

## **AFA Rule Clarification Statement No. 18 – Issued April 2010**

The AFA Committee at its April 2010 Meeting dealt with several matters involving clarification issues associated with AFA Rules and determined that the following clarification should be specifically drawn to attention of Club coordinators, Judges and all members;

### **1. Issue of Deliberate false starts being used to delay the start of a heat in order to give team more set up time.**

The Committee noted that this matter had been brought to its attention following the recent Canberra Royal Show competition. The Committee recognised that any suggestions re 'deliberate' false start was difficult to prove but noted also that some evidence existed to support the suggestion that this could now be being used by some teams as a delay tactic when a team member was not set and ready to run. The Committee concluded that any such deliberate action constituted "poor sportsmanship" and that Judges should deal with the action under Rule 9.2 (r). The Committee determined that the attention of all members should be drawn to this matter and a clear statement issued that such behaviour was against the Rules.

### **2. Use and calculation of Declared Seed Times.**

The Committee noted that there was evidence that some teams were not correctly applying the AFA Rules regarding use the WEB seedtime or calculation of declared seed times. This was occurring where a team was entered in a Competition, using a new or different team name, yet a similar constituted team of dogs (involving at least 4 of the dogs in the new named team) had an established web seedtime lower than the declared time. This matter will be taken up directly with the Clubs involved however the Committee determined that all Members should be reminded that declared seed times must be based on the assessed time of the four fastest dogs in the team and that average times should not be used nor the times of slower dogs in the team taken into account.

### **3. Concerns re growing use of 60 seconds changeover times.**

The Committee has received a number of expressions of concern regarding the growing use of 60 seconds changeovers in Competitions. Concerns expressed include an increased risk of injury to handlers and dogs given the need for haste in set up and also potential disadvantage to one team over the other where there is a delay in one of the earlier teams clearing its box. This can result in one of the teams receiving less than the allowed 60 seconds set up time. The Committee recognised that at times it would be necessary for Competition organisers to move to 60 second change over to accommodate the completion of the Competition within set time limits. This decision should be taken in consultation with the appointed AFA Representative for that competition. The Committee determined that the attention of Clubs, and particularly Competition organisers, should be drawn to the need for them to consider available racing time when submitting competition formats and draws

for approval. Formats and draws should be based on 90 seconds changeovers applying through out the Competition. The need to move to 60 seconds change overs should arise where some unforeseen delay has impacted on the race schedule – such as problems with malfunction of lights or delay through weather or accident. The Committee ask all Competition organisers and officials involved with planning or running competitions to recognise that there is an expectation that the normal time for change over of teams is 90 seconds.

#### **4. Other matters.**

The Committee is in the process of developing several Rule amendments that will be implemented as “ On Trial” Rules once wording is finalised.

These are in areas of;

Height Cards and Measuring Rules

Box Malfunction during warm up period

False start rules involving teams that are in a forfeit situation

Any approved changes to Rules will be notified to all Judges and Clubs prior to implementation date.