



NSW Fencing

Equipment and Safety

June 2014

Table of Contents

Purpose.....	3
Context.....	3
Injuries.....	4
Feedback.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Source of hazards.....	5
Equipment overview.....	5
Scoring system elements.....	6
Protective ratings.....	6
Certification.....	7
Equipment elements by type.....	7
Mask.....	7
Jacket.....	8
Underplastron.....	8
Breeches.....	8
Shoes.....	8
Glove.....	9
Socks.....	9
Maintenance.....	9
Weapon specific requirements.....	9
Epee.....	9
Foil.....	9
Sabre.....	9
Age specific requirements for blade sizes.....	10
Gender specific requirements.....	10
Male.....	10
Female.....	10
Minimum equipment levels.....	10
Context.....	10
Proposed equipment requirements.....	11
Upgrading existing equipment.....	12
Phase-in of required equipment for NSWFA Competitions and Squads.....	12
Tables of proposed equipment ratings.....	12
Table 1 Mandatory Minimum Equipment Protection levels by Age and Competition Type	14
Table 2 Recommended Minimum Equipment Protection levels for Clubs, Schools, Coaching.....	15

Purpose

This document is intended to provide information to all interested parties, ranging from parents of first time fencers through to coaches, clubs referees and NSW Fencing, on the appropriate levels of equipment to be used by fencers at all levels in NSW.

It has generally been considered that the minimum acceptable rating for protective equipment at NSW Fencing competitions is 350N, however this has not been stated in a formal policy. The NSW Fencing Association (NSWFA) Executive intends to introduce a formal policy on equipment rating by late 2013, with a phase-in period to allow individuals and clubs to purchase new equipment. It is intended that after the phase-in the use of the stated levels of equipment will be mandatory at all events which are the responsibility of NSWFA, and will be recommended for clubs and schools.

Please note that this document has been written with all members of the fencing community in mind, including parents and beginning fencers as well as experienced fencers, coaches and officials. Also, the protection levels in this document are minima. Use of higher than recommended levels is acceptable, other than U11 competition blade sizes.

Context

The various International and International Fencing Federation (FIE) Standards referred to in the body of this document do not specify what the appropriate ratings are for equipment items to be used at competitions below the international level. The FIE sets equipment requirements for international competitions but does not give guidance about the ratings that should apply in national or regional competitions, referring the matter to the discretion of the local organising bodies.

In Australia, the Australian Fencing Federation (AFF) requires FIE/CEN2 tested and rated equipment for national competitions (with some variation for national schools championships) but does not specify the equipment levels that member state associations should adopt. Requirements at State level vary.

The NSWFA Executive favours uniform equipment requirements at State level but has taken this first step to what we hope will be a path towards State uniformity by preparing safety rules in NSW that are intended to be informative, adequate and appropriate.

In looking for guidance on reasonable levels for local, school and State competitions, the closest comparative jurisdiction for which equipment levels are readily available is the UK, which has a well-developed set of safety requirements, generally setting 350N as the minimum equipment rating for national and local competitions.

British Fencing set three categories:

- a) fencing with size 3 or smaller blades and non-electric foil blades which requires 350N jacket and plastron or 800N jacket, 350N mask and bib, and either breeches or unrated trousers
- b) fencing at FIE and international level which requires 800N plastron, 800N jacket 800N breeches, 1600mask and bib
- c) all other fencing which requires 350N jacket, 350N breeches, 800N plastron, 350N mask and bib.

It seems probable that the same risks pertain to Australian as to UK fencers. Also, within Australia the risks to fencers are likely to be the same in each State at a given competition level. It therefore makes sense to base our requirements on the UK, and, if possible, to aim to align those requirements in each State in the future so as to facilitate competitors being able to compete in other States without having to buy equipment for a "one-off" use. However, we have recommended higher levels of protection for the older age groups in recognition of the overlap between older (20 years and up) fencers and national and international fencers.

There are few reported incidents world-wide of recent serious fencing related injury using equipment

that meets the 350N requirement or higher. A few have been recorded where the fencer was using the higher rated 800N (1600N mask and bib) equipment, which might be related to greater impact forces generated by higher level competitors. Incidents are also known where injury has occurred due to ill-fitting or incorrectly worn equipment.

Serious fencing related injury in NSW is also uncommon, even with equipment in use that may not meet the 350N requirement. However, there have been a couple of recent cases where injuries were sustained during bouts, including one through a relatively new glove, and another involving an older 1600N mask.

Injuries

All sportspeople will sustain injuries from time to time. Most will be trivial, requiring an adhesive or an analgesic and be mainly better within a day or so. Unfortunately others are not so trivial, and the injured person will need medical attention and/or time away from the sport to recover. In order to see if there is a pattern in fencing related injuries, NSWFA would appreciate being informed of the circumstances for fencing related lost-time injuries. Information on type of injury, what the person was doing at the time, what gear (including brand, rating and condition) was involved, the persons name and a contact number in case follow-up questions are necessary should be sent to safetydraft@nswfencing.org.au and marked "injury". Your help in this will lead to a safer sport, and aid in making evidence based decisions on necessary equipment levels.

Feedback

It is the intention of the NSWFA to revise this document periodically as needed. If you notice any inaccuracies, or matters that should be included and aren't, please send your comments to safetydraft@nswfencing.org.au and marked "feedback". If you explain as clearly as you can what should be changed or included, and why, we will have a better chance of understanding your point and adjusting the document appropriately if needed.

Changes

(June 2014) :This version has been updated to reflect the changes in equipment requirements for Sabre by the FIE and clarification of groin and chest protection requirements.

For Sabre, masks with clear visors are no longer acceptable and must be replaced by 1 July 2014. By 2015, gauntlets must be impact rated to 800N by 2015, It is recommended that if a fencer needs to replace a gauntlet before January 2015, they replace it with the 800N type.

Chest protector clarification

For all weapons, girls of any age must wear a hard chest protector. Boys under 13 must wear a chest protector for epee.

Groin protector clarification

Groin protectors are recommended for all male fencers. They are not mandatory because it is recognised that the traditional hard groin protector may compromise free movement and if cracked, or if shattered, may present different hazards. If a fencer wants to have extra groin protection, 800N rated underwear is available and should be considered.

Introduction

Fencing is a combat sport requiring fast thinking and rapid movement. It is a ballistic action sport, meaning it is a stop-start, rapid change-of-direction activity. Like any competitive sport it has an intrinsic risk of injury, and as with most ballistic sports the principal risks are of sprains and strains, particularly to the lower limbs.

A 5 year survey of American fencing competitions showed fencing to have a relatively low rate of time/loss injury, similar to other ballistic sports. This means that modern fencing is a relatively low-risk sport although serious injuries can, and do, occur. However, the relatively low occurrence of serious injury now is supported by the mandatory use of correct protective equipment, particularly the mask and underplastron.

The fencing uniform is intended to protect the wearer against penetration injuries from the forces generated by a hit from their competitor's weapon, particularly in the event that their competitor's blade breaks. It does not provide particular protection against ordinary impact injury caused by being hit, such as bruising, except for the use of the hard chest plate/s required for female fencers and young males and hard crotch protectors for young males.

For the uniform to be effective it must be worn at all bouts. It must also be at least the minimum impact level appropriate to the risks associated with the level or age group of the bout, and be properly fitted and well maintained.

In this document where ratings and the like are mentioned, they refer to correctly maintained equipment in good condition. Irrespective of the nominal rating, defective equipment does not provide the level of protection with which the item is marked, and should not be used.

An important, and often overlooked, aspect of safety is vigilance by all concerned in the sport. Defective equipment should be retired until it is repaired by a competent person, if such repair is possible. If not possible the equipment should be permanently marked or destroyed so that it is not used by mistake.

It must be understood, however, that as with every sport, even the correct fitting and use of a recommended grade of appropriately maintained equipment does not guarantee that the sport will be accident free.

Source of hazards

Inadequate warmup/cool down leading to soft tissue injuries.
Inappropriate footwear leading to incorrect grip on the piste and knee or ankle flexion.
Forceful hits leading to bruises, contusions or broken bones.
Puncture injuries to the head or body from an intact or broken blade.

Equipment overview

Fencing safety requires that in a competition, all skin be covered except for the non-weapon hand and the back of the head. A full fencing uniform currently comprises a mask and bib, jacket, underplastron and breeches. These items must be made of impact resistant material which is rated according to its level of impact resistance.

Shoes and knee-length socks are also required, as well a technical glove or gauntlet on the weapon hand.

Rigid chest-protectors are compulsory for females of all ages, as well as for males under 13 in epee ,

but these protectors do not have to be rated.

A groin protector or cricket box, or impact rated underwear is recommended for all males, especially in epee. This is particularly the case in bouts where one or more participants are relatively inexperienced and more likely to hit off-target.

Clothing must be white, other than the webbing of the glove or gauntlet, and the off-foot sock, which may be coloured or patterned as long as neither glove nor sock are predominantly black.

Note: The requirement for the uniform to be white is not a safety issue, but dates back to before electronic scoring, when impacts were shown up as a red dots against the white background. The continuing prohibition on black clothing is because that colour denotes a coach or other official.

A weapon is also required and is part of the safety system. The weapon is required to not have an observable defect (such as a crack or eccentric bend) before or during a bout. The specification for the grade of weapon will vary with the level of the competition, and may include specifications as to construction material. Foil and epee blades that meet FIE specifications have an FIE stamp on the blade and the year of manufacture. This stamp certifies that the blade has been produced by an FIE-approved maker to the FIE standard. For sabres, the stamp is S2000. Blades are made from two types of steel. A blade made from maraging steel is generally stronger than a blade made from non-maraging steel and has a flatter, rather than jagged, fracture profile.

Blades that do not carry the FIE stamp may prove serviceable and are acceptable in training and some competitions, but they are generally not of the quality of FIE blades. However, an FIE stamp is not a guarantee of longevity.

Scoring system elements

There are three weapons used in modern fencing; sabre, foil and epee. If the scoring in a bout is electronic, a conductive jacket (lame) and bodywire are required for foil and sabre and a bodywire for epee. Depending on the level of competition, foil and sabre may also require a conductive bib and headwire. The mask requirements for sabre differ from those for foil and epee, and a conductive glove or gauntlet is required. These variations will be discussed later under weapon types.

While some of the scoring system elements may in fact provide some protection, that is not the main purpose of their design, and it is inappropriate to rely on these elements as primary safety items.

Protective ratings

In fencing, protective equipment is rated according to the impact force which the material will resist, according to the test procedures in the European Standard EN13567 *Protective Clothing – Hand, Arm, Chest, Abdomen, Leg, Genital and Face Protectors for Fencers,- Requirements and Test Methods*. The current edition of this standard is 2002, addendum 1 2007. This Standard is a suite of test methods for assessing and rating fencing equipment. It has one informative annex on equipment use, *Annex B Levels of Protection*. which says:

"Level 1: This is the lowest level of protection for fencing equipment.

Level 2: This is the highest level of protection for fencing equipment and is the Standard set for top international competition by the fencing International Governing Body the FIE. "

The ratings in this Standard are:

Level 1: Resistant to 350N of impact force (often called CIE equipment, or CEN1)

Level 2: Resistant to 800 N of impact force, 1600N for Mask and Bib (often called FIE equipment or CEN2).

N = Newtons, a measure of force.

Certification

It is beyond the ability of most individuals to test and rate each item of fencing equipment that they own, or to determine if the testing has been carried out correctly. In order to ensure that equipment is of the level it claims, and to allow weapons check before competitions, all jackets, underplastrons, breeches, masks and bibs worn by competitors at NSW Fencing competitions must be rated and labelled according to the test results for that brand and model of item as CEN1 or CEN2 or FIE. This also applies to weapons. If a particular grade of weapon is specified in Table 1. As Table 2 is advisory, it is up to the person holding the position of responsibility for each event in Table 2 to decide whether to allow equipment that has been not been tested and labelled.

Where rated equipment is referred to in this document, it means equipment tested by a competent laboratory in accordance with EN13567 and certified by a competent body as meeting CEN or FIE requirements and labelled accordingly.

A list of competent laboratories and certified equipment is beyond the scope of this document. However, more detailed information can be found on the FIE website and should be available from the manufacturers of certified equipment.

Equipment elements by type

Mask

The mask must be made from protective material which allows the wearer to see while affording impact protection to the face and sides of the head. The design must provide penetration and impact protection to the face and sides of the head with minimum interference to the visual acuity of the wearer. Current mask designs do not protect the back of the skull or top of the neck.

The material used for the mask face is usually metal mesh,

Note: „As decided by the FIE. The masks or sabre with a transparent plastic sheet visor set into a mesh surround may no longer be used

The mask face is set in a frame to accommodate top and side panels. The seal between the wire mesh and the frame of the mask must be securely fixed without any gaps which could allow a blade to penetrate.

A robust, formed, bib is fitted around the bottom of the mask and up the sides to protect the neck.

The mask must have an elastic strap at the back to hold the mask securely in place on the head. During a bout, the strap shall be in contact with the back of the head and shall not be looped over the tang (if present).

The mask must be an appropriate size for the wearer. When fitted with the bib in place, it should not ride up when the head is tilted forward, nor shift easily when the head is shaken. A bib which is very stiff, or more than 120mm deep, may cause the mask to ride up in use and the user should check for this when fitting the mask.

As a fencer may need a conductive or non-conductive bib depending on the weapon type and competition level, a mask that accepts changeable bibs may be used, with the following provisos:

- Interchangeable or retrofitted bibs are only acceptable if they are the type or types specified by the manufacturer of that mask.
- The method of securing the bib is that specified by the manufacturer of that mask and bib.

- The recommended bibs should attach easily and securely.
- There must be no gaps in the attachment
- The mask must be presented at weapons check in the condition in which it is to be used. If a change is made during the competition, such as a lame applied or removed, the mask must be submitted again for checking.

The protective material (usually a wire mesh) should be regularly checked for defects. Typical defects include distortion (including dents), corrosion (from water, sweat or cleaning fluids), weak points and separation of wires in the mesh.

A mask should be replaced if flaws are seen or if it is past its marked “use-by” date. A defective mask should be marked or destroyed so that it is not used deliberately or inadvertently by another fencer.

Before major competitions, masks will be subject to check by weapons testers, however it is the responsibility of the fencer to maintain his or her mask in good condition at all times. A defective mask which is unsuitable for competition should not be used for other purposes such as training, because the risk that it protects against is not materially changed and the consequences of mask failure are likely to be a serious injury.

Jacket

Jackets should have a turnover collar to catch a blade if it slides up the jacket under the bib, to prevent contact with the neck or jaw. If the jacket has a front opening, the opening should be on the side of the fencer’s non-weapon arm, so the opening is covered by a flap that will carry a blade over it.

The jacket must be long enough to cover the hips and prevent any skin showing between the jacket and breeches.

The jacket and breeches should overlap, particularly at the back, in order to provide protection to the kidney area if the jacket rides up during a bout.

Underplastron

Underplastrons are handed. The sleeve should fit over the weapon arm. Any seams in the underplastron should be in a different position to those in the jacket to avoid a weak point that might permit weapon entry.

If the underplastron is secured by a strap or straps, they should be in good condition so the garment fits the wearer snugly.

Breeches

Breeches should fit snugly but not impede free movement. They should be long enough to cover the fencer from the above waist to below the knees.

Shoes

Shoes should be flexible, have a gripping sole with side support and a rounded heel to facilitate lunging. Purpose designed fencing shoes are recommended. Running shoes with a built up heel that is extended behind the foot or out to the sides may contribute to rolling ankle injury.

Glove

The glove or gauntlet should have a protective area across the back of the hand and along the back of

each finger. Once the glove is fastened, there should be no holes other than that necessary for a body wire. Gloves and gauntlets are particularly susceptible to deterioration through wear, so should be examined regularly for signs of wear and replaced if necessary. The glove must extend back over the forearm. It must be worn over the outside of the jacket sleeve and stay there in use to protect against a blade slipping inside the jacket sleeve. For sabre, as of 2015 gauntlets must be rated at 800N as decided by the FIE.

Note: It is recommended that if a fencer needs to replace a gauntlet before January 2015, they replace it with the 800N type.

Socks

Socks should be knee level or higher so there is no bare skin between the sock and the breeches. Socks must be of a type that will not fall down while fencing. Socks should not be considered to provide any significant protection against injury.

Maintenance

All equipment should be maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.

For hygiene reasons, the fencing uniform will need to be laundered. However, because the uniforms utilise unusual materials to provide their integrity, failure to follow the manufacturer's stated care instructions may reduce the impact resistance capacity of the garments without that reduction being apparent.

Use of non-recommended cleaning fluids may affect the protective capability of transparent visors.

Sweat corrodes metal. Wet conditions will corrode metal. Storage of masks (and lames) in bags with used clothing or towels will necessarily challenge the metal components and may unnecessarily shorten their life.

Weapon specific requirements

Epee

Weapon, body-wire, mask with non-conductive bib, no lame. A groin protector is required for all males in schools competitions,

Foil

Weapon, body wire, conductive lame, mask and bib. The requirement for the bib to be conductive or non-conductive and the associated wire requirement will vary with the competition type and age group,

Sabre

Weapon, sabre mask with conductive bib and wire, sabre lame and bodywire.

Age specific requirements for blade sizes

For all age categories, coaches and fencers/parents should consider what blade size that best suits each individual fencer, with consideration given to the weapon type, and to the physical and fencing development of that fencer, in deciding what is most weight-appropriate for them for regular use.

However, in order to provide weapon parity for young fencers, the following requirements apply to NSW State and Schools competitions:

For ages Under-13 and older there are no restriction on blade size.

For ages Under-11 and younger, fencers must use blades of maximum sizes 0-3.

~~Foil and Epee must use blades of maximum sizes 0-3,~~

~~For Sabre there is no restriction on blade size.~~

Gender specific requirements

Male

Groin protectors

A groin protector is compulsory in epee for males of all age groups in schools competitions. A groin protector is recommended for all male fencers in other weapons and age groups. It is not currently mandatory because it is recognised that the traditional hard groin protector may compromise free movement, and if cracked, or if shattered, may present different hazards. If a fencer wants to have extra groin protection, 800N rated underwear is available and should be considered.

Chest protectors

A flat chest protector is compulsory for males in epee up to and including the U13 age group and is recommended for all other weapons and age groups.

The groin and chest protectors must be in good condition and any rigid component must have no visible cracks, as a crack can open under impact and cause a potentially serious pinch injury.

Female

Chest protectors

A chest protector is compulsory for all age groups and weapon types. It may be of the bodice type, or protective cups known as 'dingers'. The bodice type is strongly recommended as "dingers" may not adequately protect the sternum or ribs.

The chest protector must be in good condition with no visible cracks, as a crack can open under impact and cause a potentially serious pinch injury.

Minimum equipment levels

Context

At competitions, the minimum level of protective equipment needed will vary with the age, experience, size and gender of the competitors, having regard to the types of impacts likely to be generated by the other competitors.

Observation shows that older, larger, more experienced competitors may generate more impact force, but are more likely to hit within target areas and to an opponent who is more likely to be accommodating the hit in some way, whereas younger, lighter, less experienced competitors may be more likely to hit off-target, and perhaps outside the more protected areas, but with less force. The lack of a significant observed incidence of penetration-type injury over time and amongst a large numbers of fencers of a wide range of ages, sizes and skill levels undertaking large numbers of bouts suggests that

the protective systems are, relative to the risk, effective.

In general, the minimum rating for each item of protective equipment for bouts should be 350N.

For intermediate competitor levels (Schools competitions, State) a combination of 350 and 800N clothing and 1600N for mask and bib should be appropriate.

For top levels of competition the equipment levels are set by the relevant organising bodies (AFF, National, FIE World, Olympic). Currently 800N equipment (1600N for mask and bib) is required.

At practice and instruction sessions where impacts are more controlled, the use of lesser, or in some cases unrated, equipment may be acceptable after assessment of player control and likely impact forces and level of supervision by the coach or other designated responsible person in charge.

If the decision is made to allow the use of any unrated equipment, this assessment should be documented by the decision maker. If bouting type activity is likely, the use of rated equipment is recommended. Club or practice bouts should be considered to require the same level of protection as an equivalent competitor-level competition bout.

Proposed equipment requirements

The maximum protection practically available for all competitors is currently FIE rated weapons, 800N breeches, underplastron and jacket and a 1600N mask and bib. However, the observed reality is that an Olympic competition level of protection is highly unlikely to be necessary or cost effective for the younger competitors or at club or instruction level, particularly given the low incidence of reported injury when much of the protective equipment historically used is unrated and of an unknown protective level.

In the absence of detailed research on the matter, U15 (i.e. age based competition descriptions) has been taken as an indicative cut off point where the impacts are likely to be greater because of the increasing size, skill and experience of the competitors and higher than minimum level protection may thus be required. This age base has been used rather than simply a division according to the type of competition (i.e. local, school, state, national).

It is not the wearer whose age/skill/size is the issue, it is that of the person they face, who may well be much larger or of a different skill or experience level, even if they are the same age. As it is the impact generated by the other fencer that needs to be protected against, if a competitor 'fences-up', that is, fences in a higher age or competition category than their cohort, the safety requirements of the higher age or competition category apply.

Whether this increase is necessary or cost effective in the absence of a history of injuries that would have been prevented by a change in equipment standards is unclear. However, given the availability of graded protective equipment, it would seem prudent to set minimum equipment requirements together with an appropriate phase-in period

These guidelines are expected to provide increased protection over that produced by the status quo.

Upgrading existing equipment

It is acknowledged that complying with the proposed equipment requirements will cause serious financial implications for some participants, so, in the absence of any empirical evidence of injury indicating a pressing need for an immediate change at any level, a phase-in time seems reasonable. However, an appropriate response to safety must take priority over expense.

A phase in time should be set for the new equipment to be obtained and brought into use. For the

phase in, it is recommended that a stock-take be made of the equipment under their control by the NSWFA and by each club, school or coach who provides equipment, and that the items furthest from the suggested levels be replaced first. Absent any other criteria, the order might be: underplastron, mask/bib, weapons, gloves, jacket, breeches.

Unless there is evidence of injuries due to the use of lower rated equipment, it is recommended that all equipment be upgraded according to the normal stock replenishment schedule or within 5 years, whichever is the sooner.

Phase-in of required equipment for NSWFA Competitions and Squads

NSWFA encourages all competitors to obtain and wear equipment that complies with or exceeds the requirements in Table 1 for their age group and competition type as soon as feasible. It is strongly recommended that as weapons are replaced and new weapons acquired, they also comply with the relevant requirements in Table 1.

For NSWFA competitions, the following items will become mandatory according to the following timetable:

- As of 1 January 2014, all competitors in NSWFA competitions must wear underplastrons that comply with the relevant requirements in Table 1.
- As of 1 July 2014, all competitors in NSWFA sabre competitions must wear a mesh mask. Masks with clear visors are no longer accepted.
- As of 1 January 2015, all competitors in NSWFA competitions must also wear masks and bibs that comply with the relevant requirements in Table 1.
- As of 1 January 2016, all competitors in NSWFA competitions must also wear jackets and breeches that comply with the relevant requirements in Table 1.

Tables of proposed equipment ratings

Fencing has an extremely low incidence of reported injury with the current levels of protection. Assuming the likely impacts will vary with the age, size and skill of the competitors, the tables below align the protection to the perceived risk, and to allow easier movement of competitors and their equipment between States for competitions.

The minimum criteria for equipment for competitions are given in Table 1. The practice has been to allow the use of tracksuit pants in place of breeches for some club and younger competitor's bouts. The use of minimum 350N breeches is recommended for all bouts. Rated breeches are compulsory for epee where the legs are a valid target area. If the decision is made to allow tracksuit pants for foil or sabre, the pockets and other openings should be sewn or otherwise fixed shut so that they do not catch a blade. Shorts, tights and leggings are not acceptable unless they are worn underneath breeches (or tracksuit pants if that is an option instead of breeches).

Note: Shorts may provide an additional hazard if the blade catches in the leg opening and is directed up the leg and toward the crotch.

Recommended levels of equipment for fencing events in NSW other than competitions are given in Table 2. The use of equipment according to the requirements of the appropriate age group is recommended. If the individual who is responsible for the event (who is likely to be the instructor, club president or presiding coach) chooses to allow lesser equipment, the reason(s) for this decision shall be noted in writing.

All recommended grades are minima, and the use of higher grades is encouraged, as is compliance before the specified date.

Table 1 Mandatory Minimum Equipment Protection levels by Age and Competition Type

Level	Specified by	Under plastron	Weapon	Mask and bib	Jacket	Breeches
International (all ages)	FIE	800N	FIE 2000S	1600N	800N	800N
National	AFF	800N	FIE 2000S	1600N	800N	800N
National Schools	AFF	800N	FIE 2000S	1600N	350N	350N
State Novice	NSWFA	800N	Good condition	350N	350N	350N
Schools competitions	NSWFA	800N	Good condition Blade size maximum 0 – 3 for foil and epee U11 and younger, no restriction for sabre	350N	350N	350N/ Tracksuit pants allowed for foil and sabre for U13 and younger
U20/Junior, U23, Veteran, Open, NSWFA Squads and Camps	NSWFA	800N	Good condition	1600N	800N	800N
U15, U17/Cadet	NSWFA	800N	Good condition	1600N	350N	350N
U13	NSWFA	800N	Good condition	350N	350N	350N/ Tracksuit pants allowed for foil and sabre
U11 and younger	NSWFA	800N	Good condition. Blade size maximum 0 – 3 for foil and epee, no restriction for sabre	350N	350N	350N/ Tracksuit pants allowed for foil and sabre
Phase in timing	In force by	2014	2015	2015	2016	2016

Table 2 Recommended Minimum Equipment Protection levels for Clubs, Schools, Coaching

Level	Specified by	Weapon	Mask and bib	Under plastron	Jacket	Breeches
Group instruction	Club President	good condition	350N	350N	350N	Club President specifies
Bouts, controlled training U17 and older	Club President	FIE 2000S	350N	800N	350N	Instructor specifies
Bouts, controlled training, U15	Club President	good condition	350N	350N	350N	Instructor specifies
Bouts, controlled training, U13 and younger	Club President	good condition	350N	350N	350N	Instructor specifies
Individual Instruction/drills	Instructor	good condition	350N	Instructor specifies	Instructor specifies	Instructor specifies