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Dear Hon Sec,

Now that the season has begun it has become apparent that there is a severe shortage of active referees available to officiate at games. We need to have our 'Active Referees' numbers in the region of 200, thus allowing for a rotation to ensure, that to the very best of our ability all games are covered. At the present time the number of referees across the province is on a weekly basis approximately 80. With on average 200 games per week in Munster some of which require referee and touch judges this is a huge draw on a small pool of people. As a result providing associate referees to officiate at all games is an impossible task and can be a source of frustration to teams when there is no referee available.

As you are well aware, the role of the referee in our game is a critical one and with this in mind I am asking your club to reach out to all of your members to see if any of them would be interested volunteering as a referee. There are a number of options available ranging from being a full time member of the M.A.R to becoming an affiliate referee.

- In the event that you have club members that are willing to become an affiliate referee, this course can be undertaken online <https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/refereeing/club-school-affiliated-referees/>
- Many clubs have had referees who have in the last few years retired and may be in a position to return to refereeing to assist in ensuring that games can be officiated by an associate referees, we request that these people reach directly out to the MAR and contact the Honorary Secretary Mr. Martin Ryan at marhonsec@mar.ie and re-registration will be expedited.
- Should you have members within your club who are interested in taking up refereeing for the first time they should contact Mr. David Wilkinson, who is the National Referee Development Manager at the IRFU and can be contacted at david.wilkinson@irfu.ie.

The Rugby Committee has commissioned a working group which will be starting in the next week to look at improving the numbers but for now your help would be greatly appreciated on this urgent matter.

Yours in Rugby
Packie Durkan
Chairman
Munster Rugby Committee