



HARNESS RACING VICTORIA

OBLIGATION TO COME FORWARD POLICY

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Obligation to Come Forward Policy

INT-PO-012
(01 JUL 2021)

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1. PURPOSE

One of the key strategic objectives of Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) is to ensure that the Victorian Harness Racing Industry “maintains a strong integrity jurisdiction and be regarded as a world leader in harness racing regulation”.

HRV have invested significantly in integrity and have developed a robust integrity structure to ensure HRV is well equipped to deal with integrity risks and challenges and to ensure that a level playing field exists for all harness racing participants.

A key pillar of this strategic objective is the ability to encourage the disclosure of behaviours within the harness racing industry which would amount to an offence or a breach of the policies and procedures of a relevant authority. To achieve this objective HRV provides structures and processes which enable the safe and confidential disclosure of serious misconduct by all licensed persons, breeders and owners that are involved in the harness racing industry.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this policy relates to the disclosure of serious misconduct, by all licensed persons, breeders and owners who seeks to make such a disclosure. Any matter that is not considered serious misconduct should be reported via alternative avenues.

3. DEFINITIONS

Disclosure: The provision of information relating to real or suspected serious misconduct.

Industry: Harness Racing Industry.

Licensed Person: A person granted a licence by HRV to train, drive or be a stablehand in accordance with the Australian Harness Racing Rules.

ORIC: Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner.

Owner: Any person currently registered in the ownership of a Standardbred

Breeder: A person who either professionally or as a hobbyist is involved in the breeding of Standardbred horse being from a registered stallion and registered dam.

4. SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

Matters which are deemed to be Serious Misconduct in accordance with the scope of this policy may be reported by anyone and include:

- Disclosures involving illegal conduct;
- Disclosures relating to breaches of the AHRR;
- Equine welfare related matters;
- Disclosures involving breaches of HRV Policies;
- Disclosures involving allegations of corruption or dishonesty.



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HRV seeks to remind those who fall within the remit of this Policy of their requirements under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 246

A person who has reasonable grounds for believing that someone is behaving or may behave or has behaved in a way causing, likely to cause or which has caused a breach of these rules shall promptly bring the matter to the notice of the Controlling Body or the Stewards.

NOTE: *This is not an exhaustive list and a review of other disclosures may determine that such matters are subject to this policy.*

5. MANAGEMENT OF DISCLOSURES

The management and handling of disclosures will be conducted in accordance with relevant reporting mechanisms and the associated policies of HRV and related organisations.

5.1 Considerations When Making a Disclosure

This policy has been established to address Serious Misconduct and is not designed to obviate other mechanisms to report matters to HRV. The policy is designed to address Serious Misconduct and is not an avenue for the reporting of disagreements or grievances relating to legitimate actions conducted under other HRV processes and procedures or the legitimate enforcement of the AHRR.

A disclosure must be honest and genuine and not made with a view or intent to cause harm or damage to the reputation of another.

5.2 Channels for Reporting Disclosure

There are various channels for disclosing a serious misconduct concern made available, including:

Reporting Body	Detail
HRV Integrity Department	www.hrv.org.au 400 Epsom Road, Flemington VIC.
HRV Integrity Matters Website	www.integrity.thetrots.com.au
ORIC	www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au Tel: (03) 8684 7776 Email: enquiries@racinintegrity.vic.gov.au
ORIC Hotline	www.racingintegrity.vic.gov.au Tel: 1300 227 225



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5.3 Racing Integrity Hotline

Complaints and Information disclosures received through the Racing Integrity Hotline will be subject to review by the Racing Integrity Commissioner who, where applicable and in accordance with the Racing Act 1958, may refer or disclose the information to HRV's Integrity Department for information purposes or investigation.

5.4 HRV Integrity Department

Information disclosures and complaints received by the HRV Integrity Department will be subject to review and evaluation by the Investigation and Compliance Manager, with oversight from the General Manager Integrity. Evaluation of the disclosure will result in the information being retained for intelligence purposes further action or investigation in accordance with the HRV Integrity Department Standard Operating Procedures.

Prior to the commencement of any investigation, a briefing with the Investigation and Compliance Manager, Senior Information and Intelligence Analyst and the Investigative Steward will occur at the commencement of the investigation. This will include the scope of the investigation, expected outcomes, available resources, reporting arrangements and stakeholders involved.

This investigation is then entered on the Information Case Management System (ICMS) by the Senior Information and Intelligence Analyst.

If applicable the disclosure or part thereof, may be referred to a Law Enforcement Agency or other external body, including other Principal Racing Authorities.

5.5 Alternate Avenues of Disclosure

The HRV Obligation to Come Forward policy is not constructed to impede the ability of a person to report alleged Serious Misconduct including illegal conduct to a relevant Government Agency, Regulatory Body or Law Enforcement Agency.

5.6 Protection

The HRV Obligation to Come Forward Policy is designed to work collaboratively with other relevant HRV Policies and Procedures, including but not limited to the 'HRV External Complaints Handling Policy', and the HRV Public Interest Disclosure Policy which do allow anonymous disclosures.

HRV will endeavour to ensure that confidentiality is maintained and will only release details of a person making a disclosure under this policy when that person has granted permission for HRV to release such details to other specified agencies, or where HRV is legally obligated to provide such disclosure.

5.7 Disclosure Support

In addition to protecting the identity of a person making a disclosure under this policy, a specified integrity official will be appointed to oversee the protection and welfare of that



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person to minimise or mitigate any risk that person may face in regard to potential harassment, discrimination or loss of reputation.

Where applicable, the assistance provided by the 'HRV Industry Assistance Program' will be made available as required and where appropriate, considering the protections afforded that person.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

HRV will always, act in the best interests of the Harness Racing Industry and with the intent of protecting the integrity and reputation of HRV and the industry. Where possible, HRV may give consideration to affording immunity, or reduced punitive action against a person making a disclosure under this policy should that person be identified as being implicated to a lesser extent in a breach of the AHRR which is intertwined in the disclosure. It should be noted however that HRV will not offer the same immunity or reduced punitive action on behalf of another Principal Racing Authority and at no time will offer or suggest such action with regard to potential breaches of the law or criminal prosecution.

7. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as required to address changes to legislation or the AHRR, at a minimum biennial basis.

Board Approved
14 Apr 2021