

State Fencing Centre Piste Booking Policy

Preface:

The Victorian State Fencing Centre (SFC) is a neutral fencing venue created with the specific intention to be a site of high-performance training for Victorian fencers. This is accomplished through bringing both coaches and fencers together that would otherwise train at separate clubs and venues.

Whilst it is not the intention of any policy to deliberately exclude specific users from the facility, the same importance cannot be provided to all users. Those who have achieved a higher level of performance need to be preferred over those who wish to use the facility for a more social and casual purpose.

The centre is being used by many coaches, many fencers and multiple weapons all needing space at the same time and there are only 8 pistes to go around. Any decision about its use has to be based around the original intention of the SFC as a high-performance training venue, as well as being both **fair and transparent**.

This policy has been designed, with the intention of allowing for equality of access across fencers and coaches, so as to meet the original intention of the Centre.

Important key terms:

- **Fencer:**
Any individual who is using the Centre for tasks explicitly concerned with training. This includes activities such as warming up, footwork or bouting with other fencers.
- **Coach:**
Any individual who is using the Centre for tasks explicitly concerned with the *training and development of fencers*. This includes activities such as running squads, group training, group lessons and individual lessons. A coach must be affiliated with Fencing Victoria and be accredited as a coach of Level 1, or above, by the Australian Fencing Federation (AFF).

Note:

An individual, who is qualified as a coach, but is not booking the space for the purposes of personal coaching practice (and is instead using the space for their fencers to train on) is defined as a **fencer**, according to the rules and regulations of this document, **not a coach**, once more than 1 Piste has been booked – for example a Coach who is not present cannot book more than 1 Piste using Coach priority.

- **Peak Time:**
Peak Time at the SFC is between the hours of 6.30 pm to 8pm on Monday to Friday.

General Rules Governing Use of the SFC

All users of the centre must pay Fencing Victoria for use of pistes, whether it be through booking directly using the link located on the Fencing Victoria website in accordance with Fencing Victoria booking guidelines, or through payment to/agreement with another individual who has made a booking as described above.

- a. A minimum of one piste must be booked by all coaches/fencers for use of the Centre.**

- b. **Outside of Peak Time**, a maximum of two pistes may be booked by a coach at any one time. To book more than two pistes, permission must be obtained from the Board of Fencing Victoria.
- c. A maximum of two coaches, from any one club, can book pistes in advance.
- d. A maximum ratio of 'fencers using pistes' to 'pistes booked for fencing' that should be maintained is 6:1.
 - i. Having fencers in excess of this 6:1 ratio is valid grounds to petition Fencing Victoria for additional piste bookings.
- e. A minimum ratio of 'fencers using pistes' to 'pistes booked for fencing' that should be maintained is 3:1.
 - i. Having fencers in deficit of this 3:1 ratio is valid grounds for Fencing Victoria to refund bookings, should a petition be successfully made to have these pistes made available on the grounds of a greater need by others .

Note: If a group of more than 3 people are using the centre for Warm-up activities, they must book a Pistes at the ratio of 5:1, fencers to Piste, doing the warm-up.

- f. **Coaches must book a minimum of one piste to coach in the Centre.** They may move to another, unoccupied piste, so as to allow fencers to utilise the booked piste or they may use the non-piste space present next to the piste that they have booked.

Note: When a coach books the **Coaching Piste**, they must stay on the Coaching Piste, even if other Pistes are free. If they want to move to another Piste, which is free, they can change their booking or if there is not a Piste available on the system – but free in reality, they must sms to say they are changing Pistes and I will update the amount they pay for the Piste in the back of the system.

- g. In the event of multiple coaches using the same booking, the number of additional unoccupied, non-booked pistes that can be used for coaching **is one**.
- h. Coaches and fencers who are being paid by/have made an agreement with other individuals to use their booking are responsible for these individuals, and as such will face penalties should these individuals not follow Centre policy, including, but not limited to, the use of pistes that have not been booked or have been booked by another coach.

Note: The last Coach to leave (the one with the final booking for the night), will be responsible for following the State Fencing Closing Checklist – [STATE CENTRE CLOSING CHECKLIST](#)

Fencing Victoria takes no responsibility whatsoever for any financial transactions arising between fencers and/or coaches as a result of agreements to transfer piste use or bookings.

Peak Times

During Peak Times the following rules and procedures over-ride some of the **General Rules Governing the Use of the AFC**

- a. During Peak Times only one piste can be booked per Affiliated and Registered AFF Coach of Level 1 or above. Bookings must be made in advance of the Sunday before the start of each week.
- b. On the Sunday, before the commencement of each week, fencers can book a maximum of 1 available piste and coaches can book a second piste, if available.
- c. Fencing Victoria reserves the right to cancel any and all bookings made by coaches and fencers (issuing a full refund to those individuals) so long as a minimum time period of 4 weeks' notice has been issued to the booking individual. The Exemption to this is: if the Centre is required for a National or State Event that was unforeseen 4 weeks in advance. Under these circumstances booking may be cancelled by the Fencing Victoria Executive with less than 4 weeks' notice and a full refund will be issued.

2. Standard Penalties for Breach of SFC Piste Booking Policy

In the event of a coach or fencer using the Centre without making payment to Fencing Victoria, a series of graduated penalties will be faced by the individual and are as follows:

- a. First offence will receive a formal, written warning from Fencing Victoria explaining that they have been found breaching Centre policy and that further breaches will receive a graduated penalty as detailed below.
- b. Second offence will be penalised via a fine equal to the payment of three **(3) times** the 'Casual Rate' for booking pistes.
- c. Third offence will be penalised via a fine equal to payment of used pistes at a rate of **five times** Fencing Victoria's 'Casual Rate' for booking pistes.

Should a coach or fencer breach booking policy more than three times, they will face the following penalties as determined by majority decision by the board of Fencing Victoria:

- a. Restriction to booking capabilities, resulting in an inability to make bookings **and use the Centre for any coaching/fencing purposes during peak-use periods for a period of up to 3 months.**
- b. Restriction of booking capabilities, resulting in the coach or fencer not being able to book a piste at any time for a period of **one month**
- c. Suspension from the SFC, preventing **any** access to the facility for a period **as determined by the Board of Fencing Victoria.**

1. Booking Priority for the SFC

Priority for use of the Centre determines if, and when, individuals may book the Centre. Those with higher priority will be given preferential timing in piste booking and will follow the below hierarchy of highest priority to lowest priority:

- a. AFF approved squad activity and Competitions (6 month booking period) & FV approved squad activity and Competitions (6 month booking period)

- b. Coaches with full AFF affiliation – Level 1 or above (3 month booking period)
- c. Fencers with FV affiliation (6 week booking period)
- d. Additional bookings by any of the above parties in excess of the maximum 2 pistes, made with express written permission from the Fencing Victoria board (4 week booking period)

In the event that booking of pistes within the Centre makes any of the above groups unable to use the SFC, resulting in their exclusion from the facility, they may secure permission from Fencing Victoria for pistes to be made available to them - as long as they make communication a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the date in question.

Any petition later than this will be automatically refused on the grounds that reviewing the situation, reaching a decision and contacting affected parties will not be afforded an adequate time-frame to occur.

All decisions will be at the discretion of the Board of Fencing Victoria and decisions must be respected by all users of the Centre. Should a decision regarding modification to the policy be reached for an individual, it is possible for Fencing Victoria to extend this modification indefinitely, allowing the same modification to occur on a weekly or monthly basis (e.g. if a coach is allowed to book 4 pistes during a non-peak-use period, they may be allowed to continue booking 4 pistes at the same time indefinitely).

Peak-Use Rationale:

The choice to minimise time to book down to 1 week from 4, affords coaches more time to book pistes, especially for those who book on a week-by-week basis, rather than a month in advance, whilst still providing adequate time to make additional bookings where required.

The choice to prevent fencers from making bookings until all coaches have had an opportunity to make additional bookings is based on the logic that coaches rely on the use of the Centre for their career. Excluding them from use of the Centre through allowing fencers to book out the space, prevents coaches from providing adequate training opportunities to the fencers who rely on them and, therefore, excludes these individuals from the use of the Centre.

The choice to prioritise decision making in response to conflict based on 'need' ensures that people will not be disadvantaged and excluded due to inadequate training space. However, an additional factor of 'high performance' *needs* to be considered as the **SFC is a state training facility** and therefore is intended for high performance activity as opposed to social or casual fencing.

Failure to put our high performing fencers at the fore-front of our decision making fundamentally undermines the intention of this facility.