

## **Notice to Veterinarians and Industry Participants**

### **IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS TO THE AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING**

#### **Stomach-Tubing and Administration of Alkalinising Agents.**

##### **Introduction**

The Australian Racing Board (ARB) has advised of the following amendments to the Australian Rules of Racing. Due to Western Australia's statutory provisions with respect to the Rules of Racing these will come into effect as of 1 October 2013.

Trainers should take particular note of the amendments that ban the stomach-tubing of a horse, and the administration of alkalinising agents, both on the day of its race and during the one Clear Day prior to the day of the race.

Rule of Racing AR. 64G and new Rule of Racing AR. 178AA will be implemented that effectively:

- (i) Prohibit the procedure of stomach tubing (nasogastric intubation) within one clear day of racing.
- (ii) Prohibit the administration of alkalinizing agents within one clear day of racing.

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

##### **New definition to AR.1**

“**Clear Day**” means a 24 hour period from 12.01am to 12 midnight.”

##### ***Effect of Amendment***

A **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 both stomach-tubing and the administration of alkalinizing agents is one clear day. This means that if a horse is racing on a Saturday, the last time it may be stomach-tubed, or be administered alkalinizing agents, is 11:59 pm on the Thursday. In this case, the Clear Day is the Friday.

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

## **Amendment to AR.64G**

**“AR.64G.** (1) No person, without the permission of the Stewards, may stomach-tube, attempt to stomach-tube, cause to be stomach-tubed or be a party to the stomach-tubing of a horse which is engaged to be run in:

(a) a race: at any time on the day of the race prior to the start of that race or during the one Clear Day prior to the day of the race; or

(b) an official trial or jump-out: at any time on the day of official trial or jump-out prior to the start of that event or during the one Clear Day prior to the day of the official trial or jump-out.

For the purpose of this rule, “stomach-tubed” and variations of that term means any application to a horse of a naso-gastric tube.

(2) Any horse that has been stomach-tubed contrary to the provisions of AR.64G(1)(a) or (b) may be prohibited from starting in any relevant race, official trial or jump-out.

(3) Any horse that has been stomach-tubed contrary to the provisions of AR.64G(1)(a) may be disqualified from the relevant race in which it started.”

### ***Effect of Amendment***

Mindful of the definition of “one Clear Day” this rule operates to extend the period of time where it is an offence to stomach tube a horse that is engaged to run in a race or official trial or jump out, to include not only the day of the race, but also that period of time captured by the definition of one Clear Day.

Accordingly it is the use of a stomach tube during the excluded period of time that gives rise to an offence. That includes using a stomach tube to administer any substance including electrolytes, alkalinising agents, oiling etc as it is the use of the tube during the excluded time that is prevented by the rule, regardless of what substance is being administered.

### **New Rule 178AA**

**“AR.178AA.** (1) A person must not administer an alkalinising agent, in any manner, to a horse which is engaged to run in any race, official trial or jump-out:

(a) at any time on the day of the scheduled race, official trial or jump out and prior to the start of such event; and

(b) at any time during the one Clear Day prior to 12.01am on the day of the scheduled race, official trial, or jump out.

(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 AR.178AA(1) commits an offence and may be penalised.

(3) Where the Stewards are satisfied that a horse has, or is likely to have been, administered any alkalinising agent contrary to AR.178AA(1), the Stewards may prevent the horse from starting in any relevant race, official trial or jump-out.

(4) Where a horse has been administered any alkalinising agent contrary to AR.178AA(1), the horse may be disqualified from any relevant race in which the horse competed.

(5) For the purposes of AR.178AA, 'alkalinising agent':

- (a) means any substance that may elevate the plasma total carbon dioxide (TCO<sub>2</sub>) of a horse when administered by any route;
- (b) includes but is not limited to substances that are bicarbonates, citrates, succinates, acetates, propionates, maleates, lactates and trometamol (THAM, Tris Buffer or Trometamine) and also include products marketed as urinary alkalinisers and hind gut buffers;
- (c) does not include substances:
  - (i) that are alkalinising agents which are contained in commercial feeds and/or balanced commercial electrolyte supplements which when fed and consumed according to the manufacturers' recommendations for normal daily use have a negligible effect on plasma TCO<sub>2</sub>; and
  - (ii) in respect of which the Stewards have granted an express exemption from the operation of AR.178AA, provided that any exemption from the definition of alkalinising agent granted under this rule does not constitute a defence to a charge laid against a person following the detection by an Official Racing Laboratory of a TCO<sub>2</sub> concentration in a

horse in excess of the threshold prescribed by AR.178C(1)(a).”

### ***Effect of Amendment***

Applying the definition of “one Clear day” this rule makes it an offence to administer, attempt to administer or cause to be administered any substance that meets the definition within the rule of an ‘alkalinising agent’.

For the purposes of **AR.178AA**, an alkalinising agent is any substance that may elevate the plasma TCO<sub>2</sub> of a horse, when administered by any route, with the exception of balanced, commercial electrolyte supplements 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.

AR.178AA prohibits the administration of alkalinising agents by any route within the one clear day of racing, including in feed.

Alkalinising agents that must not be administered either on the day of the race or within the one clear day of racing include, but are not limited to, bicarbonates, citrates, succinates, acetates, propionates, maleates, lactates and trometamol (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 the definition include proprietary formulations such as: Sodium Bicarbonate (“bicarb”), 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 within one clear day prior to racing or prior to competing in an official trial or jump-out.**

Balanced electrolyte supplements and potassium supplements that contain electrolytes may be administered or 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®, Endura-Max®, Endura-Max Paste®, Equicharge® Horsport® Humidimix®, KelatoLYTE Electrolyte Replacer®, Ranvet Electrolytes®, Recharge®, Restore® and Vetsense®.

Commercial electrolyte supplements which may contain some alkalinising agents but which should have negligible effects on plasma TCO<sub>2</sub> when administered in feed according to the manufacturers’ recommendations for normal daily use include Equilyte®, Race Electrolyte®, and Salkavite®. Examples of commercial balanced intravenous solutions that can be used up to and including the day prior to racing but not pre-race on the day of the race include Darrow’s Solution®, Hartmann’s Solution® and Lactated Ringers.

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 AR178. 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 AR178 'presentation' rule remains and an offence is committed.