

K15012/3/2017-SP-IV
Government of India
Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports
Department of Sports

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
6 Feb. 2017

To

As per list attached

Sub: Inviting nominations for Dronacharya Award for 2017.

Sir,

I am directed to invite the nominations for Dronacharya Awards 2017 for outstanding coaches in sports and games.

2. To be eligible for the award, coach, whether he/she works full time or part time as coach, he/she should have produced outstanding achievement over a period of four years immediately preceding the year in which the award is to be given. Accordingly, achievements for the period 1st January 2013 to 31.12.2016 of the sportspersons imparted coaching by the coach will be taken into consideration. For 2 awards earmarked for lifetime contribution in coaching, achievements of the coach in producing outstanding sportspersons over a period of 20 years or more will be taken into account.

3. A coach found encouraging the use of drugs/substances banned by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) based on a sample collected by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) or any other agency authorized by WADA and tested by National Dope Testing Laboratory or any other WADA accredited laboratory, by a sportsperson whom he/she is coaching, will not be eligible for the Dronacharya Award. A coach against whom enquiry is going on/pending in this regard will also be ineligible.

4. The nominations of the eligible coaches for the award must be sent in the prescribed proforma to Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Room No. 507 'C' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001. Last date for receipt of nominations is **28th April 2017** as 29th & 30th April 2017 are closed holiday.

5. Organizations, authorized signatories from whom nominations will be considered and number of nominations they can make are as follows:

- i) Indian Olympic Association – President/Secretary General (upto two nominations)
- ii) National Sports Federations – President/Secretary General (upto two nominations)
- iii) Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI): President/ Secretary (upto two nominations)

- iv) State/ UT Governments/ Sports Control/ Promotion Boards – An officer of not less than the rank of Secretary or Director (Sports) of the organization after taking due approval of the competent authority ((upto two nominations)
- v) Sports Authority of India- Director General/Secretary (upto two nominations), in addition to the quota to be exercised by it in respect of de-recognized/suspended NSFs.
6. For the NSFs de-recognized or under suspension, Sports Authority of India (SAI) will exercise the quota of nominations and make nominations upto a maximum of two eligible coaches for each sports discipline with the approval of Director General, SAI
7. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Awardees/Dronacharya Awardees/Arjuna Awardees/Dhyan Chand Awardees of previous years can also nominate one eligible coach each for Dronacharya Award in their respective disciplines.
8. The concerned agencies should send the application in one lot only and should restrict the number of nominations as per the above guidelines. In case more nominations are made, first two/one nominations (as the case may be) will be considered.
9. Applications, which are not in the prescribed proforma, or not signed by the authorized signatory or are incomplete, or have been received after last date, that is **28th April 2017**, shall not be considered.
10. It should be noted by all that canvassing in any form for/by an entry will render that entry liable to disqualification.
11. A copy of the scheme, alongwith prescribed proforma in which nominations of eligible coaches are to be sent, is enclosed for necessary information.

Yours faithfully,



(Sunil Garg)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
Tel No. 23380625
Room No. 507 – 'C' wing Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi.

Copy also to:

1. PS to MOS (I/C) YA&S
2. PPS to Secretary (Sports)
3. PPS to Joint Secretary (Sports)

To:

1. The Secretary,
Department of Youth Affairs &
Sports, (All States and U.Ts)
2. The President/Secretary General,
(All recognized National Sports
Federations).
3. The President/Secretary General,
Indian Olympic Association,
B-29, Olympic Bhawan, Qutub
Institutional Area,
New Delhi.
4. President/Secretary,
Board of Control for Cricket in India
(BCCI)
4th Floor, Cricket Centre
Wankhede Stadium
'D' Road, Churchgate
Mumbai- 400020
5. Secretary,
Services Sports Control Board,
Room No.97, G Block, Armed Forces,
Headquarters, Nirman Bhawan, New
Delhi.
6. Secretary
Railway Sports Promotion Board
Room no. 452, 4th Floor,
Ministry of Railways,
Rail Bhavan,
New Delhi – 110001
7. Secretary
All India Police Sports Control Board
25, Akbar Road,
New Delhi
8. Secretary, Petroleum Sports
Promotion Board,
1012, Surya Kiran Building,
19, Kasturba Gandhi Marg,
New Delhi-110001
9. Secretary,
Air India Sports Promotion Board
1st Floor, Vayudoot Building,
Safdarjung Airport,
New Delhi.
10. Secretary,
SAIL Sports Promotion Board
Steel Authority of India Limited
(SAIL),
Corporate Office, Ispat Bhawan,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110003
11. Secretary,
Central Civil Services Cultural &
Sports Board,
361-B Wing, 3rd Floor,
Lok Nayak Bhawan
New Delhi-110 003
12. Director General,
Sports Authority of India, New Delhi.

**Scheme for Dronacharya Award For Outstanding Coaches In Sports And Games
(Amended as on 03.02.2016)**

1. PREAMBLE

The scheme may be called the "Scheme for Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games".

2. OBJECTIVES

The Award is intended to:

- (i) Honour coaches who have done outstanding and meritorious work on a consistent basis and enabled sportspersons to excel in international events; and
- (ii) Motivate coaches to dedicate themselves with a singularity of purpose of raising the standard of sportspersons to highest performance in international events and thus bring glory to the country.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this scheme, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (a) "Scheme" means the Scheme for the Dronacharya Award for outstanding coaches in sports and games.
- (b) "Committee" means the Selection Committee constituted under the Scheme.
- (c) "Award" means the Dronacharya Award.
- (d) "Chairperson" means chairperson of the Selection Committee under the Scheme.
- (e) "Government" means the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- (f) "Olympian" means a sportsperson who participated in the Olympic Games as a Member of Indian Contingent approved by the Government of India.
- (g) "Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Awardee" means a person who has been conferred with Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna by the Government of India.
- (h) "Arjuna Awardee" means a person who has been awarded an Arjuna Award by Government of India.
- (i) "Sports Administrator" means a person who is engaged in management/ administration of national/international sports events, sports organizations including private sports academies, sports programmes and delivery of sports services.
- (j) "Sports journalist/expert/commentator" means a person who is associated with sports journalism including freelancing in print or electronic media, or a person who writes extensively on sports issues or has written books on sports, or a person who gives live commentary during sports events

4. SPORTS DISCIPLINES COVERED BY DRONACHARYA AWARD

The Dronacharya Awards shall be given to eligible coaches who produce outstanding results in:

- a) different Olympic sports disciplines;
- b) Such non-Olympic sports disciplines as are recognized by the Government of India in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports; and
- c) Such indigenous sports as are recognized by Government under extant rules.

5. ELIGIBILITY

5.1 To be eligible for the award, coach, whether he/she works full time or part time as coach, he/she should have produced outstanding achievement over a period of four years immediately preceding the year in which the award is to be given. Nominated coach will have to submit details of periods for which he/she coached the disciple(s) in question against whose performance he/she is seeking the Award. The Ministry reserves the right to seek affidavit from the sportsperson concerned where it is found that more than one coach is claiming credit for achievements of a sportsperson.

5.2 **For 2 awards earmarked for lifetime contribution in coaching**, achievements of the coach in producing outstanding sportspersons over a period of 20 years or more will be taken into account.

5.3 A coach found encouraging the use of drugs/substances banned by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) based on a sample collected by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) or any other agency authorized by WADA and tested by National Dope Testing Laboratory or any other WADA accredited laboratory, by a sportsperson whom he/she is coaching, will not be eligible for the Dronacharya Award. A coach against whom enquiry is going on/pending in this regard will also be ineligible.

5.4 Sportspersons who have already been conferred with Dhyan Chand Award will not be eligible to apply for Dronacharya Award.

6. NOMINATIONS

6.1 The nominations for the Award will be invited by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports from all recognized National Sports Federations (NSFs) recognized by the Government of India, Indian Olympic Association, Sports Promotion and Control Boards and State/UT Governments in the month of January/February each year. Last date for the receipt of nominations will be 30th April or last working day of April. The National Sports Federations recognized by the Government of India; the Indian Olympic Association, Sports Promotion and Control Boards and the State/UT Governments may nominate upto two names in a particular year. In case of cricket, for which no National Sports Federation has been recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, nominations from Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) will be invited. For the NSFs de-recognized or under suspension, Sports Authority of India (SAI) will exercise the quota of nominations and make nominations upto a maximum of two eligible coaches for each sports discipline with the approval of Director General, SAI. Nominations beyond maximum two will not be considered. Only the first two nominations sent by the nominating agencies will be considered.

6.2 Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Awardees of the previous years can also nominate one eligible coach each for Dronacharya Award for the sports discipline for which they themselves were awarded Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna. Arjuna, Dhyan Chand and Dronacharya awardees of previous years can also nominate one eligible coach each for Dronacharya Award in their respective disciplines. Further, Director General, Sports Authority of India can also nominate upto two eligible coaches for this award, in addition to the quota to be exercised by it in respect of de-recognized/suspended NSFs.

6.3 Notwithstanding the above, Government reserves the right to make upto two nominations of coaches in deserving cases where no such nominations have been received from the agencies mentioned under the Scheme.

- 6.4 The authorized signatory for sending nominations will be as follows:-
- (i) Indian Olympic Association – President/Secretary General.
 - (ii) National Sports Federations – President/Secretary General. [In the case of Cricket, there is no federation recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Nominations for cricket will need to be sent by President/ Secretary General of the Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI)].
 - (iii) State/UT Governments/Sports Control/Promotion Boards – An officer of not less than the rank of Secretary or Director (Sports) of the organization after taking due approval of the competent authority.
- 6.5 Nominations forwarded by any office bearer other than those mentioned in para 6.4 above will not be considered.
- 6.6 Nomination agencies are expected to send nominations of most deserving coach(es) irrespective of whether coaches have applied to them for awards.
- 6.7 The nominating authorities are required to certify in the nomination form itself that the nominees are clear from vigilance/disciplinary angles and are not involved in acts of criminal and moral turpitude nature. In case of sportspersons employed with Central Government/State Governments/PSUs or in private organizations, nominating authorities should obtain a requisite report from the concerned employers before certifying that the sportsperson being nominated is clear from vigilance/disciplinary angle and is not involved in any act of criminal or moral turpitude nature. While seeking report from the employer, details of charge sheet/disciplinary action taken/pending, if any, should also be obtained. Copy of the report/certificate obtained from the employer of the coach should be enclosed with the application of the coach being nominated.
- 6.8 Copies of the nominations received from organizations other than the National Sports Federations (NSFs) will be sent to the concerned NSF for verification of the details and the achievements and for checking if the nominated coach has ever been warned/penalized for any unfair practice like age fraud/sexual harassment, doping etc. All details in this regard, if any, alongwith verification report should be sent by the concerned NSF within a week of the receipt of letter from the Ministry.
- 6.9 The Award will be made in respect of the calendar year during which the application is invited.
- 6.10 The nominations will be sent to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in the prescribed proforma giving the achievements of the coaches in international competitions for the previous three years and for the year of the Award.
- 6.11 The applications for nomination should be addressed to Director (Sports)/Deputy Secretary (Sports)/Under Secretary (Sports), Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports only and date of receipt in his/her office will be the date of receipt of nomination by the government.
- 6.12 Received applications are to be duly stamped and recorded in a register. In addition, all applications received within time will be duly acknowledged to the recommending authority.

7. SCRUTINY OF NOMINATION

7.1 All nominations received from the organizations mentioned in para 6.1 and 6.2 will be sent to the Executive Director (TEAMS)/Director (TEAMS), Sports Authority of India and concerned National Sports Federations, who will verify the achievements/performance of all nominated coaches within a maximum period of one month of receipt.

7.2 The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports will seek a report from NADA about each of the shortlisted nominees to verify if anyone of them has ever been found positive for doping.

8. SCREENING COMMITTEE TO SCRUTINIZE ALL THE NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

8.1 A Screening Committee consisting of Joint Secretary (Sports), Department of Sports, Secretary, Sports Authority of India (SAI), Director (Sports)/Deputy Secretary (Sports), Department of Sports and Executive Director (TEAMS)/Director (TEAMS), SAI will meet for the scrutiny of the nominations. Applications of the nominated Coaches, reports of SAI, will be placed before the screening committee. Valid nominations, which are clear from vigilance, disciplinary and doping angles, will be placed before the Selection Committee as per the eligibility prescribed

9. PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION

9.1 The Awards will be decided by a Selection Committee constituted by the Government of India as under:-

1.	Chairperson	To be nominated by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports
2.	Sportspersons of eminence (Olympians or previous Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna or Arjuna Awardees)	2 members
3.	Previous Dronacharya Awardees from different disciplines	3 members
3.	Sports Journalists/Experts/Commentators	2 members
4.	Sports Administrator	1 member
5.	Director General, Sports Authority of India	Ex-officio member
6.	Joint Secretary (Sports), Department of Sports	Member Secretary

9.2 There should be minimum two years of gap before a member other than ex-officio is re-nominated as chairperson or member in the Selection Committee.

9.3 Not more than one sportsperson of eminence or previous Dronacharya Awardee from a particular sports discipline shall be a member of the Selection Committee to avoid any bias in favour of a particular discipline.

9.4 A statement of achievements of all those coaches, who fulfil eligibility criteria and whose nominations have been received before last date, will be sent to the members of the Selection Committee at least a week in advance before the meeting of the Selection Committee.

9.5 The Chairperson in consultation with Member-Secretary may constitute panel amongst the members of the Committee to assist the Committee.

9.6 The Chairperson may seek advice of experts in specific sports disciplines wherever necessary.

9.7 Shortlisted nominations from team games may be sent to experts at least a week in advance for their views. The experts may also be asked to attend Selection Committee meetings to clarify the doubts of members. The evaluation criteria may include international recognition, goals scored, player of the match/player of the tournament award, etc of the trainees of the coach.

9.8 Any person directly or indirectly related to a coach nominated for the Awards shall not be eligible to participate in deliberations of the Selection Committee, concerning that coach.

9.9 The Committee will determine its own work procedure and will keep in view the guidelines/criteria, if any, framed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports. Members of the Selection Committee will give their recommendations as per the provisions of the scheme and the marks criteria of the scheme.

9.10 The quorum for the meeting of the Committee shall be 75% of the members of the Committee and the Chairperson.

9.11 The Committee shall select the Award winners by consensus failing which by a majority, decision and give its report to the Government of India within one month of reference.

9.12 The Executive Director (Teams)/Director (TEAMS), Sports Authority of India will be present at the times of deliberations of the Committee in order to provide information/clarifications, if any, required by the Committee.

9.13 All the selection proceedings will be treated as "Confidential". The Chairperson may take necessary steps in consultation with the Member-Secretary to maintain strict confidentiality of the deliberations and selection made by the Committee.

10. NUMBER OF DRONAHARYA AWARDS TO BE GIVEN IN A YEAR

Ordinarily not more than 5 awards could be given in any calendar year. Out of these, 2 will be earmarked for lifetime contribution in coaching.

11 GENERAL

11.1 The Award shall comprise of a statuette, a certificate, ceremonial dress and a cash prize of Rs. 5,00,000/- (Rupees five lakh) which will be presented to the winners at the function for the presentation of the Award to be held at a place and on a date to be decided by the Government of India.

11.2 No Award will be made for a second time to the same person.

11.3 The Award may be given posthumously if such an occasion arises.

11.4 In order to ensure due diligence in the selection of awardees, the Ministry will make necessary character verification prior to finalizing the names of the awardees through the regional centres of SAI, if need be, by taking help of concerned police authorities.

11.5. At the time of the presentation ceremony, the awards will be conferred upon the selected awardees, who are present. No person other than the awardees will collect the award and prize money at the presentation ceremony. The awardees who are not able to come to receive the award on the National Sports Day, can later receive the same from the Minister-in-Charge for Youth Affairs and Sports.

11.6 The Government of India may cancel or annul the Award of any recipient for specific reasons including doping and, thereupon, the recipient shall be required to surrender the certificate of honour but it shall be competent for the Government of India to restore the Award once the cancellation and annulment has been withdrawn.

11.7 The decision of the Government of India in respect of matters covered by this Scheme and interpretation of the provisions of this scheme shall be final and no appeal shall lie against them.

11.8 A person who is recommended for the Award shall be deemed to have accepted the provisions of the Scheme.

11.9 Canvassing in any form in respect of an entry will render that entry liable to disqualification.

11.10 Minister-in-charge for Youth Affairs & Sports will be competent authority for relaxation of any clause, provided there are sufficient reasons (to be recorded in writing) for doing so.

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR DRONACHARYA AWARDS

Affix a recent
passport
size photograph of the
nominee

1.	Name of the National Sports Federation/ Institution/Association/State Government/UTs making recommendation	
2.	Name of the Coach recommended (In capital letters)	
3.	Particulars in brief	
4.	Date of birth	
5.	Father's name	
6	Address (with Telephone No./mobile No. /E-mail, if any)	
7.	Name of the employer with complete address	
8.	Status of Coach	

9.	Qualification	
	a) Academic	
	Degree/Diploma Institute	Year of Passing
	b) Professional	
	Degree/Diploma Institute	Year of Passing
10.	Whether does he/she possess any degree or diploma in coaching of the discipline he/she has been recommended for Dronacharya Award	
11.	Year of starting coaching in the discipline	
12.	Name of sportspersons he/she spotted as talented in sports, their age when spotted (Please give extra sheet if necessary)	
13.	Achievements of the talent identified, whom he/she spotted and coached. (Please give extra sheet if necessary)	
14.	Names of sportspersons whom he/she has coached continuously in the last three and prior years including in the National Camps alongwith details of periods for which he/she coached the disciple(s) in question against whose performance being nominated for award.	

15.	Details of sports achievements at international level of the disciple(s)/trainee(s)		
Sl. No.	Name of the Event	Date(s) & Year/Venue	Achievements, during which he/she has been coaching National Team/Sportsperson
1	2	3	4
16	Recommendation of Federation/Association/Institute		
17.	Professional ability		
18.	Management ability		
19	Outstanding achievements (including Sports Distinction)		
20.	Sense of discipline		
21.	A brief report on the result achieved meriting award		
22.	Please indicate whether this nomination is for category of lifetime contribution in coaching		Yes/No

Undertaking by the coach nominated for the Award:-

That I have carefully read the provisions of the Scheme for the Dronacharya Award for the Outstanding Performance in Sports and Games and hereby accept all its provisions. I have never been penalized for any unfair practice like age fraud etc.

None of my trainees has been penalized or no enquiry is pending / ongoing against any of my trainees for use of drugs / substances banned by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) based on a sample collected by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) or any other agency authorized by WADA and tested by National Dope Testing Laboratory or any other

WADA accredited laboratory. This is applicable for the period the disciple(s) was/were under my training.

I have never encouraged the use of drugs /substances banned by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) by any sportsperson(s).

(Signature of the Coach)
Name and Discipline

Note :- In case any enquiry has been initiated or warning given, details should be given by Coach.

Recommendation from State Government/National Sports Federation/India Olympic Association etc

1. I recommend that Shri/Km/Smt. son/daughter/wife of Shri for the Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Coaches for the year
2. I have carefully read the provisions of the schemes for Dronacharya Award and confirm that the coach is eligible for being considered for the Award.
3. It is certified that the particulars mentioned above are correct.
4. It is certified that nominee is clear from vigilance/disciplinary angles and is not involved in acts of criminal and moral turpitude nature. In case of coaches employed with Central Government/State Governments/PSUs or in private organizations, a requisite report has been obtained from the concerned employer before certifying that the coach being nominated is clear from vigilance/disciplinary angle and is not involved in any act of criminal or moral turpitude nature. Copy of the report obtain from the employer is enclosed.

Signature of President/Secretary General
Of the Federation/Associations/Head of the Institute, State/UTs

Name:
Designation:
Address

Telephone No./FAX No.

Official Seal

Note:

1. Report the employer will include details of charge sheet/disciplinary action taken/pending, if any.

2. A coach found encouraging the use of drugs/substances banned by the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) based on a sample collected by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) or any other agency authorized by WADA and tested by National Dope Testing Laboratory or any other WADA accredited laboratory, by a sportsperson whom he/she is coaching, will not be eligible for the Dronacharya Award. A coach against whom enquiry is going on/pending in this regard will also be ineligible.

Place:

Date:

Criteria for giving Dronacharya awards to Coaches

1. 80 % weightage will be given for the medals won in various International championships by the sportspersons, trained by the coach for at least 240 days immediately preceding the tournament. The International championships and sports events will be in respect of the disciplines covered in Olympic Games (Summer, Winter and Paralympics), Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. Points for winning medals by trainees will be given to each eligible coach during the last 4 years as per marks given in the table below:

S. No.	Event	Medal		
		Gold	Silver	Bronze
1.	Olympic Games/ Paralympics	80	70	55
2.	World Championship/World Cup (once in 4 years)*	40	30	20
3	Asian Games	30	25	20
4	Commonwealth Games	25	20	15

* For World Championship/World Cup of different periodicities, proportionate marks will be given

2. Equivalence of any other sports discipline/tournament, not listed above, will be decided by the Selection Committee with reference to above-mentioned categories of sports tournaments and the points will be allotted accordingly.

3. For team events, marks will be computed taking into consideration strength of the team. If prescribed marks for an individual event are 'A', in the case of team event, the marks will be computed as follows:

- (i) A team of 2 persons: $1.5 \times \text{'A'}/\text{number of persons in the team}$
- (ii) A team of 3 or 4 persons: $2 \times \text{'A'}/\text{number of persons in the team}$
- (iii) A team of 5 to 10 persons: $3 \times \text{'A'}/\text{number of persons in the team}$
- (iv) A team of more than 10 persons: $5 \times \text{'A'}/\text{number of persons in the team}$

4. 80 marks will be given to the coach getting maximum points as computed in the table above. Rest of the coaches will be given marks proportionately to the said coach. For example if say a Coach "A" has got highest points say 45 points as per table above in his/her sports discipline and Coach "B" got 40 points as per table above, then A will get 80 marks and B will get $(80 \times 40 / 45) = 71.11$ marks.

5. 20 % weightage will be given to the marks given by the Selection Committee for assessment of the eligible coach keeping in view profile and standard of the sports events in which his trainees have won medals.

6. For Cricket and indigenous games, which are not Olympic / Asian games / Commonwealth Games disciplines, the Selection Committee will recommend the coach(es) taking into consideration the performance of the sportspersons, coached by them.
7. Normally not more than 5 awards could be given in any calendar year. Out of these, 2 will be earmarked for lifetime contribution in coaching. This condition can be relaxed only in exceptional circumstances to be recorded in writing. Further, not more than 1 award will be given in each discipline in either of the two categories of Dronacharya Award.
8. In a particular sports discipline, names of not more than 2 coaches with the highest marks as per the criteria brought out in the table above will be considered by the Selection Committee.
9. Selection Committee will recommend the final list of coaches for the Awards as per the marks obtained in terms of the criteria indicated above.
10. Selection Committee may not mechanically recommend Dronacharya Award to the recipient of the highest marks across disciplines. But in a particular sports discipline, award will be recommended only for the recipient of the highest aggregate marks.
11. The marking criteria will not apply to coaches to be selected on the basis of lifetime contribution in coaching. Selection Committee will give its recommendations for such two coaches taking into consideration the contribution made by them over a period of 20 years or more in terms of producing outstanding sportspersons.
12. The recommendations of the Selection Committee will be placed before the Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports for the final decision.