



RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **NOTICE OF AMENDMENTS TO RWWA RULES OF HARNESS RACING AND RWWA REGULATIONS RELEVANT TO THE RWWA RULES OF HARNESS RACING**

In accordance with Section 45 (1) (b) of the *Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003*, notice is hereby given that the Board of Racing and Wagering WA has resolved that the RWWA Rules of Harness Racing be amended as follows;

### **Local Rule amendments applicable 26 March 2021**

#### **Introduction of Driving Skills Panel**

##### ***LR 174A. Driving Skills Panel***

- (1) RWWA may engage a Driving Skills Panel for the purpose of assisting in the mentoring of and provision of remedial or technique training for conditional drivers and drivers.*
- (2) The Stewards may at any time direct a driver to the Driving Skills Panel for mentoring or any remedial or technique training as they think fit.*
- (3) A driver must not fail or refuse to attend the Driving Skills Panel when directed, or fail or refuse to comply with any reasonable direction of the Driving Skills Panel.*

*The Stewards may suspend or limit a driver's permission to drive in races in any way the Stewards think fit if they find that any aspect of a driver's race driving technique, method or practice may be a hazard to that driver or other drivers, or may be contrary to a horse's welfare.*

Riding Skills Panels were introduced throughout Australia in Thoroughbred Racing to assist any riders who were having difficulties with their riding style/skills, whip use, positioning in races, causing interference, conduct at Stewards Inquiries etc and it is now proposed that a similar model be introduced in Harness Racing for Drivers.

The Thoroughbred panel has proved very effective in providing guidance to riders in a formal, constructive discussion that is aimed at providing guidance to improve performance. The process enables training, mentoring and or other processes to be in place that if not followed enables stewards to penalise the rider if an effort to meet the required outcomes does not eventuate.

This process will now be duplicated in Harness Racing with the introduction of this new rule.

#### **New Local Rule 213B – Shockwave Therapy**

##### ***LR 213B.***

*No person other than a qualified Veterinarian shall perform Shockwave Therapy on a horse without the formal approval of RWWA.*

*Without limiting Rule 213B, subject to formal approval by RWWA persons other than qualified Veterinarians may perform shockwave therapy on a horse under such conditions as RWWA may direct which will include that treatment*

*may only be applied to Standardbred racehorses that have been referred by a registered veterinarian, who has recommended such treatment as confirmed in writing by that veterinarian.*

National Rule 213B was introduced on 4 December 2020. This rule restricted the possession of devices to perform shockwave therapy, and the performance of shockwave therapy on a horse, to registered veterinarians.

Following submissions from within the Harness Racing industry it was evident that there were lay people who were, prior to 4 December 2020 conducting Shockwave Therapy on a professional basis.

The new Local Rule will allow persons other than qualified veterinarians to conduct this therapy on a conditional basis **subject to prior approval by RWWA** and that any shockwave therapy conducted thereafter may only be applied to Standardbreds after they have been referred by a registered veterinarian, who has recommended such treatment as confirmed in writing by that veterinarian.

## **Amendment to RWWA Regulations relevant to the RWWA Rules of Harness Racing**

### **Introduction of Stable Foreperson Licence**

#### **Reg.90.2A. Stable foreperson licence**

- (1) Application for a stable foreperson licence shall be made on a New Licence Application – Harness form.*
- (2) A stable foreperson licence shall not be granted to a person younger than 18 years.*
- (3) Payment of a one off fee.*
- (4) Applicant must have had has at least five (5) years of practical experience reasonably required to carry on the vocation of a trainer, including (but not limited to) experience in, attendance to, and performance of duties involving the handling of standardbred racehorses at stables, trials and race meetings.*
- (5) Must be currently licensed as a Stablehand, Driver or Trainer*
- (6) Must pass a written, and practical horse handling competency and RWWA rules and policies, examination and interview conducted by the Stewards.*
- (7) Must supply a letter from the nominating trainer as to why a Stable Foreperson licence is required.*
- (8) The listed trainer must have a minimum of twelve (12) horses in training.*
- (9) Licenses are applicable for a 12 month seasonal period then are subject to annual renewal for which there is no fee.*

It is the current practice for Harness trainers with larger teams of horses to be granted permission for a licensed person employed by them to be in charge of their horses on a seasonal basis when they are not able to attend race meetings, trials or trackwork, or alternatively, the trainer provides a letter of authority for another trainer to act on his behalf for any individual meetings he cannot attend.

The issue with this process is that such approval is a delegated authority only and is not recognised or formalised by a particular type of licence to act on a continued basis and carry on the responsibilities of the licence in the absence of the trainer on an ongoing basis and assume responsibility in presenting and preparing horses for races, trials, and trackwork on behalf of the registered trainer. Further, trainer's delegates may not have the required knowledge,

experience, or day to day contact with the trainer's stable to perform this task, in particular when they may be required to represent the trainer at any race day inquiry.

The introduction of a Stable Foreperson's licence to act as a representative of a trainer on a continual basis throughout the course of a racing season would overcome this issue and ensure that only those persons who have been assessed and approved by the Stewards to have the knowledge and experience to perform that duty would be licensed to do so.

Having a licenced Stable Foreperson would result in Stewards dealing with same person who has an intimate understanding of the stable and therefore have a greater knowledge of the horses rather than a temporary stand in who accepts authority on the basis of a signed letter only. An important and further benefit is that it would also enhance the person's level of experience and skills and provide a pathway to becoming a trainer with the experience gained of managing the workload of a racing stable and accepting more responsibility and dealing with race day Stewards inquiries.

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