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# GUIDE TO CONTRACT STRUCTURE IN NEW ZEALAND

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**NZRPA**  
NEW ZEALAND RUGBY PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This paper is intended to provide young players with guidance and advice on how the contracting structure for professional rugby in New Zealand operates.

For further information, including a complete copy of the Collective Employment Agreement between the NZRU and players, please visit [www.nzrpa.co.nz](http://www.nzrpa.co.nz)

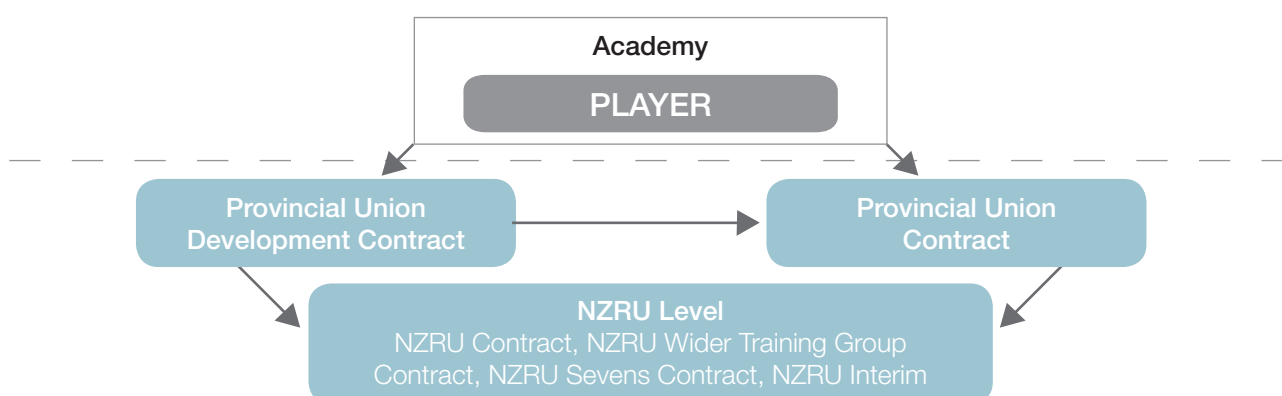
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## 01 How are players in New Zealand employed?

All players in New Zealand are employed under a Collective Employment Agreement. That means all players are subject to some terms which are standard across all contracts. The Collective Employment Agreement covers a wide range of issues related to the employment of professional rugby players including Revenue Sharing, Player Property (use of images etc), Commercial Merchandising, Promotional Services, Misconduct and many others. This guide focuses on the different types of playing contracts a player may enter into and the terms and conditions of those contracts. It is important to know which type of contract you are being offered as each type is different.

All playing contracts offer a “retainer” which is an amount payable regardless of injury, illness or selection. Some types of contracts have minimum retainers.

## 02 What types of contracts are there in New Zealand professional rugby?



### Academy

These days most players start off as part of an academy based at one of the Provincial Unions. These players are usually subject to some type of academy agreement. Recently, academies are increasingly signing players up on Provincial Union Development Contracts.

### Provincial Union level

Once a player signs a Provincial Union Development Contract or a Provincial Union Contract he is ‘employed’ under the Collective Employment Agreement. A player must be on one of these types of contract to play in the Air New Zealand Cup. The Provincial Union named on a player’s contract determines his “Home Super Rugby Franchise” for the purposes of Rebel Sport Super 14 selection.

A player on one of these types of contract automatically agrees to be a part of the Rebel Sport Super 14 Selection Process, unless he notifies the NZRU in writing by the Super Rugby Eligibility date (usually the second week of October) each year.

A player on a Provincial Union Development Contract or Provincial Union Contract may agree to go on loan to another Provincial Union with his agreement and the agreement of the Provincial Unions involved. Loans can be complicated so players looking at entering into a loan arrangement are advised to contact the NZRPA on **0800 PLAYER** or [contact@nizrpa.co.nz](mailto:contact@nizrpa.co.nz).

### NZRU Level

There are four types of contracts at NZRU level: NZRU Contracts, NZRU Wider Training Group Contracts and NZRU Sevens Contracts. A player may be on only one of these types of contracts at any time, plus either a Provincial Union Contract or Provincial Union Development Contract. A player must be on one of the NZRU level contracts in order to play Rebel Sport Super 14, or for the New Zealand Sevens Team, All Blacks, Junior All Blacks, NZ Maori or an All Blacks Trial Team.

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### 03 What is a Provincial Union Development Contract?

Provincial Union Development Contracts are used for up and coming players with the potential to play in the Air New Zealand Cup.

#### A Provincial Union Development Contract:

- Has no minimum retainer value
- Has a maximum term of two (2) years
- Must expire between 31 October and 31 December

Any player who is called into an Air New Zealand Cup squad and required to perform the same work as other squad members must receive \$1,000 in that week (inclusive of his Provincial Union Development Retainer).

### 04 What is a Provincial Union Contract?

Provincial Union Contracts are used for players with the ability to play Air New Zealand Cup. A Provincial Union must have at least 26 players on Provincial Union Contracts each year.

#### A Provincial Union Contract:

- Has no maximum term
- Has a minimum retainer of \$15,000 per year
- Must expire between 31 October and 31 December

A Provincial Union Contract may also include Individual Performance Incentives, Non Financial Benefits or Team Performance Incentives.

### 05 What is an NZRU Contract?

These contracts are used for players who selected in the Final Squads for Rebel Sport Super 14 and have a minimum retainer of \$65,000.

First year Rebel Sport Super 14 players will automatically default to a retainer of \$65,000 paid over 14 months from 1 November unless the NZRU and the player agree otherwise.

NZRU Contracts may also include Individual Performance Incentives which may not total more than 10% of the retainer value for that year. An NZRU Contract may also contain non-financial benefits such as a car, and team performance incentives.

### 06 What is an NZRU Wider Training Group Contract?

These contracts are for players selected to the Wider Training Group of a Super Rugby Franchise. Each year, WTGs are selected after the Final Super Rugby Squads (ie 28 man squads) are selected.

- Two and a half day per week (on average) commitment to a Super Rugby Franchise
- Must be at least seven (7) Wider Training Group players per franchise

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For and NZRU Wider Training Group Contract there are four tiers or retainers:

<b>Tier 1:</b> Developing Premier Competition Player (1-2 years) / U19 player / U21 player	\$15,000-\$20,000
<b>Tier 2:</b> Established Premier Competition Player (3+ years)	\$20,000-\$25,000
<b>Tier 3:</b> Developing Previous Super Rugby Player (1-2 years)	\$25,000+
<b>Tier 4:</b> Established Super Rugby Player (3+ years) / 'Next Best' Player	\$30,000+

## 07 What is an NZRU Sevens Contract?

Every year, the NZRU must name a New Zealand Sevens Squad of at least 15 players. Those players must be party to either an NZRU Wider Training Group Contract or an NZRU Sevens Contract.

For an NZRU Sevens Contract, there are three tiers of retainers:

<b>Tier 1:</b> Players who have played less than 4 IRB Sevens World Series Tournaments at the commencement of that Contract Year	\$25,000
<b>Tier 2:</b> Players who have played 4 or more IRB Sevens World Series Tournaments at the commencement of that Contract Year	\$35,000
<b>Tier 3:</b> Elite Sevens players (as determined by the NZRU) of which there must be at least 3	\$45,000+

Where a player is on an NZRU Wider Training Group Contract and named in the New Zealand Sevens Squad, that player receives the highest retainer he is entitled to (either WTG or Sevens) plus \$5,000.

All players selected to a New Zealand Sevens Team for a tournament are entitled to \$2,000 per tournament.

## 08 What Is An NZRU Interim Contract?

This is a contract used in a wide range of circumstances where other types of NZRU level contracts are not suitable. Eg they may be used for a replacement Rebel Sport Super 14 player who is not on an NZRU Wider Training Group Contract, or for a player selected to the NZ Sevens Team or other National Team who is not on an NZRU level contract. They may also be used to retain players on a temporary basis.

The minimum weekly amounts of a player's NZRU Interim Retainer (inclusive of any NZRU Team Selection Fees) which must be paid to a player who is required to play for an NZRU Team are:

New Zealand Sevens Team	\$500
Any other NZRU Team	\$1,500

For example, a replacement Rebel Sport Super 14 player on an NZRU Interim Contract must receive \$1,500 per week.

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## 09 What happens if I make a National Team (eg All Blacks, Junior All Blacks, NZ Maori or All Blacks Trial Team)?

All players selected to one of these teams receive standard amounts on top of their retainer called "Team Selection Fees". These are weekly amounts, with a minimum of one week per period of assembly, then pro-rata daily amounts after that.

The Team Selection Fees per week are:

NZRU Team	
All Blacks	\$7,500
Junior All Blacks	\$3,500

NZRU Team	
New Zealand Maori Team	\$2,000
An All Blacks Trial Team	\$2,000

For further information contact the NZRPA on [0800 PLAYER](tel:0800-PLAYER) or [contact@nwrpa.co.nz](mailto:contact@nwrpa.co.nz)

The NZRPA will provide you with further educational information and support in relation to Contracts or any other aspect of rugby.

This advice can be found at the NZRPA website [www.nwrpa.co.nz](http://www.nwrpa.co.nz)