

Umpires Pathway & Program

Effective: October 2020

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Introduction:

As the National Governing Body for cricket in the United States, USA Cricket is responsible for ensuring that there is an appropriate standard of umpiring at all levels across the country and a sufficient number of officials capable of officiating as required.

USA Cricket's Foundational Plan (2020-2023) identifies as one of its strategic objectives the desire to increase participation in all aspects of the sport. In support of that objective, and as a priority action, it calls upon USA Cricket to: 'design and deliver a pathway and related programs, education materials and certification to support all match officials in this country.'

The purpose of this document is to respond to that mandate by establishing a plan for the development of umpires within the USA. The document includes the overarching framework for the plan, an overview of the pathway that flows from umpiring at a grassroots level to international level, and the associated support programs and certification courses that USA Cricket will make available to umpires at various stages of the pathway.

In forming this plan, careful consideration was given to the current and historic umpiring landscape and challenges in the USA. Consultation took place with existing umpire organizations, individual umpires and cricket leagues all over the country. We also spoke to those responsible for umpiring programs in other countries around the world to ensure that this plan reflects global best practice whilst containing a local perspective.

Contacts:

Zone	Name	Email Address
Western Zone	Ravishankar Byrappagowda	ravishankar.byrappagowda@usacricket.org
Midwest Zone	Matin Inamdar	matin.inamdar@usacricket.org
Southwest Zone	Sameer Bandekar	sameer.bandekar@usacricket.org
Eastern Zone	Danny Khan	danny.khan@usacricket.org
Mid-Atlantic Zone	Vijaya Mallela	vijaya.mallela@usacricket.org
Southern Zone	Jermaine Lindo	jermaine.lindo@usacricket.org
USA Cricket Development Manager	Jamie Lloyd	jamie.lloyd@usacricket.org

1. FRAMEWORK

1A: Formal Registration Process:

USA Cricket is in the process of launching a new membership platform. As part of this platform individuals will be able to register as members of USA Cricket and indicate at the time of registration (or subsequently) that they are 'umpires'.

Only by becoming members of USA Cricket will umpires in the USA be able to take part in the programs and receive the associated benefits and officiating experiences outlined in this document. By becoming members and identifying as 'umpires', individuals will automatically be included in all official USA Cricket communications, including umpirespecific communications. USA Cricket will also maintain on an ongoing basis a list of all identified 'umpires' who have registered as members of USA Cricket, and the level to which they have been categorized (see below).

Once the membership platform has been established and officially launched, umpires will have until 1 January 2021 (or as otherwise determined by USA Cricket) to become a member of USA Cricket, and therefore to be included within the first intake of USA Cricket registered umpires. At or following the time of registration, umpires will be required to upload any existing certification/accreditation and other information about their umpiring credentials and aspirations.

1B. Formal Categorization Process:

Once the formal membership registration process has concluded, all officially registered umpires will be categorized according to their experience and ability.

In line with best-practice from around the world, the USA Cricket umpiring pathway will be based around an introductory course and three levels of accreditation (Levels 1 to 3) and a series of suitably aligned USA Cricket certification programs.

Until USA Cricket has implemented its own certification program, it will be working with umpires in the USA who have received their training and/or certification from other organizations both within and outside the USA. As such, in order to bring some structure to the system, USA Cricket needs to categorize these umpires in the most consistent way possible based on all available information. This will ensure that the most suitably qualified officials can be appointed to the relevant fixtures, and that each has access to suitable support programs.

As such, once the initial window has elapsed for umpires to register as members of USA Cricket, a thorough categorization process will be undertaken by USA Cricket using the

following basic guideline criteria (or such other factors as it may consider appropriate at its discretion).

• Category A:

- o Must be a minimum of 13 years old
- Umpire occasionally in USA domestic cricket (e.g. typically player/parent/coach umpires);
- Has a basic understanding of the laws of the game; and
- Has no certification.

• Category B:

- Must be a minimum of 13 years old
- o Umpire occasionally in USA domestic cricket; and
- Has certification (whether from USACUA, USACAO, any other domestic League program in the USA, or equivalent of level 1 umpiring certification from any ICC Full member organization), but are not familiar with current ICC Playing Conditions or game processes.

Category C:

- Must be a minimum of 18 years old
- o Umpire regularly in USA domestic cricket; and
- Has completed the equivalent of level 2 umpiring certification from any ICC Full member organization; and
- Has good familiarity with current ICC Playing Conditions and game processes.

Category D:

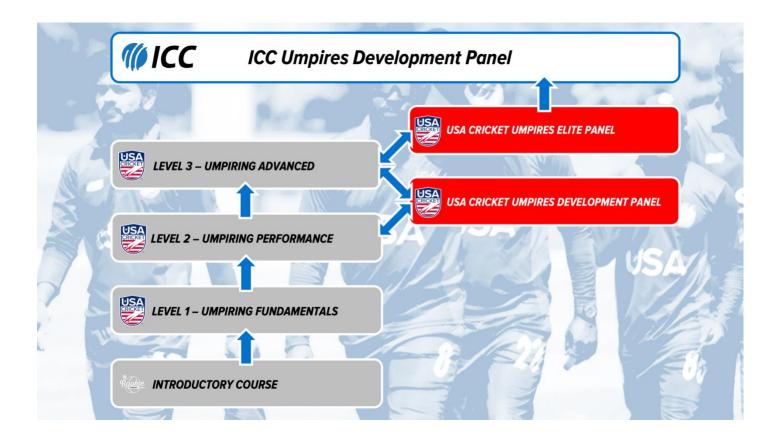
- Must be a minimum of 18 years old
- Has been appointed to the ICC Development Panel;
- Has experience with officiating ICC/International games;
- Has completed the equivalent of level 3 umpiring certification from any ICC Full member organization; and
- Has good familiarity with current ICC Playing Conditions and game processes.

NOTE: Umpires who have been categorized as above shall be allocated a provisional level and will be required to complete the following certification:

 Category A and B umpires should be regarded as having a provisional Level 1 ability, but should seek certification with the USA Cricket Level 1 course at the earliest opportunity.

- Category C umpires should be regarded as having a provisional Level 2 ability, but should seek certification with the USA Cricket Level 2 course at the earliest opportunity.
- Category D umpires should be regarded as having a provisional Level 3 ability and USA Cricket will work individually with them to determine the appropriate level of USA Cricket certification required.

2. UMPIRES PATHWAY



3. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

3A: Accreditation Program:

The USA Cricket Umpires Accreditation Program aligns with the Player Pathway as shown in the diagram above. It incorporates current best practice globally, including a focus on digital and online delivery at different levels.

The Accreditation Program has three levels of certification (Level 1 to Level 3):

- Umpires Introductory Course
- Level 1 Umpiring: Fundamentals
- Level 2 Umpiring: Performance
- Level 3 Umpiring: Advanced

In addition, USA Cricket will establish the following two standing panels of umpires (which will be appointed by invitation only):

- **USA Cricket Umpires Development Panel**, which will be selected from all umpires who are certified at USA Cricket Level 2.
- **USA Cricket Umpires Elite Panel**, which will be selected from all umpires who are certified at USA Cricket Level 3.

The best members of the USA Cricket – Umpires Elite Panel will be eligible for nomination to the **ICC's Development Panel**.

Summary of Umpire Accreditation Program:

COURSE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF UMPIRING
Introductory Course	N/A	Up to and including all Rookie League/Modified junior formats
Level 1 Umpiring: Fundamentals	13 years of age minimum Preferred that Introductory course has been completed	Up to and including local junior/youth and recreational adult league cricket
Level 2	18 years of age minimum	Up to and including local competitive youth and

Umpiring: Performance	Must have completed Level 1 course	competitive adult league cricket
USA Cricket Umpires Development Panel	By appointment only	Prioritized for selection to officiate in Intra-Zonal (and other similar standard representative) matches, and will also become eligible for nomination and selection to officiate in Inter-Zonal and National Championship (and other similar standard representative) matches.
Level 3 Umpiring: Advanced	18 years of age minimum Must have completed Level 2 course and officiated for 1 year since completion	Up to and including all levels of local competitive youth and competitive adult league, intra-zonal youth and intra-zonal adult cricket (and other similar standard representative matches)
USA Cricket Umpires Elite Panel	By appointment only	prioritized for selection to officiate in Inter-Zonal and National Championship (and other similar standard representative) matches, and will also become eligible for nomination to the ICC Development Panel.

Umpires Introductory Course

Overview:

The Umpires Introductory Course covers umpiring basics including the key Laws and essential field craft. The short 2-3-hour standalone course provides any cricket enthusiast with a taste for what the role entails and a starting point for pursuing umpiring further.

It is targeted at all individuals considering becoming an umpire, irrespective of their previous experience. In particular, parents, caregivers and volunteers involved in officiating in schools and community entry-level programs will find this a useful resource.

Examination / Certification:

There is no exam, certification or recertification at this level.

Benefits:

Umpires attending the course will be able to register as a USA Cricket Umpire Member – Introductory.

Recommended Level of Umpiring:

Once a candidate successfully passes a USA Cricket Umpires Introductory course, it is recommended that they officiate up to and including all Rookie League/Modified junior formats.

LEVEL 1 - Umpiring: Fundamentals

Overview:

The Umpiring Fundamentals certification course is designed to provide a more complete overview of the Laws of Cricket and how to apply them in a match-day environment. The course extends further the principles of field craft and match management.

The course provides any individual with the essential tools and confidence to umpire cricket matches at a domestic recreational level.

It is targeted at a wide range of players, coaches, parents and volunteers, who often find themselves umpiring in recreational matches where there are no higher-qualified or independent umpires available for appointment. It is also the first formal certification course for those umpires wanting to progress to higher levels.

The course will also include the following nationally recognized health and safety courses (which may vary from state to state):

- 1. Concussions in Sports (CDC Youth Sports OR NFHS High School Sports)
- 2. Heat Illness Prevention
- 3. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- 4. Sportsmanship
- 5. First Aid for sports with CPR
- 6. SafeSport

Entry Requirements:

Participants must be a minimum of 13 years old.

It would be preferred that an Introductory Course has been completed.

Examination / Certification:

An Online Examination may be taken after completing the two-module online course.

Successful candidates in the examination with a minimum score of 80% will receive their USA Cricket Level 1 Umpiring Certificate.

- **Note:** To be eligible to receive their Level 1 Umpiring Certificate, all umpires must, as part of the process, also submit to and pass a formal Background Check.

Benefits:

Once a candidate successfully passes a USA Cricket Level 1 umpiring course, they will receive at least the following benefits:

- Level One Certification
- MCC Blue Law Book.
- USA Cricket branded umpires counter
- USA Cricket Membership ID Card that is color-coded by accreditation status
- Exclusive discount on umpiring apparel and equipment through the USA Cricket online store

Recommended Level of Umpiring:

Once a candidate successfully passes a USA Cricket Level 1 umpiring course, it is recommended that they officiate up to and including local junior/youth and recreational adult league cricket.

Re-Certification:

A USA Cricket Level 1 umpiring qualification is valid for two years.

Umpires wishing to re-certify at this level should do so by re-taking the Online Examination and paying the examination fee.

If, in the meantime, umpires have graduated to Level 2, they do not need to re-certify at Level 1.

LEVEL 2 – Umpiring: Performance

Overview:

The Umpiring Performance certification course is designed to provide further knowledge and skills sufficient to become a proficient umpire at local league level. Its content will extend beyond the basic Laws of Cricket, build on field craft and match management techniques and introduce the concept of working as a team with an umpiring colleague. The course will also include the following nationally recognized health and safety courses (which may vary from state to state):

- 1. Concussions in Sports (CDC Youth Sports OR NFHS High School Sports)
- 2. Heat Illness Prevention
- 3. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- 4. Sportsmanship
- 5. First Aid for sports with CPR
- 6. SafeSport

Entry Requirements:

Participants must be at least 18 years old.

Any person meeting the above age requirements, and passing the USA Cricket Level 1 course examination is eligible to attend the USA Cricket Level 2 course and attempt the examination.

Examination / Certification:

An Oral and Written Examination may be taken after attending the three-module course.

This course is intended to be conducted in a group environment (online or in person).

Successful candidates in the oral and written examination with a minimum score of 80% overall will receive their USA Cricket Level 2 Umpiring Certificate.

- **Note:** To be eligible to receive their Level 2 Umpiring Certificate, all umpires must, as part of the process, also submit to and pass a formal Background Check.

Benefits:

Once a candidate successfully passes a Level 2 umpiring course, they will receive at least the following benefits:

- Level Two Certification
- MCC Blue Law Book
- Tom Smith's Book for Cricket Umpiring and Scoring
- USA Cricket branded umpires counter
- USA Cricket Membership ID Card that is color-coded by accreditation status
- Exclusive discount on umpiring apparel and equipment through the USA Cricket online store

Recommended Level of Umpiring:

Once a candidate successfully passes a USA Cricket Level 2 umpiring course, it is recommended that they officiate up to and including local competitive youth and competitive adult league cricket.

Umpiring Opportunities:

Level 2 Certified Umpires also become eligible for nomination and selection to officiate in Intra-Zonal (and other similar standard representative) matches, and to the USA Cricket Umpires Development Panel.

Re-Certification:

A USA Cricket Level 2 umpiring qualification is valid for two years.

Providing that umpires have officiated in at least 15 recognized League matches (or similar standard matches) during the two-year period since their original Level 2 certification, they will be eligible to seek re-certification at this level by re-taking the Oral and Written Examination and paying the examination fee.

Any umpires who do not meet the above criteria, but wish to seek re-certification at this level, will need to re-take the full three module course as well as re-sit the Oral and Written Examination and pay the examination fee.

If, in the meantime, umpires have graduated to Level 3, they do not need to re-certify at Level 2.

LEVEL 3 – Umpiring: Advanced

Overview:

The Umpiring Advanced certification course is designed for experienced umpires who aspire to stand at the highest level of domestic cricket within the USA. As well as the interpretation and application of the Laws of Cricket it also covers the management of the match, the field and the players, with a focus on man-management and other practical aspects. Basic First Aid and SafeSport modules are also included.

The course will also include the following nationally recognized health and safety courses (which may vary from state to state):

- 1. Concussions in Sports (CDC Youth Sports OR NFHS High School Sports)
- 2. Heat Illness Prevention
- 3. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- 4. Sportsmanship
- 5. First Aid for sports with CPR
- 6. SafeSport

Entry Requirements:

Participants must be at least 18 years old.

Any person meeting the above age requirements and passing the Level 2 course examination and who has officiated for at least one year since that Level 2 examination

and for a minimum of 15 matches is eligible to attend the Level 3 modules and attempt the Written Examination and Practical Assessment.

Individuals who have passed the Level 2 course examination may sit the Level 3 Written Examination earlier if they wish, but they will not be eligible for the Level 3 Practical Assessment until they meet the above minimum period of officiating.

Examination / Certification:

A written examination may be taken after attending the 9-module course.

The overall examination is in two parts. 100 marks are available; 60 marks are attained across the Written Examination, whilst 40 marks are attained across the Practical Assessments.

• Part 1: Written Examination

The written exam is in two sections:

- Section 1: covers the Laws of Cricket together with any amendments and/or experimental Laws and the most recent edition of the USA Cricket Umpires Handbook; this part represents 40 marks of the total 60 available.
- Section 2: covers the local playing conditions as set by the examination committee and represents the remaining 20 marks available.

• Part 2: Practical Assessment

- Umpires are required to be assessed for 6 x One-Day Matches (40 Overs/50 Overs) or 12 x T20 Matches. Only assessors designated by USA Cricket are qualified to assess umpires.
- Each assessor may assess a candidate for not more than 2 x One-Day Matches (40 Overs/50 Overs) or 4 x T20 Matches.
- The average score from combined practical assessments shall carry 40% weight towards the final score.
- **Note:** To be eligible to receive their Level 3 certificate, umpires must submit to and pass a Background Check.

In addition, umpires will need to pass a physical examination, which will include BMI, eye and hearing exams and general fitness requirements.

Benefits:

Once a candidate successfully passes a Level 3 umpiring course they will receive at least the following benefits:

- Level Three Certification
- MCC Blue Law Book
- Tom Smith's Book for Cricket Umpiring and Scoring

- USA Cricket branded umpires counter
- USA Cricket Membership ID Card that is color-coded by accreditation status
- Exclusive discount on umpiring apparel and equipment through the USA Cricket online store
- USA Cricket Umpires further education and professional development conferences and opportunities

Recommended Level of Umpiring:

Once a candidate successfully passes a USA Cricket Level 3 umpiring course, it is recommended that they officiate up to and including all levels of local competitive youth and competitive adult league, intra-zonal youth and intra-zonal adult cricket (and other similar standard representative matches).

Umpiring Opportunities:

Level 3 Certified Umpires also become eligible for nomination and selection to officiate in Inter-Zonal and National Championship (and other similar standard representative) matches, and to the USA Cricket Umpires Elite Panel.

Re-Certification:

A USA Cricket Level 3 umpiring qualification is valid for three years.

Providing that umpires have officiated in at least 15 recognized League matches (or similar standard matches) per year in each of the three-years since their original Level 3 certification, they will be eligible to seek re-certification at this level by re-taking the Oral and Written Examination and paying the examination fee.

Any umpires who do not meet the above criteria, but wish to seek re-certification at this level, will need to re-take the full three module course as well as re-sit the Oral and Written Examination and pay the examination fee.

Level 3 umpires must also submit to annual physical examinations, including BMI, eye and hearing exams, and general fitness requirements, to ensure they remain fit enough to officiate at this level.

3B: USA Cricket Umpiring Panels

USA Cricket Umpires Development Panel

Overview:

The Development Panel is established to identify and support talented umpires who have the potential and desire to progress to higher levels within the overall pathway. It is recommended that a minimum of 12 people be appointed to this panel each year.

Entry Requirements:

Appointment to the Panel is by invitation only on an annual basis.

To be eligible for nomination and to continue on the Panel, umpires must have passed their Level 2 course examination and meet such other criteria as may be determined by USA Cricket from time to time.

Benefits:

Once an umpire has been appointed to the Development Panel, they will receive at least the following benefits:

- MCC Blue Law Book
- Tom Smith's Book for Cricket Umpiring and Scoring
- USA Cricket branded umpires counter
- USA Cricket Membership ID Card that is color-coded by accreditation status
- Exclusive discount on umpiring apparel and equipment through the USA Cricket online store
- USA Cricket Umpires further education and professional development conferences and opportunities

Umpiring Opportunities:

Development Panel Umpires will be prioritized for selection to officiate in Intra-Zonal (and other similar standard representative) matches, and will also become eligible for nomination and selection to officiate in Inter-Zonal and National Championship (and other similar standard representative) matches.

USA Cricket Umpires Elite Panel

Overview:

The Elite Panel is the highest level of umpiring attainable within USA Cricket. It is recommended that a minimum of 6 people be appointed to this panel each year.

Entry Requirements:

Appointment to the Panel is by invitation only on an annual basis.

To be eligible for nomination and to continue on the Panel, umpires must have passed their Level 3 course examination and meet such other criteria as may be determined by USA Cricket from time to time.

Benefits:

Once an umpire has been appointed to the Elite Panel, they will receive at least the following benefits:

MCC Blue Law Book

- Tom Smith's Book for Cricket Umpiring and Scoring
- USA Cricket branded umpires counter
- USA Cricket Membership ID Card that is color-coded by accreditation status
- Exclusive discount on umpiring apparel and equipment through the USA Cricket online store
- USA Cricket Umpires further education and professional development conferences and opportunities

Umpiring Opportunities:

Elite Panel Umpires will be prioritized for selection to officiate in Inter-Zonal and National Championship (and other similar standard representative) and will also become eligible for nomination to the ICC Development Panel.

3B: Additional professional development opportunities:

In addition to the core accreditation pathway, as the program is developed, certified USA Cricket umpires may be provided with additional opportunities to develop their skills and experiences, and to network and learn with their umpiring colleagues from across the country. These opportunities may be offered in a number of different ways, e.g.:

- Umpire exchange programs with Full/Associate Member countries
- Annual conference for cricket umpires.
- Partnerships with Full Members to make further umpiring opportunities available, and to provide opportunities to get a Full Member umpiring credential.

3C: Performance monitoring & evaluation:

In due course, USA Cricket will provide tools to all league members across the country so that the performance of umpires can be tracked at all levels of the game.

This will be based on regular submission of captain's reports, either via the USA Cricket official scoring app or membership platform immediately following the conclusion of the match, or within a pre-determined time (12-24 hours) post-match via a notification alert sent to captains.

Umpires will be graded across a number of criteria with an average score out of 5 being applied. Each Umpire, as well as USA Cricket and relevant league officials will have access to the more detailed report.

Such performance data will be monitored and used by USA Cricket in determining its match appointments and its appointments to the USA Cricket Umpires Development Panel and USA Cricket Umpires Elite Panel, and in order to provide support to umpires to improve their performance through tailored programs or initiatives.

3D: Match appointment process:

Domestic cricket organized by Leagues

USA Cricket will develop a process whereby member leagues can engage the services of local umpires through the USA Cricket membership portal. Umpires will be listed by Zone/State/County, and their current Certification Level will be made available.

The Monitoring & Evaluation scores will be visible on each umpire's profile, which will help inform a League's decision on which Umpires to engage for which fixtures.

- Regional, Domestic and International Cricket

USA Cricket will appoint umpires to Zonal, Conference and National fixtures and assist in the appointment of umpires to International fixtures.

A robust and transparent set of criteria will be established to guide the appointment process, and will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Level of umpiring certification and qualification
- Level of umpiring experience
- Years of umpiring experience
- Domestic monitoring & evaluation scores
- Must be legally able to work in the United States and submit a W9 to USA Cricket

Umpires on the USA Cricket Umpires Development and Umpires Elite Panels will be given priority for these respective opportunities.

4. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

To facilitate the implementation of this plan, USA Cricket will put in place dedicated resources and will seek to deliver the various aspects of it within the timelines set out in the proposed delivery plan.

4A: Required Resources and Reporting Line:

Human Resources

The responsibility for providing strategic oversight and guidance to the implementation of this plan lies with the Development Committee.

The management responsibility for delivering the plan lies with the National Development Manager, who will report on progress to the Development Committee on a regular basis.

USA Cricket will initially appoint six volunteer Umpire Coordinators, one in each Zone, to support the operational responsibilities of the Development Manager and the implementation of the plan.



Volunteer Umpire Coordinators

The Volunteer Umpire Coordinators will help to design and facilitate all parts of the umpire's program and pathway both nationally and within their assigned zone. They will report directly to the Development Manager.

Initially, these positions would be assumed on a voluntary basis although such arrangements will need to be kept under review on a regular basis as the program grows in scope.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer Umpire Coordinators:

- Help with formal categorization process of initial umpire intake.
- Help facilitate the re-certification of all registered umpires.
- Contribute to the design of umpire certification courses which align with current best practice, and with the 4 levels of the umpiring pathway.
- Help with delivery of the umpires program across their respective zone.
- Help market and deliver umpire courses across their respective zone.
- Help identify and train the course trainers and assessors.
- Work with USA Cricket's technology partner to develop an online performance monitoring and evaluation tool for umpires to be appropriately assessed by leagues/tournaments/teams/captains.
- Help develop a hierarchy or criteria to assist in the appointment of umpires to Zonal, Conference, National and International fixtures.
- Investigate further development opportunities for aspiring umpires (exchange programs, conferences, full-member accreditation etc.) for incorporation into future versions of the USA Cricket pathway and program.

• Required Qualifications:

- Highly qualified umpire with a thorough practical knowledge of the laws, playing conditions, and match management.
- Experience in training and/or writing umpire training material.
- Good knowledge of the local umpiring community in the USA
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Good administration and time-management skills.

As delivery of the plan evolves, there may also be a need to engage with Umpire Trainers, Tutors and Assessors as the need arises, possibly on a regional basis.

Physical Resources

The following physical resources will be required to develop and implement the umpiring program.

- Printable training materials
- Printed certificates
- USA Cricket branded umpires' counters
- Blue Law Books
- Tom Smith's 'Book for Cricket Umpiring and Scoring'
- Umpires Shirts for Zonal/Conference/National fixtures
- Other umpiring equipment

4B: Delivery Plan & Timeline:

TASK	к-о	1M	3M	6M	1Y	2Y
Signoff on USA Cricket Umpires Program and Pathway	Х					
Appoint Volunteer Umpires Coordinators	Х					
Finalize Level One Course content		х				
Select Third Party Software to Build Online Level One Course		х				
Complete Umpires' Categorization and Online Directory established			Х			
Launch Online Level One Course			Х			
Announce first batch of successful Level One Umpires			Х			
Develop Introductory Course content and supplemental resources			Х			
Produce first quarterly Digital Umpires Newsletter			Х			
Develop USAC - Umpires' Code of Conduct & Policies			Х			
Identify potential Umpire Trainers and Assessors from amongst Umpire community			Х			
Develop Membership & ID Cards for Umpires			Х			
Launch Online Introductory Course				Х		
Develop 'Umpire Trainers' Course content (for Level Two and Level Three)				Х		
Develop Level Two Course and Supplemental Resources				Х		
Launch Level Two Course – Host one in each of the three Conferences					х	
Announce first batch of successful Level Two Umpires					Х	
Conduct initial Umpire Trainers course in conjunction with Level Two Courses (Invite Only)					Х	
Develop Level Three Course content and supplemental resources					Х	
Launch Level Three Course – Number of courses dependent on interest level						х
Appoint appropriate number of Assessors dependant on Level Three registrations						Х
Begin Practical Assessments of first batch of Level Three Umpires						Χ