



### **Notice to Harness Trainers – Intra-articular injections stand-down period**

Harness trainers should note the introduction of a new Rule of Racing HR196D, that prohibits the intra-articular administration of any substance to a Standardbred racehorse within 8 clear days of racing. This Rule is effective from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

HR 196D reads as follows;

- (1) A person shall not within eight (8) clear days of the commencement of a race administer, attempt to administer or cause to be administered an intra-articular injection to a horse nominated for that race.
- (2) A Steward shall order the withdrawal or disqualification of a horse that has been either the subject of an administration or an attempted administration of an injection in breach of subrule (1).
- (3) A person who fails to comply with sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence.
- (4) For the purposes of this Rule "one clear day" means the twenty four (24) hour period from 12.01 a.m. to midnight.

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.

As such a stand down time of 8 clear days equates to 10 regular days when including the day of administration and the day of racing.

In applying HR196D and by example, a horse subjected to an intra-articular administration with any substance on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month, is ineligible to race until the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

Trainers are referred to the RWAA Harness Clear Day Rule chart available under veterinary notices on the RWAA website to further assist with the application of clear day principles.

This prescribed stand down time is intended as a minimum period before racing within which any substance must not be administered intra-articularly, including any shorter-acting medications. This stand down period must not be confused with the recommended "withdrawal" time of the particular medication used. The "withdrawal" period for a prohibited substance is calculated to ensure a horse is presented clear of the prohibited substance when competing. In certain situations, specifically for longer acting corticosteroid preparations such as methylprednisolone, and for injections into low volume joints such as the lower hock joints, the recommended "withdrawal" period may be much longer than the minimum stand down time prescribed by HR196D, and as such must continue to be observed.

**Note:** The administration of intra-articular medications is "treatment" according to HR190B and therefore must be recorded by a trainer and/or their veterinarian as required by this Rule.

Trainers are advised to contact the RWAA Veterinary Department for further advice on this matter 08 9445 5459 or 08 9445 5305.

14<sup>th</sup> March 2021