**AFA Notification No. 75 February 2019.**

**This Notification deals with :**

1. **Amendment to Rules of Regular Racing to allow handicap race option in Divisions where there is a large seed time gap and non-handicap racing in other Divisions.**
2. **Notice regarding requirement to obtain Sanction approval before the conduct of any ‘special activities’ , such as filming, at an AFA Sanctioned event.**
3. **Handicap Racing in Regular Competitions.**

The AFA Committee at its Meeting on Monday the 11th February approved an On Trial Rule Amendment to Appendix A Part 2 dealing with Round Robin handicap format racing. The Rules Sub-Committee agreed that the problem of significantly different seed times between some teams entering a Race Meeting either left a team in a division of its own or caused a division to have a time difference across it that could be deemed unfair.

While the problem had been discussed by the AFA committee a few years ago, a suitable resolution had not been identified.

With the introduction of Open Class, Handicap racing has become more prevalent and could provide a suitable solution to the issue.

The Sub-Committee agreed that Handicap racing should be allowed to be run in Regular Class racing divisions where excessive gaps occurred between seed time. The Sub-Committee considered if a guide should be set in terms of a minimum time difference before a division was declared as Handicap racing. However, it was decided that with suitable wording the decision to run a division as Handicap should be sanctioned by the Regional Rep (or Other) when the Division Splits were agreed.

**RECOMMENDATION: -**

The Rules Sub-Committee recommended that Handicap racing should be available to divisions racing in Regular Class at Race Meetings where an excessive gap occurs between seedtimes of competing teams.

The Sub-Committee further recommended that as an On-Trial Rule, Appendix A Part 2 of the Rules should be amended into a ‘Part 2a’ to cover a handicap Race Meetings; a new ‘Part 2b’ to cover the mixed handicap / non-handicap situation, and a ‘Part 2c’ which describes the mechanics of running the handicap which is common to both previous parts and is largely untouched.

The On Trial Rule will be introduced effective from race meetings closing on or after 1st March 2019.

The amendments to Appendix A Part 2 ( which will be a total replacement text) will be included in the AFA Rules and Policies on the AFA web site before the introduction date.

Race Organisers are thus now free to recommend, as part of the format approval process by the Reginal Rep, the use of handicapped Division/s in a situation where a single team combined Division would have been previously necessary or where a large seed time gap exists in say the last Division of a competition. Equally Reginal reps are free to recommend such an approach where they believe this to be a preferred option to a large seed time differential.

1. **Requirement to obtain Sanction approval before the conduct of any ‘special activities’ , such as filming, at an AFA Sanctioned event.**

The AFA Committee wishes to draw attentional to Rule 1.1d which requires host clubs to obtain AFA written approval for any and all special or unusual requests at any AFA Sanctioned event. Competition Organisers are NOT authorized to approve activities, such as the conduct of extra races in order to provide filming opportunities. Any such activities must be submitted to the AFA (via email if necessary) for consideration. Approval will only be granted where the request can be accommodated without any safety risk and without interference to the participants involved in the sanctioned event. Attention is also drawn to the requirements of Rule 8(b) that prevents dogs entered in a competition taking part in training in the ring type activities during the duration of the competition, including at lunch time.

B.Lindsay AFA Secretary.