

**VICTORIAN ATHLETIC LEAGUE INC.
RULES & REGULATIONS**

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**APPROVED BY THE REGISTERED CLUBS OF THE VICTORIAN ATHLETIC LEAGUE
ON JANUARY 2006.**

These rules shall come into operation for the 2005/2006 season and all previous Rules then in existence shall be replaced as from the above date, and such repeal shall not disturb the continuity of the status, operation or effect of any rule, report, application, penalty, liability or right made, effected, issued, granted, given, entered into, incurred or acquired or existing or continuing before the commencement of these Rules.

DEFINITIONS

In these Rules, unless inconsistent with the subject matter or context-

"VAL" means the Victorian Athletic League Incorporated pursuant to the laws of the State of Victoria.

"Director" means a Director of the VAL.

"The Board" means the Board of Directors duly elected by the VAL member organisations.

"Clubs" means a Club, or body or group of persons being unincorporated or incorporated, organised for the purpose of conducting athletic sports meetings and are duly registered with the VAL.

"Office" shall mean the registered office for the time being of the VAL.

"Metropolitan Club" means a club conducting athletic sports up to & including a 50 kilometre radius of the Melbourne GPO.

"Country Club" means a club which conducts meetings outside a 50 kilometre radius of the Melbourne GPO.

"Athlete" means any person who is registered with the VAL for the purpose of competing in VAL sanctioned events.

"Trainer/Coach" means any person who is registered with the VAL for the purpose of training Athletes participating in VAL sanctioned events.

"Registration" means acceptance by the VAL, subject to its conditions, of a person's participation in VAL approved events.

"Meetings" means any athletic carnival which has received a license from the VAL to conduct such activities.

"Gift" means the major race on the program as declared by the hosting club or VAL.

"Doping/drugs" means any substance referred to in Section 17 or as amended.

"Confederacy" means any scheme, arrangement or agreement by Athletes, Trainers, persons or other parties, which has the purpose of causing interference in a race, causing a race result to be predetermined, causing an Athlete not to compete to the best of his ability, or any other instance which results in a race not being run on the merits of the Athletes concerned.

"Veteran" means Athletes over the age of 35 years on the day of competition.

"Novice " means any Athlete who has never won an event under AAC rules.

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SECTION 1: LEGAL REPRESENTATION

1. No member of the legal profession will be permitted to represent an appellant in any hearing conducted by the VAL Board, or at a hearing initiated by order of the Board. This does not preclude a member of the VAL Board from being of the legal profession or preclude a Director or independent person, who is a member of the legal profession, from presiding at a hearing initiated by order of the Board. An athlete who is a member of the legal profession shall be entitled to participate in hearings where he is the appellant, defender or protester.
2. No decision or findings by VAL officials, VAL board, VAL protests, hearings tribunals or appeals may be appealed to any Court or external jurisdiction including the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

SECTION 2: CLUBS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Any club or group of persons wishing to hold athletic competition or meetings within the state of Victoria under these rules shall first make application to the VAL nominating their proposed meeting date and program of events, on the appropriate form available from the VAL. Each meeting shall be advertised on the program and on all notices and advertisements as held under the VAL rules. Each club shall on payment 2 days prior to the Victorian Athletic League Annual General Meeting of a non-refundable affiliation/registration fee of \$250 to the VAL will be entitled to:
 - a) one vote at the VAL Annual General Meeting at the AGM following the completion of their meeting.
 - b) to conduct an athletic meeting under the VAL rules & regulations.
2. All athletic meetings shall be held subject to the VAL Rules.
3. The VAL shall have sole discretion on the administration of & composition of the yearly meeting calendar & shall decide whether or not two or more meetings may be held on the same day and which meeting shall receive the sanctioning of the VAL. The calendar shall be subject to confirmation at the Annual General Meeting of the VAL and no other date may be allocated unless approval by those clubs whose fixtures are within 7 days before or after the date proposed for the new club.
4. If any VAL affiliated Club conducts its meetings in violation of the VAL rules & regulations described herein it shall be dealt with at the Board's discretion. The VAL may impose the following range of penalties on any club & members of its committee who are in breach of these rules:-
 - a) disqualification from the VAL for a period of up to & including 2 years
 - b) a fine of up to \$500.00 (max.)
5. All clubs shall be required to provide the following officials & equipment at their athletic meeting & shall include the following:-

Judge or Judges	Starters Assistant
Colour Table Attendant	Assistant Time-Keeper

The Official Recorder shall keep a complete record of events run, with all the details of heat winners, scratchings and the time for each event.

Clubs shall advise at the time of registration with the VAL of their ability to, & intention of providing the aforementioned items. Clubs may nominate the persons that they will be unable to provide for their meeting and the VAL shall provide the persons and deduct the cost of its provision from monies due the Club.

A registered Club using the services of any VAL officials at its meeting shall pay fees, to the respective official as defined by the Board.

All club officials must be approved by the VAL.
6. The VAL Board shall annually constitute a panel of Judges, Starters, Time-Keepers, and Stipendiary Stewards, and acting under the powers set down in the Rules of Incorporation may appoint any such official to act at any sports meeting where a Club does not have its own approved (by the Board) officials.

7. The following distances are the only distances over which clubs may conduct events;- 70 metres, 90m, 100m, 120m, 200m, 300m, 400m, 550m, 800m, 1000m, 1500m, 1600m 2000m, 3000m, and 3200m, unless approved by the VAL.
8. Races are to be conducted as follows:
- (i) 70m to 200m maximum 8 competitors per heat.
 - (ii) 300m maximum 10 competitors per heat. Max 10 per final (Except in the case of a dead heat in the heats.)
 - (iii) 400 metres maximum 15 competitors per heat.
 - (iv) 400 metres maximum 10 competitors in final. (Except in the case of a dead heat in the heats.)
 - (v) 550, 800, and 1000 metro races may be run in heats and final or final only, maximum of 18 competitors per heat.
 - (vi) Clubs conducting an 800m or 1000m event in heats shall be required to invoke the 20 minute acceptance rule for that event.
 - (vii) In heats where there is one acceptance, or three acceptors in the 800m or 1000m, the remaining runners will be transferred to another heat. Athletes so moved to other heats do not automatically progress to the next round.
 - (viii) Where entries exceed 150, races are to be run in two or more divisions, in the form of front markers and backmarkers events, or front markers, middle markers and backmarkers.
 - (viii) The only exception to running the race in divisions is for those clubs running the events in lanes or in heats, with semis and a final.
 - (x) 1500,1600 and 3200 metre races, where entries exceed 80, races are to be divided into two or more divisions. The divisions are to be front markers and backmarkers, or front markers and backmarkers.
 - (xi) In sprint events where semi finals are not part of the programme the maximum number of athletes available to run in the final shall be utilised. Eg. 8 lanes = 8 finalists.
9. All events within a clubs meeting shall be classified according to the following guidelines based on the advertised participation money;

Gift Events:

Group 4; \$1,000. and less.	Group 3; \$1,001.-\$3,000.
Group 2; \$3,001.-\$7,500.	Group 1: \$7,501. - \$10,000.
Classic \$10,001. and over	

All Other Events (Sprint and Distance)

Group 4; \$400. and less.	Group 3; \$401- \$ 500.
Group 2; \$501. - \$1,000.	Group 1: \$1,001. - \$3,000.
Classic : \$3,001. and over.	

These groupings shall assist in the determination of handicap limits & handicap penalty

Clubs shall nominate which event is the "Gift" when lodging their carnival registration. If clubs have failed to nominate the "Gift event" it will be determined by the VAL prior to the event.

Clubs may also provide marketing titles for other events, such as "Memorial", "Purse", "Challenge", "Handicap", "Feature" etc. as desired to help promote the undercard events. The adding of a marketing title shall not effect the event group status or "Gift" status.

The allocated net participation money at all meetings shall be stated in the program and cannot be amended after publication, except with the permission of the VAL.

HANDICAP LIMITS.

- a) All Open 70m races shall have a 20% limit of the distance. ie : 14m subject to clause h).
- b) All exclusive women's & novice 70m races shall have a 20% limit of the distance. ie:14m subject to clause h).
- c) All group 3 and 4 exclusive veteran races shall have an open handicap subject to clause p).
- d) All group 2 exclusive veteran races shall have a 20% limit of the distance.
- e) All group 1 and Classic exclusive veteran races shall have a 15% limit of the distance.
- f) All group 1 and Classic exclusive women's races shall have a 15% limit of the distance.
- g) All group 2 and 3 exclusive women's races shall have a 20% limit of the distance.
- h) All group 4 races including "Gifts" shall have an open limit subject to clause p).
- i) All Classic Gifts shall have a handicap limit of 8 - 10% of the distance.
- j) All group 1 Gifts shall have a handicap limit of 10 - 12% of the distance.
- k) All group 2 Gifts shall have a handicap limit of 15% of the distance.
- l) All group 3 Gifts shall have a handicap limit of 20% of the distance.
- m) All other group 1 and 2 events shall have a handicap limit of 15% of the distance.
- n) All other group 3 events shall have a handicap limit of 20% of the distance.
- o) All combined races involving exclusive groups such a veteran, women and novice, or a combination thereof shall have a handicap limit of 30% of the distance subject to clause h).
- p) All 1500m races and beyond must not have a limit beyond 400m. The VAL may approve an amendment to these limits in special circumstances.

Clubs may nominate specific limits for events for consideration by the VAL Board. Upon approval of specific limits the VAL shall ensure these limits are advertised in the athlete entry book. If clubs fail to apply for a specific limit for events the above clauses of Rule 9 shall apply.

If, in the Handicappers assessment the entry and an Athletes ability exceeds the current target time handicapping system, the relevant club shall adjust their advertised handicap limits by an equal amount to that set by the Handicapper as the difference between the current target time and the adjusted target time for the event.

- 10. Clubs registered under these rules shall provide a minimum participation money of \$150 for novice events and \$200 for other events (divided races are deemed an event for the purpose of this clause and participation monies equally divided).
- 11. Clubs shall set their own entry fee for each event, provided all VAL administration and club affiliation fees are covered. (Consideration should be given to ensure entry fee is larger than VAL portion per entry as supplied by the VAL).
- 12. All sprint races up to and including 200 metres must be run on a track so lined or staked and stringed that each competitor must have a separate course. The width between the lines or strings shall not be less than one metre or more than 1.22 metres wide and the stakes shall not be more than 10 metres apart. In the straight sprint races the starts shall be marked off in increments of 0.25 metres from the back mark to the limit mark by means of lines across the track. The starts for 200 metres around each turn shall be separately marked off for each lane.
- 13. All circular tracks, or tracks for races to be run around a turn shall be measured 30 centimetres from the outside of the pole line.
- 14. On the day of the sports & prior to the start of the meeting, all tracks shall be properly surveyed, checked and re-measured by the club, or its delegated official under the supervision of the Steward in Charge.

15. Clubs are to provide a clearly defined warm-up track for athletes to use, which must be within the oval where practicable.
16. Where the races have been run in heats and final, all finalists shall receive participation money of not less than the entry fee. Clubs are not required to pay losing semi finalists in any event with a prizepool of \$1000 or less with the exception of all Gift events where losing semi finalists must be paid. Clubs may still elect to pay losing semi finalists irrespective of the race prizepool, however there is no minimum amount to be paid to losing semi finalists. It is desirable that the amount paid to losing semi finalists is not less than the entry fee for the race.
17. All heats are to be drawn by the VAL, which shall notify Clubs of the draw and the number of runners per event. These draws cannot be changed by any Club. The exception to this rule shall be where Clubs cannot practically and physically accommodate the eight (8) lanes in the 70m - 200m events. Such Clubs shall notify the VAL prior to the drawing of the heats.
- a) All heats shall contain a maximum of runners as defined as follows:
- i) 70m to 200m - Eight athletes
 - ii) 300m - Ten athletes
 - iii) 400m - Fifteen athletes
 - iiii) 550,800m & 1000m - Eighteen athletes
- b) All heats shall be randomly drawn in backmarker to front marker format. Athletes with handicaps withheld shall be listed as the frontmarker of the draw.
- i) Where two (2) or more athletes are trained by the same VAL registered trainer, the front marker of the athletes shall be moved to the next available heat not containing a runner with the same registered trainer.
- c) All semi-finals shall be drawn with athletes being seeded based on the fastest qualifying times run in the heats.
- i) The number of athletes seeded shall be the number of semi-finals multiplied by two
 - ii) The remainder of the athletes shall be drawn from backmarkers to front markers based on the alphabetical listing of declared handicaps.
 - iii) The following table is an example of the criteria based on a four berth semi-final.

SEMI-FINAL 1	SEMI-FINAL 2	SEMI-FINAL 3	SEMI-FINAL 4
BM1	BM2	BM3	BM4
4th FQ	3rd FQ	2nd FQ	1st FQ
5th FQ	6th FQ	7th FQ	8th FQ
BM5	BM6	BM7	BM8
BM9	BM10	BM11	BM12
BM13	BM14	BM15	BM16

LEGEND: BM = Backmarker, FQ = Fastest qualifier. **Seeded athletes shown in bold**

- iv) All semi final draws shall be drawn using raw times to determine seeding of athletes.

v) Once formatted as above the semi-final draw shall then be randomly sorted from backmarker to frontmarker to provide the final drawing of the semi finals.to

vi) Where the seeded BM is also one of the FQ's then the next FO (No.9) shall be placed into the draw replacing the seeding vacated by the BM/FQ, as per the following example,

SEMI-FINAL 1	SEMI-FINAL 2	SEMI-FINAL 3	SEMI-FINAL 4
BM1	BM2	BM3	BM4/1st FQ
4th FQ	3rd FQ	2nd FQ	9th FQ
5th FQ	6th FQ	7th FQ	8th FQ
BM5	BM6	BM7	BM8
BM9	BM10	BM11	BM12
BM13	BM14	BM15	BM16

If more than one of the seeded BM's the above process will continue until the draw is completed.

d) **EVENT PROGRESSION CRITERIA.**

- i) Progression from Heats: Winners and other placings (as determined by the club with VAL approval) shall advance to semi finals, or finals. **In addition at least one fastest time must be included to progress from the heats stage.** The only exception is where there are insufficient vacant positions in the next stage eg: 8 heats and no semi finals = 8 winners only, due to 8 lanes only
 - ii) Progression from Semi Finals to Finals: Winners and placings shall form the basis of the progression. There is no requirement for a fastest time to also progress from this stage, however clubs may elect to include fastest times as part of the progression or a combination of placings and fastest times.
 - iii) Progression from Repechage to Semi Finals: Winners shall progress to semi finals. Placings may also be used to determine progression as well as fastest times. However there is no minimum requirement to include a fastest repechage time in the progression to the semi finals.
 - iv) All fastest times shall be based on the actual (raw) time not a wind adjusted time. If a number of fastest times used to progress are identical the athlete with the least favorable wind conditions shall be the first option to proceed etc. The wind gauge shall be used to determine the least favorable wind conditions.
 - v) In the absence of semi finals all lanes available must be utilised in the final up to and including 200m events.
18. All clubs which conduct an event in their program classified as Group 1 or Group 2 by these rules shall include & conduct a novice event on their program as defined by these rules. All other clubs are encouraged to conduct novice events on their program, but it is not mandatory.
19. Clubs, at their own discretion, may choose to conduct an invitation event, or events, at their meeting. The Club may propose the format & conditions of the events and submit them to the VAL for approval.
20. In invitation events the Backmarker shall run off scratch & all other participants shall be awarded handicaps relative to that mark as determined by the appropriate VAL handicapper.

21. The VAL may approve a different qualification system for finals for certain events upon application from the organising authority. These events usually span a period of dates with a common entry as a series. A points system, or a combination of current rules and a points system, shall be devised, if approved for such an event. Any rules for a series such as this will be approved by the VAL board and the Chairperson shall then sign and date such rules for the given event.

22. The following persons shall be admitted without charge to the sports ground on the day of the meeting;-
 - a) Athletes producing their entry pass
 - b) Registered Trainer/Coaches producing their current registration card
 - c) VAL Board of Directors producing their current Director's card
 - d) VAL Officials producing their current official's card.
 - e) Honorary Life Members producing their membership Card

SECTION 3: V.A.L. BOARD -POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The VAL;

1. Shall have the power to inquire into and deal with any matter relating to activities under the control of the VAL . The Board may, at its discretion, impose a fine of up to, & including, \$500 and/or disqualification from any form of participation in VAL, or any affiliated bodies, events for a period of time as determined by the VAL on any registered person of the VAL proved, in the opinion of the VAL;
 - a) to have used obscene, threatening, abusive or insulting language to or concerning any official of the VAL or any official at any sports meeting,
 - b) is guilty of conduct contrary to the VAL code of conduct,
 - c) is guilty of conduct contrary to the interests of the VAL.
 - d) is guilty of a breach of any of the VAL rules.

Any action brought by the VAL against any person under this rule they are entitled to appeal as defined under the Disciplinary Appeals Procedures set down for "Serious Offences" in Section of these rules.

2. Shall have full power and discretion to grant licenses to competitors, officials and bookmakers.
3. Shall have the power to ratify or confirm any suspension or disqualification imposed by any recognised controlling body in this or any other country.
4. Shall at its first meeting each year appoint
 - a) Finance and Administration Committee
 - b) Handicap Review Panel
 - c) Credentials Committee - To comprise of the non-retiring members of the board
 - d) Rules Committee
 - e) Club Liasons
 - f) Operations Committee
 - g) Appeals Tribunal
 - h) AAC Representatives
5. Shall have the discretion and power to establish guidelines, conditions, rosters, remuneration etc. relating to the appointment of all its Officials for a season. The VAL shall appoint the aforementioned officials as soon as practical after the Annual General Meeting. Prior to the confirmation of appointment, these guidelines and conditions must be signed by each Official.
6. Directs that all Officials (eg., Handicappers, Stewards, Judges, and Finish Machine Operators) are entitled to receive accommodation only at the expense of the Club whose meeting is being attended if;
 - 1) the meeting is more than 200kms from the Melbourne GPO,
 - 2) the meeting is conducted over 2 or more days,
 - 3) the meeting commences prior to 10.00am,
 - 4) the meeting concludes after 9.00pm,
 - 5) a combination of any and all the above.

If the meeting is the first meeting of a dual meeting weekend where both meetings are more than 200kms from the Melbourne GPO then the costs shall be divided equally between the two clubs concerned. The Board will advise Individual Clubs of their obligation in regard to this rule.

7. Shall arrange or provide travel to all VAL sanctioned meetings for all Officials. If travel is not able to be provided or arranged, the VAL shall pay a kilometre travel allowance to a years maximum as is determined and detailed in the relevant terms and conditions of appointment. Claims outside those detailed will not be considered.

SECTION 4: CHAIRMAN - POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Chairman, may at any time and at his discretion decide such issues as referred to in these rules. Such issues and action shall be decided in consultation with, & acceptance by a minimum of five other members of the Board. All such decisions shall then be conveyed to the next full Board meeting for Incorporation into the VAL minutes.

SECTION 5: STIPENDIARY STEWARDS - RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTIES

1. The VAL Board shall appoint a Chief Stipendiary Steward and other Stipendiary Stewards as may be required. The Chief Stipendiary Steward will be responsible to the Board for the proper conduct of all VAL events at sports meetings held under these rules. The appointment will be for a term of one year under the guidelines established by the VAL Board.
2. The Chief or Acting Chief Stipendiary Steward shall be in sole control of a meeting and have free access to all parts of the sports ground relevant to the conduct of the athletic meeting.
3. The Chief Steward shall be required to provide details of the charges, nominating the charge and under which rule the charge refers to, in triplicate. The first copy shall be handed to, or attempted to be handed to, the person or representative of that person charged within 2 hours of the incident warranting the charge. The second copy is forwarded to the VAL and the triplicate remains in the Stewards charge book.

As an alternative to the issuance of the charge within 2 hours of the incident, the Chief Steward shall notify the person or their representative within 2 hours of the incident/event, of a pending charge or an active investigation into the performance or incident, and that a relevant charge may be issued within 7 days either personally or by registered mail. If the person or their representative refuses to accept the issuance of the charge sheet from the Chief Steward or is unavailable to receive the issuance of the charge sheet within the designated time allocation, the charge sheet shall be served to the person by registered mail within 7 days of the charge issue to the person and shall not constitute any breach of the intent of the specific charge or any other VAL rules.

4. Such charge and penalty shall be laid, & all reasonable efforts made to serve same to the person as soon as practicable to allow the proper course of justice to follow, but no later than 2 (two) hours after the event during which the offence occurred subject to the provisions in rule 3. The details of the formal charge shall be advised at the time of issuing the charge and the charge service.
5. The Chief Steward, or the Steward acting in his stead, shall report in writing at the conclusion of each meeting to the VAL Board on the conduct of the carnival, the efficiency of the other officials, track marking and its preparation. Recommendations for the benefit of the VAL or Club may be made by the Chief Steward or the steward acting in his stead. All charges, penalties and active investigations against individuals must be provided, together with a detailed account of the incident including diagrams.
6. The Chief Stipendiary Steward shall officiate where possible at all meetings.
7. In the event of two meetings being conducted on the same day, the Chief Steward shall attend one of the meetings and shall delegate his authority to another Steward who shall officiate at the other meeting. The delegated Chief Steward shall assume all powers & responsibilities of the Chief Steward for the period of time delegated. A second or subsequent Stipendiary Steward shall be appointed as required.
8. In the absence of a Bookmaker's Supervisor the Chief Steward will act to signal the 'all clear' to the Bookmakers.
9. Take such action as is required to determine breaches of the rules, to lay charges and fix penalties to caution or warn any person suspected of:
 - a) inconsistent running

- b) an unsatisfactory performance
- c) not trying to win or any infringement of the rules.
- d) breaching the rules before, during or after any sports meeting conducted under these rules and to give evidence before the Appeals Tribunal as or where required as defined below;

Unsatisfactory Performance

1. An unsatisfactory performance shall be defined as:
 - a) an inconsistent performance as defined by the schedules below and/or
 - b) a performance, as decided by the Chief Steward, which was less than at optimum level and commitment at all times during the event.
2. An inconsistent performance shall be assessed by the Chief Steward as follows,
 - a) that the recorded performance by the athlete at any meeting must be within the acceptable performance range (refer Table 1) as stated below. These ranges are the average recorded performance time of that meeting, over the competing distance in the preceding two years.
 - b) the variance in an athletes performance between events (refer Table 1), or heats of an event during the course of a meeting. The average of all other athlete performances relevant to the event are to be assessed to consider variance in conditions. An accurate variance assessment can then be made in respect to the athletes performances.
3. The following performance ranges shall be used to determine the degree to which the recorded performance was unsatisfactory and/or inconsistent and a guide to the penalty options available to the Chief Steward.
4. In using these ranges, the Chief Stewards' assessment will consider track and weather conditions, wind adjusted times, as well as any handicap adjustment.
5. Any athlete who is unable to compete to the best of their ability for reasons of injury, illness or fitness shall disclose this information to the Chief Steward prior to the commencement of their event. The Chief Steward shall take this into account when assessing the athlete's performance. Failure, by the athlete, to notify the Chief Steward of any known injury or illness shall render the athlete liable to the penalties set down for inconsistent or unsatisfactory performance as decreed by the Chief Steward and/or a fine of up to \$500.00. Any offence under this section is subject to the Handicap Review and Appeal Process.
6. In order to enforce these rules the stewards have the opportunity to:
 - (a) conduct an inquiry into the recorded performance. The Chief Steward may suspend all betting on the event, or upon the athlete concerned until the determination of the Chief Stewards' inquiry is complete. In assessing the athlete's performance and any penalty imposition upon the athlete the Chief Steward may utilise the performance data thus far available for that meeting,
 - (b) conduct an investigation including the research of the athlete's prior performances and then take appropriate action.

7. Table 1 : Performance Range

<u>Distance (m)</u>	<u>Acceptable Range</u>	<u>Moderate Range</u>	<u>Extreme Range</u>
70 - 100	within 0.3 seconds	0.3 to 0.4 seconds	>0.4 seconds
120	within 0.4 seconds	0.4 to 0.8 second	>0.8 second
200 - 300	within 0.7 second	0.7 to 1.4 seconds	>1.4 seconds
400 - 550	within 1.5 seconds	1.5 to 3 seconds	>3 seconds
800 - 1000	within 3 seconds	3 to 6 seconds	>6 seconds
1,500 & 1,600	within 6 seconds	6 to 12 seconds	>12 seconds
3,200 & above	within 10 seconds	10 to 20 seconds	>20 seconds

8. The Chief Steward shall have sole discretion when setting penalties and shall apply the following guiding principles to their implementation:

a) An inconsistent/unsatisfactory performance if assessed to occur within the moderate performance range shall incur a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100.00 and/or up to a four meeting suspension. A handicap penalty or review may also be imposed and included in the penalty imposed. Any offence under this section is subject to the Handicap Review and Appeal Process.

b) An inconsistent/unsatisfactory performance, if assessed to occur within the extreme range shall incur a maximum penalty of a fine between \$100.00 and \$1000.00 and/or disqualification from the event, and/or up to 100% of prize money won forfeited to the VAL, and/or up to a 2 year suspension. A handicap penalty or review may also be imposed and included in the penalty imposed.

Note: The Chief Steward shall clearly explain their role and what is required of the athlete. The steward shall also provide the athlete and/or his registered trainer and/or their representative with a copy of the relevant rules and a verbal explanation of the appeal procedure. Any offence under this section is subject to the Handicap Review and Appeal Process.

c) Repeat offences within a period of two years without clearance from the Chief Steward - shall result in a fine of up to \$5,000.00 and/or 100% of prize money won forfeited to the VAL, and/or disqualification for up to two years. A handicap penalty or review may also be included in the penalty imposed. Any offence under this section is subject to the Handicap Review and Appeal Process.

d) As part of any penalty assessment the Chief Steward may require the athlete to start at the next meeting and/or a nominated meeting and/or a number of predetermined meetings. The steward shall explain that the stewards require to see an improved performance and are giving the athlete the opportunity to do so.

If the athlete refuses to start, it is to be explained that their handicap will be reviewed and that they may be suspended from competing at all future Group 2 events and above within the currency of the season. If an athlete informs the Chief steward that they are injured and unable to compete, it should be clearly stated that, in order to run at all future Group 2 events and above, the athlete must compete in a number of prior races. A degree of discretion must be applied in the case of interstate or overseas athletes.

However, in order to compete at any future Group 2 events and above for the season the athlete must start in at least one meeting prior to their scheduled next Group 2 event and above competition. If the athlete's performances are unsatisfactory, they shall incur either another fine, and/or a handicap penalty, and/or a suspension from all future Group 2 events and above for the currency of the season, or a combination of these.

Failure to compete in an event prior to the next group 2 event or above and/or nominated events or predetermined events by the Chief Steward, shall deem any entry to group 2 events or above either as void and/or re-assessment of handicap by the relevant handicappers.

Any requirement under this section is subject to the Handicap Review and Appeal Process.

e) The Chief Steward shall clearly explain their role and what is required of the athlete. The steward shall also provide the athlete and/or his registered trainer and/or their representative with a copy of the relevant rules and a verbal explanation of the appeal procedure.

10. When called before the Handicap Appeal Panel, Race Day Referee or Disciplinary Appeal Tribunals, the Chief Steward, Steward, Handicapper or Board Member shall be permitted to question the defendants and defendant's witnesses and to present his own witnesses.

11. The Chief Steward shall make recommendations to the VAL Rules Committee regarding changes to the rules, which will be to the betterment of the sport in general.

12. The Chief Steward shall where necessary, explain the rules and their application to the Athletes, Trainers and Club Officials, either before, during or after a sports meeting. The Chief Steward shall not be required to make any explanations to any individuals as to any action taken.

13 a) The Chief Steward shall warn, charge and/or penalise an Athlete, Trainer/Coach or Club Official up to a maximum of \$500.00, and/or disqualification from the event, and/or suspension from future events for any unbecoming, slanderous, threatening or defamatory language on the day of any VAL sports meeting or 24 hours thereafter. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

b) The Chief Steward shall warn, charge and/or penalise an Athlete, Trainer/Coach or Club Official up to a maximum of \$500.00, and/or disqualification from the event, and/or suspension from future events for any improper conduct, offensive behaviour, unsportsmanlike behaviour, assault to any person, on the day of any VAL sports meeting or 24 hours thereafter. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

c) The Chief Steward shall warn, charge and/or penalise an Athlete, Trainer/Coach or Club Official up to a maximum of \$500.00, and/or suspension for future events for any behaviour or action that may bring the sport into disrepute. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

NB Rule 13 is not subject to the charge issue and service time requirements.

14. Payment of fines must be finalised within seven days to the VAL or prior to the athlete's next competition. Athletes will not be permitted to compete in any athletic event in any affiliated competition until the fine/s are paid.

15. The Chief Steward or VAL Board shall have the power at any time, and either upon or without objection being made, order an examination of the bone fides of any Athlete entered in a race, or who has run in a race, and if in the opinion of the Stewards or Board such Athlete has been guilty of any offence against these rules, either in connection with the race in question or at any time antecedent thereto. They may disqualify such Athlete or take such action with regard to such Athlete as they may deem fit. The VAL Board or the Steward shall have the power to call upon any Athlete to submit to being photographed and failing compliance with such request, such competitors shall be disqualified. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
16. The Chief Steward shall place additional Athletes in lane events in mark order. (Or as near as practical to mark order.)

SECTION 6: HANDICAPPING

1. The Handicapper/s shall be appointed under the terms and conditions as set by the VAL Board of Directors and be appointed by a majority vote of the incumbent Board of the forthcoming year. The handicapper will be responsible for the handicapping of every athletic meeting under the guidelines issued by the Board. The appointment will be for a term of one year at the remuneration determined by the Board.
2. All clubs shall be charged a fee for the handicapping of athletes based on a rate per athlete entry at their meeting. The rate shall be determined by the Board.
3. It shall be the duty of the Handicapper/s to attend each sports meeting. Should more than one event be conducted on the same day, or the Handicapper/s is/are not able to attend, the handicapper/s shall arrange with the Chief Steward to deputise on their behalf.
4. The Handicapper shall not knowingly handicap a disqualified Athlete, excepting any Athlete appealing under VAL rules or one who has obtained a clearance from the Board. Such clearances and the date of same shall be included on the entry form for any sports meeting. The Handicapper shall have the power to withhold the handicap of an Athlete whose entry does not comply with the rules of the VAL pending further investigation by the handicapper.
5. The handicap of any competitor shall not be disclosed by the handicapper/s or the VAL before the complete list of handicaps has been finally declared. Handicaps become the property of the VAL who shall forward a copy to the Club.
6. The Handicapper/s must carry out their duties immediately they are aware of any alteration required to the handicaps and inform the VAL at the earliest opportunity. The VAL shall immediately notify the Athletes and Clubs involved. In the event of the Handicapper/s not being present at a meeting, or where circumstances do not permit the Handicapper/s to carry out the requirements of this rule, the Chief Steward shall allot a handicap to the Athlete for the event.
7. The Handicapper/s shall at the time of declaration of handicaps for any meeting, forward copies of such handicaps to the VAL.
8. An original list of handicaps shall be supplied to the Club by the VAL bearing the signature of the Handicapper and also the time and date of such declaration of handicaps. Each Club shall publish in their official program the date and time of the declaration of the handicaps for its meeting.
9. Once handicaps have been declared for a meeting:
 - a) an athlete has 14 days from the date of declarations of the handicaps to lodge a review/appeal against their allotted handicap. Any such upheld review/appeal by shall be immediately enforceable by the handicapper in accordance with the Handicap Review and Appeal Procedures.
 - b) no alterations or re-handicaps are to occur in the instance where an Athlete has won a final and has by that time competed in a heat or semi-final and qualified for another final.
10. All penalties for winning any event shall be at the sole discretion of the handicapper in accordance with handicapping system guidelines, excepting the circumstances as dictated by the rules & conditions listed below and those decreed by the VAL.

NOVICE EVENTS

a) An athlete is defined as a novice, and shall therefore be eligible for an event designated for novice athletes only if that athlete has not won ANY final in any event conducted by the following organisations;

- i) the IAAF &/or affiliated bodies,
(State, National, World Title including Junior Divisions above under 16)
- ii) the Scottish Games Association,
- iii) the AAC &/or affiliated bodies(including the VAL),
- iv) the IOC &/or affiliated bodies.

NOTE:

- Any future change in the name, or initials of the above controlling bodies shall not diminish or undermine the intent of this rule. Any alteration to the above information shall be issued as soon as, when & if it occurs.
- All events previously designated as Restricted events or Maiden Events shall be referred to as Novice events.

b) All novice events shall be deemed non-penalty for any open/senior events for the currency of the season in which the event was conducted, provided that the following criteria is adhered to;

- i) the athlete in winning the event does not break the designated target time for that event, as adjusted for track & wind conditions.
- ii) the event time recorded by the athlete in winning the event is not better/lower than the time recorded by the winner of the open/senior event conducted at the same meeting, over an equal distance, & as adjusted for track & wind conditions.

If the above conditions are not met then the novice athlete shall forfeit the non-penalty status of the event & shall be then subject to the handicappers' discretion as to an appropriate future handicap.

c) Any athlete winning the final of a Novice event shall be ineligible to compete in any future novice events.

d) All athletes' performances in winning events designated, as non-penalty shall NOT be subject to any reappraisal of their current handicapping status over any distance for the currency of the season in which the winning performance was achieved.

11. The Handicapper shall inform the Starter of any athlete becoming liable for a penalty before the start of any event for which such a penalty could apply.
12. Handicap penalties shall not apply to a match race or invitation race upon application from the Club to the Board.
13. Athletes that have already entered a novice race and have since lost their novice status shall be re-allocated to another event of suitable similar distance of the novice event entered at that carnival by the Chief Steward. The exception to this is for Stawell where immediate transferrance to the Stawell Gift from the novice race will not occur unless the differing balance of the entry fee is supplied to the VAL.

- 14 Athletes that **enter a novice after they have lost their novice status** will not be allocated into a similar event despite paying entries for the novice event. Entry fees will not be refunded for this error by the athlete. The Chief Steward may place them into a more appropriate event if he desires, provided the balance between the novice entry fee and the open entry fee is provided to the VAL by the athlete.
- 15 The handicapper shall use wind adjusted times to assist him in the evaluation of athlete performance and subsequent handicapping. The equation shall be 0.05 sec. adjustment, either positive or negative, for every 1m/sec of registered wind reading. Reference to wind adjusted times can also be made by stewards and at any VAL Handicap and Disciplinary review, hearing, protest and appeal. All target times are based on wind adjusted times.

SECTION 7: ENTRY PROCEDURE

1. Any race or competition whether for any prize, stake, trophy, remuneration or gain, or otherwise whatsoever shall be considered a performance within the meaning of these Rules and must be included on the registration form and entry form where required.
2. Entries shall be sent to the VAL by athletes on the form in use by the VAL at the time of entry. All entries shall be made and races run in the legal name of the competitor.
3. Entries shall close for all VAL sanctioned events at the VAL a maximum of 28 calendar days, or to the nearest VAL office working day (as determined by the VAL), prior to the date of the event unless specifically requested, in writing to the VAL, by an individual club. All entries must be submitted by the athlete & received by the VAL no later than the advertised closing date. Telephone entries are strictly not permitted. The post mark of all mail must be dated no later than the advertised closing date to be considered a legitimate entry.
4. An individual club may apply to the VAL up to & including 5 calendar days prior to the date of the event requesting an entry for an athlete who is categorised within the following criteria;
 - a) a member of an Athletics Australia sanctioned international team within the 3 years prior to the date of the event,
 - b) any national or international athlete, who is ranked in their national top 10 rankings over the specific or relevant distance to the event entered as compiled by their National Association in the previous year.
 - c) a previous winner of the event being entered.
 - d) an athlete whose current performances exceeds the minimum performance standard required to establish a top 10 performance as defined by item (b).
Sprint events are defined as events up to & including the 400m & all hurdle events.
Distance events are defined as events over 400m.
These entries shall be termed as 'Wild card entries'
 - e) Wild card entries shall incur an entry payment penalty equivalent to twice the originally advertised entry fee for the event entered. The additional fee shall comprise of a handicapping fee equal to double the standard handicapping fee for each handicap & shall be paid to the relevant handicapper. The balance shall be allocated equally between the VAL & the relevant club. If entry conditions are satisfied then the athlete shall receive an entry to that event.
 - f) A club applying for a wild card entry shall be responsible for furnishing unequivocal proof to the VAL of the athletes' validity to qualify for a wild card entry as required by the VAL. Failure to do so shall mean rejection of the application.
5. The VAL, on receipt of the information shall advise entrants of the starting time of each series of events and their handicap marks approximately five days prior to the meeting entered. If entries can be proven by the athlete to be mislaid the VAL board have the power to ensure that the entry is still processed and that the athlete be handicapped.

6. The VAL Board may refuse to accept, or cancel any entry before the start, without being bound to assign a reason, and may disqualify an Athlete at any time if it has been shown that their entry was made under false pretences or contains false or incorrect information, irrespective of whether it was an inadvertent or deliberate act. Should any Athlete through forces beyond their control be unable to correctly detail the information required on the registration form their case shall be placed before the Board. The Board may make any order, or grant any dispensation it deems fit, to permit the Athlete to be duly and correctly registered.

Every such entry made is received on the condition that any decisions of the VAL in relation to the entry are not subject to any action at law ie: An appeal against any such decision can only be made to an Independent Panel as per a Major Disciplinary Offence. There is no right of appeal to any jurisdiction outside that provided by the VAL.

7. Entry fees paid by a disqualified or suspended Athlete for meetings following their disqualification or suspension and for the period of their disqualification or suspension will not be refunded to the Athlete. Athletes may enter events whilst suspended provided the events entered are outside the suspension period.
8. All original entries shall be taken to the sports ground by the VAL for production if required by the Chief Steward.
9. The VAL shall retain all original entry forms for a period of not less than 6 months for inspection as required.
10.
 - a) Athletes must declare all athletic performances outside the jurisdiction of the VAL (both hand held & electronic times) to the VAL within 28 calendar days of their occurrence on the forms available from the VAL. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
 - b) Athletes must declare all athletic performances outside the jurisdiction of the VAL (both hand held & electronic times) to the VAL within 7 calendar days of their occurrence, or prior to the athletes next performance at a VAL sanctioned meeting, if the said performance improves (lowers) the latest performance submitted by the athlete to, and registered by the VAL &/or is the first performance over a distance not previously registered with the VAL, irrespective of all, and any prevailing circumstances and conditions. All such performances shall be termed - "Personal Bests". Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
 - c) Athletes must declare to the VAL any winning performance outside the jurisdiction of the VAL prior to competing under VAL rules. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
 - d) All declarations by the athlete shall be accurate, correct, & verifiable by the VAL, Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
 - e) If the above conditions are not satisfied the athlete concerned shall incur the following penalties, which may be imposed by the VAL at any time during the currency of the athletes registration and all are subject to the Disciplinary Offence Procedures,

- i) Failure to declare performances under Rule 10(a):-
- the athlete shall be fined up to \$100.00 for each performance not declared during the currency of the season in which the performance was executed,

 - Handicap Review and/or amendment
 - All of the above
- ii) Failure to declare performances under Rule 10, the athlete shall incur, at the discretion of the Chief Steward,
- a fine of \$500.00 and/or,
 - disqualification from the event currently engaged in, and all future events for the currency of the season,
 - a fine of \$500.00 plus 5% of the prizemoney won and/or,
 - the forfeit of the total prizemoney won and/or,
 - all of the above.
- iii) all financial penalties shall be due to the VAL prior to the athletes next performance in any athletic event.

SECTION 8: ATHLETE'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. To compete in VAL sanctioned events each Athlete must register with the VAL before making their first entry. Every person registered with the VAL shall at all times abide by the rules and regulations of the VAL and the athlete shall be liable for any offence that they may be guilty of, even though their registration has expired. All Registrations shall date from the 1st October each year.
2. Application for registration shall be made to the VAL on the registration forms in use, and such application must be accompanied by the applicable Registration Fee to be as determined annually by the VAL Board. All athletes at the time of registration acknowledge that they will abide by the rules and regulations and that the decisions and findings by the VAL will be final and that there is no right of appeal to any External Jurisdiction, Tribunal, Court or Court of Arbitration for Sport.
3. Upon accepting a registration, the VAL shall enter the name of the person in the athlete data base the athlete shall be issued with an entry booklet displaying their registration number.
4. Athletes registering with the VAL for the first time shall provide complete details of their athletic history, including previous athletic organisation affiliations, athletic performances, as required by the VAL registration form or any further details as required by the Handicapper. The minimum age for an Athlete to compete under VAL Rules is 15 years at the time of first competition.
5. Athletes previously registered with the VAL and renewing registration after a lapse of one or more years will be required to declare all their performances during the season in which they were last registered, as well as a complete list of all subsequent performances (interstate, overseas, amateur or unregistered included) up to the date of the application.
6. Athletes registered or previously registered with affiliated interstate or any overseas organisation must complete their registration with the VAL before entering for events run under these rules. They shall furnish complete details of their performances as required on the current registration form. The VAL may before granting registration at its discretion, request that the accuracy & authenticity of any performances supplied by the athlete be ratified & certified by the Secretary of the interstate or overseas organisation with which the runner is/was registered.
7. All monies applicable for registration fees & race entry must be paid before the advertised closing date of the athletes first race. Failure to do so will result in the athlete being ineligible to compete in that event. The responsibility for the payment of all fees rests with the Athlete.
8. Any person who is a defaulter for any monies payable under these rules may be fined or disqualified and shall not be allowed to start in any events or functions conducted under the auspices of the VAL until such time as the outstanding monies are paid.
9. Any Athlete, after nominating or accepting for any event at a meeting conducted under the VAL rules shall be liable to forfeit all fees or monies won by him at that meeting on being disqualified for any offence committed at, or prior to, such meeting.

10. Any Athlete and/or Trainer/Coach upon being called before the Stewards shall present themselves at the time requested by the Stewards. Failure to present themselves to the Stewards will render the athlete ineligible to compete or participate in any further events at that meeting, or future meetings. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
11. Athletes shall wear a clean and complete costume (singlets, vests, shorts, bicycle shorts and footwear) as approved by & at the sole discretion of the Chief Steward. Athletes shall be supplied with, and wear, numbers or colours corresponding to the program. Any Athlete committing a breach of this rule or failing to comply with the directions of the Chief Steward may be prevented from competing, fined or disqualified by the Chief Steward. Athletes may apply to the Chief Steward for permission to compete in bare feet and/or approved footwear. Once approval has been granted it cannot be retracted for the remainder of the season, unless approved by the Chief Steward. Sponsorship clothing supplied by the clubs must be worn by the athlete if requested. Failure to do so shall disqualify the athlete from that event.
12.
 - a). No persons other than the VAL & Club Officials at the meeting, competitors taking part in the meeting, registered trainers and approved media, shall be allowed within the arena except with the permission of the Chief Steward.
 - b). All persons except officials inside the arena must not be standing or must be seated whilst an event is underway. Persons failing to comply with this direction will be subject to a fine of up to \$100.00 for each individual breach at the discretion of the stewards.
 - c). The Chief Steward or the steward acting in his stead is empowered as a delegate of the VAL Board and the hosting club to refuse or revoke entry to the carnival of any person as he so desires. Failure to comply with this request shall incur a fine of up to \$100.00 and/or further legal action. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
 - d). No athlete, person or trainer shall encourage or coach an athlete whilst in the course of actual participation from within the interior of the running arena. No athlete, person or trainer, if inside the running arena, shall insult, discourage, abuse or the like other athletes whilst they are participating in an event .
- *NB* The Chief steward or steward shall have the discretion to impose a fine of up to \$100.00 for any breach of these regulations and also the discretion to disqualify the athlete to which the encouragement or coaching was referred to. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
13.
 - a) All athletes must compete in the heats into which they are drawn except as follows;
 - (i) where an athlete has been transferred under Rule No. 17 (b) (1) of Section 2.
 - (ii) where a heat has been reduced to one competitor, or 3 competitors in the 800m, 1500m or 1600m , the Chief Steward shall reallocate the competitor to the next available heat, subject to Rule No. 17c(ii) of Section 2 where possible/practical.
 - (iii) pursuant to Rule No. 13 (i) or (ii), of this section, the reallocated competitors shall receive the monies allocated to the heat winners of the deleted heat. However if successful in winning their reallocated heat the athlete shall only

receive one allocation of heat money that being for the deleted heat, not for the reallocated heat.

(iv) The unallocated monies associated with Rule No.13 shall remain with the athletic club.

- b) If an athlete whose registration has been received & accepted by the VAL has not been Included in a heat, the athlete shall be Included In a heat at the sole discretion of the Chief Steward in order of handicap (back/front marker) & subject to Rule No.13a(i) where possible/practical.
- c) If a heat has been deleted then the fastest non-automatic qualifier, adjusted for wind conditions by a wind gauge when applicable, shall progress to the next round designated for that event.
14. Where Clubs conduct heats of the 800m or 1000m the athlete is required to accept at the Clubs marshalling area, 20 minutes prior to the commencement of the first heat of that event.
15. If, in this, or any other state or nation, any person attempts to influence by force or corruptly gives, or offers, or promises, directly or indirectly any money, present, or wager, in any form, to any person having official duties in relation to the conduct of any meeting, or if any person accepts or agrees to accept, directly or indirectly, a bribe in any form or if any Athlete willfully enters for any race when disqualified, or if any other person be guilty of, or conspire with, any person for the commission of any corrupt or fraudulent practice, or malpractice in relation to athletics, every person so offending may be disqualified and such proceedings taken against him as may be deemed proper.
16. After any disqualification or suspension has been imposed on any person or persons by the VAL or any other governing body to which this body is affiliated, no such person or persons shall be eligible to compete in any events to which these rules apply until such time as the person or persons can produce a clearance from the body by whom the disqualification or suspension was imposed or from the Board. The certificate of the Stewards that any Athlete has been disqualified may be received as conclusive evidence of such disqualification.
17. Any Athlete who sustains an injury or illness during an event, which prevents the athlete from running to the best of their ability or is unable to take their place in a semi final or final for similar reasons, shall incur an automatic suspension of 28 days. The use of a Medical Practitioner may be used at the discretion of the Steward in Charge to substantiate the claim of injury or illness. In determining the 28 days, the day on which the injury occurred is counted as day one. Return to the competition may be permitted by the Steward in Charge and/or left to his discretion after 14 days on production of a suitable Medical Practitioners Certificate and/or a satisfactory trial. All injury or illness suspensions will be enforced by the AAC professional athletic leagues but are not enforced for amateur competition. However all other forms of suspension or disqualification will be enforced by all athletic codes including amateur competition including suspension until fines are cleared with the issuing athletic body.
18. Athletes and Registered Trainers must request permission from the Sports Administrator via appointment before speaking to the Handicapper during the course of a meeting. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process. (Minor)

19. An athlete may apply in writing to the VAL office, no later than the closing date for entries of the relevant meeting, seeking a refund of the entry monies paid.

The athlete shall receive a refund of 100% of the value of the entry money paid.

No refund shall be payable to any athlete;-

- a) after the date for the closure of entries (refer entry book for the applicable dates).
- b) if the athlete has been suspended from competition.

SECTION 9: RULES RELATING TO RACING.

1. Athletes shall place the leading edge of their starting block at the back of the line denoting their handicap. An athlete who starts off the wrong mark may be disqualified and forfeit all prizemoney. An athlete who starts in the wrong colour or number or in the wrong lane may also be disqualified and forfeit all prizemoney. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
2. An Athlete overtaking another athlete must always pass the athlete on the outside (unless the athlete being passed has retired from the track or is clearly competing wide) and must be two clear metres ahead before taking ground in front of the passed athlete. The Stewards may fine and/or disqualify an Athlete who does not comply with this rule. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
3. Any Athlete jostling, pushing, bumping, elbowing, shouldering or shoving during the course of a race, or running across or willfully obstructing so as to impede another's progress shall, at the discretion of the Stewards, be fined and/or disqualified. It shall be the duty of the track Stewards to report to the VAL Stewards any Athlete whose competing they consider unfair. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
4.
 - a) If the first placed Athlete is disqualified in a final, the 2nd placegetter shall be declared the winner, & other placed Athletes also change. e.g. 3rd becomes 2nd, 4th becomes 3rd etc.
 - b) If an athlete whose performance has progressed them to the repechage, semi finals, or final is disqualified the next eligible athlete to qualify shall replace them in the event. Athletes who are ill or suffer injury are not deemed to be disqualified for this purpose of advancement. Similarly athletes failing to report to the start of the heat, semi-final, repechage or final will not be replaced by the next eligible athlete.
5. Any Athlete who, in the opinion of the Stewards, deliberately looks around at any time during the running of the event in which they are competing may be fined or disqualified.
6. Confederacies are strictly prohibited and in any race where a confederacy is proven, which in the opinion of the Stewards, prevented the parties concerned or any other parties running on their merits, such parties to the confederacy shall be disqualified and/or fined. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
7. Any Athlete on being advised by the Stewards of the likelihood of them being lapped by other athletes shall move out a minimum of 3 metres from the running line to allow the unimpeded path of the following athletes. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
8. Athletes are not permitted to wear a timing device whilst participating in events beyond 200m. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
9. An athlete must not run on the inside of the designated course of the event. An athlete shall be disqualified if they receive an unfair advantage by leaving their designated course during the race. Where events have lanes allocated an athlete must not leave his designated course and shall be disqualified if they receive an unfair advantage by leaving the designated course or they interfere and disadvantage another athlete by leaving their designated course. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

SECTION 10 - REGISTERED TRAINERS

1. a) Any person may register with the VAL as a trainer/coach by lodging with the VAL the appropriate completed registration form & the applicable fee.
- b) Registration as a trainer/coach, or athlete/trainer, shall entitle the said person to the following benefits upon presentation of their current validated trainer/coach, athlete/trainer pass;
 - i) Free admission to all VAL athletic sports meeting,
 - ii) access to all sports arenas for the tending of their athletes immediately involved in events coming up.
 - iii) entitlements as decreed by rule no. Section 2 Rule no. 17 (b) (1) (heat draws)
- c) the registered trainer shall nominate all athletes under their control at the time of registration & provide to the VAL any information, which varies the registered information as it occurs.
- d) Any registered trainer that does not pay any fines imposed on him shall forfeit trainer entitlements until the fines are paid

SECTION 11 - STARTERS AND STARTING RESPONSIBILITY

1. a) The starter shall have total control of the athletes preparing for, and on their marks and shall have sole responsibility for all aspects of the starting process.
- b) The Starter shall provide a starting pistol. cartridges or caps, which has been approved by the VAL. The VAL shall supply to the starter a red, or other approved coloured jacket, which shall be worn by the starter during the discharge of their duties.
- c) The Starter must be able to fire a second barrel in case of necessity.
- d) In the event of the Starters pistol becoming unworkable the Chief Steward of the sports meeting shall have the power to make arrangements to start the events.
- e) The starter shall ascertain from the Chief Steward that the all-clear has been issued on the previous heat, and that the timekeepers, judges & the finish machine operators are ready prior to the start commands being given.
- f) Unless the permission of the Chief Steward has been obtained, the time of starting, as stated in the program, shall be strictly adhered to and races started regardless of absentees.
- g) No event shall be started before the stated time except with the consent of every Athlete participating in that event.
- h) The Starter in all races run in lanes shall position themselves in line, or as near as possible, from the Backmarker to Front marker and stand a minimum of 5 metres behind the Backmarker in those events.
- i) Each club shall supply a minimum of two (2) starter's assistants who shall take direction from the starter.
- j) The Starter's Assistant shall place the Athletes on their respective marks and shall give the all clear to the Starter. No other command shall be given by the starters assistant.
- k) The Starter's Assistant shall ensure that all Athletes in lane events shall use two starting blocks and that the front block shall be positioned at the back of the handicap line prior to giving the all-clear to the starter.
- l) The Starter's Assistant shall ensure that in all non-laned events the athletes starting foot position shall be behind the back of the handicap line prior to giving the all clear to the starter.
- m) In all races conducted in lanes, the Starter shall have the power to address the Athletes at their discretion, then give the following commands prior to firing the pistol.
 - (i) 'To Your Blocks'
 - (ii) 'On Your Marks'
 - (iii) 'Set'

In circular events a whistle blast may be substituted for commands two and three.

- n) The Starter shall commence the event by a retort from the starter's gun fired from an elevated position & above their heads.
2. The Athletes shall remain still after the "set" command, and while in the "set" position. Breaking shall be deemed as any forward movement of the foot or body whilst in the "set" position, prior to the pistol being fired, except when a runner signals to the Starter, by raising their hand whilst retaining both feet in contact with the blocks, that they are not ready. The starter may stand all of the athletes up, without penalty if athletes are clearly unsteady.
3.
 - a) the VAL shall provide the services of a recall starter to assist the starter in the detection of false starts.
 - b) the recall starter shall be equipped with equipment by the VAL as required.
 - c) the recall starter shall be totally responsible to, & take direction from the starter in the discharge of their duty.
 - d) the starter shall have the right to recall the runners at any time by a second discharge of the pistol.
 - e) the recall starter shall be empowered to enact a recall of the athletes by the retort of their gun in the event that in their opinion a false start has been made & has been undetected by the starter.
 - f) in such circumstances the recall starter shall consult the starter & advise on the reason for the declaration of a false start.
 - g) once briefed the starter shall administer the appropriate penalty, warning &/or disqualification that the starter deems applicable.
 - h) the Chief Steward is not empowered to overturn the decision of the starter, but may relieve the starter of their duties if, in the opinion of the Chief Steward that the performance of the starter is unsatisfactory.
4.
 - a) Any Athlete who breaks shall be penalised as follows;
 - (i) 1/2 metre in distances up to and including 70 metres.
 - (ii) 3,4 metre in distances of 90 metres and 100 metres.
 - (iii) 1 metre in distances over 100 metres up to and including 200 metres.
 - (iv) 2 metres in distances over 200 metres up to and including 400 metres.
 - (v) 3 metres in distances over 400 metres up to and including 800 metres
 - (vi) 5 metres in distances over 800 metres.
 - (vii) Disqualification from the event shall follow if any Athlete breaks twice.
 - b) The Starters Assistant shall advise the athlete of their adjusted mark & direct them to it accordingly.
5. In handicap events, stations shall be awarded according to the order of the program. In scratch races athletes shall draw lots for their respective station. The Starter shall decide any disputes as to stations.
6. The sequence of colours shall be as follows;
1 Red, 2 White, 3 Blue, 4 Yellow, 5 Green, 6 Pink, 7 Black, 8 Grey, 9 Brown, 10 Purple, 11 Red/White, 12 Blue/White, 13 Yellow/White, 14 Green/White, 15 Pink/White, 16 Black/White, 17 Grey/White, 18 Brown/White, 19 Purple/White.

NB* Persons with withheld marks or entered via wildcard criteria shall wear the colour which corresponds with their allocated lane unless another applicable colour is provided. Lane allocation in heats shall be determined by the Chief Steward with first consideration to use outer lanes in those heats with multiple scratchings or those with less athletes allocated to the heat.

7. The Board may authorise different colours or different colour sequence.
8. The use of stand-up start machines is prohibited.
9. It shall be the duty of each athlete to ensure that they start from proper allocated mark and if in default may be disqualified from the race in question. An athlete, on being disqualified, shall forfeit any fees they may have paid or participation money won along with any other tangible gift presented to them. (Refer Section 9 no.1). Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

SECTION 12: JUDGES RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each club shall use VAL approved Judge/s plus at least one approved Club Judge & Judge/s who shall stand not less than 10 metres from any finishing post.
2. An area of 10 x 5 metres shall be cleared either side of the finishing line angled back to the Judges position.
3. Clubs shall be required to use the electronic race recorder approved, provided & installed by the VAL at their athletic meeting. In the event of the unavailability of this machine the Club may seek approval from the Board to use another machine and operator. The finishing beams are to be fixed at a height of 1.2 metres above ground level.
4. The Judges, in consultation with the Chief Steward, shall have the power to declare the heat, or event a 'no race' and shall have the power to order the race to be re-run, if, in their opinion, anything of substance, except a call to overrule the start by the starter & recall starter occurred during the race, to interfere with any athletes chance of winning.
5. Athletes must breast the finishing line. When tape is used, it is to be on the back of the finishing gate and any athlete incorrectly breasting the finish line shall be warned, fined and/or disqualified from the event.
6. In the event of a dead heat in one of a series of races which counts for points, it shall not be run off, but the points shall be divided equally between the athletes involved in the dead heat.
7. In the circumstance of a dead heat in the final of any event other than in the main race on the program, the decision will stand and prizemonies shared equally between the dead heating athletes. Should the dead heat occur in the main race, the runners involved in the dead heat shall run off over the same distance at a time decided by the Chief Steward to decide the winner.

SECTION 13: PROTEST PROCEDURE

114. a) An athlete shall advise the Chief Steward Immediately following the completion of their performance in the event, or heat of that event contested and prior to the running of the next event or heat of that event, of their intention to dispute and/or protest the judges decisions on the results of the event and/or any breach of existing rule in relation to racing.
- b) Once notified of the athlete's intention to protest, the Chief Steward shall immediately cause an announcement to be made via the public address system advising them that a protest has been lodged.
- c) The athlete shall formally advise the Chief Steward in writing of their Intention to Protest (Schedule 1) within 20 minutes after their event. The protest application shall be accompanied with a sum of \$50.00. This sum shall be refunded should the protest be upheld.
- d) Any such protests & disputes shall be referred to a 3 person Protest Hearing Committee who shall preside over the Protest Hearing. The Chairman of the hearing shall decide the appropriate time and place of the hearing having due regard to the continuation of the race programme and the fair and reasonable time afforded to the persons involved in the hearing for protest preparation and natural justice. The committee shall consist of
- (i) an independent chairman
 - (ii) an independent VAL Board Member
 - (iii) an independent representative of the Runners & Trainers Association Committee or membership.
- Each member shall have one vote and the burden of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities. A majority of these votes shall be basis to form the hearing findings.
- NOTE: The independent chairman may be a member of the VAL Board of Directors or a senior official of the officiating Club as approved by all parties.
- e) Any majority decision of the Protest Hearing Committee shall be immediately enforceable and binding on all parties.
- f) There is no right of appeal to the result of a Protest Hearing Committee and there is no right of appeal to any other legal jurisdiction in relation to a Protest Hearing Committee decision. There is no further right of appeal available to the parties to an alternative tribunal or civil court of law.
- g) An advocate is permitted for both parties concerned whom may speak on their behalf however they are not permitted to be a lawyer.
- h) A protest cannot be withdrawn by the athlete without leave by the Chief Steward.
- i) No participation monies shall be paid out to any athlete involved in the event involving the protest until the results of the protest hearing are decided and concluded.
- j) Upon determination by the appeals tribunal the Chief Steward shall cause the announcement of the result of the athletes protest hearing to the public.

- k) Bookmakers shall not be required to pay any dividends until the results of the protest hearing are announced.
- l) If no protest or dispute is made by an athlete prior to the commencement of the next event or heat of that event then the chief steward shall advise bookmakers and the public by causing an all clear signal to be made.
- m) If the protest is in relation to the Stawell Gift event a protest deposit of \$250 shall be lodged with the notice to protest which shall only be refunded if the protest is upheld. Any protest in relation to Stawell Gift Semi Finals must be lodged at the earliest convenience but no later than five minutes after the event.
- n) The protest panel is empowered to forfeit all or part of any protest deposit to the VAL any protest that it deems to be unsuccessful and frivolous.

SECTION 14: HANDICAP REVIEW PANEL & APPEALS TRIBUNAL

1) INTERNAL HANDICAP REVIEW PANEL

The VAL shall appoint an Internal Handicap Review Panel whose terms of reference shall be as follows:-

- i) to review the handicappers' spreadsheets, as produced by the handicappers' for anomalies and/or vagaries in the relativity of handicaps between athletes and between distances competed over by the athlete. If an anomaly/vagary exists, as decreed by a majority vote of the panel the Chairman is empowered to seek an explanation from the relevant handicapper and direct the handicapper as to the course of action as decreed by the majority vote of the panel. The panel is also responsible for addressing handicapper guideline protocols and providing guidance in relation to handicapper quality control.
- ii) The panel shall consist of an Independent Chairman (who can be a VAL director), a VAL director, and the Chief Steward.
- iii) Each member of the panel shall have one vote and any decision shall be based on the balance of probabilities. A majority of the votes will be the basis for the panel's findings.
- iv) The Chairman shall be totally responsible for the conduct & agenda of each meeting.

b) ATHLETE HANDICAP REVIEW REQUESTS AND APPEALS

In accordance with the terms of entry, any dispute relating to the handicap allocated to an athlete will be determined to its finality according to the following procedures:

- i) An athlete who wishes to review his or her handicap shall within 14 days of declarations of the handicaps, lodge a written request on the prescribed application form titled 'Handicap Review Application' (Schedule 2) to the Sports Administrator of the VAL. (Except as detailed below in paragraph (xi). The Review Application shall set out the nature of the complaint, clearly identifying the evidence in support of his or her argument that the handicap is unjust in the circumstances. The Review Application must be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of \$25.00.
- ii) The VAL Sports Administrator or his/her agent must refer the matter, including the completed Review Application together with any written submissions provided by the athlete in support of his or her Review Application, to the Handicapper within two (2) working days of receipt of Review Application.
- iii) In exceptional circumstances determined solely by a majority vote the VAL Board (a minimum of three Board Members constitutes a quorum), particularly where time is of the essence, the necessity to provide written submissions will be dispensed with and the athlete will be allowed to address the Handicapper by way of oral representations confined to 15 minutes in duration. The athlete may be represented by an advocate who will make the representation on behalf of the athlete. The advocate may not be a lawyer.

- iv) The Handicapper will review the athlete's handicap taking into account any relevant circumstances presented by the athlete and advise the Sports Administrator of the VAL of his decision by way of brief written report within 7 days. There is no obligation on the Handicapper or the VAL to publish the reasons for the handicappers decision to the athlete. The athlete need only be advised of the success or failure of the Review Application and of any revised handicap where appropriate. Where the athlete appears in person before the Handicapper, the Handicapper may advise his decision directly to the athlete and provide a written report to the Sports Administrator of the VAL in due course but not later than 48 hours after reaching his decision.
- v) The VAL Sports Administrator or his/her representatives shall forward a copy of the Handicap Review results to the athlete within two working days.
- vi) Only in exceptional circumstances to be determined solely at the discretion of the VAL, will the athlete be allowed to call witnesses to support his or her Review Application.
- vii) If witnesses are called by the athlete, the Handicapper has the right to ask relevant questions of the witnesses.
- viii) If the athlete remains unsatisfied with the result of the Handicap Review Application he or she has a single right of appeal to the Handicap Appeal Panel convened or assembled by the VAL. This is the only avenue of appeal open to an athlete.
- ix) Only in relation to Stawell Handicap declarations will an athlete proceed immediately to the Handicap Appeal Panel, thereby dispensing with the Review Application procedures set out in paragraphs (i) to (vii) inclusive.
- x) An appeal against the findings of the Handicap Appeal Panel must be lodged in writing on the prescribed form ('Handicap Appeal Application') (Schedule 3) with the Sports Administrator of the VAL within 7 days of receipt of the Handicap Review Application decision. Where an appeal is lodged during the running of an event, the Handicap Appeal Application must be lodged with the Chief Steward.
- xi) The Appeal Application must be accompanied by an application fee of \$150.00 for events other than the Stawell Gift. Where the application relates to the Stawell Gift, the application fee is \$500.00. This fee is non-refundable in the event the appeal is dismissed. If the appeal is upheld, the Handicap Appeal Panel may refund up to 50% of the application fee. The remaining amount shall be retained by the VAL. The panelists attendance costs shall be met by the VAL.
- xii) The VAL must convene a Handicap Appeal Panel to determine the Handicap Appeal Application no later than 7 days from receipt of the Handicap Appeal Application. Only in exceptional circumstances where it is practically impossible for the matter to be determined within 7 days will the Handicap Appeal Panel convene later than 14 days from the lodging of the Appeal Application.
- xiii) The Sports Administrator of the VAL shall make the necessary arrangements to convene the Handicap Appeal Panel and will notify the athlete of the arrangements for hearing the matter including the time and place of the hearing. VAL may choose to take into account the athlete's availability in setting down the time and place so long as the athlete makes a reasonable effort to make himself or herself available to attend at the time and place notified by the VAL.

- xiv) The Handicap Appeal Panel shall consist of three independent members appointed at the sole discretion of VAL, one of which will be nominated as the Chairperson to preside over the appeal hearing. An independent member is someone who has neither a direct or indirect involvement in the matter or with the athlete lodging the Appeal Application. A person with an involvement with an athlete in direct competition with the athlete lodging the Appeal Application is not considered to be independent.
- xv) The Chairperson will set down the procedures for hearing the matter at all times adhering to the rules of the VAL and natural justice.
- xvi) If the athlete wishes to make written representations these must be with the Sports Administrator of the VAL no later than 48 hours before the Handicap Appeal Panel will convene to hear and determine the Appeal Application.
- xvii) The Sports Administrator of the VAL shall distribute any written submissions to the Handicap Appeal Panel members and the Handicapper.
- xviii) The written report of the Handicapper prepared as a result of the Appeal Application will be released to the athlete and the Handicap Appeal Panel no later than 48 hours before the Handicap Appeal Panel is to be convened to hear and determine the matter.
- xix) The Handicapper, or a representative of VAL, may choose to make oral submissions to the Handicap Appeal Panel in response to the athlete's Appeal Application, in addition to relying on the content of the Handicapper's report.
- xx) The athlete, or at the discretion of the Handicap Appeal Panel, a representative of the athlete who may not be a lawyer, may choose to make oral submissions to the Handicap Appeal Panel.
- xxi) Where the Handicapper, or a representative of VAL, chooses to make oral submissions, their submissions will be in response to any written and/or oral submissions made by the athlete in support of the Appeal Application.
- xxii) The appropriate standard to which the Handicap Appeal Panel must be satisfied is on the balance of probabilities, i.e it is more reasonable than not that the athlete's argument is acceptable and that the original handicap is unjust in the circumstances.
- xviii) A majority decision of the Handicap Appeal Panel may choose to dismiss the Appeal Application or alternatively, uphold the Appeal Application and in doing so re-handicap the athlete taking into account those relevant matters accepted by the Handicap Appeal Panel. Any adjustment to the handicap by the Appeal Panel shall remain until the athlete is subject to any other penalties within the rules of the VAL and/or the next declaration of handicaps.
- xxiv) The decision of the Handicap Appeal Panel is final and binding upon all parties. There is no further right of appeal available to the parties to an alternative tribunal or civil court of law.
- xxv) The Handicap Appeal Panel shall provide a written report to the Sports Administrator of the VAL no later than 48 hours after it determines the matter. The Handicap Appeal Panel is not obliged to publish its reasons for its decision to the athlete however the VAL Sports Administrator shall forward the result to the athlete within 72 hours.
- xxvi) Where the Handicap Appeal Panel has set aside the original decision of the Handicapper, the Sports Administrator of VAL or his representative, is obliged to notify the Handicapper of the Handicap Appeal Panel's decision within 24 hours of receipt of the Handicap Appeal Panel's decision.

xxvii)The Handicapper shall consider the finding of the Handicap Appeal Panel for all future assessments of the athlete's handicap.

xxiii)There is no further right of appeal in relation to the adjusted handicap.

xxix)All declared or adjusted handicaps by the relevant handicapper or steward shall stand until such time as the Handicapper or Handicap Appeal Panel determine otherwise.

(c) VAL Disciplinary Offence Procedures and Disciplinary Offence Appeals

Acknowledgment

All members, athletes and officials acknowledge the power vested in the Victorian Athletic League ('VAL') pursuant to its constitution to initiate disciplinary action and submit unreservedly to the jurisdiction, procedures, penalties and appeal mechanisms of VAL as set out in the rules to be administered by the Board and the Sports Administrator.

Power to discipline

All members, athletes, persons, and officials who infringe on any rules are liable to be penalised.

All penalties and/or suspensions shall remain in force until the determination of either the Hearing, Tribunal or Appeal.

Categories of offending

- 1 There are two categories of offences: minor offences and serious offences.

An offence is categorised solely at the discretion of VAL and its nominated officials with the power to determine into which category an alleged offence falls vested in one of the following persons:

- (i) the Race Day Referee where the offence occurs at a sanctioned VAL event; or
 - (ii) the Sports Administrator in consultation with the Board for offences committed other than at a sanctioned VAL event.
2. The Race Day Referee will be any member of the Board present at a VAL sanctioned event and who has no involvement with the alleged offender.
 3. In exercising his/her discretion in paragraph 1, the Race Day Referee or Sports Administrator may be guided in the categorisation of an offence/s by one or more of the following non-exhaustive list of factors:
 - the impact or damage caused by the offending upon the sport and/or the victim;
 - the intent of the person;
 - the need for a penalty to be imposed;
 - the appropriate level of penalty proportionate to the offending conduct;
 - the need for general and specific deterrence; and
 - parity and consistency of approach.
 4. In the event that the alleged offending conduct consists of both types of offences, the VAL may elect to deal with each category of offence separately according to the procedures provided for each offence category or alternatively, consolidate the matters into the one disciplinary procedure to be dealt with according to the procedures set out for dealing with serious offences.

Minor offences

5. Minor offences are less serious offences, which attract penalties reflecting this fact.
6. Minor offences will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible. The chief steward shall have the discretion to determine whether a minor offence should be referred for hearing under the disciplinary offence process. All persons charged with minor disciplinary offences have the option of exercising the right to have the charge further examined by the Race Day Referee. However if they waive that right at the time of charge no Race Day Referee hearing will be required and the penalty issued in the charge shall stand.
7. If the race day referee is sought to determine a Minor offence it must be dealt with as soon as is practically possible but no later than seven (7) days after the alleged offence has been brought to the attention of the Race Day Referee, unless this is not possible. The Race Day Referee may elect to deal with a charge on the day so long as the alleged offender is given a minimum of ten minutes notice and no real prejudice is suffered by the alleged offender if the matter were to proceed on the day. If the matter does proceed on the day and the alleged offender does not object, then the alleged offender waives any future right to argue prejudice. Many hearings will require prompt attention due to the ongoing action of events and thus expediency is necessary if a race day referee is sought.
8. The alleged offender ('the Defendant') shall be notified in writing set out in the charge sheet of the following:
 - the alleged offence/s with which s/he is being charged;
 - a brief description of the offending conduct;
 - the time and place of the hearing;
 - confirmation that the applicable disciplinary procedure is that relevant to minor offences; and
 - the penalty range applicable to minor offences.
9. The defendant will be provided with a copy of the Disciplinary Offence Procedures at the same time they are notified in writing of the charge.
10. The disciplinary hearing will be conducted in an informal environment to be determined at the sole discretion of the Race Day Referee always subject to procedures set down in this section.
11. Both the party laying the charge/s ('the steward') and the defendant will be provided with the opportunity to make submissions to the Race Day Referee and may wish to call evidence in support of their case.
12. Evidence and/or submissions will be verbal only. The steward or prosecuting agent will proceed first.
13. Representation on behalf of the defendant in the form of an advocate is not allowed with the only exception being that where the defendant is under the age of 18 a representative is allowed. One observer may, at the discretion of the Race Day Referee, attend on behalf of the defendant and be present in the hearing room provided that the observer plays no role whatsoever in the proceedings.
14. Witnesses may be called to give evidence but only upon the Race Day Referee being satisfied that the evidence that the witness can give is material to the charges. A witness may give evidence by telephone link-up. There is a general right to cross examine a witness but only in relation to relevant matters. Witnesses will only be allowed to be recalled to give further evidence in the event that relevant new evidence is presented.

15. Upon hearing from both sides, the Race Day Referee may choose to retire from the hearing to consider the matter. During this time the Race Day Referee will not discuss the matter with either party involved in the action however may consult with any other party to confirm facts and to assist an investigative and accurate decision with regard to fairness, consistency, and parity.
16. The standard of proof upon which the Race Day Referee will determine the matter is the balance of probabilities meaning it is more likely than not the offending conduct occurred.
17. The findings of the Race Day Referee will be delivered orally and there is no obligation on the Race Day Referee to publish reasons for his/her decision.
18. The Race Day Referee has the power to adjourn a matter part-heard if the circumstances warrant an adjournment.

Penalty

19. If the charge is proven the defendant will be given an opportunity to present material in mitigation relevant to penalty only. This is not an opportunity for the defendant to re-argue his/her case and any attempt to do so will be immediately halted.
20. The prosecutor will also be afforded the opportunity to make submissions to the Race Day Referee on the appropriate penalty to be imposed in the circumstances. If the defendant makes submissions on penalty then any submissions made by the prosecutor shall be made in response to the defendant's submissions and no further reply by the defendant will be allowed.
21. Prior offending may be disclosed to the Race Day Referee but only after a finding of guilt in relation to the current matter is secured. When imposing a penalty, the Race Day Referee may give greater weight to prior offending of a similar nature.
22. When imposing a penalty for a minor offence, the Race Day Referee may choose one or both of the following penalties:
 - a warning or reprimand; and/or
 - a fine not exceeding \$500 and payable before the athletes/trainers next start or within 7 days.
23. Where a fine is imposed upon a defendant but which remains outstanding the VAL has the right to deny an athlete entry to a subsequent VAL event or any trainer their trainer entitlements.
24. Upon conclusion of the matter, the Race Day Referee must submit a written report of the findings to the Sports Administrator within 7 days of the determination of the matter, or in the event of the matter being dealt with whilst on tour, within 7 days of return.
25. There is no right of appeal against conviction or penalty for minor offences.

Serious offences

26. Conduct considered to be a serious offence must be reported to the Sports Administrator by the Chief Stipendiary Steward or VAL Board as soon as possible. A brief report setting out the circumstances surrounding the offence as well as identifying material witnesses and a summary of the evidence those material witnesses can give must be submitted with the report.
27. The Sports Administrator, with the assistance of the Board if required, will determine whether the matter should be dealt with as a serious offence or a minor offence. In determining whether a matter is serious or not, the Sports Administrator will be guided by the circumstances surrounding the commission of the alleged offence including, but not limited to, those factors detailed in paragraph 3.

If the Sports Administrator and/or the Board determine that a matter is not a serious offence, the matter will be referred back to the Race Day Referee, who will then conduct a hearing in accordance with the procedures for determining minor offences. The fact that more than seven (7) days has elapsed since the commission of the alleged offence does not preclude the matter from being heard.

28. If the Sports Administrator and/or the Board determine that a matter is a serious offence, the Sports Administrator will appoint a Tribunal consisting of three members to hear and determine the matter. The Sports Administrator will appoint one Tribunal member as Chairperson.
29. The time and place of the Tribunal hearing will be determined at the sole discretion of the Sports Administrator. Subject to receiving notification under paragraph 9, and in the absence of a significant reason showing cause why the Tribunal should not proceed, the Tribunal may elect to hear the matter in the absence of the defendant.
30. The Tribunal will be conducted according to those procedures for the dealing with minor offences as set out in paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of these disciplinary procedures except that the tribunal will preside and not the race day referee.
31. Evidence may be given orally or in writing. Where evidence is given in writing and there is no opportunity to cross-examine the witness, the Tribunal has the discretion to attach less weight to this evidence.
32. Both parties have the right for an advocate to appear on their behalf. Legal representatives are precluded from both representing and attending any Tribunal hearing. One observer may be present with the defendant in the hearing room however this person may not involve themselves in the hearing in any manner.
33. In imposing a penalty for a serious offence, the Tribunal may choose from the following range of penalties amended by VAL from time to time:
 - forfeiture of membership of VAL; and/or
 - a fine not exceeding \$5000; and/or
 - suspension from all competition for a period not exceeding two years, and/or
 - event disqualification, and/or
 - forfeiture of prizemoney and entry fees, and/or
 - handicap penalty, and/or
 - handicap review, and/or
 - warning, reprimand, and/or
 - suspended sentence, and/or

- any other requirement as desired within the VAL rules by the stewards or handicappers.
34. If a hearing is convened to determine both serious and minor offences as provided for under paragraph 5 of these procedures, the Tribunal is limited in the scope of penalties it may impose in relation to those minor offences to those provided for in paragraph 22 and 23. Those serious offences will be penalised in accordance with paragraph 33, 35 and 36.
 35. The Sports Administrator will confirm in writing with the defendant any penalty imposed.
 36. Where a fine is imposed upon a defendant but which remains outstanding the VAL has the right to deny an athlete entry to a subsequent VAL event or a trainer any entitlement they have.

Appeals procedures

37. Appeals may only be lodged regarding serious offences. Where a matter for determination involves both minor and serious offences, an appeal can only be lodged in relation to those offences categorised and dealt with by the Tribunal as serious.
38. An appeal notice in the prescribed form (Schedule 3) must be lodged with the Sports Administrator within seven (7) days of the handing down of the Tribunal's decision. The appeal notice must be accompanied by an appeal application fee of \$100 refundable only at the discretion of the Tribunal and in circumstances where the defendant is successful in overturning the Tribunal's finding of guilt and/or reduces the penalty imposed. The Tribunal may withhold part of the amount to cover the costs of the Tribunal hearing.
39. An appeal against the findings of the Tribunal and/or the imposition of a penalty in relation to a serious offence shall be conducted within 21 days of receipt of the notice of appeal. The Sports Administrator has a discretion to convene an appeal hearing outside of the 21 day period but only after it has been established that it would be impossible to hear the appeal any earlier.
40. The Appeal Tribunal shall consist of three members appointed by the Sports Administrator of Board, none of which has had a prior involvement in the matter. The matter will be determined by the Appeal Tribunal on a date to be determined by the Sports Administrator at his/her sole discretion and the defendant shall be notified of this date in writing. An Appeal Tribunal Chairperson shall be appointed by the Sports Administrator. The Appeal Tribunal Chairperson will have the discretion to conduct proceedings at his/her discretion subject always to the disciplinary procedures set out A majority decision will determine the matter.
41. In order for a matter to proceed to an appeal, the defendant must establish on the balance of probabilities that it is more likely than not that he/she has an arguable case. This shall be done by written submissions only, lodged with the Sports Administrator no less than ten (10) days before the Appeal Tribunal is to convene to determine the appeal. The prosecutor will have the final right of reply to any submissions lodged by the defendant. The prosecutor's submissions in reply must be lodged with the Sports Administrator and served upon the defendant no less than seven (7) days before the Appeal Tribunal is to be convened. The Appeal Tribunal Chairperson alone shall determine whether the defendant has sufficiently made out one or more ground/s of appeal no less than four (4) days before the matter is scheduled to proceed. There is no right to appeal against this decision. The Appeal Tribunal Chairperson's decision will be conveyed to the parties by the Sports Administrator.
42. If it is determined on the balance of probabilities that the defendant has an arguable case and the appeal is in relation to penalty only, the matter will proceed by way of written submissions only.
43. Each party will be required to submit in writing their arguments with the party making the appeal obliged to lodge their written arguments no less than two (2) days before the matter is scheduled to proceed. A copy of the submissions of the party making the appeal will be provided to the non-appealing party who will then have 24 hours from the time of receipt of the appealing party's submissions to submit their own reasons.
44. If the appeal is against both conviction and penalty, the appeal will proceed according to the procedures set out in paragraphs 11, 14, 15, 18, 30, 32,33 and 34 of these procedures
45. A majority decision will determine the matter.

46. The findings of the Appeal Tribunal will be delivered orally and there is no obligation on the Appeal Tribunal to publish reasons for its decision.
 47. An appeal against conviction is a re-hearing of the matter and the parties will be obliged to recall any earlier relevant witnesses and may call fresh evidence, provided that the Appeal Tribunal is satisfied that the new evidence is relevant to the matter. The Appeal Tribunal has the power to impose a new penalty as provided for in paragraph 33 and 34 of these procedures. The new penalty may be greater than the penalty handed down by the original Tribunal provided the penalty falls within the range of penalties provided for in paragraph 33 and 34 of these procedures.
 48. The Appeal Tribunal Chairperson will notify the Sports Administrator in writing of the findings of the Tribunal. The Sports Administrator will then confirm in writing to the defendant any penalty imposed. In the case of an interstate runner, a courtesy copy of the penalty will be sent to the respective governing bodies.
 49. The determination by the Appeal Tribunal will be final and binding on all parties. No further right of appeal exists within VAL, or to an external tribunal or any civil court of law.
 50. The Sports Administrator will keep a register of all penalties imposed for serious offences.
 51. If the member, athlete or official is suspended or penalised, the suspension or penalty shall remain in force pending the determination of the matter by way of appeal.
- d) Any person acting in any capacity listed in Rule 13 or 14 must declare any pecuniary interest or other conflict of interest in any event and disqualify themselves from presiding on any of the above hearings, appeals or tribunals.

SECTION 15: BOOKMAKERS BETTING

1. Any person acting in an official capacity with the VAL as a Director (at a meeting where they are directly involved with the Committee of that meeting) Steward, Handicapper, Judge, Starter, Timekeeper, Finish machine Operator, Assistant or Deputy of any of the above at any meeting conducted under the VAL Rules, or Club officials at their own meeting shall not participate in any gambling associated with that meeting. This includes, but is not restricted to, horse racing, trots, football, Calcutta's etc. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.
2. Registered athletes shall not be allowed to operate as a bookmaker or bookmakers clerk at an athletic meeting at which they are competing unless approved by the Chief Steward. If approved the Chief Steward shall announce such facts to their public at the commencement of the meeting. Failure by the athlete to inform the Chief Steward shall subject the athlete to a maximum fine of \$500.00 or be deregistered. Any offence under this section is subject to the Disciplinary Offence Process.

SECTION 16: POSTPONEMENT OF EVENTS

1. In event of unfavourable weather or for any other extenuating circumstances the Club or Chief Steward shall have the power to postpone the sports meeting from hour to hour and from time to time and make any alterations to the program as they deem necessary. The Club or the VAL shall not be responsible for any expense or loss incurred by any Athlete or Trainer as a consequence of any postponement or other action taken in relation to this rule.
2.
 - a) In the event of the cancellation of an event, the entry fee paid by an athlete for that event shall be refunded after the deduction of VAL administration charges.
 - b) An athlete may apply in writing to the VAL office, no later than the closing date for late entries of the relevant meeting, seeking a refund of the entry monies paid.
 - c) If the criteria as detailed in Item (b) is followed then the athlete shall receive a maximum refund of 75% of the value of the entry money paid.
 - d) No refund shall be payable to the athlete after the date for the closure of late entries (refer entry book for the applicable dates).

SECTION 17: DOPING

1. All athletes registered with the VAL or any affiliated body shall be required to submit to all drug testing procedures as required & conducted by Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) under IAAF rules. Any results of a test or procedure under these provisions shall be reported to the VAL and the athlete shall be subject to any penalties or procedures as per ASDA and the IAAF rules.

SECTION 18: RECORD PERFORMANCES

1. Club Secretaries shall forward to the VAL details of the results of an event where they consider a record has been established. For a record to be recognised by the VAL the following conditions must be complied with,
 - a) the record must be made in a VAL sanctioned competition;
 - b) in a special event duly advertised and conducted under VAL rules.
 - c) An Athlete does not have to win an event to have a record recognised provided that all other rules contained herein are complied with.
 - d) No record shall be allowed where the level of the track at the finish is below the level of the track at the start.

If automatic timing is not being used then the watches shall be started at the flash of smoke from the retort of the pistol. All races shall be timed by watches, which register one-hundredth part of a second. At least three timekeepers shall time the race and the time recorded by each watch shall be forwarded to the VAL. The three watches used in timing must be tested by a qualified watchmaker prior to and after the event. If electronic watches are being used the responsibility for testing shall be with the Chief Steward.

2. All record attempts shall be run from the actual scratch mark. That is with the Athletes hands behind the starting line. This also applies to invitation scratch events.
3. At least three days notice shall be given to the VAL by the Club where a record attempt is being made.
4. Prior to and after the record race, a certificate shall be issued to the VAL by the Club by a licensed Surveyor stating that the distance has been measured & accurate. In circular events the track shall be measured 30 centimetres out from the pole line.
5. No record shall be allowed for any straight course where the assisting wind velocity as measured by the VAL wind gauge exceeds 2 metres per second or where 50% or more of the distance is not raced with an equal opposing wind if other than a straight course is used.

SECTION 19: MISCELLANEOUS

1. A current edition of the Rules shall be published and made available to the Clubs, Athletes, and Trainers/Coaches at a nominal charge. New registrations and new Clubs shall receive a copy free of charge. Amendments to the rules shall be included in the entry booklet.
2. On recommendation of the VAL Board, any person who has rendered exceptional service to the VAL may be granted an Honorary Life Membership by a majority vote of the AGM. Recommendations in this instance must be submitted to the VAL by the 30th April each year. Honorary Life Memberships shall be limited to two per year. Presentation of Honorary Life Memberships will be made at the VAL Annual General Meeting. Life members shall be entitled to free admission to any VAL sanctioned meeting on presentation of their Life Membership card.
3. Any change to the Rules as recommended by the VAL Rules committee, shall be communicated in writing to the Clubs for their comments. The Clubs shall respond in writing within 21 days from the issue of the proposed changes to the VAL. The Rules committee shall review all correspondence received prior to that date and amend if required the proposed rule to reflect any issue deemed appropriate by the Rules committee. The Rules committee shall then present their recommended rule changes to the VAL board for approval. The VAL Board shall determine the merits of the proposed rule change & by majority vote support, reject, or seek further review by the Rules committee. Should the Board seek further review, then this review shall be undertaken by the Rules committee & at its conclusion shall resubmit the proposed rule changes to the board for approval. This process shall continue until a majority vote of the board supports or rejects the changes. Approved rule changes shall then be communicated to the Clubs & Athletes as soon as possible.

SECTION 20 : JUNIOR RACES

1. Any races conducted by the VAL which are under age (under 21 years etc) events shall receive a non penalty status in relation to other events excluding junior events conducted by the VAL. Penalties associated with under age events shall be confined to those events.
2. The entry, registration, handicapping method, penalty method, and performance assessment rules of these events may be varied from season to season as agreed by the VAL board. Such rules shall be endorsed and signed and dated by the VAL Chairperson at the beginning of the season.