



RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **NEW HARNESS RULE OF RACING - Administration of Alkalinising Agents**

### **Introduction**

Harness Racing Australia has advised of the following new Harness Rule of Racing. Due to Western Australia's statutory provisions with respect to the Rules of Racing this will come into effect in WA as of 1 February 2018.

Trainers should take particular note of new Harness Rule of Racing 196C that bans the administration of alkalinising agents to a horse, both on the day of a race and during the one Clear Day prior to the day of the race.

The purpose of this notice is to explain the changes and to assist trainers and veterinary practitioners in managing compliance with the new Rule.

### **New Harness Rule 196C**

**196C. (1)** A person must not administer an alkalinising agent in any manner to a horse which is engaged to run in a race:

- (a) at any time on the day of the scheduled race and prior to the start of the race;
- (b) at any time within one (1) clear day of the commencement of the race.

(2) Any person who:-

- (a) administers an alkalinising agent;
- (b) attempts to administer an alkalinising agent;
- (c) causes an alkalinising agent to be administered; and/or
- (d) is a party to the administration of, or an attempt to administer, an alkalinising agent contrary to sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

(3) Where the Stewards are satisfied that a horse has, or is likely to have been, administered any alkalinising agent contrary to sub-rule (1), the Stewards may prevent the horse from starting in any relevant race.

(4) For the purposes of this Rule:-

one clear day means the twenty four (24) hour period from 12.01 a.m. to 12 midnight.

### **Explanation of New Rule 196C**

This new rule makes it an offence to administer, attempt to administer or cause to be administered, both on the day of a race and during the one clear day prior to a race, any substance that meets the below definition of an alkalinising agent.

For the purposes of Rule 196C, an alkalinising agent is defined as any substance that may elevate the plasma total carbon dioxide (TCO<sub>2</sub>) of a horse when administered by any route.

One Clear Day is defined within the Rule to mean a twenty four hour period from 12:01 a.m. to 12 midnight. For practical purposes, a clear day restriction means that the calculation of the number of days for which the procedure/ treatment is banned does not take into account the day of treatment nor the day of racing.

For example, the restriction on the administration of alkalinising agents is one clear day. This means that if a horse is racing on a Friday, the last time it may be administered alkalinising agents, is midnight on the Wednesday. In this case, the Clear Day is the Thursday.

A clear day is not the 24 hour period prior to the time of racing.

***Alkalinising agents that must not be administered either on the day of the race or within the one clear day prior to racing include, but are not limited to; bicarbonates, citrates, succinates, acetates, propionates, maleates, lactates and trometamol (e.g. THAM, tris buffer or trometamine) and also include products marketed as urinary alkalinisers and hind gut buffers.***

***Products that contain alkalinising agents and which fall within this definition include proprietary formulations such as: Sodium Bicarbonate ("bicarb"), sodium citrate, Baladene®, Lang's Solution® for intravenous use, Neutra-Syrup®, Neutralka®, Neutrolene®, Neutrolene Plus® and Neutradex® and any other products that are marketed as lactic acid buffering or neutralising products. These products must not be administered to a horse on the day of the race prior to racing, or within the one clear day prior to race day.***

This rule does not prohibit the use of balanced, commercial electrolyte supplements or feeds which may contain some alkalinising agents, but which can be demonstrated to have negligible effects on plasma TCO<sub>2</sub> when administered in feed according to the manufacturer's recommendations for normal daily use. These commercial balanced electrolyte supplements may be fed in normally recommended amounts within the one clear day.

Examples of normal balanced electrolyte products would include such proprietary preparations as; Applyte Gel®, Electromix®, Electro Paste®, Electrovite Paste®, Equilyte®, Endura-Max®, Endura-Max Paste®, Equicharge®, Horsport®, Humidimix®, KelatoLYTE Electrolyte Replacer®, Ranvet Electrolytes®, Recharge®, Restore®, Salkavite® and Vetsense®.

Regardless of the operation of this rule, in the event that an elevated level of TCO<sub>2</sub> beyond the threshold is detected from any sample taken by the Stewards, the rule does not provide a defence to a charge laid against a person under the Rules. Consequently even if a product that is described or may be described as a 'balanced electrolyte supplement', such as the examples above, is fed/administered and a horse returns an elevated level of TCO<sub>2</sub> greater than 36.0mm/L, the absolute and strict liability operation of the 'presentation' rule remains and an offence is committed.

**Barbara Scott  
Chief Steward Harness**