

Rule Notification FY2526-12 Control and custody of, and access to, official documents

At its meeting on 1 June the AFA committee resolved to clarify responsibilities for custody and control of documents prepared or completed by, or for the use of, officials at a race meeting and also who may access those documents and under what conditions.

The rule changes to give effect to this decision will be effective from 1 July 2026 and will be included in the next published version of the rules. Relevant guidelines and manuals will be updated to reflect the rule changes.

Background

The AFA committee has in the past been required to consider allegations of tampering with official timesheets after they have been signed off by race meeting officials. More recently complaints have been made to the committee about unauthorised persons attempting to access or remove documents from the timing table during a race meeting.

The committee acknowledged that the rules do not currently adequately reflect what has been the normal practice, namely, that documents at the timing table are only for the use of the officiating timekeepers, judges and AFA representatives and are not to be accessed by anyone else, except for when team captains are checking the official timesheet for their team at the end of the race meeting.

The committee agreed that it was necessary to include appropriate provisions in the rules to provide clarity and avoid disagreements about access to documents.

The approved rule changes are:

1. Insert a new definition of **official documents**:

official documents means all forms and documents prepared or completed by, or for use of, officiating **timekeepers, judges** and **AFA representatives** at a **race meeting**. It includes **official timesheets, risk assessments**, incident records, **incident reports, witness statements, Australian record time reports** and results summaries.

2. Insert a new rule 2.13 **Official Documents**:

The **race meeting organiser** is responsible for the overall custody and control of **official documents** for a **race meeting**. When **official documents** are not in the **race meeting organiser's** possession the **race meeting organiser** must ensure that the **official documents** are in the possession and under the direct control of an officiating **judge, timekeeper** or **AFA representative**.

Official documents for a **race meeting** may only be accessed by:

- the **race meeting organiser** and **timekeepers, judges** and **AFA representatives** who are officiating at the **race meeting**,

- **team captains** who may have access only to the **official timesheet** for their **team** at the end of the **race meeting** for the purpose of checking and signing the **official timesheet**,
- any other person who is given prior approval by an officiating **judge** or **AFA representative**.

Persons accessing **official documents** must not remove them from the immediate vicinity of the timing table.