



An Open Letter to the SAFTAA community

10th March 2019

The purpose of this letter is to give high level feedback of the Special General Meeting held on 6 March 2019.

As most of you are probably aware, we recently convened a Special General Meeting (SGM) of the association after being requested to do so by two clubs (mandated by Section 7.2 of the SAFTAA Constitution). Although the clubs did not fulfil all the requirements for calling a SGM (i.e. to provide a specific purpose), they did provide a number of agenda points. These are reflected below.

1. Unconstitutionality of the SAFTAA constitution, shooters have no say and SAFTAA executive is not following the constitution.
2. SAFTAA chairman ignoring email request.
3. Minutes of decisions and discussions – Proof of minutes of meetings that were held or in respect of decisions made by SAFTAA executive (Para 6.9), (Para 9.4d)
4. New members joining SAFTAA via website (Para 4.2)
5. Course standard – Request to increase difficulty, proof of request and minutes in respect of the decision (Para 9.3d)
6. Inconsistent decisions taken during leagues (ERAC vs Inyathi)
7. Members shooting during WFTC competition, no minimum requirements specified (if you have the money you can shoot) (Para 2.6)
8. What is SAFTAA's mission and vision statements
9. What is SAFTAA's plan to increase members, how, when and where etc.?
10. Clubs not adhering to prescribed difficulty level notwithstanding that a certificate of compliance is issued.
11. Are our rules in accordance with World rules? Are we in or out?
12. Specify the start and end of a match in order to clarify when a competitor may consume alcohol or cigarettes. (We have regarded the end of a match since the start of SAFTAA until recently to be when a shooter has shot his last shot and left the course, but it is now interpreted as finished only when the shoot outs are finalized. This is an issue for many competitors and needs to be finalized).

We would like to address each item separately even though there is significant overlap in some respects.

1. Unconstitutionality of the SAFTAA constitution, shooters have no say and SAFTAA executive is not following the constitution.

We need to deal with the three components separately.

The SAFTAA Constitution is the foundation and backbone of governance of the association. It has been accepted by all clubs since its inception and modified (last in 2015) in the prescribed manner. There have been no suggestions for further changes. The Constitution can therefore not be unconstitutional.

"Shooters have no say" – the issue is that the previous committee only distributed the names that were nominated for the current Executive on the evening before the delegates meeting. This did not allow enough time for delegates to get a full mandate from all members.

OUTCOME: *Executive will distribute the nominated names five days before elections at the Annual General Meeting. (Delegates Meeting)*

"SAFTAA executive is not following the constitution" – a very serious accusation that upon further discussion revealed two deviations (neither of which were material) namely:

- a) SAFTAA did not send out the minutes of the AGM within the prescribed 30 days – this has been rectified.
- b) The committee does not take minutes of all meetings and does not circulate them – it has become custom and practice over the last number of years to only communicate decisions that significantly impact on the community.

OUTCOME: *The executive will find a mechanism to record and distribute decisions of all meetings as required by the Constitution.*

2. SAFTAA chairman ignoring email request (see attachment)

The email request was for the return of the increased difficulty level (instituted on 19 Nov 2018) to the previous level. We received only objections from two clubs and could therefore not change the rating back. The reasons for the initial change was communicated verbally in December and via email with some delay in January, to all the clubs. The answer and motivation were not acceptable to Big5 and Inyathi.

OUTCOME: *We committed in the written reply to gather community opinion after the national trials.*

3. Minutes of decisions and discussions – Proof of minutes of meetings that were held or in respect of decisions made by SAFTAA executive (Para 6.9) (Para 9.4d)

Discussed under section 1 above.

4. New members joining SAFTAA via website (Para 4.2)

The reference is for the registration of clubs to the association and is not done via the website.

We do however acknowledge that there have been some issues with the renewal and new registrations this year and we are finding solutions to rectify this.

5. Course standard – Request to increase difficulty, proof of request and minutes in respect of the decision (Para 9.3d)

The reference is to the duties of the Technical Officer (TO) to make written submissions for amendments to the rules to the Executive.

Under 6.5 in the **Rules**; the TO is tasked with setting the course difficulty. This was done in written communication to all clubs on 19 Nov 2018. Setting the course difficulty does not constitute a change in the rules and the quoted section does not apply.

6. Inconsistent decisions taken during leagues (ERAC vs Inyathi)

There seems to be unhappiness about a decision taken during the 2019 Kick-Off at ERAC where a wire obscured the hit-zone of a target for some shooters.

The mechanism for disputing targets is as follows:

- Should the shooter believe a target is illegal – distance or visibility (querying failing targets are described in the rules) the query should be lodged with the RO before taking the shot
- Should the shooter disagree with the RO decision the Technical Officer will adjudicate.
- Should the shooter disagree with the TO a formal dispute may be lodged with the Executive through the Code of Conduct (last page). The chairman will then investigate and make a final decision

7. Members shooting during WFTC competition, no minimum requirements specified (if you have the money you can shoot) (Para 2.6)

The issue is that inexperienced shooters attend the World Championships and may damage the reputation of SAFTAA (hence the reference). The suggestion is for a minimum standard to be required.

It has been the practice that development shooters attend World's as individuals. The executive believes this to be a mechanism to grow the sport and encourages this. We would only require that shooters understand the rules and have the ability to compete safely. Individual competitors have also been invited to Protea practice days as well as shared accommodation and transport during the Championship.

8. What is SAFTAA's mission and vision statements

The reason for this agenda point is not clear.

SAFTAA does not have a formal mission and vision statement at present. Section 2 of the Constitution describes our vision and role.

9. What is SAFTAA's plan to increase members, how, when and where etc.?

As in previous years, the Executive relies heavily on clubs to take the initiative to increase members. The association has also invited suggestions for initiatives that could be used to support growth. We also intend to use the hosting of WFTC 2020 as a catalyst for increasing numbers.

10. Clubs not adhering to prescribed difficulty level notwithstanding that a certificate of compliance is issued.

We have no evidence of this happening and no examples were presented. Should a club not adhere to the prescribed difficulty level, the league will be cancelled.

11. Are our rules in accordance with World rules? Are we in or out?

Our rules are in accordance with the 2018 version of the WFTF rules. We will make submissions for changes after the 2019 National Trials for the 2019 / 2020 season as normal. These will be based on the most recent changes published by WFTF.

12. Specify the start and end of a match in order to clarify when a competitor may consume alcohol or cigarettes. (We have regarded the end of a match since the start of SAFTAA until recently to be when a shooter has shot his last shot and left the course, but it is now interpreted as finished only when the shoot outs are finalized. This is an issue for many competitors and needs to be finalized).

Rule 3.7 clearly stipulates that no alcohol may be consumed before the last shot has been fired. It is also against the law to handle an air rifle while under the influence.

There is no restriction (other than courtesy and safety) on the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products. These may be consumed before, during and after any match.

I hope this provides adequate insight into the discussion during the meeting.

The Executive serves the FT shooting community and would really appreciate any feedback and suggestions for improvement on how to advance the sport.

Please communicate through your club chairperson or with us directly if you have any questions or comments.

Kind regards



Paul Fevrier
SAFTAA Secretary



Wian Strydom
SAFTAA Chairman