

**ANNEX ONE**

**World Rugby furthers head injury prevention commitment with expanded Head Contact Process**

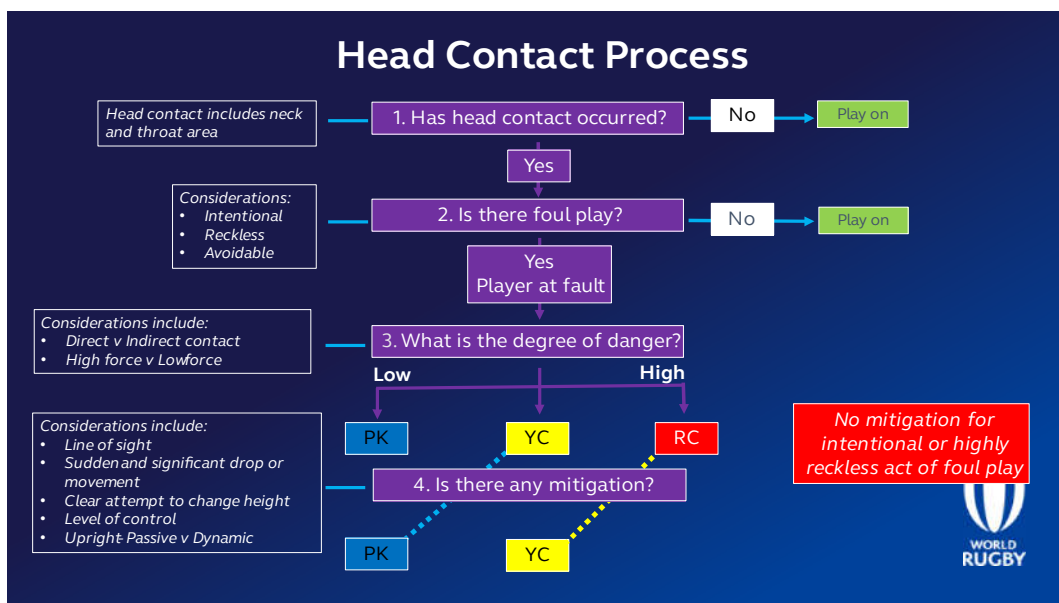
World Rugby has launched the Head Contact Process (HCP) to assist the sanctioning process for contact with the head and neck, underscoring the sport’s commitment to head injury prevention.

The HCP is an evolution of the High Tackle Sanction Framework, which supported rugby’s ambition of reducing the risk of head injury through stronger and more consistent on and off field sanctioning of high-risk tackle actions, in turn encouraging a positive change in player behaviour.

The scope for sanction consideration has been broadened within the HCP to include all illegal head and neck contact, including dangerous clean-outs, head-on-head collisions and head contact which arises from ball carriers leading with an elbow or forearm, in addition to high tackles and shoulder charges.

The HCP will come into effect from March 10, 2021 in the form of a Law Application Guideline <https://www.world.rugby/the-game/laws/guidelines/17>

As well as the broader scope the HCP provides a clear 4 step process for on-field sanctioning



and a series of trigger words to help Match Officials determine and explain sanctions.

Trigger words for match officials		
Match Officials may wish to use the non-exhaustive list of trigger words below to help them identify whether a player is at fault, the degree of danger involved and whether any mitigation should be applied.		
PLAY ON	PK	YC
RC		
<b>No Fault</b>	<b>Low danger</b>	<b>High danger</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sudden and significant drop in height by the ball carrier</li> <li>Player had no time to readjust</li> <li>Passive action</li> <li>Involuntary collision</li> <li>No leading arm when close to the body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indirect contact</li> <li>Low force</li> <li>Low speed</li> <li>Passive</li> <li>No leading head/shoulder/forearm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct contact</li> <li>Lack of control</li> <li>High speed</li> <li>Upright &amp; dynamic</li> <li>Leading head/shoulder/elbow/forearm</li> <li>Swinging arm</li> <li>No mitigation for intentional or highly reckless act of foul play</li> </ul>
	<b>Mitigation</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sudden/significant drop in height or change in direction from ball carrier</li> <li>A late change in dynamics due to another player in the contact</li> <li>An effort to wrap/bind and having no time to adjust</li> </ul>	



With the game united in its commitment to protecting players, the HCP is the result of a comprehensive, collaborative and scheduled review of the High Tackle Sanction Framework actioned at the Player Welfare Symposium in Paris in March 2020. It was undertaken by a multi-disciplinary review group featuring players, coaches, referees, medics and disciplinary representatives\*.

While the on-field sanctions have been approved for EXCO for immediate implementation, an exciting proposal regarding off-field sanctions will be voted on by Council in May.

**\*The High Tackle Sanction Framework Review Group:** Bernard Laporte (Chair), Conrad Smith and David Quinlan (IRP), Richie Gray, Dave Rennie and Gregor Townsend (coaches), Wayne Barnes and Jaco Peyper (referees), Christopher Quinlan QC and David Barnes (judicial and citing), Dr Martin Raftery and Professor Ross Tucker (medical and research), Alan Gilpin, Joe Schmidt, Mark Harrington, Dr Éanna Falvey, Joël Jutge, Paddy O'Brien, Yvonne Nolan, Steve Hinds, Rhys Jones and Dominic Rumbles (World Rugby).