



Horse Race Day Veterinary Examination Policy

Purpose

To ensure the safety and welfare of horses which have attained an extended age, had a large number of lifetime race starts, not started in a race for an extended period, horses which have raced the day prior, at the same race meeting or are engaged to compete the following day. This is to be achieved through the conduct of race day examinations, both pre- and post-race by the official on-course veterinarian. This policy further strives to ensure the safety of participants, particularly those drivers driving or competing against the horses covered by this policy.

Background

After consultation with highly experienced equine veterinarians Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Stewards have formulated this policy as horse welfare is of paramount importance to HRV, the wider industry and a fundamental expectation of the general public.

The Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR) provide the necessary powers for Stewards to order a horse to be examined in any manner in which they deem appropriate.

AHRR 15(1)(k) states:

15(1) Stewards are empowered –

(k) to inspect, examine or test in such manner as they consider appropriate any person, horse, racetrack, stable, stud, artificial breeding station or other place, item, document, equipment, vehicle or substance.

Horses covered by this policy

The following horses are covered by this policy and should be examined by the official on-course veterinarian **prior** to competing:

- Horses which have attained an age of twelve (12) years of age or older.
- Horses which have started in two hundred (200) or more races.

- Horses which have not raced for twelve (12) months or longer.
- Horses which raced the day prior.

The following horses should be examined **after** competing:

- Horses which have attained an age of twelve (12) years of age or older.
- Horses which have started in two hundred (200) or more races.
- Horses who have raced more than once at a race meeting.
- Horses which have not raced for twelve (12) months or longer.
- Horses which are engaged to race the day immediately following.

Examination Type

The type of examination to be conducted is at the sole discretion of the official on-course veterinarian.

The HRV Stewards will be guided by the advice provided by the official on-course veterinarian as to the suitability of a horse to fulfil any immediate racing engagement.

Licensed Persons/Registered Owners – Requirements

A licensed person and/or registered owner shall not hinder or fail to assist the official on-course veterinarian in their examination of a horse.

Any failure to adhere to the requirements of this policy may result in action being taken against that person under the provisions of Australian Harness Racing Rule 238 which states:

“A person shall not fail to comply with any order, direction, or requirement of the Controlling Body or the Stewards relating to harness racing or to the harness racing industry.”