



HANDBOOK OF REGULATIONS

FOR THE ORGANISATION OF PROTOCOL CEREMONIES

AT FIE COMPETITIONS

November 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

The four protocol ceremonies – opening and closing ceremonies, finals presentation and medals ceremonies – are the highlights of the major FIE competitions, as they are media events accessible to the world-wide public. Their presentation must therefore have an exceptional production, without compromising the sporting aspects such as quality of the piste, lighting, and the space allocated to fencers and referees.

The production must in particular pay attention to:

- the aesthetics of the scene
- the ease of understanding of the spectators and television audience
- the suitability and convenience of television camera and photographer positions
- strict adherence to the timetables
- the official protocol requirements
- the reliability of equipment

The protocol function is an increasingly important part of the way that fencing is presented. Apart from the protocol ceremonies and their associated activities, it has always included elements of VIP management such as reserved seating and hospitality. However, with the increasing importance of fencing's VIP guests, including sponsors who may be watching via television or the internet, it becomes more difficult to separate VIP considerations from those of the general spectator experience. The areas of interest of the protocol role are therefore expanding to include some of the relevant spectator experience areas.

These, among other developments, have prompted:

- the creation of a separate organisers' handbook for protocol, outlining the protocol regulations and requirements for FIE events
- the appointment of a permanent FIE Chief of Protocol
- the requirement for a designated Protocol Manager within the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of World Championships, Zonal Championships and Grand Prix events

1.1 The protocol handbook

In order to ensure the optimal promotion and presentation of all FIE events, and in particular the World Championships, the FIE has established this handbook to assist those in the LOC who have responsibility for protocol, by including all the relevant regulations and requirements within one document.

The objectives of the protocol requirements outlined in this handbook are:

- to ensure the accuracy and smooth-running of the protocol ceremonies and all other related matters
- to further increase the profile of the sport
- to enhance the experience of spectators, television audiences and internet users

This new handbook has expanded and developed the sections that were previously contained in the general Organisers Handbook, and also includes the protocol sections that were previously incorporated in the FIE Administrative Rules.

Unless otherwise specified, the requirements in this handbook apply to all FIE individual and team competitions for senior, junior and cadet categories. (For veteran events they apply only as recommendations.)

1.2 The role of the FIE Chief of Protocol

For World Championships and nominated Grand Prix events that are selected prior to the start of the season, the FIE Chief of Protocol liaises with the LOC to ensure, on behalf of the FIE, that all elements of FIE protocol are respected, as outlined in the FIE Statutes, the FIE Administrative Rules and any relevant handbooks.

The FIE Chief of Protocol works collaboratively with the LOC's appointed person – preferably a dedicated Protocol Manager – to ensure the best possible outcome. Specific responsibilities of the FIE Chief of Protocol and the LOC Protocol Manager are described in section 2 of this handbook.

The FIE Chief of Protocol will receive and review the LOC's protocol-related plans not less than 2 months in advance of the event.

At the expense (travel, full board and per diems) of the LOC, the FIE Chief of Protocol will arrive at the venue 2-3 days in advance of the start of competition in order to view all the relevant arrangements, observe rehearsals of the protocol ceremonies (opening and closing ceremonies where applicable, medals ceremony and finals presentation) and agree any necessary final adjustments. Full details are given in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of this handbook.

1.3 Roles within the Local Organising Committee (LOC)

For World Championships, Zonal Championships and Grand Prix events, the LOC must appoint a Protocol Manager who will have responsibility for the planning and delivery of all the protocol functions outlined in section 2.2. The LOC may also appoint a commentator/Master of Ceremonies (MC) to present one or more of the protocol ceremonies.

The LOC Protocol Manager will be responsible for the progressive unfolding of all the protocol phases, which must result in a perfectly presented production. This will be supervised by the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official.

The MC and/or announcers, directed by the LOC Protocol Manager or nominated manager, will present all these public phases. The commentary:

- must be dignified
- must be in French, then in the language of the organising country (but if the first language of the organising country is French, then the second language will be English)
- must not continue during the fencing bouts
- must not criticise the referees' decisions
- must remain impartial

The LOC Protocol Manager, with the aid of the MC where appropriate, should ensure that slack periods are filled appropriately (for example – with entertainment, exhibitions, audience engagement or background music).

2. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 FIE Chief of Protocol

For World Championships and the nominated Grand Prix events, the FIE Chief of Protocol collaborates with and supports the LOC to ensure the proper preparation, in line with FIE regulations and expectations, of:

- the display of flags
- the opening and closing ceremonies, where applicable
- the finals presentation
- the medals ceremonies
- VIP arrangements and facilities
- some aspects of presentation, in particular those that impact on the VIP experience (such as spectator information, venue dressing and signage)

In advance of the start of competition (not less than 2 months) the FIE Chief of Protocol will receive from the LOC the plans and arrangements for all the aspects listed in section 5.1 for review and approval.

The FIE Chief of Protocol will arrive 2-3 days in advance of the start of competition in order to:

- observe rehearsals of the protocol ceremonies (opening and closing ceremonies where applicable, medals ceremony and finals presentation) as listed in section 5.3
- view other relevant arrangements as listed in section 5.2
- agree any necessary final adjustments.

During the competition the FIE Chief of Protocol:

- Ensures that FIE protocol regulations are respected
- Assists in the technical organisation of the protocol ceremonies and ensures that the work of the personnel in charge is properly organised
- For World Championships:
 - establishes the seating order in the Presidential Box and/or the VIP box or section, and liaises with the LOC Protocol Manager to ensure that every seat bears the name of its entitled person
 - collaborates with the FIE President or his representative (on such occasions when the President is present) to receive and transmit the names of the FIE officials who will take part in the medals ceremonies

2.2 LOC Protocol Manager

For World Championships, Zonal Championships and Grand Prix events, the LOC will appoint a Protocol Manager, to undertake the following:

- To be responsible for the technical organisation of the protocol ceremonies and procedures as specified in this handbook and as indicated by the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official
- To ensure that the work of the personnel connected with the protocol ceremonies and VIP arrangements is properly organised and presented, including the provision of suitable costumes, uniforms and dress code for the various participants
- To organise the naming of the reserved seats in the Presidential Box and/or the VIP box or section, in consultation with the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official and according to the order of precedence
- To oversee the occupation of all sections of reserved or dedicated seats, and to ensure that the security services do the same
- To receive, in good time, the names of the LOC VIPs who will take part in the medals ceremonies
- To arrange full rehearsals of the protocol ceremonies, with the final rehearsals 1-2 days before the first day of competition, as detailed in section 5.3, to be observed by the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official. For those LOC managers or team leaders who will not be present for all ceremonies, arrangements must be made for their deputies to attend the rehearsals.
- To review all other relevant arrangements with the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official, 1-2 days before the first day of competition, as detailed in section 5.2
- To forward protocol plans and other relevant information to the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official, no less than 2 months before the event, as detailed in section 5.1
- To liaise with other LOC personnel to ensure that all high-profile volunteers are well-selected, well-trained and well-managed in order that they represent the sport well. Examples are:
 - Participants in any of the protocol ceremonies
 - Field of play volunteers who are in sight of the spectators or the television cameras
 - VIP hosts and/or hostesses

- To request from the FIE, not less than one week in advance of the start of the event, the number of seats to be reserved in the finals hall for FIE guests and sponsors
- To notify the FIE, not less than 30 days in advance, in the case that the opening ceremony is organised in the open air and is a big event involving the general public
- To request from the FIE, not less than one week in advance, the number of seats to be reserved for the FIE Executive Committee and guests, in the case that the opening ceremony takes place elsewhere than the competition venue
- Each day, to ensure that the medals and diplomas for that day are handed over in good time to the FIE Chief of Protocol. Upon delivery, each medal must be checked by the FIE Chief of Protocol in front of the LOC representative who is delivering them.
- To ensure that all protocol-related data is collected and managed in a timely fashion (see details in 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.4 and 3.7)
- To ensure that the LOC protocol team is properly established as detailed in 2.3, including:
 - that there is an appropriate protocol team structure in place
 - that the team leaders have the information required for their roles
 - that all team members have the necessary equipment for their role (such as computers, printers, radios and/or mobile phones)
 - that all team members are well-trained, and have a clear understanding of their role and the relevant FIE requirements, and are given all information needed to do their job well
- To provide the necessary facilities for the protocol team as detailed in 2.4.

2.3 LOC protocol team structure

For World Championships the LOC should appoint a protocol team similar to that described in this section. For other events this section can be used as a guide, as appropriate.

The LOC Protocol Manager must ensure that there is a suitable structure in place to fulfil all the FIE protocol requirements, such that there is a perfect performance of all protocol ceremonies and arrangements commencing on Day 1.

The main roles include:

- A producer for the opening ceremony, with an MC (optional) and 2 announcers (French language and host country language) for all the protocol ceremonies (but if the first language of the organising country is French, then the second language will be English)

- A manager for the 2 daily competition ceremonies – the finals presentation and the medals ceremonies. This person can also be responsible for the closing ceremony.
- Team leaders for each of:
 - the Call Room Protocol team
 - the VIP presenter team
 - the medal-bearer team
 - the flag-raising team
 - the platform team

Some of the team leader roles may be combined (but not with the VIP Team Leader).

2.3.1 Competition Ceremonies Manager

The Competition Ceremonies Manager has operational responsibility for co-ordinating the finals presentation and medal ceremonies each day through the various protocol team leaders.

It is likely, depending on the decision of the LOC Protocol Manager, that he/she will also have operational responsibility for the closing ceremony.

This person must be available to the FIE Chief of Protocol on a day-to-day basis, for consultation about any problems or changes that need to be made for that day. This person will have the following responsibilities:

- Co-ordinate, on a daily basis, all the LOC teams that participate in the Finals Presentation and Medals Ceremonies by liaising with:
 - the Call Room Protocol Team Leader
 - the VIP Team Leader
 - the Medal-bearers Team Leader
 - the Flag-raising Team Leader
 - the Platform Team Leader
 - the MC (if applicable) and/or French-language announcer (who will liaise with the host country announcer)
 - the music co-ordinator
- Train and manage the protocol team leaders, as above.
- Ensure that all team members are given detailed information regarding the LOC protocol team structure including team members' names, roles and contact details , and an explanation of the scope and boundaries of the different team roles.

- Instruct all team leaders and team members that, if they are unable to attend for the scheduled day/time, or if they are delayed and likely to arrive late, they must as soon as possible notify their team leader or manager. They must not make their own arrangements for alternative cover.
- After consultation with the FIE Chief of Protocol, ensure that all team members are notified of their required arrival time for the following day. Ensure that all team leaders maintain a daily list of check-in times for their team members, along with their contact details.
- Check, through the team leaders, that all participants are in place at their required times. (Generally – but not always – LOC team members should check in 1 hour before their start time and be in their correct position 30 minutes before their start time.)
- Double-check all critical elements such as the selection of the correct flags and national anthems for the prize giving ceremony.
- Ensure that the 2 competition ceremonies start in good time, and undertake a trouble-shooting role to solve any unexpected problems.
- Ensure that all teams receive a print-out of the appropriate results in good time, including:
 - that the announcers have the correct order of fencers and referees for the finals presentation
 - that the MC and/or announcers have the details of the medallists for the medals ceremony
 - that the flag-raising team leader has the list of medallists' nationalities
- Check when all teams are ready to start each ceremony. Then notify everyone that it is about to start, and notify the MC or French language announcer and the music co-ordinator that they should start the ceremony immediately.
- Ensure that the medal ceremony teams all commence at the moment the French language announcer has announced the start of the protocol ceremony (and not before).
- Co-ordinate each day the radio requirement of all teams, and their distribution, end-of-day collection and overnight charging. Ensure that all radio users are instructed in how to use the radio (for example – they must identify themselves at the start of each radio conversation).
- Prepare a contingency plan in advance in case of any unexpected absence (for example – one of the medal bearers not arriving).

- Brief the team leaders each day regarding any changes or special requests, and check with the team leaders that they know what they need for the following day (for example, the correct number of flower bouquets for the medallists).
- Work with the LOC Protocol Manager, the Flag-raising team leader, the French announcer and the music co-ordinator – and others as appropriate – to co-ordinate the closing ceremony and its rehearsals.
- Ensure that there are adequate security arrangements in place for the temporary storage of all items.
- Check that all direct reports (protocol team leaders and call room protocol volunteers) arrive at the venue at the specified time, are in position at the specified time, and are properly dressed.
- Notify the FIE Chief of Protocol and the LOC Protocol Manager, at the earliest opportunity, if there is a significant problem – anticipated or actual.

2.3.2 VIP Team Leader

This team leader has responsibility for looking after the VIPs taking part in the protocol ceremonies. This role cannot therefore be combined with any other protocol ceremony role. This person will also assist the LOC Protocol Manager with the arrangements for the VIP tribune, and other ad hoc requests in connection with the VIPs. The main elements of the role are below.

VIP presenter notifications:

- Ensure that he/she has received the names and correct titles of the LOC presenters from the LOC Protocol Manager.
- Pass on the presenter names and titles, in writing, to the FIE Chief of Protocol – care should be taken that the order of first name and last name is correct for that particular country.

VIP presenter escort:

- Immediately after the last fight has finished, go to the VIP tribune and make contact with the LOC presenter(s). If necessary, explain that they will be escorted down in a few moments as soon as the ceremony is ready to start.

- Liaise with the Competition Ceremonies Manager by radio, to decide when to take the presenters down to the ceremony assembly point – in particular it is not necessary to invite them down immediately if all the medallists have not yet arrived in the Call Room.
- If there is a delay after collecting the presenters, invite them to be seated at the medal ceremony assembly point and remain with them, keeping them updated regarding progress.
- Brief the presenter(s) about the protocol ceremony procedure and positioning – including the any arrangements for photos at the end of the ceremony – having arranged a translator in advance if required. Provide updates if there is any delay in the commencement of the medals ceremony.
- Remain until the end of the ceremony to thank or guide the presenters if appropriate.

VIP tribune:

- Assist the LOC Protocol Manager, as required, with the naming of the seats
- Monitor the VIP tribune to ensure that the seating area is properly organised and that appropriate access restrictions are in place

General:

- Be available to assist the LOC Protocol Manager or the FIE Chief of Protocol with ad hoc requests in connection with the VIPs

2.3.3 Platform Team Leader

This person is responsible for the preparation of the medals ceremony area, ensuring that:

- the medals podium is moved into position as quickly as possible
- there is no advertising around the medals podium that might be visible on the TV cameras
- any unsightly parts are either taped up (such as cables) or covered up with flower arrangements
- there is a temporary rope or ribbon barrier, which must be as discreet as possible, put in place approximately 5m in front of the medals podium, behind which the photographers and TV cameras will be positioned – there must be 2 volunteers in this area to ensure that no-one comes past the barrier into the medal ceremony area

- the pathway for the VIP presenters is clear – if the route goes across a piste, it is preferable that it is temporarily covered with a suitable piece of carpet
- the positions for the presenters are clearly but discreetly marked
- there are 4 chairs positioned at the medal ceremony assembly point, so that the VIP presenters can be seated until the last moment, with their translator and escort if required. Protect the area from passers-by if necessary.
- the area surrounding the medals ceremony area is clear, clean and tidy

This person is likely to undertake a similar role during the closing ceremony.

2.3.4 Medal-bearer Team Leader

This person is responsible for:

- Training and managing the team who carry the medals, diplomas, certificates, prizes and flowers for the medallists
- Ensuring that there are suitable arrangements for conveying all the items to be presented (for example, a set of cushions, or trays covered with a cloth)
- Ensuring that all required items are received in good time
- Checking that all the items are on the right trays or cushions, in the right order
- Ordering the appropriate number of flowers, according to the number of medallists each day – a full schedule should be prepared in advance
- Providing an escort to guide the VIP Presenters
 - from their assembly point to their position in front of the medals podium
 - to the front of the medals podium for photos with the medallists at the end of the ceremony
 - from the medals podium back to the assembly point
- Ensuring that there are adequate security arrangements in place for the temporary storage of all items
- Checking that all team members arrive at the venue at the specified time, are in position at the specified time, and are properly dressed

- Notifying the line manager, at the earliest opportunity, of any late arrival, absence or problem (anticipated or actual)

2.3.5 Flag-raising Team Leader

This person is responsible for:

- Training and managing the team to raise and lower the flags in the medals ceremonies
- Regular testing of the flag-raising equipment
- Collecting, at the earliest opportunity, a list of the nations who will be represented in each medal ceremony
- Careful selection of the flags to be used in each ceremony – arrangements must be made for someone to double-check each selection
- Working with the Competition Ceremonies Manager, as required, in connection with the flag requirement in the closing ceremony.
- Ensuring that there are adequate security arrangements in place for the temporary storage of all items
- Checking that all team members arrive at the venue at the specified time, are in position at the specified time, and are properly dressed
- Notifying the line manager, at the earliest opportunity, of any late arrival, absence or problem (anticipated or actual)

2.3.6 Call Room Protocol Team Leader

This person is responsible for all protocol elements in the call room, in connection with the finals presentation and the medals ceremonies. This includes:

- Training and managing the call room protocol assistants:
 - There must be 2-3 volunteers in the call room who, between them, must be able to speak French, English and Spanish. These volunteers will assist the Team Leader to explain the protocol procedures to the fencers and referees.

- These volunteers will also assist with guiding the medallists from the piste to the call room so that the medals ceremony can start immediately. If a fencer wishes to leave the call room, one of these volunteers (equipped with a radio) must accompany them.
- Where required, these volunteers will be asked to assist with locating fencers or teams who have not arrived in the call room at the required time.
- Training and managing the call room line leaders:
 - There must be 2 volunteers, appropriately dressed (national costume or smart clothing), to lead the line of fencers and referees on and off the finals piste during the finals presentation (one at the front to lead on, and one at the rear to lead off)
 - There must be 1 volunteer, appropriately dressed (national costume or smart clothing), to lead the line of medallists to the medals ceremony area
- Ensuring that fencers and referees are in place in good time for the ceremonies, and locating those who are missing
- Ensuring that the FIE's rules and policies are observed, for example - checking that fencers are not carrying their national flags during the medals ceremonies, and ensuring that they are correctly dressed
- Verbally briefing the fencers and referees regarding the protocol procedures for the finals presentation and medals ceremonies. (Although this will have been previously notified to them in writing, the document is often not read or not understood.)
- Lining up the fencers and referees in the correct order
- Liaising with other team members regarding readiness to start the ceremony

2.3.7 Assistant/translator for the FIE Chief of Protocol

This person must be available to the FIE Chief of Protocol on a day-to-day basis, and will have the following responsibilities:

- Translation at the daily review meetings with the competition ceremonies managers and team leaders
- General translation duties for interactions with LOC personnel
- Production of the daily forms (using an existing template in Microsoft Word) for transferring information regarding the presenters names and titles, the finalists names for

the diploma and certificates, and the countries of the finalists for the flag-raising team's preparations

- Collection of the finals results and completion of the fencers' names on the winner's diploma and the medallists' certificates
- Liaison with other LOC members – this person should therefore have use of a local mobile phone
- Communications with the call room regarding ad hoc messages for the fencers and referees
- Be prepared, if requested, to act as co-ordinator for the start of the competition ceremonies, and the closing ceremony if appropriate, on behalf of the FIE Chief of Protocol
- To act as a runner:
 - Take the VIP presenter information and any updates to the announcers and to the public scoreboard operators. (Every time there is a change the previous version should be retrieved when handing over the new version.)
 - Take the completed diplomas and certificates to the medal-bearer team leader.
- Trouble-shooting as required, including being on duty as an observer to ensure that, if there any VIP presenter changes at the very last minute, these are properly notified

2.4 Protocol team requirements in the venue

For World Championships the LOC should provide facilities and equipment as described in this section. For other events this section can be used as a guide, as appropriate.

- 4 tables and chairs with easy access to the competition floor of the finals hall, clearly labelled (Protocol 1 and 2, Announcer 1 and 2) for the use of:
 - The FIE Chief of Protocol
 - The LOC assistant/translator for the FIE Chief of Protocol
 - The French language announcer
 - The national language announcer (but if the first language of the organising country is French, then the second language will be English)
- These positions should have a good view of the finals piste and medals podium.

- Each of the 4 tables must be equipped with a power point, wired internet access and a small table lamp.
- A dedicated printer must be installed for use by the FIE Chief of Protocol and his/her assistant.
- There must be 2 microphones for the announcers, who must have good communication with the team responsible for protocol ceremony music. If possible, the music team should be close to them.
- A local mobile phone must be provided for use by the FIE Chief of Protocol in order to liaise effectively with the LOC managers and team leaders.
- A radio must be provided for each of:
 - the FIE Chief of Protocol
 - the LOC Protocol Manager
 - the Competition Ceremonies Manager
 - the Opening Ceremony Producer (if applicable)
 - the assistant/translator for the FIE Chief of Protocol
 - the Call Room Protocol Team Leader
 - the VIP Team Leader
 - the Platform Team Leader
 - the Medal-bearer Team Leader
 - the Flag-raising Team Leader
 - the MC and/or the French language announcer

1 or 2 spare radios must also be available. (For example, for use if there is a person operating the flag-raising mechanism from a position in the roof, also for the call room volunteers when searching for missing fencers prior to the protocol ceremonies)

A secure storage facility (lockable cabinet or safe) must be provided for use by the FIE Chief of Protocol in, or very close to, the DT area. It must be large enough to contain documents, certificates, medals and a laptop.

A secure room, close to the medals ceremony area, must be provided to ensure the security of flags. In addition, a safe must be provided in this room for the secure storage of medals, diplomas and certificates. The 2 keys or passwords must be given to the FIE Chief of Protocol and the Competition Ceremonies Manager.

3. PROTOCOL CEREMONIES

3.1 Display of flags

A display of flags is required at all FIE events.

In the main competition hall (finals or elimination rounds) where the events take place, the flags of the FIE and the organising country, encircled by those of all the participating nations, must be hoisted and flown on centrally placed flagpoles for the entire duration of the competition.

If preferred, the display of flags may be electronic.

A second set of flags, if available, may be flown in an additional hall.

3.2 Opening ceremony

An opening ceremony must be organised at all World Championships and Zonal Championships.

It must take place just before the first final of the championships.

If an important personality of the country in which the championships are taking place has been invited to open the championships, he/she will be welcomed at the entrance of the competition hall by the President of the organising federation and the President of the LOC, who will introduce him/her to the President of the FIE (or his representative) and their colleagues.

The President of the FIE and the President of the organising federation will then lead him/her and accompanying guests to the stand of honour.

The ceremony must respect the following order:

- **An optional interlude in the form of a brief spectacle:** this must be of short duration (maximum 20 minutes).
- **Immediately afterwards, a parade of the flags of the participating countries:** the flags are carried by young fencers from the organising country or by hosts and/or hostesses trained to do so.

- **At the World Championships, at the end of the parade, an athlete and an official from the host country will take the following oath, which will be said in the host country language, and then translated into French:**

“In the name of all athletes, we promise to take part in these World Championships, respecting and abiding by the FIE rules and in the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship, and fairness. Together we stand in solidarity and commit ourselves to sport without doping, without cheating, without any form of discrimination. We do this for the honour of our sport, and in respect for the values of fencing,”

“In the name of all officials and referees, we promise to take part in these World Championships, respecting and abiding by the FIE rules and in the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship, and fairness. Together we stand in solidarity and commit ourselves to sport without doping, without cheating, without any form of discrimination. We do this for the honour of our sport, and in respect for the values of fencing,”

- **The speeches and the declaration of the opening of the championships:**
 - The President of the organising federation or his representative, speaking through a microphone from a podium (usually installed on the finals piste), will welcome the competitors and the President of the FIE or his representative with a few appropriate words (maximum 2 minutes).
 - The President of the FIE or his representative will then say a few words of thanks (maximum 2 minutes) and, if there is a guest of honour mentioned above, will add: *"I have the honour of inviting to announce the opening of the 20... World (or name of zone) Fencing Championships"*.
 - The guest of honour will then say: *"I declare the World (or name of zone) Fencing Championships of 20... open"*.
 - In the absence of a guest of honour, the President of the FIE or his representative will declare the championships open.
- **The end of the ceremony:** the national anthem of the organising country is played as the FIE flag and national flag of the organising country are raised. The parade leaves the competition hall by the shortest route to the sound of the music.

The opening ceremony should not take longer than 45 minutes if it is held in an indoor venue. If the opening ceremony is organised in the open air and if it is a big event involving the general public as well as those in the competition, then there will not be a time limit. In this case the organisers must communicate with the FIE at least 30 days before, so that there is sufficient time to inform all participating federations.

If the opening ceremony takes place elsewhere than the competition venue a sufficient number of places should be reserved for the FIE Executive Committee and FIE guests. This number should be requested from the FIE not less than one week before the start of ceremony.

3.3 Finals presentation

The fencer and referee arrangements for entry, presentation and departure must be consistent across all major FIE events, and to a high standard of presentation for spectators and television audiences.

3.3.1 Procession from the call room

Participants should proceed from the call room according to the following table.

Individual event	Team event
To proceed from the call room (front of line) and be led to the presentation area	
Volunteer – escort (to lead out) Fencer 1 Fencer 2 Fencer 3 Fencer 4 Referee 1 Referee 2 Referee 3 Referee 4 Volunteer – escort (to lead back) (There may be more than 4 referees.)	Volunteer – escort (to lead out) Team A - Fencer 1 Team A - Fencer 2 Team A - Fencer 3 Team A - substitute Team B - Fencer 1 Team B - Fencer 2 Team B - Fencer 3 Team B - substitute Referee 1 Referee 2 Referee 3 Referee 4 Volunteer – escort (to lead back) (There may be more than 4 referees.)
To proceed from the call room (back of line) and be guided to the appropriate area	
Volunteer - escort Coach 1 Coach 2 Coach 3 Coach 4 Volunteer - bag carrier 1 Volunteer - bag carrier 2 Volunteer - bag carrier 3 Volunteer - bag carrier 4	Volunteer - escort Team A - Coach 1 Team A – Official / Coach 2 Team B - Coach 1 Team B – Official / Coach 2 Volunteer - bag carrier 1 Volunteer - bag carrier 2 Volunteer - bag carrier 3 Volunteer - bag carrier 4

3.3.2 Presentation of finalists and referees

At the beginning of each final the finalists are presented to the audience and their best 2 results are announced. The fencers must be dressed in fencing clothing, holding a weapon in their sword hand. When their name is called they must step forward and salute the audience, raising the guard of the weapon to the chin, on 1 or both sides of the arena as appropriate.

All referees, video-referees and assistant referees involved in the final are also presented. The announcers will not identify each referee's role, but will only say "The referees are: *first name / last name / country ...*". When their name is called the referee must step forward and acknowledge the audience (with a small bow, no waving or clapping) on 1 or both sides of the arena as appropriate.

The line order and presentation of the fencers is based on the order of the semi-final fights, as shown on the tableau. The line order and presentation of the referees is based on alphabetical order of last name, women before men.

Fencers must be instructed beforehand, in writing, about the arrangements and etiquette relating to the finals presentation and the medals ceremony. These instructions should be verbally repeated in the Call Room by the Call Room Protocol Manager.

Referees must be instructed beforehand, in writing, about the arrangements and etiquette relating to the finals presentation.

The 2 best results of each finalist must be collected beforehand. This can be done by attaching a form to the score sheets for the tableau of 8, having previously arranged that the referee asks the winning fencer to complete it immediately. A volunteer will wait to collect the completed form and return it to the Competition Ceremonies Manager.

3.3.3 The bouts

The bouts must begin immediately after the presentation.

The fencers must present themselves fully dressed, with their weapons checked, weapon in hand, ready to fence. The fencing bags will already have been delivered nearby (preferably not in full view).

The final bout will take place 10 minutes after the last semi-final, if there is only one final.

In the event of 2 finals the same evening, the 4 semi-finals will be fenced consecutively, followed without a break by the 2 finals.

3.3.4 Field of play considerations

Frequent checks should be made by the LOC protocol team regarding what is in view of the VIP seating areas and the television cameras.

Protocol ceremony volunteers, field of play volunteers, and in particular the volunteer escorts who will process out from the call room, should follow a strict dress code and be aware of the importance of projecting a good image of the sport when shown on television.

3.4 Medals ceremonies

A medals ceremony must be organised for every competition at all FIE events.

During each ceremony the playing of the national anthem of the winner is compulsory. Each ceremony must also incorporate the national flags of the medal winners.

The awarding of prizes must take place as soon as possible after the final bout.

The medals ceremony podium is located on or near the finals piste. The place for the winner (or the winning team) is slightly higher than that for the second, who is on their right, and for the third(s) who is(are) on their left. There must be no advertising visible on the medals ceremony podium.

At the end of each event, the MC or announcers say: *"The Protocol Ceremony of the Fencing Championships 20..."* and announce(s) the results.

The officials scheduled to award the prizes, having been notified beforehand, are led from the stand of honour to the podium by a host or hostess.

The teams or fencers ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd march in, dressed in their national tracksuits. They must not be carrying their weapons or their national flags. The fencers stand just behind the podium, each standing behind their respective place on the podium.

Fencers must not take any 'selfies' until after the end of the national anthem.

As each fencer is announced they step forward and mount the podium in the appropriate place.

The medals and trophies will then be awarded by the President of the FIE, accompanied by a member of the LOC to congratulate the winning fencers or teams (with flowers if available), beginning with the bronze medal(s), then the silver and finally the gold. In the absence of the President the order of precedence detailed in 4.2 is to be strictly followed.

The national flag of the winner will be hoisted on the central flagpole, and those of the fencers or teams placed 2nd and 3rd will be hoisted on the 2 (or 3) flagpoles to the right and left of the central flagpole, facing the official stand. While the national anthem (in its entirety) of the winning country is played, the 4 fencers or 3 teams and the spectators turn towards the flags.

Please note:

- For World Championships and Zonal Championships: actual flags must be raised during the ceremony.
- For all other FIE events: the use of electronic flags (1 set only) is optional. It is not obligatory to raise the flags during the ceremony, but they must be presented in an appropriate way for the ceremony.

Until the official ceremony is finished, nobody is allowed to step on the podium or near the podium at any time. Security personnel must ensure that there is not an invasion of the piste by the public. They must also ensure that medallists are prevented from making any unofficial exits from the field of play into the spectator areas when celebrating their victory.

After the official presentation and the national anthem, the organisers may plan the presentation, informally, of additional trophies or prizes.

3.5 Closing ceremony

A closing ceremony must be organised at all World Championships and Zonal Championships.

Normally this takes place immediately after the prizes for the last finals bout have been awarded. However, by agreement with the FIE Chief of Protocol, it is possible in some circumstances that it takes place immediately before the finals session on the last day. It must respect the following order:

- **The speeches and the declaration of the closing of the championships:**
 - The President of the LOC or the President of the organising federation, speaking through a microphone from a podium (usually installed on the finals piste), will say a few appropriate words (maximum 2 minutes).
 - The President of the FIE or his representative stands on the podium and declares the championships to be closed, with a few appropriate words (maximum 2 minutes), and adds:

"In the name of the International Fencing Federation, I bestow my deepest gratitude to the Organising Committee of this competition, to the fencing Federation of ..., and to the people of the city of ... for their generous hospitality. I declare the World (or name of zone) Fencing Championships 20... to be closed, and I invite the fencers of all

the countries to meet next year in ... (if a city has not yet been designated, the name of the city will be replaced by the words "at the place which will be chosen") to celebrate the World (or name of zone) Fencing Championships 20..."

- **The award of any special prizes and trophies:** this takes place at the end of the competition, before the lowering of flags, and is held in front of the seats of the participants.
- **The end of the ceremony:**
 - A fanfare is sounded.
 - The national anthem of the organising country is played.
 - The flags of the organising country and of the FIE are slowly lowered.
 - The designated team (often a squad of soldiers) removes and folds the two flags.
 - The FIE flag is formally presented to the FIE President by the President of the LOC, who formally presents it to the President, or representative, of the LOC for the World Championships of the following year. (The flag of the organising country is retained for return to the LOC immediately after the ceremony.)
 - The championships concludes to the sound of music, and the presenters are escorted from the platform.

Immediately after the end of the ceremony all the volunteers must be invited onto the field of play.

3.6 Medals and diplomas to be awarded

For World Championships (including veteran) the following are awarded:

1. The FIE gold medal and the diploma of World Champion of the FIE to the winners of each individual event, and to each member of each winning team of the World Championships
2. A silver (or silver-plated bronze) medal and a bronze medal for the 2nd and 3rd places in each individual event, and to each member of the teams that were classified 2nd and 3rd.

For Zonal Championships the following are awarded:

1. The gold medal and the diploma of Zonal Champion to the winners of each individual event, and to each member of each winning team of the Zonal Championships

2. A silver (or silver-plated bronze) medal and a bronze medal for the 2nd and 3rd places in each individual event, and to each member of the teams that were classified 2nd and 3rd.

Medals:

- Medals for all World Championships will be provided, by previous arrangement, by either the FIE or the LOC. One face of the medals will have the FIE design, and the other face will have the LOC design. The FIE will pay for the medals, and the FIE Head Office will approve the final design and quality of the medals.
- Medals for Zonal Championships and all other events will be provided by the LOC.

Diplomas:

- Diplomas for the World Championships will be provided by the FIE.
- Diplomas for the Zonal Championships will be provided by the LOC.

Before each medal ceremony the LOC will write on each diploma by hand the name(s) of the gold medallist(s). This will include the first name and last name, but not country. Care should be taken to write the first name and last name in the usual order for each particular country.

3.7 Collection and distribution of protocol-related data

Protocol information should be formally collected, and a document handed over to the appropriate person. It is not sufficient to transfer this information only verbally.

This includes:

- Sign-off of national anthems by national delegation representatives
- The collection of fencers' biographical data
- The production and distribution of protocol information and instructions for finalists re the Finals Presentation and Medals Ceremony
- The production and distribution of protocol information and instructions for referees re the Finals Presentation
- Before the finals presentation, the notification of the names and titles of the LOC VIP medal presenters to the FIE Chief of Protocol or his/her representative, plus the Master of Ceremonies, the announcers and the public scoreboard operators. (There must be a good system in place for speedily notifying these teams of last-minute changes to LOC VIP presenters.)
- Before the finals presentation, the notification of medallists biographical data to the Master of Ceremonies and the announcers
- Before the finals presentation, the notification of the finalists' nationalities to the flag-raising team

- After the final bout, the speedy notification of medal places to the flag-raising team, the Master of Ceremonies, the announcers, the public scoreboard operators and the scribe for the FIE diplomas and any other certificates

3.8 Checking of flags and national anthems

The LOC Protocol Manager must ensure that all flags and national anthems are scrupulously checked.

If an organiser is unable to obtain the flag and/or national anthem of a participating nation he/she must inform the respective federation at least 30 days prior to the event, so as to allow it to either obtain its flag and/or anthem, or to make it/them available via its embassy. (The LOC may request in the invitation forms that each federation brings a recording of its national anthem.)

The LOC Protocol Manager must carefully check that the display includes the flags of all participating countries, and that the flags are hoisted correctly including the facing/positioning and the direction of hanging. (If consulting a website for this purpose, checks must be made to ensure that it is up-to-date.)

The LOC Protocol Manager must also ensure that each national anthem in its entirety is checked and signed off by an appropriate member of that nation's delegation, in advance of its use in a ceremony.

3.9 Special arrangements applying only to the Olympic Games

These include:

- **Opening and closing ceremonies** – these take place in the main stadium and are in honour of all the sports on the Olympic programme.
- **Display of flags** – in the main fencing hall the Olympic flag is added to the flags of the FIE and the competing countries.
- **Medals ceremonies** – the Olympic medals are handed to the winning fencers or teams by the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or his delegate. The President of the FIE or his delegate takes part in the ceremony and awards the prizes of the FIE after the IOC representative has awarded the Olympic medals.

4. VIP MANAGEMENT AND SPECTATOR EXPERIENCE

This section applies mainly to World Championships and Zonal Championships. However, the precedence and seating requirements also apply to all other FIE events where there are VIPs present.

4.1 Reception of VIPs

Several members of the organising federation must be on hand to welcome VIPs when they enter the finals hall.

A special reception room with refreshments must be made available for VIPs, ideally with facilities for Wi-Fi and secure storage of personal items.

VIPs must be accompanied to the Presidential Tribune, presented to the FIE President and then shown to their respective reserved and named seat(s).

4.2 Reserved seating for VIPs and the order of precedence

Seats for the FIE guests and sponsors must be reserved in the finals hall. This number should be requested from the FIE not less than one week before the start of the event.

The order of precedence is specified in the FIE Administrative Rules, and is listed below:

1. The President of the FIE;
2. [Governments representatives and sport authorities](#);
3. The President(s) of Honour
4. Former F.I.E. Presidents, according to the order in which they were elected;
5. The [FIE](#) Secretary General;
6. The [FIE](#) Secretary-Treasurer;
7. The [FIE](#) Vice-Presidents;
8. Other members of the FIE Executive Committee;
9. [Members of Honour of the FIE, in the order of the dates of their nominations](#);
10. [FIE Honorary Vice-Presidents](#);
11. Presidents of the National Federations;
12. Delegations leaders from the National Federations if they are not Presidents of their Federations;
13. The members of the commissions [and Councils](#);

Other personalities [may](#) be included in this order of precedence according to their relative importance.

The same order of precedence applies to their partners [who were](#) invited and [are](#) present.

4.3 Reserved seating zones in the finals hall

Groups of seats must be reserved as follows:

- **T1** Presidential Tribune, FIE Executive Committee and VIPs
- **T2** Tribune for Presidents of Federations and FIE Commission members
- **T3** Tribune for fencing family including fencers, members of national delegations, referees, officials, staff involved in the organisation of the competition and others as appropriate

Accreditation cards will assist security personnel and hosts or hostesses to direct these groups of people to the appropriate seating.

The remaining seating can be made available to the public.

4.4 VIP experience

All aspects of the VIP experience should be considered.

Venue-dressing should be of an appropriate standard, particularly the view from the reserved seating, and venue signage should be clear.

Care should be taken with the physical boundaries for photographers. In particular, photographers on the field of play should not be able to block the view of the VIP seating areas during the ceremonies, the finals or the post-final celebrations.

Consideration should be given to the provision of a VIP welcome pack, including the official programme and other fencing-related information. There should also be advice about where to access additional information, such as phone apps, websites and any venue-based information points.

Volunteers working in the VIP areas should be well-selected and well-trained, with good language skills including either French or English, good fencing knowledge, customer service skills and an appropriate level of dress code.

5. REVIEWS AND REHEARSALS

This section applies to World Championships, Zonal Championships and Grand Prix events.

5.1 Advance review of plans

In advance of the start of competition (not less than 2 months) the LOC Protocol Manager will send the LOC's protocol plans and other information as listed below, to the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official, for review and approval.

Plans for:

- Display of flags
- Opening ceremony, where applicable
- Finals presentation
- Medals ceremony
- Closing ceremony, where applicable

Arrangements and processes for:

- Obtaining and checking of flags and national anthems (for the medals ceremonies the flags must be checked 2 people, separately, to ensure that they are for the correct countries and in the correct order)
- Notifying the LOC flag-raising team of the nationality of each medallist
- Notifying the nominated LOC scribe of the name (first name, last name) of each fencer who will be receiving a diploma and/or certificate
- Collection of each finalist's 2 best results (if different from the process recommended)
- Notification to finalists of information for finals presentation and medals ceremony including assembly, dress code and etiquette
- Notification to referees of information for finals presentation including assembly, dress code and etiquette
- Notification to announcers of finalist and referee information for finals presentation
- Notification to announcers and public scoreboard operators of medallist and presenter information for the medal ceremonies

- Communication between all LOC teams involved in the protocol ceremonies including:
 - LOC Protocol Manager
 - Opening Ceremony producer (optional)
 - Competition Ceremonies Manager
 - Call Room Protocol Team Leader
 - VIP Team Leader
 - Medal-bearer Team Leader
 - Flag-raising Team leader
 - Platform Team Leader
 - MC and/or announcers

Key members of the protocol ceremony teams should be equipped with radios during, and immediately before, the ceremonies – as listed in section 2.3.1.

Other information:

- List of potential VIP visitors (confirmed and unconfirmed)
- Facilities and arrangements for VIPs
- Security arrangements for the field of play during finals and medals ceremonies (this should include suitable barriers to prevent the photographers from obscuring audience and TV camera views of the medallists on the podium)
- Plans for spectator information (including the official programme)
- A plan of the venue
- The structure of the LOC protocol team, including protocol volunteer roles, showing clearly which individuals have operational responsibility for:
 - the Opening Ceremony
 - the Closing Ceremony
 - the Medals Ceremonies
 - the Finals Presentation
 - VIP management
 - MC and announcers
- Escalation routes and authority levels in the LOC protocol team, for example – for access to keys and safes, approval of last-minute expenditure, changes to accreditation and access rights, re-assignment of volunteers, ad hoc supply or redistribution of equipment such as printers, phones and radios

5.2 On-site review of arrangements

The LOC Protocol Manager will attend a meeting with the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official 1-2 days before the start of the competition. The review topics will include:

- Rehearsal arrangements
- VIP arrangements and facilities
- Reserved seating arrangements
- The display of flags
- Checking of flags and national anthems
- Spectator information
- Television camera and photographer positions
- Overview of LOC protocol personnel
- Arrangements to meet the MC and/or announcers
- Venue tour – key areas
- Key contacts

5.3 Rehearsals of protocol ceremonies

The LOC Protocol Manager will organise rehearsals of the protocol ceremonies for review and approval by the FIE Chief of Protocol or nominated FIE official, to take place no later than 1-2 days before the first protocol ceremony, as below.

- The main components of the opening ceremony, where applicable, to include:
 - the parade of flags
 - the arrangements and technology for the speeches and declaration of opening
 - the playing of the national anthem and the raising of the FIE and host country flags
- The finals presentation, to include fencer and referee entry, presentation and departure
- The medals ceremony
- The main components of the closing ceremony, where applicable, to include:
 - the arrangements and technology for the speeches
 - the arrangements for awarding any special prizes (if any)
 - the sounding of a fanfare, the playing of the national anthem and the lowering of the FIE and organising country flags
 - the handover of the FIE flag by the President of the LOC to the FIE President
 - the handover of the FIE flag by the FIE President to the President of the LOC of the following year's championships

Volunteers may substitute for fencers, referees and presenters during rehearsals.

5.4 Post-event reporting

The LOC Protocol Manager will contribute specialist input to the final report of the event regarding matters of protocol, including:

- Problems experienced, and their solutions
- Lessons learned for the future
- Suggestions for further developments and enhancements

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