Communication	16
7.1 Internal communication	16
7.2 External communication	16
7.2.1 Dutch handbal association (NHV)	16
7.2.2 Referees	17
7.2.3 External boards	17
7.2.3.1 ACLO board	17
7.2.3.2 Other boards	17
7.2.4 Sports Center	17
8. Social safety and inclusivity	19
8.1 Confidential Advisors	19
8.2 Zero tolerance policy	19
8.3 Behavioural code Groningen	20
8.4 Certificate of Conduct (Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag)	20

1. Introduction

Before you lies the multi-year policy plan of H.V. De Cirkeltijgers for the period 2025–2030. The previous multi-year policy plan covered the years 2020–2025. Over the past five years, our association has once again developed itself and new challenges, opportunities, and insights have come our way. It is therefore time for a revised version of our policy plan.

Since 2005, we have chosen not to let the knowledge and experiences of past boards be lost, but instead to record them in a multi-year policy plan. Every five years, the current board draws up a new version. By briefly highlighting the multi-year policy plan each year in the ongoing policy plan, we ensure that it remains a living document that guides our choices and ambitions. The previous multi-year policy plan has been fully updated, refined, and supplemented, which enables us to look ahead to the next five years with a fresh perspective. If necessary, of course, a new multi-year policy plan can also be drawn up in the meantime.

We would like to express our gratitude to all working groups and former boards who, now or in the past, have contributed to the development of the multi-year policy plan. Our thanks also go out to all members, former members, committees, sponsors, donors, volunteers, and previous boards. Thanks to your dedication, H.V. De Cirkeltijgers has become the association it is today.

With this renewed multi-year policy plan, we hope to contribute to a bright future for our association. We look forward to the next five years full of sporting highlights, growth, and connection.

2. Mission and vision

The mission of H.V. De Cirkeltijgers is to be an accessible, inclusive, and close-knit student handball association in which enjoyment of sport, personal development, and involvement are the central focus.

Our vision is to remain a stable and healthy association on sporting, social, and financial levels, where students from secondary vocational education (MBO), applied sciences (HBO), and university (WO) backgrounds feel welcome and can play handball at a suitable level. As a student sports association, we are part of a dynamic society and student world. We want to grow along with these changes by providing space for students from diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of sporting ambitions. In this way, we continue to be a place where everyone feels at home and can develop both on and off the field.

On a social level, we attach great importance to collective responsibility within the association by sharing responsibility for communication, organisation, and engagement. With this, we ensure that roles are fulfilled and the association can continue to exist. As a student sports association, we also place great value on the combination of sports and social activities.

To remain financially attractive, especially for students, we strive to maintain an affordable membership.

On a sporting level, we want to create more unity within the association: we aim for all teams to play according to the same handball style with shared systems and tactics. At the same time, we believe it is important that every member can play at their own level to ensure both enjoyment and challenge are guaranteed.

CIRKELTIJGERS

3. Identity

H.V. De Cirkeltijgers is a student sports association for secondary vocational education (MBO), applied sciences (HBO), and university (WO) students. Training takes place twice a week, and competitive matches are played on weekends or during weekdays in the case of midweek competitions. In addition, there is room for social activities through drinks, events, and shared moments after training.

H.V. De Cirkeltijgers is an association where people come together to motivate, challenge, and support each other when needed. Many members are actively involved in the association as volunteers. Sports and socialising together form the core of who we are; it is this combination that characterises our association and creates an open and energetic atmosphere.

3.1 International identity

The proportion of international members has increased in recent years to almost 50% of the total membership. To involve all members in the association, communication is standardly conducted in both Dutch and English, or in some cases entirely in English. In the presence of international members, English is spoken, emails are sent in both languages, and the website is available in Dutch, English, German, and Spanish.

With the growing number of international members in the association, we are responding to this development. Starting from the 2025-2026 season, the General Members' Meeting will be conducted entirely in English. This ensures that international members also gain insight into the workings of the association.

Furthermore, from the 2025-2026 season onwards, certain board positions will be opened to international members who do not have sufficient Dutch language skills. These positions include Chairperson, Treasurer, and Internal Coordinator. The positions of Secretary and External Coordinator are not suitable for international members lacking Dutch proficiency, due to the necessity of external communication in Dutch, such as with the Dutch handball association (NHV) and sponsors.

4. Organisation within the association

4.1 Board structure

The board structure consists of five positions: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Internal Coordinator, and External Coordinator. The positions of Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer are considered vital, as without these three roles, a functioning board cannot be formed. At the time of writing, the board consists of four members. While this is workable, a five-member board remains desirable. With five board members, responsibilities can be better distributed, which allows more attention and depth in the various tasks.

Each board member has their own set of responsibilities, but flexibility is central within the board. Members support each other where needed and can temporarily take over each other's tasks in case of absence. Smaller tasks can be redistributed to better align with the preferences and strengths of individual board members.

Since the 2023–2024 season, the position of Vice-Chairperson has been replaced by that of External Coordinator. This role focuses on maintaining, strengthening, and expanding external contacts, which is an essential aspect of the association's functioning. In the 2024–2025 season, this task was distributed among the remaining board members because a fifth board member was not available. While this is temporarily workable, it is neither desirable nor sustainable for the future.

Given the structural challenge of forming a full board, we advise establishing a sponsorship committee in the case of an incomplete board. This committee falls under the responsibility of the Internal Coordinator and does not need to be structurally present at board meetings. Ideally, the committee should be led by a former board member due to their experience with the tasks. We recommend a fixed email address for the External Coordinator so that communication with sponsors remains consistent from year to year. Another option is to broaden the responsibilities of the External Tournament Committee. This committee could then become a general External Committee responsible for maintaining all external relationships, including those with other associations for participation in their tournaments and with sponsors.

An early start in the search for new board members increases the chance of forming a strong team. This can be done through social media, targeted approaches, and personal conversations. We also advise encouraging candidate board members to actively search for other interested members themselves. This helps create a motivated board that works well together, benefiting both the functioning and the atmosphere of the association. Additionally, we recommend involving the Advisory Council (RVA) in the formation of a new board, as they have played an active role in the board handover since the 2024–2025 season.

4.2 Committees

At the time of writing, the association has five committees that members can join: the Party Committee (FeCo), Information Committee (InfoCie), Tournament Committee (ToCo), External Tournament Committee (XTCie), and Promotion Committee (PromoCie).

- The Party Committee organises the association's social activities, such as the monthly drinks and events.
- The Information Committee publishes the association's magazine (Tijgerprint) seven times a year, keeping the association informed about interesting matters within the club.
- The Tournament Committee organises the annual international Cirkeltijgers tournament.
- The External Tournament Committee arranges opportunities to participate in external tournaments both in the Netherlands and abroad.
- The Promotion Committee manages the association's Instagram account and supports the board in promoting the club in various ways.

The Internal Coordinator should stay well-informed about the progress within the committees. Therefore, we recommend that the Internal Coordinator conduct at least a monthly check-in with the committee chairs to review the status of their activities.

4.2.1 The international Cirkeltijgers tournament

Since the cancellation of the international Cirkeltijgers tournament during the COVID-19 period, the tournament has not attracted the number of participants it did in previous years. In particular, international participants from countries farther away from the Netherlands have stayed away, which has led to the tournament being shortened in recent years to either Saturday evening or Sunday morning. It is uncertain whether the number of participants will return to pre-COVID levels; therefore, we advise carefully considering whether the Tournament Committee and the board want to continue organising a 3-day tournament each year. A 3-day format may require last-minute adjustments, leading to disappointments and cancellations among external participants. However, catering costs have decreased significantly over the past year, making it easier to organise a 3-day tournament for the coming years, as long as the Sports Center's caterer remains the same. At the time of writing, Ballersz handles the catering and is very willing to collaborate. If the Friday evening party returns to Ballersz, there is even more room for negotiation. The Tournament Committee is responsible for successfully managing the tournament. However, this is a major event conducted on behalf of the association and involves significant funds; therefore, it is important that the board is kept well informed regarding the organisation. One possibility is to allow board members to attend committee meetings regularly, with the preferred board members being the Treasurer, as the Treasurer is responsible for the budget and finances

of the tournament, or the Internal Coordinator, as the Internal Coordinator coordinates the various committees.

4.3 Trainers and coaches

In recent years, it has been possible to arrange a trainer and a coach for most teams. For teams without a permanent trainer, the use of a trainer pool has provided a solution. This pool consists of a group of committed members willing to lead training sessions when a permanent trainer is unavailable. This solution has been proven to be valuable in practice, so we recommend setting up this pool again when needed.

For all teams, it is desirable that a coach is present during matches. For competitive teams in the 'Hoofdklasse', 'Eerste Klasse', and 'Tweede Klasse', this becomes mandatory. In the absence of a (permanent) coach, we advise asking another member of the association to take on this role. Preference is given to a member who trains the respective team, as they are already familiar with the team. There are no other requirements for coaching, so anyone may act as a coach. For members registered with the NHV on behalf of the association, there are no additional costs involved, which is therefore preferable.

However, it can be challenging to find a coach from another team for every match when no permanent coach is available. In such cases, we advise consulting with the team to see if someone is regularly present at matches and can, if necessary, sit on the bench as coach so that matches can proceed and continuity for the team is maintained.

CIRKELTIJGERS

5. Teams, technical committee and extra rules

5.1 Teams

In recent seasons, the association has consisted of three to four women's teams and one men's team. By offering handball at different levels, the association remains easily accessible to players of all abilities. Offering a midweek team to complement the Sunday competition can contribute to this accessibility.

Many members have been part of the association for more than five years. We therefore expect the number of members to decrease over the next five years, as the influx of new members in recent years has been lower than the expected outflow. While maintaining three women's teams in the Sunday competition is preferable, especially due to differences in playing levels among the players, we advise that future boards re-evaluate annually whether this remains feasible. Reducing the number of Sunday women's teams to two is a realistic and justifiable option if there are not enough members available to adequately fill three teams.

5.2 Team composition and technical committee

Team division is carried out annually at the start of the season based on selection training. These sessions are designed to form teams according to playing level and provide players the opportunity to train with higher-level teams if they have that ambition. Final decisions regarding team placement lie with the Technical Committee, which considers factors such as commitment and development. We advise that the board should not be part of the Technical Committee. Board members may be present during team division but should remain neutral. The board's role at that time is to safeguard the interests of the association, including ensuring a fair distribution of players across the teams.

With continuity and knowledge retention in mind, we also recommend reconsidering the composition and responsibilities of the Technical Committee. Recruiting an experienced trainer can be highly valuable. This person can support other trainers and contribute to developing a uniform handball philosophy within the association. By working with the same systems and movement patterns, teams can more easily exchange players and train according to the same principles.

For the 2025–2026 season, Bart Engels will prepare a document and PowerPoint outlining the systems and movement patterns. He will also present these to the trainers of that season through an information session. We recommend creating a plan to preserve this knowledge and transfer it to trainers in subsequent years to ensure it is not lost. The Technical Committee can play a role in this process.

5.3 Extra rules

5.3.1 '22- rule'

The general rule from the NHV is that players are assigned to one team, but may participate in up to ten matches for a higher-level team before they are permanently registered with the highest-level team. However, an exception applies to players under 22 years old; they may play with other teams without limitation, regardless of playing level. We recommend checking with the NHV each year regarding the rules on player movement between teams to ensure that as many matches as possible can be played with sufficient players.

5.3.2 Dispensation cards

An arrangement from ACLO that our association makes use of concerns dispensation cards. These cards can be used for members who are not students or who graduated/stopped their studies more than three years ago. We recommend establishing clear rules regarding dispensation cards, as in recent years, we have had to turn away new members due to a shortage of these cards. The association is free under ACLO to set its own rules for this, so we advise giving priority to members who play in competitions over training-only members. This is because competition players are more important for the continuity of the association compared to training-only members. Additionally, the principle of 'first-come, first-served' can be applied if multiple members wish to obtain the same type of membership. Other ACLO associations require members with dispensation cards to provide some form of additional support, such as committee work or other voluntary tasks. This is also something that can be considered when drafting the rules.

CIRKELTIJGERS

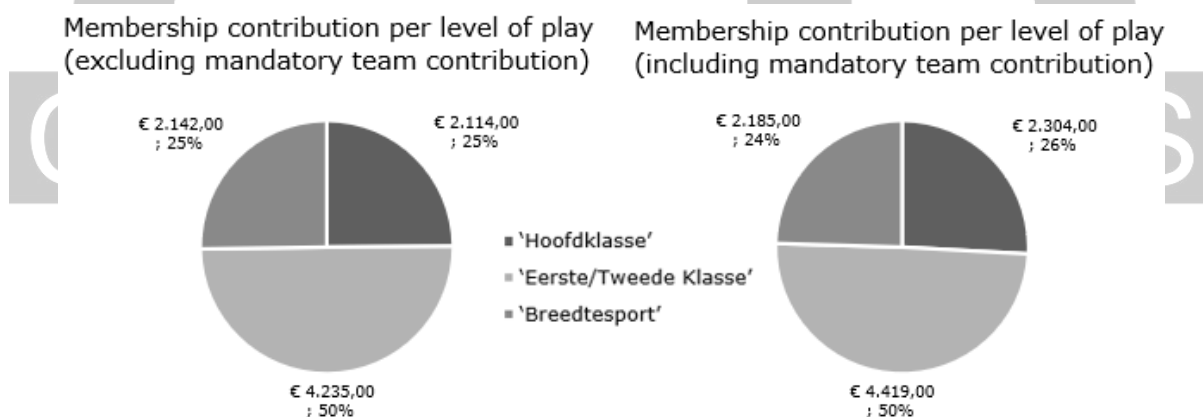
6. Finances

6.1 Cash audit committee

The cash audit committee functions as a supervisory body for the Treasurer and consists of two to four members. Currently, there are no formal rules regarding the composition of the cash audit committee. Consultation between the Treasurer and the board will take place to decide the members of the committee. However, we recommend establishing clear rules on this matter in the internal regulations (HR). In particular, we advise including provisions that exclude family ties between the cash audit committee and the Treasurer or other board members. After all, the cash audit committee must operate independently, and (the appearance of) conflicts of interest can undermine the reliability of its oversight. In addition, we recommend involving the Advisory Council (RVA) in the composition of the cash audit committee.

6.2 Key figures

The graphs below show the distribution of membership contributions within the club. A distinction is made by competition level: one team in the 'Hoofdklasse', one team in the 'Breedtesport', and two teams in either 'Eerste Klasse' or 'Tweede Klasse', as in recent seasons. The graphs present two scenarios: one with the mandatory team contribution and one without, and are based on the median number of players per competition level over the past five years.

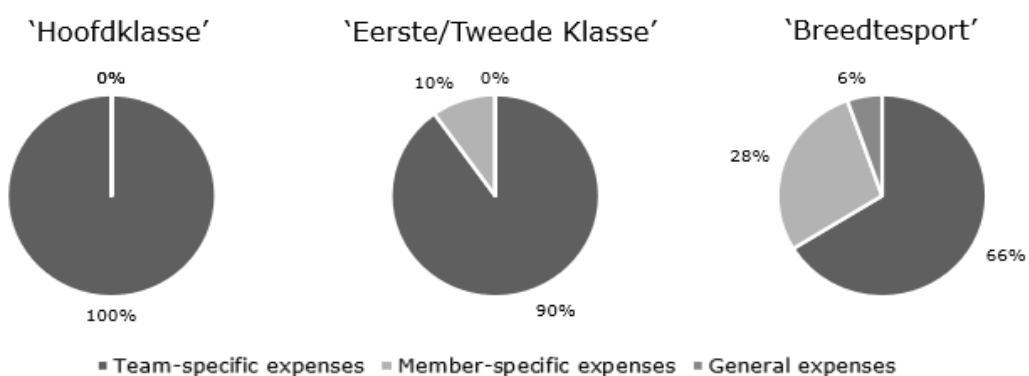


The graphs show that each competition level generates approximately the same revenue contribution for the club in both scenarios.

Teams competing at higher levels are relatively more expensive for the club. This is due to the fees of the NHV, which are significantly higher for teams at the top levels. Within the club, these fees are currently highest for the 'Hoofdklasse' team and lowest for the 'Breedtesport' team. To better absorb these higher costs, a mandatory team contribution was introduced in the 2023–2024 season in addition to the regular membership contributions paid by members. The following graphs illustrate the impact of introducing this mandatory team

contribution on the distribution of contribution revenues across the different cost categories per competition level.

The first three graphs show the distribution of contribution revenues prior to the introduction of the mandatory team contribution. They reveal that the 'lower-cost' competition levels generate revenue for the club, while the contribution revenues from the 'Hoofdklasse' players are entirely used to cover team-specific expenses. Only the revenues from the 'Breedtesport' team also contribute to covering general costs that are not tied to specific teams or individual members.



The three graphs below show the distribution of contribution revenues after the introduction of the mandatory team contribution. They indicate that there is more room to cover non-team-specific costs from the contribution revenues of players in the 'Eerste Klasse' and 'Tweede Klasse'. For 'Breedtesport' and 'Hoofdklasse' teams, there is no visible difference.



The idea of a mandatory team contribution was first introduced in the 2020-2025 multi-year policy plan. At that time, the key figures were based on hypothetical assumptions, such as projected contributions, costs, and team sizes. The graphs in the current multi-year policy plan, by contrast, are based on medians and averages from recent years. They show that the introduction of the mandatory team contribution in its current form only has a limited effect on the distribution of contribution revenues across the different cost categories per competition

level. If the goal is to further improve this distribution, we suggest considering an adjustment to the mandatory team contributions. This is to ensure that higher competition levels contribute more significantly to covering general costs that are not tied to specific teams or individual members.

6.3 Ways to address budget deficits

With an unchanged policy, the financial situation will remain manageable, but periodic review remains necessary in light of the annual increases in NHV costs and hall rental fees. To address any potential financial shortfalls in the future, we recommend exploring opportunities for fundraising each year.

6.3.1 Sponsors

To ensure financial stability, it is important to actively recruit new sponsors. We therefore recommend starting to approach potential sponsors early in the board year. Our advice is to draw up a list of local businesses and entrepreneurs and seek contact for collaborations in the upcoming season or in the future. In addition, we recommend systematically asking members whether they know of companies that could be approached. Experience has shown that personal connections with a company significantly increase the willingness to sponsor our association. Sponsorship packages provide a useful framework for discussions, but can be tailored to specific needs. The aim is to build long-term relationships with sponsors, with semi-annual evaluation meetings taking place between the sponsors and the External Coordinator.

6.3.2 Donors

Donors represent a valuable group for the association. They receive an adapted version of the association's magazine (Tijgerprint) twice a year and are personally thanked annually, for example, with a Christmas card. We recommend sending an email with the donor packages to all members who deregister around the time of the General Members' Meeting, to expand the donor base as much as possible.

6.3.3 Contribution

At present, the membership fee increases by two percent per year. To cover potential financial shortfalls within the association, it may be considered to raise this percentage. The membership fee is still significantly lower than that of other handball clubs in the region. A possible guideline is to link the annual increase to the previous year's inflation rate. However, it is important to take into account the mandatory purchase of an ACLO card. This is because the cost of this card is expected to rise substantially with the arrival of the new Sports Center, and because students generally have a more limited budget.

6.3.4 Mandatory team contribution

As previously mentioned, the mandatory team contribution was introduced in the 2023–2024 season, and these amounts have not been adjusted since. It may be

considered to let the team contribution increase proportionally with the membership fee.

During the department meeting in preparation for this multi-year policy plan, as well as during the half General Members' Meeting of March 2025, several potential financial solutions were presented and discussed. At both meetings, a convincing majority voted in favour of raising the mandatory team contribution as the most desirable solution. We therefore strongly recommend adopting this measure as a way to address any future financial challenges.

6.3.4.1 Fundraisers

One of the fundraising activities organised annually is the CT Bakery Sale. Until last year, the board made a preselection of about five products from which members could choose. This year, however, the full assortment of Bakerij Van Esch was offered, resulting in proceeds 1.5 times higher compared to previous years. We therefore recommend continuing with this approach.

In addition, members participate each year in various volunteer activities, such as Helden van Oranje, Kingsland, Hullabaloo, and ESNS. The proceeds from these activities are allocated to the team contribution and therefore do not provide an additional financial benefit to the association. We recommend contacting these organisations promptly to register our association once again as an interested party. We also request that, in addition to the volunteer fee, members be granted access to the festival grounds after completing their work. Experience has shown that this significantly increases members' enthusiasm for volunteering.

We further advise encouraging teams to organise additional initiatives, such as cake sales or car wash events. The proceeds can be fully donated to the association or partly used toward the mandatory team contribution. This strengthens member involvement, enhances team spirit, and reduces dependency on central fundraising activities.

6.3.4.2 Sponsors and donors

In some cases, sponsors or donors of the association have in the past contributed directly to covering the team contribution of specific teams. We advise against allowing this in the future. These sponsors or donors originally supported the association as a whole, and redirecting their contribution toward the team contribution has reduced the association's general income, since the team contribution would have been paid regardless of their involvement.

If a sponsor or donor wishes to support a specific team financially, this should be arranged through the team itself; the sponsor or donor transfers the amount to a team member who then uses it to cover the mandatory team contribution. This approach prevents the association from taking on obligations toward sponsors or

donors who support a specific team contribution without providing any additional income or resources to the association as a whole.

6.4 Parameter change

Once a year, two sectors within ACLO are required to submit a parameter adjustment; however, each association is free to submit a request even when its sector is not scheduled. Through this arrangement, both supervised and unsupervised hours can be requested, which affects the compensation we receive from ACLO for trainers. We therefore recommend carefully evaluating each year whether submitting a new request would be financially advantageous and determining the most favourable ratio of hours. Submitting a new request is particularly beneficial in the event of a membership increase compared to the last submission.



CIRKELTIJGERS

7. Communication

7.1 Internal communication

Clear and timely communication with members is essential to promote engagement in the association and to ensure that everyone is well-informed about relevant matters. Formal communication is conducted via email and includes important information such as finances, training schedules, and official announcements. More informal communication takes place through various WhatsApp groups and the Instagram page.

Communication from committees is forwarded to the Internal Coordinator, who then distributes it to team captains and training members. This is usually done via WhatsApp. The Internal Coordinator is responsible for communication between the board, committee chairs, trainers, coaches, and captains. The Secretary manages formal communication directed at the members.

Our recommendation for the coming years is to create a professional WhatsApp group for all members. Only the board would be allowed to post messages in this group, such as last-minute changes to training times and announcements from the board or committees. This way, members receive information directly via WhatsApp instead of through email, which sometimes ends up in spam. It also eliminates reliance on captains who may not forward messages on time. The WhatsApp group is not a replacement for email, but a supplement to ensure important information reaches members more quickly.

7.2 External communication

Our association maintains various external relationships, and a careful and appropriate approach is essential for each of them. It is important to present the association positively and professionally to the outside world. This plays a crucial role in attracting new members, sponsors, donors, and trainers. A well-maintained website and social media channels give external parties a clear impression of the association. While these platforms allow for a more informal tone, our recommendation remains that all shared content should be relevant, appropriate, and in line with the association's image.

7.2.1 Dutch handbal association (NHV)

The NHV is an important organisation for the association for organising competitions and providing support with sports-related and organisational matters, among other things. In addition, the NHV represents the interests of associations at both the national and regional levels, as well as serving as an important point of contact with other handball associations. They also mediate during conflicts that may arise between our association and other handball clubs. Transparent communication with our designated contact person within the NHV is crucial for successful collaboration.

7.2.2 Referees

For every team registered with the NHV, it is mandatory to provide an NHV referee (bondsscheidsrechter). In recent years, our association has provided one NHV referee annually. For each NHV referee not supplied, it is required to provide a club referee (verenigingsscheidsrechter) for ten matches.

We recommend training our own club referees within the association. One option is to offer a free course through the NHV that is supported by experienced practical supervisors. To find these supervisors, contact can be made with Jaap-Willem van Heel, chair of a referees' working group in Northern Netherlands. Until this is achieved, we will need to continue contacting NHV referees to fill these matches. However, it often occurs that NHV referees are unavailable because they have already been assigned by the NHV. We therefore recommend creating a contingency plan for when this situation arises, so that if no NHV referee is available, an email could be sent to other associations to see if their club referees are available.

Showing appreciation to all referees is important, for example, by offering them a refreshment after the match.

7.2.3 External boards

7.2.3.1 ACLO board

Maintaining good contact with the ACLO board is essential and promotes effective collaboration. ACLO regularly organises activities aimed at strengthening the ties between ACLO and its associations. ACLO provides an association document containing key information and deadlines for the season, making it important to monitor this closely. Throughout the year, various sector meetings are held, which the board is required to attend. During these meetings, associations have the opportunity to share their wishes and experiences with other associations and the ACLO board.

7.2.3.2 Other boards

Maintaining relationships with external boards, both within and outside the sports world, can contribute to knowledge sharing, joint activities, and support with organisational matters. Our association is relatively small, so organising larger activities can be challenging due to the associated costs or minimum participant requirements. Collaboration with other associations can make it possible to organise such activities, which makes good communication with external boards essential.

7.2.4 Sports Center

Training sessions, matches, and the international Cirkeltijgers tournament take place at the Sports Center. Good cooperation with the Sports Center staff is important for arranging matters and preventing problems. The Sports Center is

also responsible for scheduling training sessions and matches in the various sports halls.

At the time of writing, Ladies 1 and Men 1 are allowed to train once with resin in preparation for a competitive match where resin is used. For these sessions, it is mandatory to notify the Sports Center at least one week in advance. However, in the new Sports Center that will be built in the coming years, the use of resin will be completely prohibited. We therefore recommend finding an alternative sports hall where all competitive teams can train once with resin before a competitive match that requires it.



CIRKELTIJGERS

8. Social safety and inclusivity

Over the past five years, many changes have taken place within the sports world, with increased attention to topics such as social safety and inclusivity. These are also important issues for our association. The association strives to create a safe and respectful sports environment for everyone, regardless of age, background, gender, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. Social safety and inclusivity are not separate themes but form an integral part of what our association stands for. After all, a sports association is a place where people come together and where there must be space to be fully yourself.

8.1 Confidential Advisors

Within our association, important steps have been taken to achieve the above. We have appointed both a male and a female confidential advisor, making it as easy as possible for all members to reach out. The confidential advisors serve as the first point of contact for members who have experienced something within or outside the association and wish to share their story. We recommend not changing the confidential advisors annually, to develop recognition and trust among members. This will help ensure that members feel more comfortable approaching them.

8.2 Zero tolerance policy

Our association maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual misconduct, violence, and drugs. These rules apply to both members and external participants who take part in activities organised by our association or participate on behalf of the association. Transparency is essential, so it is important to clearly communicate these behavioural rules to both members and external parties. We recommend creating a method to clearly communicate this policy to external participants. One viable option is to provide a concise version of the zero-tolerance policy in the form of a contract. This contract should be signed by externals if they participate in (external) tournaments on behalf of our association, or in the international Cirkeltijgers tournament, for example. New members must agree to the zero-tolerance policy as part of their registration with our association.

For situations that violate the zero-tolerance policy, the association has a complaints committee. The complaints committee ensures that every report or complaint is handled appropriately in consultation with the board or, if a complaint involves a board member, in consultation with the Advisory Council (RVA). We also recommend not changing the members of the complaints committee annually. If complaints arise that are too serious for the association to handle internally, advice can be sought from the ACLO board and the ACII, an advisory body at the University of Groningen that deals with incidents within (sports) associations.

8.3 Behavioural code Groningen

The board must sign the code of conduct of the municipality of Groningen annually. By doing so, board members acknowledge their role model and responsibility in creating and maintaining a safe association culture. At the time of writing, Edith Frijlink is the contact person at the municipality of Groningen for social safety and inclusivity. She is open to providing support and advice, so we recommend consulting her for questions or guidance on these topics.

8.4 Certificate of Conduct (Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag)

Although our association currently has no underage members, it is important to anticipate a possible future influx of minors. It is mandatory for all trainers and coaches working with minors to obtain a valid Certificate of Conduct (Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag). Through a national scheme provided by NOC*NSF, these certificates can be requested free of charge. We recommend extending this obligation to all trainers and coaches, including those who do not train or coach underage members. Social safety is of great importance for all members, including adults.

Social safety is a shared responsibility; together we ensure that H.V. De Cirkeltijgers remains a safe, open, and inclusive association where enjoyment of sport comes first. In the coming years, it will remain important to structurally invest in social safety and an inclusive sports environment.



CIRKELTIJGERS