

PART 6 - LIBERATION PROTOCOL

1. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES;

2. HEALTH & WELL BEING OF BIRDS;

3. DUTY OF CARE TO PIGEONS;

4. ILL TREATMENT OF PIGEONS;

5. ACCEPTANCE AND INSPECTION OF PIGEONS FOR COMPETITION.

6. RIGHT OF REFUSAL.

1. Applies to all racing and tossing of pigeons by members of the SERPC INC.
2. Liberation protocols of other bodies where they are carrying pigeons of the SERPC INC. shall be the primary protocol adopted.

1. OBJECTIVES;

1. To optimize race returns by the use of best practices within our control.
2. To identify and avoid liberating the birds in conditions that could jeopardize their chance of returning home safely.
3. To set parameters within which the SERPC INC. and liberator are required to operate, in order to avoid foreseeable and therefore preventable losses from occurring.

2. LIBERATION GUIDELINES;

1. The Liberation Committee shall consist of two (2) flying members who shall communicate with each other and in consultation with the liberator (Liberation Committee members can also be the liberator from time to time) shall oversee all liberations conducted by the SERPC INC.
2. The Liberation Committee shall, prior to the release of birds, examine the current and forecasted weather conditions which are considered to be **along the expected line of flight during the flight time.**
3. The use of current weather reports and forecasts are to be obtained from credible weather reporting organisations and are to be used in conjunction with the Liberators' observations at the liberation site and any local information received by Liberation Committee Members along the expected line of flight.
4. The liberation committee shall make every effort to avoid clashes with other liberations where possible by taking into consideration factors such as forecasted weather conditions, liberation times and liberation locations.
5. Confirm weather conditions on the ground by seeking advice from local contacts along the flight path.
6. The Liberation Committee shall then determine whether liberation will be undertaken based on the "Application of Liberation Guidelines".
7. The Liberation Committee shall not liberate the pigeons for any race unless all Liberation Committee Members agree to do so.
8. Should the Liberation Committee members not agree on liberation then the matter is to be decided by the SERPC Inc. President.

Interpretation of Liberation Protocols;

1. The birds shall be liberated or held over based on a set of defined parameters which come under the umbrella of a “Green Light and Red Light” system.
2. “Green Light” is defined as a high certainty in the liberation of the birds.
3. Weather conditions, defined under “Favourable or Neutral Weather Conditions” which satisfy the conditions requirements allowing for the liberation of the birds.
4. The birds will not be liberated unless and confirm ground observations along the flight path indicate that the forecast conditions are incorrect or the weather conditions are moderating quicker than forecasted.
5. Extreme caution shall also be exercised if the defined temperature conditions are satisfied and a head wind or side wind is blowing.
6. “Red Light” is defined as a very low certainty in the Liberation of the birds, under this indicator the birds will automatically be held over.

3. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES;

1. Where circumstances prevail and GREEN LIGHT parameters are satisfied other than one (1) parameter which falls within the RED LIGHT zone, the liberation committee shall exercise extreme caution when deciding to liberate the birds provided it is satisfied that the forecasted RED LIGHT parameters are unlikely to eventuate and and/or on the ground sightings do not support the non-forecasted conditions.
2. Where circumstances prevail with two or more RED LIGHT conditions forming part of the liberation parameters, the birds will be held over.

Observation and Analysis of Weather Conditions;

1. The interpretation and analysis of weather conditions will take into account those conditions which may adversely affect the pigeons’ ability to successfully navigate their path home, while identifying those conditions which may prove favourable.
2. Analysis of weather conditions will take into account the estimated flying time, which is outlined as follows - flying time is the time between liberation and the anticipated arrival home of the majority of the pigeons (this will be calculated by using a velocity of 1200mpm) for races less than 800km, for example, a race from approximately 300km shall have a flying time of approximately 4 hours and 10 minutes.
3. For all races in excess of 800km the weather for the day after liberation shall also be taken into account before birds are liberated.

Favourable or Neutral Weather Conditions (Green Light);

Favourable or neutral weather conditions are defined as;

1. Those which are known to be helpful or have no known effect on the pigeon’s ability to navigate their way home and will result in the liberation of the pigeons.
2. Clear sky is defined as a day with no cloud.
3. Fine conditions are a combination of sun and cloud cover where the Weather Bureau predicts no rainfall at liberation point or along the expected flight path.
4. High cloud cover is along the flight not associated with rain, and the sun clearly visible from behind it.
5. Patchy cloud is a day with patchy cloud not associated with rain.

6. Rain forecast at the liberation site or over minor stretches on expected line of flight is less than 50%.
7. A tail wind is wind heading in the same direction as the birds and is 49kph (27 knots) or less. This only applies to sprint series races. It does not apply to long series races.
8. A headwind is a wind heading into the expected line of flight which do not exceed 25kph (13.5 knots).
9. Wind other than a headwind is wind in any direction other than a headwind that is less than 35kph (19 knots) especially as a cross wind on coastal routes.
10. Cross or side wind with any east direction is 20 kph (10.8 knots) or less and only for races over 300 kms from the longest marker.
11. The temperature at the race point shall not be lower than 4°C and not exceed 30°C at ground level at the liberation site at the time of liberation.

Unfavourable Weather Conditions (Red Light);

Unfavourable weather conditions are those conditions which are known to obstruct or affect the ability of the birds to navigate their way home. Should any of the following conditions be detected or be predicted during the flying time the liberation shall be postponed or cancelled.

1. Fog, dust storms or smoke haze: At the liberation site or in close proximity to the expected line of flight, at any pass or mountain range on the expected line of flight.
2. Overcast conditions: With one hundred percent low cloud coverage, poor visibility, no wind and without sun being visible or no shadows cast.
3. Poor light: A light meter reading at the liberation site of less than 10 is regarded as poor visibility.
4. Poor visibility: A clear line of sight that is less than 5 kilometres.
5. Rain: Medium chance (50% or more) of showers forecast at the liberation site or over moderate stretches on expected line of flight.
6. Snow: Should it be snowing at the liberation sight or be predicted to fall on expected line of flight.
7. Stormy weather or lightning: Predicted anywhere on or approaching the expected line of flight.
8. Temperature: Should temperature along the expected line of flight be predicted lower than 4°C or higher than 30°C at ground level
9. Wind in any direction: Wind, with the exception of tail winds, in excess of 35kph (19 knots) from any direction, especially as a cross wind when racing on coastal routes.
10. Cross or side wind with any east direction is over 20 kph (10.8 knots) and only for races over 300 kms from the longest marker.
11. The risk of our race birds clashing with other racing pigeons travelling in any other direction only when the number of race birds of the other racing organisation is at least double our own on that scheduled race.

Roles & Responsibilities of the Liberation Committee;

1. Scheduled liberation times, early as possible (E.A.P) and holdovers;
2. Birds shall not be liberated prior to scheduled liberation time.
3. Liberations may be made up to two hours later than the time scheduled.

4. Early as possible (E.A.P) is defined as: liberating birds no earlier than 30 minutes after local sunrise.
5. Birds held over shall be liberated not earlier than 8.00am but can be liberated up to two hours later than scheduled time except when stipulated earlier as per the schedule.
6. The transport is to arrive at the race point in sufficient time to allow at least 30 minutes standing time for every hour travelled by the transport in getting to the race point including watering. Basketing times are to be set so this can be achieved. The purpose of this guideline is to allow ample time for the birds to rest prior to their release. The actual liberation time should then allow all pigeons sufficient time to home on the day based on an average velocity of 1000 metres per minute.
7. Should that minimum requirement not be able to be met because of driving time to the race point or any other circumstance then the birds should be basketed two nights prior to liberation occurring. Driving time shall be determined by the use of Google Maps which does provide a driving time estimate between the home address of the actual liberator and the race point.

Holdovers;

Friday night basketing:

1. If liberation is not possible Saturday or Sunday birds will be returned to the SERPC INC. club rooms for their respective owners to collect.

Thursday night basketing:

1. Birds can be held until Tuesday. If birds cannot be liberated by Tuesday they will be returned to the SERPC INC. club rooms for their respective clubs to collect.

Wednesday night basketing:

1. Birds can be held until Tuesday. If birds cannot be liberated by Tuesday they will be returned to the SERPC INC. club rooms for their respective clubs to collect.

Communication with Liberator and/or Liberation Committee;

1. Should liberation look unlikely because of a locked in weather pattern and where there is only a remote chance of a liberation occurring, the liberation committee can make a recommendation to bring the birds back to a shorter race point on the same route.
2. Should liberation look unlikely because of a locked in weather pattern, and where weather predictions show no foreseeable chance of liberation, the Liberation Committee shall have the authority to cancel the race and bring the birds' home.

Roles & Responsibilities of the Liberator;

It is the liberator's responsibility to;

1. Care for and maintain the birds whilst they are being loaded, on route to the race point, at the liberation site and should the need arise to arrange pick up of any lost birds on way home.

2. Identify and avoid liberating birds in conditions that could jeopardize their chance of returning home safely.

Duties;

1. Help supervise loading of baskets onto the truck from bottom to top.
2. The trailer is to be opened whenever the truck is stopped for a length of time of 10 minutes or more.
3. For Security Purposes the liberator will remain with the trailer while ever the trailer is open

Friday night basketing;

1. Upon arrival at the liberation site, the trailer to be opened and all birds watered. The water shall be topped up when possible later that morning.
2. The trailer must be stationary for a minimum of 1hours prior to any liberation.

Thursday night basketing;

1. Upon arrival at liberation site the trailer is to be opened up and all birds watered. At 12.00 noon the birds to be fed.
2. Feed troughs to be removed at 3.00 pm and any excess feed re-bagged as waste.
3. Water to be checked regularly and topped up as required.

Wednesday night basketing;

1. The transporter will stop at a suitable spot by 12.00 noon Thursday. Upon arrival at this suitable site, the trailer will be opened up and all birds are to be looked after as follows: The birds are to be watered, and then fed.
2. Feed troughs are then to be checked and should any be empty more feed should be added.
3. Feed troughs are to stay on until dark with feed in them and then removed.
4. Water to be topped up regularly and removed after dark.
5. The truck is then to proceed to liberation site. Upon arrival at liberation site Friday, the trailer to be opened and birds are to be watered.
6. At 12.00 noon, the birds are to be fed. Feed troughs are to be checked regularly and should any be empty, more feed to be added, as required, up to 3.00pm.
7. All feed troughs are to be removed at 3.00pm.
8. The water to be checked regularly and topped up as required.

Holdovers;

Friday night basketing;

1. Should the birds be held over they will be fed.
2. Feed troughs to be removed 2 hours after the completion of feeding.
3. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.

Thursday night basketing;

1. Should the birds be held over Saturday, feeding to be as follows. At 12.00 noon.
2. Feed troughs are to be checked and if any are empty, more feed to be added.
3. Feed troughs are to stay on with feed in them, then be removed at 3.00pm.
4. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed each second (2nd) day.

5. Should the birds be held over Sunday, then the birds are to be fed utilising the above mentioned feeding process.
6. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.
7. Should the birds be held over Monday, then the birds are to be feed utilizing the same process as the previous two days.
8. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.

Wednesday night basketing;

1. Should the birds be held over Saturday, feeding to be as follows: At 12.00 noon.
2. Feed troughs are to be checked and if any are empty, more feed to be added.
3. Feed troughs are to stay on with feed in them, then be removed at 3.00pm.
4. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.
5. Should the birds be held over Sunday, they are to be fed utilizing the abovementioned feeding process.
6. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.
7. Should the birds be held over further, they are to be fed utilizing the same process as the previous two days.
8. In the event of a holdover the water is to be changed every second (2nd) day.

Suspect Bird Health at Liberation Point;

1. Should birds seem extremely quiet and look fluffed up or unhealthy the Liberation Committee shall be contacted immediately by the liberator. At no time are the birds to be liberated in this condition!

Care and maintenance during transport;

1. When the transporter is stopped for a period of time, e.g. driver's meal break, sleep/rest breaks or breakdowns etc, the following is to apply;
2. Fifteen (15) or more minutes – in fine weather opening the trailer on both sides shall be sufficient.
3. Should unfavourable weather, e.g. rain, fog, strong wind or snow be experienced during the trip the birds are to be protected and the trailer not opened.

Preparing for Liberation;

1. On the day of liberation, the liberator shall take note of the weather. e.g. visibility, light readings, wind direction, approximate wind speed, cloud, fog, overcast conditions, rain, smoke haze, dust, smog, shadows cast etc.
2. At least 75 minutes prior to the scheduled liberation time, the liberator will be contacted by the nominated Liberation Committee member, and asked to give a full description of the weather at liberation site as well as any poor weather encountered enroute. The nominated Liberation Committee member will provide the liberator with a brief description of the forecast weather for that day.
3. Sixty (60) minutes prior to liberation time, the liberator will be contacted by the nominated liberation committee member, who will ask for weather at liberation site again. Weather permitting, the liberator will be told to get ready to liberate.
4. Ten (10) minutes before liberation, the liberator will again be contacted by the Liberation Committee to confirm liberation.

5. Following liberation, the liberator will take note of what birds do, for example, how many mobs they break into, which direction they head, how long each mob takes to leave or anything else relevant to liberation.
6. Twenty (20) minutes after liberation, a nominated member of the Liberation Committee will contact the liberator requesting information regarding the liberation. e.g. How many mobs the birds broke into, which direction they head, how long each mob took to leave or anything else relevant to liberation.
7. The liberator must take extreme care when making weather observations at the liberation point, as it is these observations which influence the decision to liberate the birds.

4. HEALTH & WELL BEING OF BIRDS;

1. The SERPC INC. reserves the right to remove from the trailer any pigeon/pigeons or basket of pigeons that appear unhealthy or have any visible sign of injury, disease or parasites; this shall be done to ensure the health and wellbeing of the remaining pigeons.
2. All birds shall be accepted by the SERPC INC. entirely at the owners risk once they leave the owners hands.

5. DUTY OF CARE TO PIGEONS;

The SERPC INC. rules that;

1. A member, or affiliate, who has the care or charge of a pigeon or pigeons has a duty to take all reasonable measures to ensure the welfare of that pigeon or pigeons. The Australian National Racing Pigeon Board provides a national code of practice for the keeping and racing of pigeons. All members of the SERPC INC. and affiliated individuals and/or clubs must abide by that national code of practice.

6. ILL TREATMENT OF PIGEONS;

1. The SERPC INC. defines ill treatment of pigeons as wounding, mutilating, abusing, tormenting and torturing, wanton or malicious beating and causing unnecessary pain or suffering.
2. These acts are considered by the SERPC INC. as unacceptable treatment of pigeons and such acts will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the contents of this Constitution.

7. ACCEPTANCE AND INSPECTION OF PIGEONS FOR COMPETITION.

1. The SERPC INC. acknowledges the depth of expertise for pigeon care available within each member from which can be provided, suitably qualified personnel for the inspection of pigeons submitted for competition.

8. RIGHT OF REFUSAL.

1. A right to refuse an entry without challenge on the grounds of poor health, or physical impairment, or neglect, as to limit its opportunities to return safely; or on the grounds of a contagion hazard to other entries.
2. Neglect can be described as the pigeon being presented in a soiled and generally dishevelled condition and or harbouring external parasites.

3. Physical impairment is intended to cover any condition which is likely to diminish the chances of the pigeon to successfully complete the journey.