



AUSTRALIAN
FLYBALL
ASSOCIATION

Guidelines of the Australian Flyball Association Inc.

These guidelines are effective from 10 October 2022.

Contents

Guideline on Hosting an AFA Sanctioned Race Meeting.....	2
Guideline on Race Meeting Committee	11
Guideline on Setting up AFA Matting.....	12
Guideline on Extreme Weather	13

Guideline on Hosting an AFA Sanctioned Race Meeting

1. Your club must be affiliated with the Australian Flyball Association Inc. Download the “Application for Affiliation” (under “Forms” on the AFA website). Affiliation expires at the end of June each year and must be updated annually.
2. Decide on a date, location, entry fee (includes AFA EJS levy \$20.00 per team and \$10 per team matting levy if applicable), race meeting organiser, Race Meeting name, Judges, AFA Representative and closing date for entries.
3. Inspect the location at an early date, particularly with safety in mind, making sure the ground is suitable in the following ways: ground space and ring condition, parking, adequate lighting if for a twilight comp, crowd control, competitor space within sight of ring, shelter, nearby toilets, dog toileting area, access to water, access to power and the proximity of any attractions that might be a problem near flyball (eg. horses, sideshows, fireworks).
4. We recommend that your club nominates an entry receiver and Competition Secretary.
5. Contact the Judges that you would like to Judge at your Meeting (all Judges, and their status levels, are listed on AFA website. The AFA recommends that at least 1 Accredited 1 Judge officiate at your event. An Accredited 1 Judge has completed the latest AFA training program for Judges.
6. Contact your Regional Representative to check the availability of the AFA EJS for your state and make arrangements to collect the EJS in time for the competition.
7. You must have an AFA Representative at your race meeting. We recommend that this person be an AFA committee or ex-committee member or an AFA Judge who is not judging. If you have any issues in nominating a suitable AFA Representative please contact your Regional Representative for suggestions.
8. Contact the AFA Web Team (webteam@flyball.org.au) and organise for the preliminary details to be listed on the “Calendar of Events”. The details should include the name of the race meeting, host club, date, location, race meeting organiser contact details, closing date for entries, sponsors, Judges, AFA Representative, check-in times, racing start times plus an electronic copy of the entry form and any advertising material/sponsors logos’.
9. Lodge an “Application for an AFA Sanctioned Race Meeting” with the appropriate fee to the AFA (under “Forms” on the AFA website) and must be lodged at least:
 - (a) 60 days prior to the closing date for an unlimited race meeting; and
 - (b) 120 days prior to the closing date for a limited entry meeting. The AFA recommends that you lodge your application as early as possible to allow teams to organise holidays and accommodation if necessary. Applications must be approved by the AFA Committee at their regular meetings (usually first Monday of the month) and your Regional Representative will advise you of the outcome.
10. Once your event is sanctioned, entries can be received up to the closing date.
11. Check all of the entry forms to ensure that they have all of the required information. If there is any information missing, contact the Team Captain. Current Team names can be found at the bottom of the Members drop down list on the website
12. Check all the CRN’s are current members by checking AFA points on the website (Only current members are published). The list of Valid CRNs can be found in the “Sitemap”, at the bottom of the front page of the website, under “Race Meetings”. Please note that you HAVE to log in to the website to see this option. If you have any queries about CRN’s that are not listed on the website, contact your Regional Representative, who will then forward them to the AFA to be checked.
13. Check the AFA website (www.flyball.org.au) for web times of the teams that have entered. If a team has declared a seedtime on the entry form, check it against the list of times that

you have taken from the website. If it is a slower time, it must be at least a half second (0.5) second slower than the time listed on the website (e.g. website time is 25.45 therefore the team must enter a seedtime of 25.95 or slower). Refer Rule 1.4.

14. List the seedtimes from fastest to slowest. It is important not to write the names of the teams in at this stage as that can create bias when breaking the teams into racing divisions.
15. Check the Guideline for calculating division splits (Appendix A to this document) and determine proposed division splits as per the guidelines. This Guideline is designed to assist both the competition organisers and regional representatives when considering division splits.

16. Now that you have the racing divisions, you need to decide a racing format. The format will depend on the number of teams in each division and the time available for racing. Minimum scheduled racing per team is 20 heats for 3 or 5 heat races and 4 races for best-of-5. Maximum scheduled is 40 heats for 3 or 5 heat races or 8 races for best-of-5. Maximum scheduled number of heats or races shall make allowance for any Champions trophy formats or run-offs. Where possible try to arrange to have a completed round robin achieved by all Divisions as early as is possible in the day so that in the event of a cancellation during the event points can still be awarded for races completed.

Consideration should be given to running multiple rings to limit the number of teams per ring to 22 – 24 teams.

Clubs may apply for Handicap format racing where the maximum number of teams is restricted to 14 teams with a minimum of 4 teams. In addition, if there are 10 entries or less for a normal round robin competition and seed time spreads are such that conventional divisions are inappropriate, the club may apply to the AFA to change to Handicap format racing. Effective from 1st March 2019 Competition organisers are able to seek to have a format that involves both regular non handicap racing and handicap racing in different Divisions if this is necessary to cope with a wide seed time situation in any Division. Further details on these options are given in Appendix A – part 2 of the Rules and Policies.

The race format may be round robin, single elimination, double elimination or a combination of round robin and elimination / Champion Trophy race format. You also need to determine the number of heats per race (eg. 3 heats, Best 3 of 5 heats or 5 heats). The AFA recommends Best 3 of 5 heat format, especially for events held in the public arena (eg. Nationals, Canberra Royal etc.) Each division can be different, but it is advisable to get the number of heats per team as close as possible. Each team has paid the same entry fee so it is fair that they should expect a similar amount of racing. Using the Worked Example, the race format could be: Div 1: 4 teams => Double Round Robin = 12 races per division = 6 races @ Best 3 of 5 heats = 18-30 heats per team. Div 2, 3 & 4: 5 teams => Double Round Robin = 20 races per division = 8 races @ 3 heats = 24 heats per team.

17. The proposed racing divisions and formats need to be approved by the AFA via the Regional Representative or the Supervisory Judge no later than 7 days before the competition or 3 weeks where handicap racing could be a possibility. Contact your Regional Representative as early as possible to confirm their availability to review and approve your division splits and racing format – contact details are available on the AFA website. Don't include names of teams when you submit your proposed division splits and formats.

If the requested format falls outside of the maximum and minimum racing requirements in 16 above, the Regional Representative shall seek approval of the format from the AFA Supervisory Judge who shall have the authority to approve where the requested format is deemed appropriate.

18. Once the AFA has approved the racing divisions and format, it is time to prepare the race schedule. This may look difficult however it can be an easy process if you follow a couple of steps.
- (a) Using the race schedules (round robin format) in the back of the AFA Rules and Policies (Appendix A), determine how the races for each division will block together. For alternate rounds, the lanes should be switched (e.g. In the first round, Team A are in the left lane and Team B are in the right lane, but this would be swapped for the second round to ensure fairness in the racing).
In the Worked Example (Appendix B), Divisions 1 has double round robin format. Therefore, their races would be as follows: Round 1 4v1, 2v3, 1v3, 4v2, 3v4, 1v2
Round 2 1v4, 3v2, 3v1, 2v4, 4v3, 2v1 (lanes have been swapped)
 - (b) Prepare the race schedule for each division, following the format set in the AFA Rule Book. Using Excel, it is easy to complete using numbers and then when finalized, use “Find and Replace” to replace the numbers with the team names (this saves you having to continually type the names). Colour each of the divisions a separate colour, to assist with the next step.
 - (c) Shuffle together all of the divisions, trying to allow equal spacing throughout the race schedule. Organisers should try to ensure that there are at least 2 races or 15 minutes in between each team’s races.
 - (d) Where possible, block as many races of a particular division together (eg. in a 4 team round robin you can run 2 races in a block, in a 5 team round robin you can run 2 races in a block (with 1 team on a “bye” for that round) and in a 6 team round robin you can run a block of 3 races etc.) as this will assist the Judge and provide fairness in the spacing of the races.
 - (e) Make any adjustments that will assist with the flow of the competition (eg. avoid a club having to race back-to-back).
19. The proposed race schedule must be approved by the AFA Regional Representative no later than 7 days before the competition – contact details are available on the AFA website. If your state Rep is unavailable or his/her club is hosting the competition, you must have the approval done by another state Rep or the Supervisory Judge.
20. Timesheets: Timesheets should be downloaded from the AFA website. Two copies of each team’s timesheet are to be printed – one is the “Official” copy for the Timing Table and Judges, and this one must be printed on White paper, while the other is the “Team” copy for use by the teams and Team Captains. To distinguish between the copies, the Team sheets must be printed on coloured paper stock.
21. Line and box Stewards must be over the age of 12 years with a supervisor present and 16 years if unsupervised. Line stewards need to be 14 years with a Supervisor and 16 years if unsupervised. Timekeepers must be 16 years with a Supervisor and 18 years unsupervised. In all cases the junior must have completed the appropriate competency exam in order to steward or be a timekeeper. For insurance purposes, stewards who are not AFA members must become an honorary member by signing the Register of Honorary Members Form (under “Forms” on the AFA website) or supplied by the AFA representative for the day). We recommend that you try to arrange some stewards from your own Club who are not running dogs.
- (a) Once you have a list of stewards you can make a roster up, using both the volunteers and teams. Try to roster teams on at least 2 races prior to their own races. Other methods of keeping stewards in the ring may be acceptable, however, stewarding always remains the host club’s responsibility.

- (b) Timekeepers should be familiar with the process of filling out timesheets as described in the guide “How to Calculate Title Points”, which can be found on the AFA web
 - (c) site under “Hosting a Competition”. We recommend that you have at least one experienced timekeeper. All hand writing must be done clearly and in Blue or Black ink ONLY.
22. Measuring & vetting: you must provide an assistant to the Judge/s during measuring.
23. First Aid kit: A first aid kit is supplied with every set of AFA EJS for use as required. Please ensure that a first aider carries out any necessary first aid. Please ensure all Team Captains are familiar with who the first aider is – by way of introduction at Captain’s meeting. Please ensure contact number of first aider is posted at the timing table. At the end of your competition advise your regional rep if any supplies were used so they can arrange replacements.
24. EJS set up & Spare Parts: the EJS lights are the most valuable equipment in the AFA. It is preferred that the lights are transported in a vehicle rather than a trailer. Set up of the lights must be done by persons who have full knowledge of the system. Your regional representative can advise you of people who meet this requirement.
- (a) You must purchase 40 x AA quality alkaline batteries for the poles & 1 X 9- volt battery for the Judge’s remote and a 9 -volt battery for the microphone headset. You will also require 240 volts main power for the timing display panels and the speaker (beeper). Where mains power is not available and a generator has to be used, we recommend you test the system on it the night before. NOTE: The AFA provides two 240 Volt safety devices which MUST be used, with either mains power or generator power. The Earth Leakage Protector (usually at the end of a short extension cord) needs to be plugged into the supply power socket (mains or generator) before any extension cords. The AFA Surge Protector (black box with two short power leads) needs to be located above all powered devices (display panels, speaker and any other devices). The distribution box (orange device with a power lead and four power outlet sockets) is used to power devices via extension cords and power boards as necessary. Joins in extension cords need to be protected with an IP44 rated cover and power cords need to be covered to minimise any tripping hazard. In addition, the display lights need to be protected from inclement weather with clear plastic covers. Likewise, the timing table needs to be protected from sunlight and rain and chairs provided for the timekeepers. Chairs and umbrellas securely tied to the ring fence also need to be provided for the stewards in the ring.
 - (b) The night before the competition we suggest you charge the 2 x Tree lights (left & right lane) using the 240 -volt charger available in the cases. Make sure the light trees are set to “off” before starting to charge. You know it is charging when the green light flashes. Do NOT charge for more than 12 hours. If you are going to use mains 240 volts electricity connected to the light Tree then the Tree can be used without the need to charge.
 - (c) Ensure that a qualified person (preferably the person who set them up) supervises the packing of the lights at the end of a competition. This will ensure all the parts are returned correctly and the light trees are turned off.
 - (d) The lights are supplied with basic spare parts. If any of the spare parts are used at a event please advise your AFA Rep so they can replace used parts.
 - (e) All the lights come with tag and tested electrical equipment, and a surge breaker. Do not use any other equipment with the AFA owned lights. If you require further equipment contact your Regional Rep. When setting up all electrical leads at a competition please comply with the OH&S policy within your state.

25. Ring Set up: the full requirements are listed on the AFA website). Your Judge(s) are not required to assist and supervise the ring set up but will be required to check the ring set up to ensure it is correct and safe prior to racing. Ring set-up is a responsibility of the host club. It is strongly recommended that where the event allows organisers should ensure that a minimum run back of 60- 65 feet is provided. Where the venue is of a restricted size, a minimum runback of 29 feet is allowable. Anything smaller than the recommended run back of 60 feet must be agreed with the senior Judge for the competition and the competing team's captains made aware.
- (a) the markings inside the ring must be clear We recommend white line marking paint be used. The position of each jump, box and start line must be marked.
 - (b) distance tapes, if used, must be then placed on the right- hand side of each lane four feet from the centreline, and must be anchored at suitable intervals to minimise any tripping hazard. They should be of suitable material that doesn't stretch (e.g. seatbelt webbing). Distance tapes are not mandatory and paint markings and /or distance cards tied to the outside fencing can also be used but need to be clearly viewable.
 - (c) All power leads on the ground must be covered by a suitable protector to minimise trip hazards.
 - (d) All star posts must have cap protectors.
 - (e) At the Judges briefing before the Meeting starts ensure that all competitors are reminded that they are taking part in the Meeting at their own risk.
26. The end of your race meeting. Now you have successfully run a race meeting it is vital that you collect all timesheets and reports.
- Note: It is the Judges responsibility to submit any judge's reports to the AFA within 48hrs of your event This should be done online via the Judges Dashboard
- (a) Send the results including placing, seed times and fastest times to the points@flyball.org.au email address, along with any photos of the day within 48 hrs of competition completion. This is vital to keep seed times for future race meetings as up to date as possible. The file can be found on the forms page on the AFA website. Please download a new version of the workbook after each event to ensure you are using the current version, as it is updated on a regular basis to include new clubs and team names.
 - (b) Use the AFA Title Points Workbook to add up AFA title points from the timesheets. This will sort the points and add them up for the individual dogs. The workbook can be found on the AFA website. Please download a new version of the workbook after each competition to ensure you are using the current version, as it is updated on a regular basis to include new clubs and team names. The workbook is based on an excel spread sheet and comes with instructions on how to fill it out correctly. If you are having trouble with it, contact the AFA webmaster or Points & Seed Times officer for assistance on points@flyball.org.au.
 - (c) Return the workbook via email to points@flyball.org.au within 14 days of your competition. Failure to do so will result in a fine for your club. The longer you leave it the larger the fine will be. If the file is larger than 1MB then email the points address and request to be linked to the shared AFA Dropbox folder where the file can be uploaded to. You will need to load the Dropbox onto your computer to access this.
 - (d) Your EJS levy, original timesheets, entry forms and the Honorary members form must also be sent to the AFA via mail to the AFA PO Box within 14 days of your event, or penalty fees will apply. Please send both the levy and paperwork at the same time. You should keep a hard (i.e. paper) copy of the paperwork that is sent to the AFA in case the originals are lost in the mail & also as a reference for any missing points queries you may receive.

Scanned copies are unacceptable as the grey shaded fields on the timesheets show as solid black when scanned.

27. Multi-ring format: Where racing is to be undertaken using more than one ring, races must be allocated in an order that is as close to the approved running order as possible. Where a clash occurs, racing should be paused in all other rings rather than allocating races outside of the sequence. Should, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, adjustments to the approved running order need to be made on the day of racing, these must be made in consultation and with the approval of the designated AFA representative for the race meet.

CANCELLATION PROCEDURE BEFORE EVENT COMMENCES

If within 24 hours prior to the commencement of the event that due to matters beyond the control of the event organiser there is a likelihood the event could be cancelled then the organiser is to communicate with team contacts in accordance with Policy 4 – Competition Cancellation Policy. Team contacts are also required to follow the process within that policy.

FINAL CHECKLIST:

Required

- EJS / Signature Lights. Set includes bags containing 3 x tripod stands and 4 x bases for poles.
- Batteries for light poles –40 x AA quality batteries & 2 x 9 volt for remote control and headset.
- First Aid kit.
- Heat stress metre. Ensure a responsible Club official and the AFA Representative have access to the AFA Policy on Cancellation of a Competition which includes instructions on use of heat stress metre when extreme weather is expected.
- The AFA provides the following 240 volt gear with each light set (numbers may vary from set to set): Long extension cords x 3, short extension cord (between the panel displays)x 1, Surge Protector x 1, Earth Leakage Protector x 1, power boards x 2.(The AFA recommends that you do NOT run power cords down the centre of the ring & that you place the speaker on the timing table facing competitors in the line-up. Power leads should be marked as TESTED within last 12 months and any leads on ground should be covered by protectors).
- Metal tape measures (50-100ft)
- Fencing/bunting, Pickets and caps, Rope, & cable ties. All pickets must be capped.
- x3 Cabanas. 1 for Timing Table and 2 for the dogs waiting to enter the ring
- Lighting for timekeepers table if twilight comp
- x5 chairs and Umbrella's for the Ring Stewards
- Marker Paint for ground
- Buckets of water near ring
- Backing boards
- Jumps
- Stewards flags (supplied by AFA) x 5 & Stop watches x 2 (spare)
- AFA Measuring Device
- x2 distance tapes, pegs (should be pegged every 7 ft)
- Judges Peg stand & flag for indicating next teams may enter ring
- Folders and official timesheets
- Pens, tape, scissors, markers etc.

- Lollies or snacks and drinks for timing table

Recommended

- Dog Pools
- Signage for sponsors
- P.A. & speaker
- Pooper scooper, bucket & poo bags
- Microphone for Judge, if available, requires additional 9v battery

Forms:

- Register of Honorary Members form
- Timesheet forms **need blank timesheet forms in case of run offs, CT racing or timekeeping errors
- Height Card forms
- Judges Report forms
- Judges Report Summary forms
- Record Run Forms
- Witness Declaration Forms

Before:

- Confirm EJS/Signature arrangement with previous host club comp or equipment manager.
- Prepare Official Timesheets, folders and timesheets for teams use
- Prepare Catalogue
- Notify clubs about parking & distribute entry passes etc. A map can be placed on the AFA website
- Locate nearest Vet & find out opening hours
- Organise lunch & refreshments for Judges & officials
- Organise publicity (local papers, flyers etc).
- Organise gifts for Judges & officials
- Pick up prizes from sponsors & organise prizes for handlers and boxloaders
- Package raffles prizes

Day Before:

- Charge the Signature Light – Left & right part of the Light tree using chargers available in each case and charge between 6-8 hours no more than 12 hours, overnight is sufficient.
- If using a generator, test to make sure it powers the display panels and speaker correctly, via the protectors.
- Make sure the teams contact list is printed and available in case of possible event cancellation.

On the Day:

- Set up ring & timing gear and get ring inspected for safety by Judge.
- Set up the AFA Supplied heat stress meter at timing table.
- Set up signage for sponsors on inside of ring.
- Organise a helper with official timesheets for the Judges when measuring & vetting dogs. A helper is also needed to organise incoming & outgoing team timesheets & timing table folders for the timekeepers
- Organise speaker for P.A. to communicate Flyball to the public.
- Organise official's lunches and refreshment
- Esky of drinks located at timekeepers table plus lolly box

- Sell raffle tickets
- Organise prize table
- Thank Judges, Timekeepers & AFA Rep
- Clean up site at the end of the day

Afterwards:

- Complete the Competition Results Form from the AFA website.
- Email results within 48 hours including placing, fastest & seed times to the AFA webmaster points@flyball.org.au email address plus photos if available.
- Download the latest version of the Title Points Workbook from AFA website.
- Complete Points workbook as per official timesheets and then email to points@flyball.org.au. If the file is larger than 1MB then email the points address and request to be linked to the shared AFA Dropbox folder where the file can be uploaded to. You will need to load the Dropbox onto your computer to access this. The title points workbook needs to be sent within 14 days of your competition. Failure to do so will result in a fine for your club. The longer you leave it the larger the fine will be
- Send post event news releases
- Thank you letter to sponsor

Guideline on Race Meeting Committee

- (a) Race Meeting Chairperson: The Chairperson has the overall responsibility for the proper planning management, conducting and reporting of the event. The Chairperson shall act as the liaison for the club/organisation. The Chairperson shall ascertain the requirements such as insurance, rentals, schedules, concessions, protest etc.
- (b) Entries; The Entries Chairperson shall be responsible for entries and questions the entrants might have.
- (c) Grounds: The Grounds Chairperson shall be responsible for the proper layout of the competition ring, setting up and dismantling the equipment, traffic flow, crowd control, parking securing the necessary equipment, cleaning up during and following the competition.
- (d) Trophies: The Trophy Chairperson is responsible for acquiring trophies, ribbons and/or other prizes, setting up the trophy table and putting together a list of trophies and/or other prizes.
- (e) Hospitality: The Hospitality Chairperson is responsible for the planning of any luncheons, transportation, lodging, refreshments, banquets, directions, local points of interest, camping and picnic facilities etc.
- (f) Publicity: The Publicity Chairperson shall arrange and distribute all publicity, advertising, press releases etc.
- (g) Judges, Stewards and Timekeepers: Judge and Steward selection, confirmations, travel arrangements and lodging shall be the responsibility of the Judge Chairperson. Guidelines for Competition Committees.
- (h) Admission: If there is an admission charge to the event, an individual shall be responsible for advance ticket sale and/or distribution of free passes to competitors and gate admission.
- (i) Public Address: Flyball is a spectator sport. As such, it is important to announce races, explain the sport and announce times.
- (j) Having a photographer available and raffles, catalogues and other special events that generate income or that add to the success of the competition that are not in any way prejudicial to the best interest of the sport of Flyball may be considered

Guideline on Setting up AFA Matting

Approved uses for matting:

The matting can only be used in association with a flat, even and solid surface such as concrete, solid timber or carpeted floor area. The AFA has an established Policy (see Rules and Policies Doc) regarding use for Race Meetings, Training Days and Demonstrations. Applications to use the matting should be made via the Event Sanction Application Form.

Under no circumstances is the matting to be accessed or used without prior AFA approval.

It is the responsibility of the hirer to arrange transport of the matting from the store area to the event location and to return the matting to the store area at end of use. It should be recognised that the total matting weighs approx. half a tonne and occupies an area well in excess of the normal small trailer. Two standard trailers or a double Horse float is required.

Fees for use:

The AFA Policy on charging for use of matting is set down in the Matting Policy.

Laying and taping matting.

Allow approximately 3 hours to prepare the surface and lay the matting.

- The base surface needs to be well brushed or air blown to remove any surface dirt or gravel.
- Mark a Centre line with chalk and then measure equal distances on either side of Centre for the two racing lanes.
- The two sections of matting making up the Centre run of each racing lane should be rolled out and the edges of the matting rubbed over with metho to remove grease and dirt.
- The Centre lane should then be taped to the floor on both sides, at the join and at the run back end. The Box end of the lane should NOT be taped to the floor. Make sure that the tape is evenly applied to both the floor and the mat as this assists the adhesion of the second and third matt sections to the centre matting.
- The second and third width of rubber should then be rolled out alongside the centre run, edges treated with metho. and then taped to the centre run. it is not necessary to tape the outside of the second and third runs of matting to the floor.
- Box line, start line, jump locations and start gap lines (if required) can be shown by use of white 2- inch tape applied to the matting. The start line should be taped across all 3 runs and onto floor surface. DO NOT mark the matting with markers or paint as the matting lengths need to be able to be rotated.

When rolling out the matting the maximum run back length is achieved by allowing approx. 4 foot of matting behind the Box line – this will give a join in the matting approx. 6 ft before the start line and a run back of approx .65 ft. If this layout is used it is desirable to use grey colour joining tape to tape over the join in the two lengths of matting so it become less obvious. An alternative layout involves joining the matting right at the start line and then measuring back 51 feet to get the Box line. Under this option the run back area will be approx. 60 ft.

A run back tape can then be taped to the matting join tape on the right -hand side of each centre lane using clear tape. The run back tape can be made by cutting a standard measure tape of its roll up device.

Care should be taken in removing the tape from the matting in order to avoid tearing the rubber. All tape shall be removed and the matting then brushed to remove any dirt and then be tightly re-rolled.

Guideline on Extreme Weather

The AFA has developed these guidelines to reduce the risk of extreme weather (lightning, heat etc) related injuries to competitors, dogs, judges and other officials and members of the public involved in Flyball events or activities. This document also contains a number of guidelines to help Judges and other officials in recognising and managing extreme weather. These guidelines are intended to operate alongside other related policies including Policy No.4 Race Meeting Cancellation Policy. All members should use their judgement and common sense in the application of these guidelines.

The AFA is committed to safe and enjoyable events for all participants (including dogs) and spectators. This includes minimising risk due to adverse or extreme weather conditions.

Responsibilities:

Officiating Judge(s) and AFA Representative - Be aware of the prevailing weather conditions and how they may affect the handlers, their dogs and those officiating at the event.

Organiser/Club officials - Be aware of predicted and prevailing weather conditions in terms of pre-planning (season, date, time etc), risk assessment and competition management (protocols for heat, lightning, cancellation etc).

Members attending an AFA competition/event - Be aware of the prevailing weather conditions.

Risk Assessment

All AFA events must be assessed for risk during the planning stages. Assessment includes consideration of risk associated with the venue, the activities and the participants. Included in this assessment must be the likely prevailing weather conditions and the likelihood of inclement weather. If the event is conducted during a season of likely storm activity or high heat or sun, these weather conditions must be factored into the planning and risk management for the event.

Heat and Sun

Wherever possible, events are to be scheduled to avoid hot conditions. Where events are scheduled during summer competition organisers should ensure they have available appropriate mechanisms for competitors and members to seek relief from the heat (i.e. shade, cooling, easy access to water etc). AFA Policy No.4 contains Policy Rules for the suspension of events due to high temperatures viz:

As an aid to decision making the AFA have supplied all States with “Heat stress measure meters”. These meters have the capability to measure temperature, humidity and wind chill factor and provide a combined reading taking all these factors into account. This combined reading is called the WGBT (Wet Globe Bulb Temperature). These meters can be set for either indoor or outdoor use. When used outdoors they should best be located inside the ring near the lights.

WGBT meter readings are to be interpreted as follows:

Readings below 31 – racing can continue

Readings equal to or greater than 31 and less than 32 – consideration should be given to introducing breaks in racing or suspending racing.

The AFA Policy is to **REQUIRE** that racing be suspended/cancelled when the WGBR Meter reading reaches or exceeds 32. Race meeting Officials may however decide to suspend racing at any time they consider conditions are unsafe.

Sun protection

It is recommended that all participants and officials in the sun wear hats and sunscreen (minimum SPF 30+) at all times. Sunscreen must be available for use by Judges and stewards who are in the sun for more extended periods and should be re-applied regularly.

It should be noted that sunscreen does not offer complete protection against the sun and should always be used in conjunction with other protective measures.

As far as is possible, shade should be provided for the ring stewards.

Shade structures that also provide protection from wind and sun must be provided for the timekeepers.

A ready supply of drinking water must be available to all Judges and stewards.

Organisers are required to make available artificial shade for competitors waiting to enter the ring. Participants and officials are also encouraged to use other artificial means of shade such as umbrellas and cabanas and other on-field structures.

Care of dogs in the heat and sun

Comfort and safety of dogs is paramount at all times. Dogs should, preferably, be kept in shaded areas.

All dogs must have ready access to fresh cool water. Clubs are encouraged to provide shaded wading pools and/or spray hoses for cooling dogs.

The use of cool mats, coats, crate fans etc is at the discretion of the owner.

Rain

If it is raining heavily, and there are safety concerns, the competition may be discontinued for a period of time and then conditions reassessed to determine whether the competition/event should resume or be cancelled.

Safety concerns would include risk of slipping by handlers, impact of rain on all electrical equipment, visibility issues in very heavy rain etc.

If, in the opinion of the Officiating Judge/AFA representative/competition organiser, the rain fall is not a significant safety factor, then the competition may continue during the rain period.

Competition organisers should, as far as is possible, ensure team captains are kept informed of deliberations regarding whether to cancel or proceed.

As soon as rain appears, competition organisers must take appropriate action to protect the electronic timing system.

Hail Storms

In Australia, hail storms can be sudden and severe but are usually very short in duration. If a hail storm occurs during a competition, all activities should stop and all participants should seek suitable protective cover.

Lightning

Australian statistics show that approximately 25 per cent of people killed by lightning are playing sport. When thunderstorms threaten, Judges (and other Officials) must not let the desire to start a

competition or event hinder their judgment when the safety of competition, dogs, officials and spectators is in jeopardy.

All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain.

Any time thunder is heard, the thunderstorm is close enough to pose an immediate threat to the location. When thunderstorms are in the area but not overhead, the lightning threat can still exist even if it is sunny overhead and not raining or when clear sky is visible. Many lightning casualties occur before the thunderstorm rains have moved into the area; this is often due to people not seeking shelter soon enough.

Many casualties also occur after the rain dissipates; this can be due to people being in too much of a hurry to go back outside to resume activities.

Safe structures and locations

No place is absolutely safe from a lightning threat however some places are safer than others.

Safe structures:

- The primary choice for a safe structure is a large, fully enclosed building.
- If a building is not available, a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows completely closed is a reasonable alternative.

Unsafe locations and situations

- An open field.
- Close vicinity to the tallest structure in the area eg tree(s), light pole(s).
- Small structures such as picnic shelters, tents, equipment sheds.
- Use of indoor phones.
- Use of electrical appliances.
- Umbrellas or any object that increases a person's height.

Criteria for suspension and resumption of activities

The sound of thunder should serve as an immediate warning of lightning danger. Generally speaking if an individual can see lightning and/or hear thunder he/she is already at risk.

The 30/30 rule

The 30/30 rule is used to serve as a guide for the suspension and safe resumption of activities and is not included as a binding process. The 30/30 rule is a 2 part rule providing guidance on when to suspend activities and then when to resume activities.

Suspend All Activities

Sound travels at about 1 kilometre every 3 seconds. When the flash-to-bang interval, (ie lightning is seen and then thunder is heard) approaches 30 seconds, this interval means that the storm is approximately 10 km away and everyone should be inside a safe shelter. If a member observes that the 30 second suspension rule could be applicable, they should inform the Competition Organiser and/or AFA Representative.

The Competition Organiser and/or AFA Representative, is to advise all Officiating Judges if the 30 second suspension rule is going to be applied, at which time the Judge must then cease all ring activities and members should be advised to take appropriate cover.

Resume Activities

If the 30 second suspension rule has been applied, Judges must wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or observation of lightning and ensure conditions are safe before leaving

shelter to resume activities. The Judges, Competition Organiser, and AFA Representative must agree that the 30- minute resumption rule is applicable prior to resuming competition activities.

Each time lightning is sighted or thunder is heard following application of the 30 second suspension rule, the 30-minute clock should be restarted.

It is important to note that the 30/30 rule is not an absolute rule. A storm may move very quickly, or not generate any lightning or thunder until it is very close, or topographical or wind conditions may prevent sound from traveling to your position. These conditions are especially common in mountain areas. It is important that all competitors and officials observe weather conditions and be alert to the possibility of the above occurring.

First aid in the case of lightning

Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle and need immediate medical attention.

Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death in lightning fatalities. Some deaths can be prevented if the victim receives the proper first aid:

- Call an ambulance at once;
- Check the victim's pulse and breathing, begin CPR if necessary; and
- If possible, move the victim to a safer place. Be aware that the thunderstorm may still be dangerous. Don't let the rescuers become victims.

High wind

High wind has impact both on-field and off-field and to both competitors and officials

Tents and shade cabanas etc:

- Should be appropriately erected and tethered;
- Should be lowered or dismantled in high wind.

Equipment safety

- Officiating Judges (competition) or instructors/officials (demonstrations, training, other events) should be mindful that equipment does not pose a danger to the Dog, Handler, Judge, and/or officials during wind gusts.
- In particular, checks should be made on the security of the timing equipment, protection umbrellas, canopies and backboards and they should be removed or lowered if there is concern that gusts could cause injury or damage.

Decisions to suspend or cancel competitions or events due to high winds

Officiating Judges/officials should suspend judging/activities during severe wind gusts but may resume when conditions settle.

Refund Entitlements

Cancellation and refund entitlements in the case of cancellation are in accordance with the AFA Race Meeting Cancellation Policy – Policy No.4.

