



**HANDICAPPING
REGULATIONS**

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INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the guidelines provided by the VAL Board ~~of Directors of the VAL~~ to the appointed VAL Director of Handicapping, Handicap Review Panel and Handicappers to assist them in the handicapping of athletes within the Rules of the VAL.

These guidelines, which are designed to facilitate greater athlete participation and strive towards regular, competitive racing, are subject to annual review by the VAL Board, with input from VAL, the VAL Director of Handicapping, Handicap Review Panel, Officials and the VRTA.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide athletes with an equal opportunity for success
2. To provide a fair, transparent and consistent approach to handicapping
3. To encourage athletes to compete regularly, consistently and to the best of their ability.
4. To provide clear direction to athletes, trainers and other interested parties on how handicaps are derived.

HOW DOES IT WORK

The VAL Handicapping Guidelines provide a structured process for athletes to secure a lift in handicap. Under this approach, athletes who compete:

- a. a specified number of times (see further below);
- b. consistently; and
- c. to the Stewards' satisfaction;

are entitled to an incremental lift in their handicap, up to a specified limit.
A step by step guide is provided below.

KEY TERMS

AAC= Australian Athletics Confederation (affiliated Organisations are VAL, SAAL, TAL, NSWAL, WAAL and QAL).

Event Categories = Separate event categories are Open, Men, Women, Masters and Novice. Combined events such as Women & Masters are not regarded as a separate category.

Regular Event = An event (distance) that is conducted on 4 or more occasions within the season for a specific category.

Established Athlete = an athlete is considered to be established within a particular event, if they have competed in that event distance, the number of times specified within the Athlete Status and Category guidelines. See Page 13).

Ongoing Assessed Athlete (OGA) = any athlete who does not satisfy established athlete criteria over a particular event. All interstate, new and novice athletes are classified as OGA over all events. All athletes in events that are conducted 4 or less times during a season are classified as OGA in that event.

Acceptable Deviation = this deviation sets the time range within which an established athlete must run in order to ensure an Acceptable Performance. For each event, the VAL Handicappers take the fastest heat time of the day (or if in the opinion of handicappers &/or stewards/HRP that the fastest time is not reflective of the majority of the field, that the fastest time be discounted and the next time will be taken) and adds the Acceptable Deviation, as set out in the Handicap Calculations Table. If the athlete runs a time that is equal to or faster than this time then they have run within the Acceptable Deviation. If the event is a straight final, the winning time is used, or if that time is under the ceiling, then the highest placed time that does not break the ceiling time is used.

Acceptable Performance (AP) = where an established athlete runs within the Acceptable time Deviation and the VAL Handicapper and Stewards were satisfied with their performance and effort.

Satisfactory Performance (SP) = Where an OGA classified athlete runs within the Acceptable time Deviation and the VAL Handicapper and Stewards were satisfied with their performance and effort.

~~Where an established athlete has not ran within the Acceptable time deviation but has ran to the satisfaction of the Handicapper and Stewards, or when an OGA classified athlete runs to the satisfaction of the VAL Handicappers and Stewards.~~

Non-acceptable Performance (NAP) = Handicappers and Stewards are not satisfied with the athletes performance/effort, irrespective of whether the performance was within the time parameters or not, and no credit will be received for the performance.

~~Performances are classified as NAPs based on time. Athletes have not met the full criteria provided above to achieve an AP or SP, however the Stewards are not dissatisfied with the effort provided~~

Non-acceptable Time Performance (NAP-T) = An NAP-T does not imply lack of endeavour, but merely indicates that the athlete has run outside the time parameters for that particular event to earn an automatic credit.

Unsatisfactory Performance (UP) = As per the NAP, no credit will be received for the performance and further sanctions such as a fine or handicap reduction may be incurred due to the more serious nature of the anomalous performance.

~~Where the VAL Stewards deem that an athlete has not given full effort during a particular race irrespective of the time they record in that event, or the performance is anomalous with their performance history.~~

Rate per metre (RPM) = the average time per metre for a particular distance, calculated by dividing the time run by the distance covered (eg the RPM of a 120m runner who runs 12.20seconds off 6m = $12.20/(120-6) = 0.1070$)

Starting Time = for a particular distance, this is the time that athletes are handicapped to, based on their best performances, at the commencement of each season. The starting times for each event are provided in the Handicap Calculations Table (Schedule 1).

Notional Starting Handicap = an athlete's handicap for a particular distance at the beginning of the season, determined solely on the basis of a mathematical calculation and before any adjustment for prior season performances or the athlete's finishing handicap in the prior season

Actual Starting Handicap or Starting Handicap = the handicap that an athlete will commence the new season on, after allowing for adjustments for prior season performances and the athlete's finishing handicap in the prior season.

Ceiling Time = the fastest time that athletes can be handicapped to run in a particular event **after competing within the season over the distance in the VAL**. Once an athlete has reached the ceiling time, their handicap cannot be lifted again during the season. The ceiling times for each event are provided in the handicap Calculations Table (Schedule 1).

Ceiling Point = the maximum handicap that an athlete can receive for an event in a given season, determined by reference to the athletes average RPM and the Ceiling Target Time.

Novice = an athlete who has never won an event under AAC rules.

Novice Handicap = the handicap allocated to an athlete who has not previously competed over a particular distance or similar distance who does not have form or performances superior to the start time in the opinion of the VAL Handicappers.

Interstate Athlete = an athlete who is registered with a governing body other than the VAL and permanently resides outside the State of Victoria

Veterans Masters = an athlete aged 35 years old or over.

Lift Range = the range of lifts in handicap for an event that may be awarded by the VAL Handicappers, as set out in the Handicap Calculations Table.

Minimum Graduation = each athlete who achieves the required number of AP's for a particular event is entitled to a lift in handicap (unless they have reached the Ceiling Time). The Handicap Calculations Table provides a range (the Lift Range) in which the VAL Handicappers may lift the athlete's handicap. The minimum lift in that range is called the Minimum Graduation (refer to the attached Handicap Calculations Table).

Carnival/Meeting = a **professional running event** organised by a member club of the VAL.

VAL Handicappers = The panel of handicappers appointed by the VAL Board to handicap all events on the VAL calendar.

VAL Stewards = the appointed Stewards appointed by the VAL Board who along with the Handicappers oversee the conduct and stewarding of all events on the VAL calendar.

Handicap Review Panel (HRP) = A Panel appointed by the VAL Board to oversee the VAL Handicappers and ensure their adherence to the Handicap guidelines. **Refer to Section 7.5 of the VAL Regulations for the functions and authority of the HRP.**

Director of Handicapping = **An individual appointed by the VAL Board to Chair the HRP and be the direct report for all Handicappers and handicap queries, specifically to ensure the VAL Regulations and Handicap Guidelines are accurately and consistently adhere to across all areas.**

VAL Rules and Regulations = the official Rules and Regulations of the VAL, available on the VAL website at www.val.org.au or by contacting the VAL office.

INITIAL AND STARTING HANDICAPS

Initial Handicap Allocation

When a VAL registered athlete enters a particular distance for the first time, they will be allocated a starting handicap based on their best performance over that or a similar distance.

The maximum initial handicap an athlete can receive is the Novice handicap for that distance, subject to the conditions listed below. The Novice handicaps are provided in Schedule 2 of the Handicap Regulations and are dependent on the gender and age of the athlete.

The starting time for each distance alongside the athlete's best performance, or potential best performance based on their personal bests over a similar distance, is used by the Handicapper to determine if an initial handicap allocation should be less than the Novice handicap and what that handicap should be. The starting times for each distance and event category are available in Schedule 1 of the Handicap Regulations.

If a VAL registered athlete has competed regularly over other similar distances within the VAL, the Handicapper can apply to the HRP to allocate an initial handicap that is more than the novice handicap. This will only be approved if the athlete's performances over other similar distances clearly show they require a greater handicap to be competitive and the athlete's current handicap over the similar distance is completely out of balance with the novice handicap for the distance they are entering.

If the athlete is over the age of 35 and their personal best performance is more than 3 years ago, the Handicapper can take into consideration the athlete's recent performances. In such circumstances the best performance from the last 3 years will be used to determine the initial handicap allocation.

For the purpose of determining an athlete's potential best performance, distances from 70 to 400 are regarded as similar, as are 400 to 800, 800 to 1500 and 1500 to 5000.

The track and wind conditions of personal best performances are to be taken into account by the Handicapper when determining an initial handicap allocation.

Season Start Marks

Prior to the commencement of each season, the Handicappers in conjunction with the HRP, will determine the starting handicap for each registered athlete for each event they competed in the previous season.

An athlete's starting handicap for the season for each distance will be the lesser of their last allocated handicap from the previous season over that distance, or the calculated notional starting handicap less any adjustments required under the Handicap Regulations.

As such an athlete's starting handicap cannot be greater than their last allocated handicap for the distance, but can be less, based on the Handicap Regulations.

Starting handicaps are determined for all distances and separate individual categories (Open, Men's, Women's and Masters events) conducted the previous season on a regular basis. Starting Handicaps will not be calculated for Novice, Restricted and Junior events, marks for these categories will be calculated to a set net time.

The Combined Women's/~~Veteran~~ Masters events are treated as ~~Veteran~~–Masters events for the purposes of calculating handicaps. In the Women/~~Veterans~~ Masters 100/120 events the non-Masters women will not be allocated a starting handicap in this event. Throughout the season their handicap in the combined 100/120 events, will be determined directly from their Women's 120 handicap.

***The Women's/Masters event category will be removed as a category by the 23/24 VAL season.**

Calculation of Notional Starting Handicap

For the purposes of this clause of the VAL Handicap Regulations, a 'Regular event' is:

An event that is conducted on 4 or more occasions within the current season for a specific category. The different event categories are: Open, **Men's**, Women's and Masters.

Refer to the *Athlete Status Section* for definitions of athlete classifications (i.e. Established or OGA).

For Established athletes in Regular events, the calculated notional starting handicap is determined by dividing the average of the athlete's best Rate Per Metre (RPM) from the last 5 seasons and the next best RPM from the last 2 seasons, into the starting time for that event. The Starting time for each event is available in Schedule 1 of the Handicap Regulations.

For all athletes classified as OGA in a specific event, the notional starting handicap is determined at the discretion of the VAL Handicapper based on consideration of the athlete's best RPM over that or a similar distance, within or outside the VAL.

For both Established and OGA athletes, RPMs will be drawn from all performances over the distance, both within all event categories in the VAL and external to the VAL.

For non-Regular events, all notional starting handicaps are calculated as OGA.

Adjustments to Start Marks

If an athlete has won a Group 1 or Classic event in the VAL or any other Interstate AAC Affiliated organisation in the previous season, their *Actual* starting handicap for the current season in the VAL, for that particular distance only, will be reduced by one minimum graduation.

This is in addition to the penalty from the previous season. Any athlete that wins two or more Group 2 or 3 races with a season may incur an additional penalty that will be applied to the athletes start mark for the following season.

Stawell Penalties

The penalty for winning at Stawell in all events in the previous season, will be applied to the lesser of the finish mark from the previous season for that distance or the Notional starting handicap calculation for that distance for the new season. This ensures Stawell winners from the previous season, will start behind their calculated notional starting handicap by a minimum of the applicable standard penalty. For all penalties, including Stawell, please refer to the Schedule 3 of the Handicap Regulations.

Winners of all events at Stawell will have their handicaps reassessed over all similar distances (refer Page 7) and all categories for the commencement of the next season. The Handicapper will take into account the athlete's winning performance and RPM to determine if a reduction in start marks in other categories and similar distances is required for the athlete to be handicapped on or behind the relevant start mark for the new season. Any adjustments under this regulation are at the handicapper's discretion and require the approval of the HRP. This regulation does not override other penalty regulations and it should be noted wins in open events automatically attract penalties across all categories.

Athletes who make the Women's or Men's Stawell Gift Final in the previous season, will also have their 120m start mark reduced by the following amount. This adjustment will again be to the lesser of their finish mark from the previous season or the Notional starting handicap calculation for the new season.

Table 1. Stawell Gift Finalist Penalties (Men's & Women's)

- 1st Placegetter – 2m
- 2nd placegetter – 0.75m
- 3rd placegetter – 0.50m
- 4th – 6th placegetters – 0.25m

Note – These penalties will be applied to the lesser of an athlete's finish mark from the previous season or the notional starting handicap calculation for the new season.

However, the above penalties can be varied on recommendation from the handicapper by the HRP, should the handicapper consider the penalty is not commensurate with the performance recorded.

Adjustment for Artificial Tracks

The following additions are made to times recorded on artificial tracks for the calculation of RPMs. This is done in order to equate times on artificial tracks to that of a good grass track.

Table 2. Adjustments for artificial Track

Synthetic Track Race Distance	Proposed adjustment (Adjustment) (seconds)	Current adjustment (seconds)
70 m	0.15	0.10
100 m / 120 m	0.20	0.10
200 m	0.40	0.20
300 m	0.50	0.50
400 m	1.00	1.00
550 m	1.00	1.00

Otherwise, 1.5 ~~2.0~~ seconds per lap for events over 800m.

Age of Performance Allowance

If in the opinion of the Handicapper a performance over 3 years old is no longer reflective of the athlete's capabilities, the Handicapper can seek approval from the **Director of Handicapping and the HRP** to exclude that performance from the RPM calculation. This would apply to both the starting and ceiling calculations.

Veterans Masters Allowance

A Masters allowance of up to 4 minimum graduations can be added to the calculated notional starting handicap and ceiling handicap by the Handicapper, subject to the approval of the HRP, if the Handicapper believes the calculated handicaps are no longer reflective of a **Masters Veterans** athlete's capabilities due to age. The adjusted starting handicap cannot exceed the finishing handicap for last season nor place the athlete under the starting time based on their best performance from the last 12 months.

Developing Athletes

If in the opinion of the Handicapper an athlete has the potential for significant natural development or improved fitness levels, the Handicapper can apply to the **Director of Handicapping and/or HRP** to have the starting mark for that athlete reduced.

Adjustment to performances to allow for distance variations

When calculating the RPM of a performance, the Handicapper will consider and allow for any significant variation in distance between the actual distance covered and the distance to be covered by the athlete in the particular category after allowing for the handicap of the athlete concerned.

An example would be when considering the RPM of an external 1500 performance for an athlete with a 1600 handicap either significantly greater or less than 100. Other examples would be when reviewing amateur 400 or 800 performances for athletes with large handicaps over that particular distance.

For the purpose of this regulation, a significant variation would be a variation greater than 5% between the distance actually covered in the performance being considered, and the distance to be covered by the athlete after the deduction of their handicap.

Under this regulation and in order to provide a level playing field, an RPM adjustment for specific events will be applied to the variation in distance between what was actually covered and what would be covered after the handicap deduction. If the performance being considered is less than the distance to be covered for the event being handicapped, the adjustment is added on to the rpm for the extra distance. If the performance being considered is greater than the distance to be covered, the adjustment is deducted from the rpm for the reduction in distance. The following percentage adjustments for specific distances have been arrived at after reviewing a wide range of samples for each distance and allows for the different rates of de-acceleration.

- 300/400 – 10%
- 800 – 15%
- 1500/1600 – 12%
- 3000/3200 – 10%
- Please note there is no adjustment for distances of 200 or less.

This adjustment will be used when reviewing times in external and amateur competitions, for application to VAL events. This adjustment will also be applied to convert RPMs between event categories, where variation in handicaps results in a variation in distance covered that is greater than 5%. For example when utilizing an RPM from a performance in an open category event, for a women's or masters category and visa-versa.

This adjustment will be utilized for calculating start marks and for assessing if athletes have broken the ceiling time, and therefore require adjustment during the season.

For example if an athlete runs a time of 4.20 for 1500 in an external event and has a handicap of 200 in the 1600, the following calculation applies:

- Allowance for grass @ 1 second per lap – adjusted time 4.23.75 for 1500
- RPM – $4.23.75 / 1500 = 0.1758$
- Current 1600 handicap – 200
- Actual distance covered – 1400
- Variation in distance – 100
- Adjusted RPM for distance variation – $0.1758 * 1.12 = 0.1969$
- Time deduction for distance variation – $0.1969 * 100 = 19.69$ seconds
- Adjusted time for VAL distance after handicap = $4.23.75 - 19.69 = 4.04.06$.

Review of Starting Marks

If the Handicapper believes the potential adjustment arising from the calculated notional starting handicap is too severe and would result in the athlete being uncompetitive, the Handicapper can apply to the **Director of Handicapping and the HRP** to reduce the adjustment to the starting handicap. The **Director of Handicapping and the HRP** will take into account the consistency and recent form of the athlete over this and other distances.

The **Director of Handicapping and the HRP** will review the allocated starting handicaps to ensure compliance with the regulations. Subject to the conditions and potential adjustments outlined, the HRP will instruct the Handicapper to correct and adjust any handicaps it deems as not being in accordance with the regulations.

At all times the adjusted starting handicap cannot exceed the finishing handicap for last season nor place the athlete under the starting time based on their best performance from the last 12 months.

ATHLETE STATUS AND CATEGORIES

To assist in ensuring that all athletes are handicapped fairly, athletes are separated into the following categories:

- 1. Established Athletes**
- 2. Ongoing Assessed Athletes (or OGA)**
- 3. Interstate Athletes**

If an athlete meets the number of required runs throughout season in order to be classified as an established athlete then their status once this threshold is met will change to established athlete.

Established Athletes

An athlete is considered to be established within a particular event, regardless of category, if they have competed in that event on 8 or more occasions in the previous 2 seasons **or have competed in that event and on 16-20** or more occasions within the last 5 seasons in VAL competition.

However, for athletes over both the 800 and 1600 metre distances to be deemed Established will require 6 runs in the previous 2 seasons and 16 runs the past 5 seasons. Once an athlete has competed over the particular distance (800 or 1600 metres) 16 times, they remain an Established athlete in that specific category, unless they do not compete at all over that particular distance for 2 complete seasons, whereupon they would revert to OGA status until the criteria as outlined above is met.

The advantages for an athlete becoming established in an event are:

- It is incumbent on the Handicapper to gradually move an athlete to a potentially competitive handicap as they continue to compete in that event, so that by the time the athlete becomes Established, they have the handicap to run within the Acceptable time deviation (refer Schedule 1) and are therefore capable of being competitive and potentially winning. This is obviously subject to the athlete running to their capabilities.
- An athlete that is established in an event must be lifted when they have received the required number of APs or SPs, in accordance with the Handicap Regulations. For the purpose of this regulation all rounds (Heats/Semis/Final) of an individual event at a particular meeting is counted as 1 occasion in total.

OGA Athletes (including New & Novice Athletes)

An Ongoing Assessed Athlete (OGA) is any athlete who does not satisfy the established athlete criteria over a particular distance. All interstate, new and novice athletes are classified as OGA over all distances. All participants in events that are conducted on 8 or less occasions during the past 2 seasons are classified as OGA in that event.

An athlete may be classified as OGA in a single event or multiple events, depending on the number of performances over a particular distance. Athletes can be Established in one event **distance group** and OGA in another **distance group i.e. 110m/120m is a distance group, 300m/400m is another distance group.**

OGA athletes are not guaranteed a lift in handicap for any event and can be re-assessed at any time at the discretion of the VAL Handicappers, if warranted. However, OGA athletes will have their handicap reviewed after an SP and can receive a handicap lift within the range provided in Schedule 1, at the discretion of the Handicapper.

At the discretion of the VAL Handicappers, with the approval of the HRP, OGA athletes in selected Group 3 events may be provided with one-off lifts in handicap, on the basis that these one-off lifts can be reversed for future races. Should an athlete receive a one-off lift in handicap for a Group 3 race, they will be notified by the VAL Handicapper prior to competing in that event.

Interstate Athletes

All interstate athletes are classified as OGA.

The initial handicap for an interstate athlete entering a VAL event for the first time within the season, is calculated based on their PB performance in the same manner as other OGA athletes. (Track, Age of Performance and Masters allowances apply where applicable).

An interstate athlete competing with VAL for first time cannot receive more than the novice mark. Any variation to this must be recommended by the handicapper to the HRP and approved by them.

If an interstate athlete has previously competed in an AAC member organization (TAL, SAAL, QAL, WAAL, NSWAL) or has verified amateur performances, then their previous performances can be taken into account in allocating an initial handicap and for the ongoing assessment of interstate athletes within the season, once they have competed in the VAL.

The same expectations for consistency of performance and running to an athlete's capabilities, are required of Interstate athletes as VAL registered athletes, in order for Interstate athletes to be considered for a lift. This includes both VAL and interstate performances.

All interstate athletes who have not competed in an AAC member organization or who do not have verified amateur performances recorded, as listed above, cannot receive an initial handicap greater than the Novice mark for their applicable category in that event. The same process and regulations apply as to all new athletes in determining their initial handicap (refer Initial Handicap Allocation and OGA Athletes Status sections of these regulations).

ADJUSTMENT TO HANDICAPS DURING THE SEASON

As athletes compete during the season their handicap can be adjusted by the VAL Handicappers on the following basis:

First start for the Season

Refer to [INITIAL AND STARTING HANDICAPS](#) section on page 7 of this document.

~~Any such lift in handicap will apply to the next declared handicap over the particular distance. An established athlete can still receive an AP or SP for this performance that would count towards a potential lift once the required number has been achieved.~~

Throughout the Season

Every time an athlete runs their performance is reviewed by the VAL Handicappers and Stewards. In order to be entitled to receive a lift in handicap for a particular event, an athlete must achieve a sufficient number of Acceptable Performances (AP's) or Satisfactory Performances (SP's) over the relevant distance.

The number of APs or SP's required for a handicap lift will vary depending on the distance and the category that the athlete falls into (refer *Allocation of Handicap Lifts* on [pg. 16](#)).

Assessment of Performance

The VAL Handicappers together with the Stewards will assess each performance with the VAL, based on the time the athlete ran and their judgment in regards to the appropriate degree of effort being applied throughout the run.

The VAL Handicappers & Stewards will place each performance in one of the following categories. Please note that where an athlete has competed in multiple rounds (i.e. heat, semi, final), all rounds are classified as 1 performance for this assessment process:

For Established Athletes

Acceptable Performance (AP):

For a performance to be classified as an AP it needs to meet the following requirements:

- Be within the Acceptable time Deviation (all rounds) as set out in Schedule 1. If the event has heats the fastest wind adjusted heat time for the event is used. In the case of a straight final, the winning time is used.
- The performance throughout all rounds needs to be consistent with and reflective of the athlete's current capabilities
- The Handicapper and Stewards are satisfied with the athlete's performance and effort throughout.
- The performance in all rounds, in the opinion of the Handicapper and Stewards, is unhindered by lack of fitness, sickness, injury or participation in prior events or rounds.

Also note the following conditions apply:

- Heat winners shall be regarded as having an AP for that performance irrespective of their time in the heat, provided that their semifinal and/or final meet the above AP requirements (ie: unchallenged heats or walkovers).
- To be assessed as having an AP for a particular event, each run in the same event must be an AP. Hence, if you have one NAP or UP in a round of the event, then it will over-ride any AP.
- If the fastest heat time breaks the Ceiling Target Time, the VAL Handicappers will assess your performance based on the next fastest heat time that does not break the Ceiling Time.
- ~~• An AP achieved in a 200m event at Whittlesea/Epping VRTA Carnival at a Meeting, will be considered as a credit performance toward 100m and 120m events (for both Established Athletes and OGA athletes).~~
- An AP performance in a 200m event will be considered as a credit performance toward

100/120m events (for both established and OGA athletes), when there is no other 100/120m event at the same meeting

Satisfactory Performance (SP)

~~If the performance of an Established Athlete does not meet the AP criteria based on time, but both the Stewards and Handicappers are satisfied the athlete's performance was reflective of their current capabilities, The Handicapper has the discretion to classify the performance as a Satisfactory Performance.~~

For OGA Athletes

Satisfactory Performance (SP):

Based on the athlete's prior and recent form and performances, if the Handicappers and Stewards are satisfied with both the time and effort of the performance, it will be classified as a Satisfactory Performance (SP).

For all Athletes

If a performance does not meet the criteria above and is not classified as an Acceptable or Satisfactory Performance, it will be classified as a Non-acceptable Performance (NAP), **Non-acceptable Performance - Time (NAP-T)**, or an Unsatisfactory Performance (UP). **NAP** and **UP** ~~is~~ **are** the more serious of the two classifications as it is based on **performance and/or** effort.

Non-acceptable Performance (NAP)

Athletes awarded an NAP means Handicappers and Stewards are not satisfied with the athletes performance and/or effort.

An athlete who is Established or OGA in an event can receive an NAP if it is within or outside the Acceptable Time Deviation, but in the opinion of the Handicapper or Stewards, the run was not reflective of the athlete's current capabilities. No handicap lift credit will be received for the performance.

~~Performances are classified as NAPs based on time. Athletes have not met the full criteria provided above to achieve an AP or SP, however the Stewards are not dissatisfied with the effort provided.~~

~~For Established athletes NAPs can be awarded for not running within the Acceptable Time Deviation or for not meeting the other criteria provided above. As such, it should be noted a performance can be classified as an NAP if it is within the Acceptable Time Deviation, but in the opinion of the Handicapper or Stewards, the run was not reflective of the athlete's current capabilities.~~

~~An athlete who is OGA in an event can receive an NAP when the Handicapper or Stewards are not satisfied with the athlete's performance when considering the athlete's prior and recent form.~~

Non-acceptable Performance-Time (NAP-T)

Athletes awarded an NAP-T for their performance, is based on time.

~~An athlete has not~~ Athletes have not met the full criteria provided above to achieve an AP or SP, however the Stewards are not dissatisfied with the effort provided.

For Established or OGA athletes, NAP-T does not imply a lack of endeavour, but merely indicates that the athlete has run outside the time parameters for that particular event to earn an automatic credit.

Unsatisfactory Performance (UP):

Irrespective of the time of a particular performance, if the Handicappers or Stewards determine, based on their review, that the athlete did not give full effort throughout the race, **or that the performance is anomalous with the athlete's previous performance history**, then the performance will be classified as an Unsatisfactory Performance (or UP).

The athlete does not need to be formally charged under the VAL Rules for a performance to be categorised as a UP. ~~Any athlete issued with a UP can be considered for a handicap review.~~

As per the NAP, **no handicap lift credit will be received for the performance and further sanctions, including a fine and/or handicap review may be incurred due to the more serious nature of the anomalous performance.**

Right of Review for Athletes receiving an NAP or UP

An athlete who has received an NAP or UP, can seek a review of this decision from the Handicap Review Panel. This does not apply to **NAP-Ts** received for running outside the acceptable time deviation, for which there is no right of review.

An NAP or UP review request must be submitted to the ~~VAL Administrator~~ **Director of Handicapping/HRP** within 7 days of the athlete being informed of the decision. The HRP will then either uphold the NAP or UP, overturn the decision, or vary the decision, in which case the athlete will be awarded an **AP or SP** for the performance.

The decision of the HRP in regards to NAP/UP review requests, is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Stewarding, a fundamental part of the Handicap System

Stewarding is a fundamental and essential part of VAL Handicapping as it focuses on the integrity of the process. The Stewards comprise the Handicappers and Acting Stewards at the Carnival, one of whose tasks are to assess each performance.

In order for a performance to receive an AP or SP, the Stewards need to be satisfied with the effort provided and that the performance is consistent with the athlete's capabilities.

Factors the Stewards will consider in judging a performance include:

- Satisfactory effort throughout a performance. It is a requirement to always run to win, or achieve the best possible outcome, in each performance. This includes heat and semis.
- A sensible racing strategy. For example, if competing in a distance event how the athlete has paced themselves throughout a performance will be considered by the Stewards.
- Has the performance been hindered by lack of fitness, sickness, injury or participation in prior events or rounds. If an athlete, prior to competing, feels their performance could be hindered in some way, but wishes to compete, they are advised to discuss this with the Stewards beforehand. If the Stewards permit the athlete to run, this does not preclude or change the athlete's requirements as set out above, to achieve an AP or SP. (ie normal criteria applies).
- What reporting a potential hindering of performance prior to competing may alleviate, is further Stewarding action.
- Has there been interference in running that has sufficiently hindered an athlete and impacted on their capacity to run a satisfactory time.

If the Stewards have concerns over these or any other matters, they will address that with the athlete. Please note athletes have a right to be represented when being addressed by the Stewards and it is compulsory that all athletes under 18 years of age are represented.

Please refer to the VAL Rules & Regulations, available on the VAL website or from the office, for more detail on Stewarding procedures and the potential sanctions and penalties that can apply if charged with an offence.

The allocation of Handicap Lifts

The Handicap Calculations Table (Schedule 1) sets out the number of AP's or SP's required before an athlete is entitled to a lift in their handicap for the particular event. Once the athlete has achieved the required number of AP's or SP's the Handicappers will give them a lift in handicap from within the relevant Lift Range for that distance (again, as set out in Schedule 1).

Any lift in handicap that an athlete receives, will take effect from the next Carnival where handicaps have not yet been declared.

It is important to remember the following when considering whether an athlete has met the requirements for a lift in handicap:

- If an athlete gets an NAP it does not count towards the number of AP's they need to be entitled to a lift in handicap. However, importantly, getting an NAP does not cancel any AP's an athlete has received at previous Carnivals for the particular event.
- If an athlete receives a UP, it automatically cancels out any APs or SPs that they have previously recorded over that distance or a similar distance.
- An athlete's placing in an event can alter whether they are entitled to a mandatory lift or discretionary lift.
- All finalists in Group 1 or Classic races will not receive an AP or SP for that event on that particular day.
- All placegetters in Group 2 and 3 races will not automatically receive an AP or SP for that event on that particular day. The Handicappers do have the discretion to award an AP or SP to placegetters in these events, if they believe the quality of the field is below the average for that event and the athlete's performance would not have achieved a place in a field of normal or better quality.
- For the avoidance of doubt, ~~race winners are not entitled to a lift in handicap~~ the top three placegetters in a race are not entitled to a lift in handicap, unless otherwise specified by the VAL Board as a special race incentive under VAL Regulation 1.7.
- Penalties for race wins are determined in accordance with the Handicap Regulations below and listed in Schedule 3.

Handicap Ceiling (CP) or Maximum Handicap

An athlete cannot be lifted beyond their ceiling point calculation for that event. The Ceiling point is determined by dividing the athlete's best RPMs (refer to Calculation of Notional Starting Handicap for details on how this is obtained) into the ceiling time for the event. The ceiling times are available in Schedule 1.

If an athlete runs a performance during the season that reduces their ceiling point handicap, this performance will be used to recalculate their ceiling point handicap for the remainder of the season.

All performances external to the VAL are also included in this provision. Track and wind adjustments apply.

Importantly, the CP is just that, the maximum potential handicap. It should not be considered an entitlement. Each athlete must demonstrate, through regular, consistent performances, that they require the additional lifts in handicap that will get them closer to their CP in a particular event.

In cases where an athlete has reached their handicap CP and if in the opinion of the Handicapper, based on current and recent form over this and all other distances, the athlete has clearly shown the ceiling point is no longer reflective of their capabilities, the Handicapper can seek the approval of the HRP to reassess the average RPM of the athlete (and therefore their CP) by taking into consideration the age of any performances in the athlete's sample of past performances. If approved this would allow the Handicapper to increase the athlete's CP.

The allowance is applied on a discretionary basis and acknowledges:

- The length of time since an athlete has performed at his/her best; and
- The athlete's eligibility for veteran status.

In addition, the Handicappers are not required to lift the handicap of an athlete who bettered the ceiling time (or came extremely close) in the prior season from a handicap that is the same, or less, than their current handicap.

Athletes who break the Ceiling time during the Season

The Handicap Calculations table (Schedule 1) sets out the ceiling time for each event. If an athlete's time (adjusted time for the sprint events) in any round or final, is under the ceiling time, their handicap will be adjusted to a handicap that takes them back to the ceiling at the next carnival they compete in over that distance based on their **average** RPM recorded in the performance that broke the ceiling time. ~~plus the next best time in that event over the last five years.~~

- All performances external to the VAL are also included in this provision.
- Track and wind adjustments apply.

Upon completion of a meeting and on advice of the chief steward the HRP believe the track to be exceptionally fast, for the purpose of handicap calculations, the HRP can declare that an allowance is added to the recorded times. Factors that will be considered are the conditions of the track, weather and the times recorded by all participants

Any such allowance will be stated in the Stewards report and will apply to the current season for ceiling calculations and for the determination of future ratings and calculations of start and ceiling handicaps for future seasons.

Winning Penalties

Once an athlete has won a race they will incur a penalty in accordance with the Penalty Table (refer schedule 3 for the Penalty Table). This is to give the VAL Handicappers the best possible opportunity to make every athlete competitive and with the opportunity to pick up a win.

The VAL Board can determine that certain events will not attract a penalty. This will be advised to the athletes, prior to the commencement of the event.

For every event, the Penalty Table provides the VAL Handicappers with a range of penalties they can impose based on the event category and prizemoney on offer.

The Penalty table includes both a minimum penalty and an additional discretionary penalty that is available to the Handicappers. It should be noted that the Discretionary penalty will be used to take into account considerations such as the actual prizemoney, winning time and margin and the performance and improvement shown by the athlete.

Race winners who break the Ceiling Time in winning an event will have their handicap readjusted to the ceiling time prior to the deduction of the winning penalty.

Women and Masters athletes who win an Open race will be penalised in both the women and Masters categories over the equivalent distance.

Wins in any of Masters, Women's or Combined Women's & Masters events will attract penalties in all these categories over the equivalent distance.

Wins in the Women's, Masters or Women's & Masters events will not attract an automatic penalty in the equivalent Open events. If the athlete's RPM takes them under the ceiling in the Open event off their Open handicap however, their Open mark will be adjusted back to the ceiling.

Winners of Classic and Group 1 events can be penalized over other distances at the discretion of the VAL Handicappers. Similarly, athletes who win over the same distance more than once during a season ~~will~~ may incur an additional penalty.

Athletes who win 2 or more professional running races within a season (this can be over multiple distances or categories) will have their handicaps reassessed over all categories and all distances (refer page 7). The Handicapper will consider if the athlete's form has improved sufficiently to warrant a handicap reduction in other events and categories including those the athlete has recorded victories in. Any adjustments under this regulation are at the handicapper's discretion and require the approval of the HRP. This regulation does not override other penalty regulations and it should be noted wins in open events automatically attract penalties across all categories.

Athletes who win junior events can have their handicaps reviewed and adjusted in junior events over other distances, at the discretion of the Handicapper.

Winners of Classic and Group 1 events can be penalized within a Carnival for an event that is yet to commence (ie. heats for the event haven't started), in accordance with the Regulations provided herein and the Penalty Table.

Interstate wins by Victorians or Interstate athletes will also be penalised in accordance with the Penalty table and the Handicap Regulations.

Discretionary Lift for Classic Races & Stawell Carnival

The VAL Handicappers with the approval of the HRP, can provide a discretionary lift of up to 2 –4 minimum graduations to athletes for Classic races and all Stawell events that are not a part of the athlete's normal handicap. The purpose of this discretionary lift is to reward athletes who have recorded wins in lower graded events over the same distance earlier in the season and received a handicap penalty as a result of those wins, and to provide more competitive racing in our major events and at Stawell.

It can also be applied to new and interstate athletes with a strong racing history in other competitions, such as state & national level amateur athletes whose handicap is behind novice, in order to place them above the starting time in Classic races and for Stawell events, without the discretionary lift being a part of their normal handicap.

Athletes who have won a Classic or Group 1 event in the event category and distance or similar distance, over the last 2 seasons, are not eligible for this discretionary lift.

All discretionary lifts in this category, require the approval of the HRP.

In all cases, after the discretionary lift, the athlete's handicap must remain on or inside their ceiling handicap for that distance.

This discretionary lift is not a part of an athlete's allocated finishing handicap and will not be carried forward into the start mark for the following season.

Bonus Lift Incentives for Stawell

Open/Men's and Women's Gifts

The table below contains the lifts that will be applied to each event winner's handicap for the Stawell Men's and Women's Gifts. The VAL Board may alter this lift schedule in the event of changes to the season calendar.

Meeting	Date	Men's Lift	Women's Lift	
Essendon	12/11/2022	N/A	N/A	November – December = 0.75m
Docklands	19/11/2022	0.75 m	0.75 m	
Warrnambool	3/12/2022	0.75 m	0.75 m	
Terang	4/12/2022	0.75 m	0.75 m	
Waverly	11/12/2022	0.75 m	0.75 m	
Geelong	17/12/2022	0.75 m	0.75 m	
Maryborough	1/01/2023	N/A*	N/A*	Classic/Group 1
St Albans	7/01/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	January – February = 0.5m
Rye	14/01/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	
Frankston	21/01/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	
Wangaratta	28/01/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	
Beachside	4/02/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	
Ballarat	11-12/02/2023	N/A*	N/A*	Classic/Group 1
Keilor	18/02/2023	N/A*	N/A*	Classic/Group 1
Castlemaine	26/02/2023	0.5 m	0.5 m	Jan – Feb = 0.5m
Maribyrnong	5/03/2023	0.25 m	0.25 m	March = 0.25m
Bendigo	11-12/03/2023	0.25 m	0.25 m	
Euroa	18/03/2023	0.25 m	0.25 m	
Shepparton	19/03/2023	0.25 m	0.25 m	
Ringwood	25/03/2023	No lift (non-penalty) winner keeps mark.	No lift (non-penalty) winner keeps mark.)	

*Winners will not be eligible for a Stawell Lift in Classic or Group 1 races, they will keep their winning mark for Stawell, except in the instance of a Classic or Group 1 Women's Gift race where the prize money is not equal to the Open/Men's Gift prize pool at the same Meeting, women will be eligible for a Stawell Lift.

Eligibility criteria for receiving lifts

1. To be eligible for a lift, male and female athletes must have competed at least once in a VAL competition over the 100/120m distance in the Men's, Women's or Open categories in the 2020/21 or 2021/22 seasons, or have a handicap that is less than the novice handicap.
2. To be eligible for a lift, an athlete must not break ceiling time in winning their event.
3. If an athlete wins a second event over the 100/120m distance, they will become ineligible for their lift.
4. The lift will be added to the athlete's winning handicap for Stawell Gift races only. Standard penalties will apply for all other events.
5. In receiving this lift, athletes may not be handicapped to a mark that places them beyond their ceiling handicap; however, they may receive a portion of the allocated lift so that they are handicapped to that ceiling mark. More information on ceiling times can be found within the Handicap Regulations.
6. An athlete may not receive a handicap that is more than 2 metres from their season start mark.
7. Athletes that are allocated a UP (Unacceptable Performance) during the season will not automatically qualify for a lift in the Stawell Gift. Any lift applied will be at the discretion of the VAL stewards.
8. A win in an Open 100/120m race by a female athlete excludes that athlete from receiving any lift in the Stawell Women's Gift.
9. In the event that the Stawell Men's or Women's Gifts are not conducted, lifts will not be carried forward to future seasons.

Open and Women's Distance Events

Instead of receiving a lift for winning an event during the season, athletes who win events in the following Open or Women's Distance events become eligible to retain that winning handicap at Stawell in the same event:

- Open 550 m
- Open 800 m
- Women's 800 m
- Open 1600 m
- Open 3200 m

The following criteria applies:

1. To be eligible for retaining a winning handicap, male and female athletes must have competed at least once in a VAL competition over that distance in the Men's, Women's or Open categories in the 2020/21 or 2021/22 seasons, or have a handicap that is less than the novice handicap.
2. To be eligible for retaining a winning handicap, an athlete must not break ceiling time in winning their event.
3. If an athlete wins a second event over that distance, they may still be eligible to receive their winning handicap at Stawell at the discretion of the handicapper and Handicap Review Panel.
4. In retaining their winning handicap, athletes may not be handicapped at Stawell to a mark that places them beyond their ceiling handicap. More information on ceiling times can be found within the Handicap Regulations.
5. Athletes that are allocated a UP (Unacceptable Performance) during the season will not automatically qualify to retain their winning handicap at Stawell. Any decision will be at the discretion of the VAL stewards.

~~At the start of each season the VAL Board will clarify a bonus system to be applied to the Men's and Women's Gifts at Stawell. This will apply to all 100m and 120 metre races during the season that are won by an athlete.~~

~~This athlete will be guaranteed the mark they won off plus a nominated amount i.e. one metre for races won in December, three quarters of a metre for races won in January, half a metre for races won in February, and a quarter of a metre for races won March.~~

The VAL board has the power to declare a race not part of the bonus or vary the bonus amount prior to start of season, ~~or in the event of changes to the season calendar.~~

~~Note: should an athlete break ceiling time in winning the race (or in the heat or semi-final) the bonus will not apply.~~

~~Bonus lifts will not apply for distance races; instead winners will retain their initial 'winning' handicap for the season for the corresponding Stawell event, providing it does not exceed ceiling time. After two wins an athlete may retain their mark for Stawell at the discretion of the HRP and relevant Handicapper provided the athlete remains within ceiling time.~~

~~Note: this applies to 550m, 800m (Open & Womens), 1600m, 3200m.~~

Amateur Performances

The VAL Handicappers will take into account an athlete's amateur performance in determining the athlete's handicap for a particular event.

If an athlete achieves a personal best performance in amateur competition, it will have an impact on their handicap in that event (or similar event) if it improves their RPM after allowing for artificial tracks and conditions. If the performance does change the athlete's RPM, the CP is re-adjusted and if the athlete's handicap now exceeds the CP, their handicap will be readjusted back to the new CP.

Adjustment to race distances when events are readjusted to scratch

When handicaps for the entire field are adjusted either forward or back due to the inclusion of a Backmarker who would otherwise be handicapped behind scratch, or as a result of the field being pulled back to scratch, the handicap adjustments will be proportional to the net distance normally covered from each handicap. This is in order to allow for the different RPMs of athletes from different handicaps and to maintain the equity of the handicapped race with the change in distance.

For example if an 800 Frontmarker event is handicapped to scratch and the Backmarker normally has a handicap of 70, the distance each athlete runs will be adjusted by 9.59% ($70/730$). The adjustments to handicap ranges would then be calculated by adding 9.59% to the distance covered from each handicap. As a result an athlete with a normal handicap of 120 would come back 66 metres to an adjusted handicap of 54, in order to run 746 metres ($680 * 1.0959$).

HANDICAPPING OF SPECIFIC EVENTS / CATEGORIES

Regular Events

A Regular event is an event that is conducted on 8 or more occasions within the current VAL season for a specific category. Separate event categories are Open, **Men's**, Women's and Masters.

The Handicapping of all Regular events is done in accordance with the VAL Handicapping Regulations. Please refer to the section "Adjustment to Handicaps during the Season".

Please find below the handicapping process followed for specific events and categories.

Novice and Restricted events

The handicaps for Novice and restricted events are determined on a discretionary basis by the Handicapper throughout the season. The allocated handicap is to take into account the previous performances of the athlete over the distance and other similar distances in all categories, including Open, Novice and Junior.

If the athlete does not have a previous performance over the distance or similar distance, the novice handicap will be allocated for that event and athlete category.

The allocated handicap cannot exceed a handicap that places the athlete under the starting time for that distance based on their best performance both within and external to the VAL. The handicapper will take into account the potential for rapid improvement of new and developing athletes in determining the allocated handicaps. As a result, handicaps in Novice events can be reduced from the last allocated handicap based on the above circumstances.

Whilst the allocated handicap can exceed or be less than the athlete's Open handicap for the distance, handicap movement from each performance over the distance cannot exceed the amount provided in the Handicap Calculations Table (Schedule 1) for that distance.

Handicap movement in Novice events will be more gradual than in Junior events and will be more closely aligned with the athletes Open Handicap over the distance.

Junior events

The Handicaps for Junior and Age group events are determined on a discretionary basis by the Handicapper throughout the season. The allocated handicap is to take into account the previous performances of the athlete over the distance and other similar distances in all categories, including Open, Novice and Junior.

The allocated handicap will be based on a net time for the distance to be determined by the handicapper, based on their best performance both within and external to the VAL. The handicapper will take into account the potential for rapid improvement of new and developing athletes in determining the allocated handicaps. As a result handicaps in Junior events can be reduced from the last allocated handicap based on the above circumstances.

If the athlete does not have a previous performance over the distance or similar distance, the Handicapper will determine an appropriate starting handicap based on the athlete's age and gender.

If an athlete runs faster than the net time for the distance in any category or external to the VAL, allowing for their handicap, their next allocated handicap for that event will be reduced back to the net time.

Handicap movement in Junior events will often be quicker than in Novice and Open events, depending on the athlete performances, with the aim being to quickly move the athlete to a competitive handicap.

U14 races will be handicapped on completely discretionary basis, based on the above.

U18 races will be handicapped in a similar manner to Open age races, however, the Handicapper will have greater discretion for Junior races as per the above. Minimum penalties and a set Starting Time will apply for U18 races, the Starting Time and relevant penalties can be found in Schedules 1 and 3 of this document.

Combined Womens & Masters Sprint & 300m events

***This category will be removed from October 2023**

The Combined Women's & Masters events are treated as Masters events for the purposes of calculating handicaps.

All Masters and Women competing the Combined 300m events will be allocated handicaps in the Masters 300 event which is classified as a regular event and handicapped in accordance with the Regulations and starting times.

In the Women & Masters 100/120 events the non-veteran women will not be allocated a handicap in this event. Throughout the season the handicap of non-veteran women in the combined 100/120 events, will be determined directly from their Women's 120 handicap by means of adding an adjustment to allow for the faster start time of the Masters 120.

Masters competing in the combined 100/120 events will be eligible for an AP/SP for their Masters 120 handicap, and women will be eligible for an AP/SP for their womens 120 handicap. Penalties for wins in the combined events will apply to both Masters and womens 120 events.

~~The different treatment of women in the combined 300s, as opposed to the combined 100/120 events, is due to the lack of 300 Womens only events on the VAL calendar.~~

Womens 200m

The Womens 200 distance is a stand-alone event and is handicapped on a discretionary basis. However, given it is conducted so infrequently the handicaps are predominantly calculated from the current Womens 120 handicaps at the time. Previous performances, personal bests and victories over 200 are also taken into consideration by the Handicapper.

No start marks will be determined with all handicaps done based on entries at the time. Penalties for previous wins over 200m will apply. The event is non-penalty for all other distances.

Open 200m

The Open 200 distance is to be treated by the Handicapper as a stand-alone event and handicapped separately from the 120. The 120 handicaps will be used as a guide for the Handicapper but are not the single determining factor, recognizing that the capacity of athletes to run 200 varies from that of the 120.

The initial handicap allocation for an athlete entering the 200 for the first time will not exceed the lesser of 1.6 times their gift mark, or a handicap allocated based on the start time and the athlete's best RPM over all sprint distances up to 200 both within and external to the VAL.

Prior to the commencement of the season, start marks will be determined for those athletes that have competed over the distance the previous season. They will be the lesser of the last allocated handicap or the handicap that the Handicapper, in conjunction with the HRP, has determined is required to run the start time (refer schedule 1). If an athlete has not competed over the distance the previous season, their starting handicap will be determined on entering a 200 event, on the same basis as above.

In determining the starting handicap, the Handicapper will consider the athlete's performances over the 200 as well as over other sprint distances up to 400. If the athlete has competed on 5 or more occasions over the last 5 years over 200 in the VAL, their best 200 RPM over the last 5 years (3 years for veteran athletes) will be used to determine the starting handicap. If the athlete has competed on less than 5 occasions over 200 in the VAL, their best RPM over all sprint distances in the last 5 years will be used to determine their 200 start mark.

The Masters allowance and age performance allowance can be applied by the Handicapper if deemed required, in accordance with the Handicap Regulations.

External performances and personal bests over 100 and 200 events will also be used to determine the starting handicap. Track allowances apply. If an athlete has performed well over 400, the Handicapper can use their discretion to take this into consideration in the calculation of the 200 start mark.

Throughout the season as the athlete competes over the 200 events in the VAL, provided they receive a Satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper, they can be lifted out to a maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records a personal best RPM over distances from 100 - 200 either within or external to the VAL that takes potentially them under the 200 ceiling, their 200 handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling.

Penalties for wins over the 200 distance will apply however penalties for wins over other sprint distances won't automatically apply, unless the performance and RPM is judged by the Handicapper to take the athlete under the ceiling time. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the 200 for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances between 70 and 400.

The 200 event is non penalty for other distances, with the possible exception of the Stawell 200, which can attract a discretionary penalty for other similar distances as a Group 1 event. This will depend on RPM calculations in relation to the other handicap in question.

Women's 300m

The Women's 300m distance is a stand-alone event and is handicapped on a discretionary basis. Given it is conducted so infrequently the handicaps are predominantly drawn from the current Women's ~~400m & Veteran 300~~ handicaps at the time. If an athlete entering the Women's 300, does not have a current Women's ~~400m & Veterans 300~~, her Women's 300 handicap will be derived from her PBs, performances and handicaps over other events.

No start marks will be determined with all handicaps done based on entries at the time. Penalties for previous wins over 300m in all categories will apply. A win in the Women's 300m ~~by a Masters athlete~~ attracts a penalty ~~for the in Masters 300m events and Women & Masters 300m~~ in accordance with the Penalty Table, [Schedule 3](#). It is non-penalty for all other distances.

Open 300m

The Open 300 distance is to be treated by the Handicapper as a stand-alone event and handicapped separately from other distances. The 400 handicaps will be used as a guide for the Handicapper but are not the single determining factor recognizing that the capacity of athletes to run 300 varies for sprinters as opposed to 400 athletes.

If an athlete entering an Open 300 for the first time, has a history in the Open 400, their initial handicap will not exceed three quarters of their current 400 handicap minus 5. Hence an athlete with a 400 handicap of 20, would have an initial 300 handicap of 10. The novice 300 handicap is 10.

If an athlete entering an Open 300, has a current 300 Masters or Womens & Masters handicap, this can also be used to allocate a current 300 Open handicap, allowing for the difference in starting times between the two categories.

If an athlete entering the 300 for the first time, has a 120 handicap behind the novice mark of 6, the Handicapper will use their discretion to place the athlete on a 300 handicap behind the novice mark of 10.

Prior to the commencement of the season, start marks will be determined for those athletes that have competed over the distance the previous season. They will be the lesser of the last allocated handicap or the handicap that the Handicapper, in conjunction with the HRP, has determined is required to run the start time (refer schedule 1). If an athlete has not competed over the distance the previous season, their starting handicap will be determined on entering a 300 event, on the same basis as above. In determining the starting handicap, the Handicapper will consider the athlete's performances over the 300 as well as over other sprint distances up to 400.

The Masters allowance and age performance allowance can be applied by the Handicapper if deemed required, in accordance with the handicap Regulations.

External performances and personal bests over 100 up to 400 will also be used to determine the starting handicap. Track allowances apply.

Throughout the season as the athlete competes over the 300 events in the VAL, provided they receive a Satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper, they can be lifted out to a maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records a personal best RPM over distances from 100 to 400 either within or external to the VAL then if the Handicapper believes this improvement would take the athlete under the ceiling time in the 300, the Handicapper has the discretion to adjust the athlete's 300 handicap back to the ceiling time.

Penalties for wins over the 300 Open distance will apply however penalties for wins over other distances and categories won't automatically apply, unless the performance and RPM is judged by the Handicapper to take the athlete under the ceiling time. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the 300 for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances between 70 and 400.

The 300 event is non-penalty for other Open distances, however if it is a Classic or Group 1 event, it can attract a penalty for similar Open distances at the Handicapper's discretion. Wins in the Open 300 will attract a penalty in the Womens and Masters 300 events.

Open 550m

The Open 550 distance is to be treated by the Handicapper as a stand-alone event and handicapped separately from other similar distances. The 400 handicaps will be used as a guide for the Handicapper but are not the single determining factor recognizing that the capacity of middle distance athletes who compete over the 800 distance, to better handle the 550 distance than sprinters and 400 metre athletes.

The initial handicap allocation for an athlete entering the 550 for the first time will not exceed the lesser of 1.25 times their 400 handicap, or a handicap allocated based on the start time and the athlete's best RPM over the 400 or 800 distances both within and external to the VAL, converted to the 550 distance. The conversion factors are an addition of 7% to the 400 RPM, or a reduction of 7.5% to the 800 RPM.

Prior to the commencement of the season, start marks will be determined for those athletes that have competed over the distance the previous season. They will be the lesser of the last allocated handicap or the handicap that the Handicapper, in conjunction with the HRP, has determined is required to run the start time (refer schedule 1). The athlete's performance over 400 and 800 will be considered utilising the conversion formula outlined above. If an athlete has not competed over the distance the previous season, their starting handicap will be determined on entering a 550 event, on the same basis as above.

The Masters allowance and age performance allowance can be applied by the Handicapper if deemed required, in accordance with the Handicap Regulations.

External performances and personal bests over 400 and 800 events will also be used to determine the starting handicap. Track allowances apply.

Throughout the season as the athlete competes over the 550 events in the VAL, provided they receive a Satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper, they can be lifted out to a maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer, schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records a personal best RPM over the 400 or 800 either within or external to the VAL that, utilizing the conversion formula outlined above, takes them under the ceiling, their handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling.

Penalties for wins over the distance will apply to the athlete's 550 handicap, however penalties for wins over the 400 and 800 distances won't automatically apply, unless the performance and converted RPM takes the athlete under the ceiling time. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the 550 for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances between 400 and 800.

The 550 event is non-penalty for other distances, however if it is a Classic or Group 1 event, it can attract a penalty for Similar distances such as the 400 and 800, at the Handicapper's discretion.

Women's 800m

The Women's 800m distance is a stand-alone event and is handicapped on a discretionary basis.

No start marks will be determined at the commencement of the season, with all handicaps done based on entries for the particular carnival.

For an athlete's first entry for the season in the Women's 800, they will receive a maximum handicap based on the starting time of 2.10. This will be based on the athlete's PBs and prior history over 800 in all categories within the VAL, including Open 800s and external to the VAL, i.e. interstate and amateur performances. The Handicapper at their discretion can apply Age of performance and Masters allowance in accordance with the Handicap Regulations. Track allowances also apply in the case of performances on artificial tracks.

For an athlete's first entry in the Women's 800 for the season, if they have broken 2.10 in prior seasons, they will have their handicap reduced back to 2.10.

Once an athlete has competed over the Women's 800, if they receive a satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper they can be lifted within the season to maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer, schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records a personal best RPM over the 800 either within (including other event categories) or external to the VAL that takes them under the ceiling, their handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling.

Penalties for wins over the 800 distance in all categories will apply to the athlete's Women's 800 handicap. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the Women's 800 handicap for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances between 400 and 1600.

Wins in either the Women's 800 or the Women's & Masters 800 attracts a penalty in both categories, but is non-penalty for Open events and other distances in the Women's and Women's & Masters category.

If it is a Classic or Group 1 event, it can attract a penalty for other categories or similar distances such as the 400 and 1600, at the Handicapper's discretion. Also if performances reflect an RPM that breaks the athlete's ceiling in other categories, their handicaps in those categories will be adjusted in accordance with the regulations.

Womens & Veterans 800 **This category will be removed from October 2023*

The Womens & Veterans 800 distance is a stand-alone event and is handicapped on a discretionary basis. All athletes competing in this event are classified as OGA.

Given it is conducted so infrequently no start marks will be determined at the commencement of the season, with all handicaps done based on entries for the particular carnival.

For an athlete's first entry for the season in the Womens & Veterans 800, they will receive a maximum handicap based on the starting time of 2.00. This will be based on the athlete's PBs and prior history over 800 in all categories within the VAL, including Open 800s and Womens 800, and external to the VAL, ie interstate and amateur performances. The Handicapper at their discretion can apply Age of performance and veterans allowance in accordance with the Handicap Regulations. Track allowances also apply in the case of performances on artificial tracks.

Whilst performances will be drawn from athlete's history in the Open 800, as the Womens & Veterans 800 is a discretionary event handicapped to a start time, handicaps will not necessarily be reflective of an athlete's handicap in the Open 800.

Once an athlete has competed over the Womens & Veterans 800, if they receive a satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper they can be lifted within the season to maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer, schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records an RPM over the 800 either within (including other event categories such as the Open 800) or external to the VAL that takes them under the ceiling, their handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling.

Penalties for wins over the 800 distance in all categories will apply to the Womens & Veterans 800 handicap. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the Womens & Veterans 800 handicap for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances between 400 and 1600.

Wins in either the Womens 800 or the Womens & Veterans 800 attracts a penalty in both categories, but is non-penalty for Open events and other distances in the Womens and Womens & Veterans category. If it is a Classic or Group 1 event, it can attract a penalty for other categories or similar distances such as the 400 and 1600, at the Handicapper's discretion. Also if performances reflect an RPM that breaks the athlete's ceiling in other categories, their handicaps in those categories will be adjusted in accordance with the regulations.

Womens & Masters 1600m ****This category will be removed from October 2023***

The Womens & Masters 1600 distance is a stand-alone event and is handicapped on a discretionary basis.

The initial handicap allocation for an athlete entering this event for the first time will be based on the athlete's history in other events, such as the Open 1600. If the athlete has a current handicap in the Open 1600, their initial 1600 Womens & Masters handicap will be the maximum of their Open 1600 minus 90 metres, or a handicap that places them on the start time of 4.25, based on their best performance. (Age of performance and Masters allowance applies at the discretion of the handicapper). New athletes will be placed on the maximum of the relevant novice mark for their category (refer Schedule 2). If the new athlete's recent personal best reflect they should be behind the novice mark, they will be handicapped to the start time of 4.25. Interstate athletes with history in other AAC affiliated bodies, entering the 1600 Womens & Masters for the first time will be handicapped in the same manner as a VAL athlete entering the event for the first time.

Prior to the commencement of the season, start marks will be determined for those athletes that have competed over the distance the previous season. They will be the lesser of the last allocated handicap or the handicap that the Handicapper, in conjunction with the HRP, has determined is required to run the start time (refer, schedule 1). The athlete's performances in the Open 1600 will be taken in account in assessing the starting handicap. If an athlete has not competed over the distance the previous season, their starting handicap will be determined on entering a 1600 Womens & Masters event, on the same basis as above.

The MAsters allowance and age performance allowance can be applied by the Handicapper if deemed required, in accordance with the Handicap Regulations.

External performances and personal bests over distances from 800 upwards will also be used to determine the starting handicap. Track allowances apply.

Throughout the season as the athlete competes over the 1600 Womens & Masters events in the VAL, provided they receive a Satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper, they can be lifted out to a maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer, schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records an RPM over the 1500/1600 either within or external to the VAL that potentially takes them under the ceiling, their handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling at the Handicapper's discretion.

Penalties for wins in both the Open 1600s and Womens & Masters 1600 will apply to the athlete's Womens & Masters 1600 handicap. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to this event for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over distances from 800 to 3200.

Penalties for wins in the Womens & Masters 1600 won't automatically apply to the Open 1600 handicaps, however if an athlete records an average RPM that takes their Open 1600 handicap under the ceiling, their handicap in this event will be adjusted back to the ceiling.

Open 3200m

The Open 3200 distance is to be treated by the Handicapper as a stand-alone event and handicapped separately from other similar distances. The 1600 handicaps will be used as a guide for the Handicapper

but are not the single determining factor recognizing that the capacity an athlete to compete over 3200, differs from that of the 1600.

The 3200 is handicapped on a discretionary basis.

Where an athlete is yet to compete regularly over the 3000/3200 distance, their 1500/1600 form will be used to allocate an appropriate 3200 handicap. Performances over 5000 and longer will also be considered in assessing an athlete entering the 3200 for the first time.

The initial handicap allocation for an athlete entering the 3200 for the first time will not exceed the novice 3200 handicap of 150 or a calculation based on the athlete's 1600 mark of two times their 1600 handicap, less 80. For example if an athlete entering the 3200 for the first time, has an open 1600 mark of between 100 and 115, the Handicapper will, subject to external form over distances from 3000 upwards, allocate a maximum 3200 mark of 150. Again by way of example if an athlete entering the 3200 for the first time has an open 1600 mark of 130, the handicapper can place the athlete on a maximum mark in the 3200 of 180 $((130*2)-80)$.

Athletes entering the 3200 for the first time with 1600 handicaps behind the novice mark of 100, the maximum initial 3200 they can receive is two times their 1600 handicap, less 80. This is due to the fact that in the 1600 they are handicapped as "better than novice" athletes.

Athletes entering the 3200 for the first time with external times over 1500 or longer that, based on the starting time of 9.10, takes them under the Novice handicap of 150, they will be allocated a starting handicap less than 150 that reflects their external performances and personal bests. Track allowances apply.

The Masters allowance and age performance allowance can be applied by the Handicapper if deemed required, in accordance with the Handicap Regulations.

External performances and personal bests over distances from 1500 upwards will also be used to determine the starting handicap. Track allowances apply.

Throughout the season as the athlete competes over the 3200 events in the VAL, provided they receive a Satisfactory Performance, at the discretion of the Handicapper, they can be lifted out to a maximum handicap based on the ceiling time (refer, schedule 1). Throughout the season if the athlete records a personal best RPM over the 1500 upwards either within or external to the VAL that potentially takes them under the ceiling, their handicap will be adjusted to the ceiling at the Handicapper's discretion.

Penalties for wins over the distance will apply however penalties for wins over other distances won't automatically apply, unless the performance and converted RPM takes the athlete under the ceiling time. The Handicapper can also apply a penalty to the 3200 for wins in Classic and Group 1 events within or external to the VAL over the 1600 distance.

Handicap Limits

Subject to VAL Regulations 2.34 and 2.35, the following maximum handicap limits apply to events conducted by Clubs at meetings held under the VAL Rules & Regulations:

GIFTS

DISTANCE	Classic	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
	\$10,001+	\$7,501-\$10,000	\$3,001 - \$7,500	\$1500 - \$3,000
70m	7m	8m	10m	16m
100m	10m	12m	15m	20m
120m	12m	14m	18m	24m
200m	20m	24m	30m	30m
300m	30m	36m	45m	60m
400m	40m	48m	60m	80m
550m	55m	66m	82m	110m
800m	80m	96m	120m	160m

OPEN, WOMEN, *JUNIOR & **RESTRICTED

DISTANCE	Classic	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Restricted & U14-U18
	\$4,001 +	\$2001 - \$4000	\$1001- \$2000	\$600 - \$1000	\$0 +
70m	7m	14m	14m	16m	20m
100m	10m	15m	20m	25m	No Limit
120m	12m	18m	24m	30m	No Limit
200m	20m	30m	30m	30m	60m
300m	30m	45m	60m	75m	90m
400m	40m	60m	80m	100m	No Limit
550m	55m	82m	110m	140m	140m
800m	80m	120m	160m	200m	200m
1500m	150m	225m	300m	400m	400m
1600m	160m	240m	320m	400m	No Limit
3200m	320m	400m	600m	600m	600m

MASTERS, WOMENS/MASTERS

DISTANCE	Classic	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
	\$2,001+	\$1000 - \$2000	\$800 - \$999	\$600 - \$799
100m	30m	30m	30m	30m
120m	36m	36m	36m	36m
300m	90m	90m	90m	90m
800m	240m	240m	240m	240m
1600m	400m	400m	400m	400m

*Junior races – No prize money for U14 and min. \$300 for all other junior races with discretionary handicapping

**Restricted – minimum prize money is \$300 and discretionary handicapping.

Notes: (1) Combined races involve any combination of two or more specific race categories, including Masters, Women's and Restricted, provided they are not otherwise covered in the table.

ALTERATIONS TO DECLARED HANDICAPS

No handicap can be altered after declaration unless:

- a) An athlete wins another race over the same (or similar) distance after the declaration of handicaps for a subsequent Carnival;
- b) An athlete breaks the CT over the same (or similar) distance after the declaration of handicaps for a subsequent Carnival;
- c) An athlete wins a Classic or Group 1 event at a Carnival. In such cases, the athlete may at the sole discretion of the VAL Handicappers be subject to a handicap penalty applying to their handicap over the same or similar distance in an event at the same Carnival. Consistent with the VAL Rules and Regulations, no penalty will apply to the same or similar distance where the subsequent event has already commenced (ie the athlete has already competed in a heat or semi-final and qualified for a final);
- d) An athlete receives a handicap penalty under the VAL Rules as a result of a handicap review initiated by the VAL Stewards;
- e) It can be clearly established that the VAL Handicapper/s have not correctly applied the Handicapping Regulations in setting the handicap (this includes instances where an athlete successfully appeals their handicap);
- f) There has been a clear and proven handicapping or administrative error.

HANDICAP REVIEW & APPEALS PROCESS

If, after reading these Regulations, it is not clear to you how the handicap you have received has been calculated, there are a number of avenues open to you to either (a) check that it is correct or (b) request an amendment.

As a starting point, if you are a member of the Victorian Runners and Trainers Association (VRTA) you may wish to consult a representative for assistance in understanding your handicaps. Contact details can be found on the ~~VRTA website at www.vrta.org.au~~ VAL website at www.val.org.au/Membership/VRTA or by contacting the VAL office.

If you wish to have your handicap reviewed in a formal way, the VAL Rules contain a series of procedures that you should follow.

Once handicaps have been declared for a particular Carnival, you are able to lodge an application for review or an appeal against your handicap. The procedures for doing so are set out in detail in Section 14 of the VAL ~~Rules &~~ Regulations and are summarised below:

Handicap Review

1. To apply for a review of your handicap, you must complete the Handicap Review Application by contacting the VAL Office and submit it to the VAL office together with the \$50 non-refundable fee. When applying for a review, you must clearly state the basis of your request and why you believe your handicap is unjust (this includes providing any evidence).
2. The VAL office will refer your application to the relevant VAL Handicapper within two (2) business days of receipt.
3. The VAL Handicapper will review the application and all relevant circumstances and provide a brief written report to the VAL office within 7 days of receipt. This report must then be forwarded to you within a further 2 business days.
4. The review by the VAL Handicapper may or may not result in a change to your handicap. In either case, the Handicapper must provide reasons for their decision.

Note: in exceptional circumstances (particularly when time is critical), the VAL Board may decide that the formal written process not apply and the athlete be allowed to address the Handicapper by way of oral submission (not more than 15 minutes). In such cases, you may have a representative speak on your behalf, although they must not be a lawyer. In such cases, the Handicapper may provide their decision directly to you and then prepare a report to be sent to the VAL office within 48 hours.

Handicap Appeal

If you are considering asking for a review of your handicap, or appealing your handicap, it is important that you read the VAL Rules & Regulations in detail. The explanation below is designed as a summary only and does not in any way seek to amend, explain, confirm or alter the formal VAL Rules & Regulations (in their entirety).

1. If you are not happy with the outcome of the Handicap Review, then you have the right to lodge an appeal against your handicap. To do this you must submit the Handicap Appeal Application by contacting the VAL Office and submit it to the VAL office together with the \$200 fee (note: for the Open and Women's Stawell Gift the fee is \$500).
2. You must lodge your appeal application with the VAL office within 7 days of receiving the decision from your Handicap Review Application. If you lodge your appeal on a race day, you must lodge it with the VAL Stewards.
3. The VAL will forward the appeal to the Handicap Review panel for consideration.
4. Should this not be resolved to your satisfaction, the VAL will convene a hearing of the Handicap Appeal Panel (comprising independent panel members) within 7 days of receiving your appeal application (this can be later in exceptional circumstances).
5. The Chief Executive Officer of the VAL will convene a hearing of the Handicap Appeal Panel and may take into consideration your availability when setting the date, time and location of the hearing. The Chief Executive Officer of the VAL will advise you when the hearing is to be held and you must make reasonable efforts to make yourself available.
6. If you wish to present a submission of your arguments for the appeal in writing, you must lodge it with the VAL office at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.
7. The VAL Handicapper and the Handicap Review Panel may choose to make oral submissions to the Handicap Appeal Panel in response to your appeal application, in addition to relying on the content of the VAL Handicapper's report (ie from the handicap review).
8. You may also make oral representations to the Handicap Appeal Panel. You may also ask the Handicap Appeal Panel if a representative (who cannot be a lawyer) can make such oral submissions on your behalf. The Handicap Appeal Panel has discretion to allow (or not allow) you to have a representative to make submissions for you.
9. The Handicap Appeal Panel may either dismiss your appeal or they may uphold your appeal and in doing so re-handicap you taking into account the relevant matters presented in the appeal hearing.
10. If your handicap is adjusted, this adjusted handicap applies until you are subject to any other penalties under the VAL Rules or the next declaration of handicaps.
11. If your appeal is successful you will receive a refund of 100% of your application provided there are no expenses in meeting costs of the panel members. Any cost will be taken out of the application fee.

Schedule 1 – Handicap Calculations Table

NOTES:

1. All Under 14 races ~~Junior and Restricted events over all distances~~ are handicapped on a discretionary basis
2. Handicaps for all 100m events are determined from the 120m handicaps of the same category
3. All Non-Masters women are OGA in Women's & Masters ~~120m's and 300m's events~~
4. For those distances listed as N/A for established athletes, all athletes are "OGA"
5. Established Masters athletes may receive a lift after 2 satisfactory performances in open races (in the opinion of the handicapper and stewards), even if those performances fall outside the AP time range. Should the athlete fail to run within the time range, the handicapper has the discretion to reassess the handicap and lift required *following approval from the HRP.*

Schedule 1 – Handicap Calculations Table

EVENT	MINIMUM GRAD/N	ESTABLISHED ATHLETES		ONGOING ASSESSMENT ATHLETES				TARGET TIMES		TIME RANGE
				INTERSTATE ATHLETES		ALL OTHER OGA ATHLETES				
		NUMBER OF ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCES	LIFT RANGE	NUMBER OF SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCES	LIFT RANGE	NUMBER OF SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCES	LIFT RANGE	STARTING	CEILING	ACCEPTABLE DEVIATION
70 OPEN	0.25m	3	0.25m-0.50m	1	0.25m-0.75m	1	0.25m-2m	7.75	7.60	0.30
70 WOMENS	0.25m	3	0.25m - 0.50m	1	0.25m - 0.75m	1	0.25m -0.75m	8.50	8.35	0.30
120 U18 BOYS	0.25m	N/A	N/A	1	0.50m – 2.00m	1	0.50m – 2.00m	13.20	13.00	0.55
120 U18 GIRLS	0.25m	N/A	N/A	1	0.50m – 2.00m	1	0.50m – 2.00m	14.50	14.30	0.55
120 U18 MIXED	0.25m	N/A	N/A	1	0.50m – 2.00m	1	0.50m – 2.00m	13.20	13.00	0.55
120 OPEN	0.25m	3	0.25m-0.50m	1	0.25m-1.00m	1	0.25m-2m	12.45	12.25	0.55
120 WOMEN	0.25m	3	0.25m-0.50m	1	0.25m-1.00m	1	0.25m-2m	14.00	13.80	0.55
120 MASTERS & WOM&MAST.	0.25m	2 3	0.25m-0.75m	1	0.25m- 2.00m	1	0.25m-2m	13.20	13.0	N/A
200 OPEN	1m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 4m	1	0 – 8m	21.00	20.80	N/A
300 OPEN	1m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 6m	1	0 – 12m	34.50	33.50	N/A
300 MASTERS	1m	3	1m – 2m	1	0 – 6m	1	0 – 12m	36.00	35.00	2.00
300M WOMENS	1m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 6m	N/A	0 – 12m	40.00	38.5	N/A
400 OPEN/MENS	1m	2	1m – 2m	1	0 – 8m	1	0 – 8m	47.60	46.50	2.00
400 WOMEN	1m	2	1m – 2m	1	0 – 8m	1	0 – 8m	53.90	52.80	2.00
550 OPEN	1m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 10m	1	0 – 10m	70.00	69.00	N/A
800 / 1000 OPEN	2m	2	2m – 6m	1	0 – 20m	1	0 – 20m	1.52.0	1.50	5.00
800 WOMEN	2m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 30m	1	0 – 30m	2.10.0	2.08.0	N/A
800 MASTERS, W&M	2m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 30m	1	0 – 30m	2.00.0	1.58.0	N/A
1600 OPEN	5m	2	5m – 10m	1	0 – 40m	1	0 – 40m	4.07.0	4.03	11.00
1600 MASTERS, W&M	5m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 60m	1	0 – 60m	4.25	4.21	N/A
3200 OPEN	5m	N/A	N/A	1	0 – 80m	1	0 – 80m	9.10	9.00	N/A

Schedule 2 – Table of Novice Handicaps

DISTANCE/ CATEGORY	UNDER 35		OVER 35		START TIME
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
70m					
OPEN	4m	10.5m	6m	12.5m	7.75
WOMEN	NA	3m	NA	5m	8.9
120m					
OPEN	6m	17m	9m	20m	12.45
WOMEN'S	NA	6m	NA	9m	14.2
MASTERS	NA	NA	5m	17m	13.2
LEGENDS (45+)	NA	NA	10m	25m	13.2
WOMENS & MASTERS		14m	5m	17m	13.2
NOVICE/RESTRICTED	6m-NA-	17m -NA	9m-NA	20m -NA	12.65
200m					
OPEN	10m	26m	15m	30m	21.0
WOMEN	NA	10m	NA	15m	24.2
300m					
OPEN	10m	35m	18m	42m	34.5
WOMEN'S	NA	30m	NA	36m	36.0
MASTERS	NA	NA	10m	36m	36.0
WOMENS & MASTERS	NA	30m	10m	36m	36.0
400m					
OPEN	20m	54m	30m	62m	47.6
WOMEN'S	NA	20m	NA	30m	53.9
NOVICE/RESTRICTED	20m NA	54m NA	30m-NA	62m NA	50.00
550m					
OPEN	25m	75m	35m	85m	70
800m					
OPEN	40m	110m	60m	126m	1.52.0
WOMEN'S	NA	50m	NA	70m	2.10.0
MASTERS	NA	NA	30m	100m	2.00.0
WOMENS & MASTERS	NA	80m	30m	100m	2.00.0
1600m					
OPEN	100m	260m	150m	290m	4.07.0
MASTERS	NA	NA	50m	200m	4.25.0
WOMENS & MASTERS	NA	165m	50m	200m	4.25.0
NOVICE/RESTRICTED	100m-NA	260m NA	150m NA	290m NA	4.25.0
3200m					
OPEN	150m	400m	250m	400m	9.10.0

Note: All Novice Marks will be reviewed across the 22/23 season and updated prior to the 23/24 season.

Schedule 3 – Penalty Tables

Open, Men's & Women's Events

DISTANCE	TOTAL \$	MINIMUM PENALTY.	+ DISCRETION
70	UP TO \$600	0.25	0.50
	\$601 TO \$1000	0.50	0.50
	\$1001 TO \$3000	0.75	0.75
	\$3001 +	1.00	1.00
	STAWELL	1.50	1.50
100/120	UP TO \$600	0.25	0.75
	\$601 TO \$3000	0.50	0.75
	\$3001 TO \$5000	0.75	0.75
	\$5001 TO \$7500	1.00	1.00
	\$7501 TO \$10000	1.25	1.25
	\$10001 TO \$12500	1.50	1.50
	\$12501 TO \$15000	1.75	1.75
	\$15001 +	2.00	2.00
	STAWELL	2.00m	See Stawell Gift Finalist
200	UP TO \$2000	1.00	2.00
	\$2001 +	2.00	2.00
	STAWELL	4.00	4.00
300/400	UP TO \$600	1.00	2.00
	\$601 TO \$1000	2.00	2.00
	\$1001 TO \$1500	3.00	3.00
	\$1501 TO \$2000	4.00	4.00
	\$2001 TO \$3000	5.00	5.00
	\$3001 TO \$4000	6.00	6.00
	\$4001+	8.00	8.00
	STAWELL	8.00	8.00
550	UP TO \$600	2.00	3.00
	\$601 TO \$750	3.00	3.00
	\$851 TO \$1100	4.00	4.00
	\$1101 TO \$1500	5.00	6.00
	\$1501 TO \$2000	6.00	6.00
	\$2001 +	8.00	8.00
	STAWELL	10.00	10.00
	800/1000	UP TO \$600	2.00
\$601 TO 850		4.00	4.00
\$851 TO \$1100		6.00	6.00
\$1101 TO \$1500		8.00	8.00
\$1501 TO \$2000		10.00	10.00
\$2001 TO \$3000		12.00	12.00
\$3001+		16.00	16.00
STAWELL		16.00	16.00
1600	UP TO \$600	5.00	10.00
	\$601 TO \$1000	10.00	10.00
	\$1001 TO \$1500	15.00	15.00
	\$1501 TO \$2000	20.00	20.00
	\$2001 TO \$3000	25.00	25.00
	\$3001 +	30.00	30.00
	STAWELL	30.00	30.00
	3200	UP TO \$600	10.00
\$601 TO \$1000		20.00	20.00
\$1001 TO \$1500		30.00	30.00
\$1501 TO \$2000		40.00	40.00
\$2001 +		50.00	50.00
STAWELL		50.00	50.00

Note: Any multiple winner over the same distance may incur an additional penalty

Schedule 3 (continued) – Penalty Table

Women's Only Events

DISTANCE	TOTAL \$	MINIMUM PENALTY.	+ DISCRETION
100/120	UP TO \$600	0.25m	0.75m
	\$601 TO \$1000	0.50m	0.75m
	\$1001 TO \$2000	0.75m	1.00m
	\$2001 TO \$4000	1.00m	1.50m
	\$4001-\$6000	1.25m	2.00m
	\$6001-\$10000	1.50m	2.50m
	\$10001+	1.75m	1.75m
	STAWELL	2.00m	3.00 See Stawell Gift Finalist Section
300/400	UP TO \$600	2.00m	3.00m
	\$601 TO \$850	3.00m	3.00m
	\$851 TO \$1200	4.00m	4.00m
	\$1201+	6.00m	6.00m
	STAWELL	8.00m	8.00m
800	UP TO \$600	6.00m	10.00m
	\$601 - \$850	8.00m	12.00m
	\$851 +	10.00m	14.00m
	STAWELL	16.00m	16.00m

Note: Any multiple winner over the same distance may incur an additional penalty.

Under 18 Races

DISTANCE	TOTAL \$	MINIMUM PENALTY.	+ DISCRETION
100/120	\$300 UPWARDS	1.50m	1.50m
300/400	\$300 UPWARDS	1.50m	1.25m

Masters and Womens/Masters Events

DISTANCE	TOTAL \$	MINIMUM PENALTY.	+ DISCRETION
100/120	UP TO \$700	0.25m	0.75m
	\$701 TO \$900	0.50m	0.75m
	\$901 TO \$1100	0.75m	1.00m
	\$1101 TO \$1500	1.00m	1.25m
	\$1501-\$2000	1.50m	1.50m
	\$2001+	2.00m	2.00m
300	STAWELL	2.00m	2.00m
	UP TO \$700	2.00m	3.00m
	\$701 TO \$900	3.00m	3.00m
	\$901 TO \$1200	4.00m	4.00m
	\$1201+	6.00m	6.00m
800	STAWELL	8.00m	8.00m
	UP TO \$700	6.00m	10.00m
	\$701 - \$900	8.00m	12.00m
	\$901 +	10.00m	14.00m
1600	STAWELL	16.00m	16.00m
	UP TO \$700	10.00m	20.00m
	\$701 TO \$900	15.00m	25.00m
	\$901 +	20.00m	30.00m
	STAWELL	25.00m	35.00m

Note: Any multiple winner over the same distance may incur an additional penalty.

Note: Womens/Masters as an event category will be removed by October 2023 prior to the 23/23 season commencing.

Schedule 4 – Performance Range*

The Performance Range schedule below shall be used as a guide to determine the degree to which the recorded performance was unsatisfactory and/or inconsistent. Factors outside of the below schedule may also be taken into consideration when reviewing an athlete's performance – please refer to VAL Regulations Section 16 for a full outline of 'Offences' that may be taken into consideration when an athlete's performance is assessed.

The below schedule will be used as a guide for the penalty options available to the Chief Steward, under the VAL Regulations – Section 16.

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Acceptable Range</u> (seconds)	<u>Moderate Range</u> (seconds)	<u>Extreme Range</u> (seconds)
70m	Within 0.15	0.15 to 0.3	> 0.3
100m	Within 0.15	0.15 to 0.4	> 0.4
120m	Within 0.15	0.15 to 0.4	> 0.4
200m	Within 0.3	0.3 to 0.5	> 0.5
300m	Within 0.6	0.6 to 0.9	> 0.9
400m	Within 0.8	0.8 to 1.1	> 1.1
550m	Within 1.0	1.0 to 1.5	> 1.5
800m	Within 1.5	1.5 to 2.0	> 2.0
1000m	Within 2.0	2.0 to 3.0	> 3.0
1500m/1600m	Within 4.0	4.0 to 8.0	> 8.0
2000m	Within 5.0	5.0 to 8.0	> 8.0
3200m	N/A	N/A	N/A

*This schedule is under review and may be updated for the 23/24 season.