DogsNZ Agility Standing Orders - Section 11

Consultation

When ideas or recommendations for regulation change are put forward, the following guidelines should be used to ensure a wide range of opinions and input are sought and considered prior to completing any changes.

Change Initiation

New ideas or change recommendations can come to the Agility Committee from many sources. These include:
- Results of previous consultations
- Individual input from members
- Recommendations from Sub-committees
- Development of ideas from within the Agility Committee

Development of Consultation Document

Ideas need to be formulated into a document which outlines:

- The change proposed
- The reason for the proposed change
- Possible options
- The timeline for consultation
- The method of input to consultation

Consultation Process

Once the Agility Committee has formulated the document for discussion, it needs to be distributed in such a manner as to ensure the maximum number of agility people get to see it and have the chance to have input.

Format for ideal consultation:

- Upload the consultation document to the website
- Post to the Agility Committee Official Facebook page and email all clubs with the link to the document.
- Significant consultation can be added to the DogENews and.or DogsWorld magazine
- For some consultations, a collated set of questions and answers may be useful in order to clarify topics to all prior to the deadline for submitting reponses.
- Comments and ideas are circulated and discussed and input is submitted as per the timeline of the document.

- The Agility Committee collates all of the input and makes any changes to the proposal them deem that are required from the feedback
- The version two (if required) document is released for discussion with amendments.
- Additional comments are sought and collated
- A final version of the proposal is developed and regulation changes written.
- Regulation changes (with rationale) are taken by the AC Executive Council Rep for ratification by the EC.
- After approval, the Regulation changes are made and the new regulations version published

(Note: The complete end to end procedure outlining what is required for regulation change to be completed is contained in the internal Agility Committee document SOP9 – Regulation Change)

Consultation Problems

- Some more controversial consultation topics can result in strong input both online and (less commonly) in submissions. While it is desirable that people get to have their say, bullying of others or belittling of their input should not be tolerated and it is one of the occasions when close watch should be kept on the Facebook page to keep the discussion respectful.
- Sometimes there is a lot of discussion online but little is provided in the way of proper feedback to the Committee. Input should be encouraged and be simple (eg email input or Online survey as well as written input allowed)
- Negative bias can occur when only people who are violently opposed to the change put in a submission and those who support the change assume it will go through so do not submit.

Submissions

Written submissions which outline a rationale on the stance on the topic are much more useful in the development of an improved proposal than responses which just state whether the person is for or against it. The more detail and reasoning behind a submission, the easier it is for the Agility Committee to understand the points being made and the reasons for the opinion.

It is important therefore that consultation documents encourage something other than yes/no answers.

Considering Responses to the Consultation documents

All input should be read and considered individually by each Agility Committee member. Discussion around the input should then be started and time given for everyone to ensure they are happy with any changes to be made based on the input.

The goal for any consultation is to listen and adjust the proposal according to sensible input.

Nothing in this document over-rides the ability of the Agility Committee to consider matters without referring to members as provided for in Agility Regulation 3.4.2.