**Athletics Australia**

**Memorandum**

**To:** Member Associations, Athletics New Zealand, and Oceania Athletics

**From:** Andrew Matthews, Competitions Manager, Athletics Australia

**Re:** Implementation of Pit Lane rules for the Australian All Schools and Australian Junior Championships

**Date:**

Athletics Australia advises that the new ‘Pit Lane’ rule (explained in further detail below) will be implemented for the following race-walking events at the Australian All Schools (2015) and Australian Junior Athletics Championships (2016);

**2015 Australian All Schools**

* U18 5000m Race Walk (Male & Female)

**2016 Australian Junior Championships**

* Under 20 10000m Race Walk (Male & Female)
* Under 18 5000m Race Walk (Male & Female)
* Under 17 5000m Race Walk (Male & Female)

All other events will occur as per normal race-walking rules at these competitions.

The IAAF have recently decided that further trials of the new Pit Lane rule should be expanded, with a view to roll it out more extensively in future years. The principal objective of the new rule is reducing (if not eliminating) disqualifications altogether.

Athletics Australia successfully trialled the initiative at the 2015 Australian Junior Championships. The IAAF have provided further advice that they intend to deliver the Rule at the 2016 World Junior Championships.

The remainder of this memo details the rules and implementation strategy for the Australian Junior Championships and Australian All Schools Championships.

**What is it?**

Pit Lane is essentially a penalty area that athletes must pass through once issued their third red card. Instead of the third red card resulting in Disqualification, a time penalty is awarded, and the athlete will be required to remain in the pit lane area until their penalty time is up.

**Penalty Area**

The penalty area is set up on the home straight approximately 80 metres from the finish line.

It will be set up in lanes 5-7 and have one entrance at the beginning (for athletes to enter) and one at the end (for athletes to exit), and be approx. 10 metres long.

It is defined by cones or barricades. The image below provides a guide to its set up.



**Rules**

IAAF Race Walking Rules (230) will be applied with the following adaptations:

1. When one athlete receives three (3) Red Cards, he/she will receive a communication from the Chief Judge informing him/her that he must enter the penalty area at the next possible chance.
   * The time penalty for the 5000m will be 60 seconds and the 10000m will be 120 seconds. The time penalty starts the moment the athlete enters the penalty area.
   * After the time penalty, the official responsible for the penalty area will advise the athlete to re-enter the event.
   * While in the penalty area, the athlete **will not** be judged. They may stop or continue moving but will not be provided with a seating area or refreshments during this time. Communication with coaches is allowed, providing the coach is not on the field of play.
2. If after serving a time penalty, the athlete then receives any additional Red Card(s) (from the judges who had not previously sent him/her one), he/she shall be disqualified and the Chief Judge will notify the disqualification as soon as possible.
3. If an athlete receives four (4) or more Red Cards before stopping in the penalty area, the athlete shall be disqualified and the Chief Judge or his assistant must notify the disqualification as soon as possible.
4. If an athlete receives the third Red Card at a late stage of the race and it’s not possible for the Chief Judge to notify the athlete that he/she must stop in the penalty area, the athlete shall finish the race and the penalty time shall be added to their official time.
5. The Chief Judge maintains the power to immediately disqualify the athlete in the last 100m of a race (no time penalty).

**Notes to the rules**

* Athletics Australia will ensure that enough officials and volunteers are in place to ensure that the Penalty area works seamlessly.
* Advice to the walks judges will be that they should not judge any differently than they normally would. Ie. They should not feel more compelled to provide a red card because of Pit Lane being in place.