



RACING AND WAGERING  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **Advanced Diagnostic Imaging Rebate Policy (AWP020)**

Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWAA) is committed to supporting initiatives that contribute to the safety and wellbeing of horses in training and racing. RWAA has established an advanced diagnostic imaging scheme which will provide owners and trainers with a rebate on the cost of using advanced imaging techniques to investigate musculoskeletal conditions in racehorses.

Advanced diagnostic imaging modalities are considered sensitive diagnostic tools and are proven to detect subtle bone and soft tissue changes earlier than conventional imaging techniques such as radiology and ultrasonography. The early ability to identify subtle musculoskeletal changes will allow trainers and veterinarians to implement management strategies to improve the welfare outcomes for horses in their care. Other benefits may include increased career longevity, improved racing performance and enhanced options for Western Australian racehorses in life after racing.

### **Eligibility**

This policy applies to active registered thoroughbred and standardbred racehorses domiciled in Western Australia.

To be eligible for the rebate the thoroughbred or standardbred horse must be registered as active or spelling within the relevant national racing database and have been domiciled in Western Australia for a minimum of three months prior to applying for the rebate.

Prior to accessing advanced diagnostic imaging, the horse must be presenting with lameness or a musculoskeletal condition affecting the locomotory system and have undergone a comprehensive soundness evaluation by a registered veterinarian in Western Australia. The evaluation must include the following steps to localise the location/s of the lameness or musculoskeletal condition:

- a. A detailed history to determine how long the problem has been present and what factors may influence it.
- b. A comprehensive soundness evaluation relevant to the presentation, including the use of routine assessment tools such as flexion tests.

Where indicated, the soundness evaluation should include:

1. Perineural or intra-articular analgesia (regional nerve and joint blocks) of the limb(s) involved.
2. Plain radiography or ultrasonography

The veterinarian is required to provide a written report detailing the results of the above evaluation and confirming the recommendation that advanced diagnostic imaging is required to assist in determining a diagnosis.

The advanced diagnostic imaging modalities eligible for the rebate are:

- Scintigraphy (bone scanning)
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Computed Tomography (CT)
- Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT)

All eligible advanced imaging services must be undertaken within Western Australia.

Diagnostic imaging modalities not specified as eligible within this policy will not be considered for the rebate.

### **Financial contribution**

RWWA will refund 50 per cent of the cost of the advanced diagnostic imaging, up to \$1500 inclusive of GST (if GST registered). Applications made for subsequent or multiple advanced imaging investigations of the same horse will be considered on an individual case basis and must be supported by a report from the referring veterinarian recommending additional imaging.

Associated costs including, but not limited to, the lameness examination by the referring veterinarian, transport of the horse to and from the practice, other associated costs such as sedation, anaesthesia or hospitalisation and any recommended treatment following completion of the diagnostic imaging will not be covered under this scheme.

The advanced diagnostic imaging rebate is funded by RWWA's Animal Welfare program where one per cent of advertised prizemoney from all three racing codes is directed to fund dedicated animal welfare initiatives.

### **Applications deemed to be ineligible**

Where an application is deemed to be ineligible for the rebate, the applicant has the right to dispute the decision. Any dispute must be made in writing to the Head of Animal Welfare at [animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au](mailto:animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au), detailing why the application for the advanced imaging rebate should be considered eligible. Any subsequent decision will be final.

### **Claiming the rebate**

An application form (Advanced Imaging Rebate Application Form – AWF036) must be submitted to RWWA for consideration at [animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au](mailto:animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au) accompanied by the clinical report from the referring veterinarian, the veterinary radiologist report and the paid invoice from the veterinary practice performing the advanced diagnostic imaging. All reports must be original and signed by the relevant veterinarian.

The form is available on request from [animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au](mailto:animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au).

All queries about the scheme should be directed to (08) 9445 5221 or [animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au](mailto:animalwelfare@rwwa.com.au)

### **Scheme follow up**

As part of RWWA's commitment to monitoring the traceability and welfare of racehorses in Western Australia an inquiry into the progress of all horses successfully enrolled in the scheme will be made by the animal wellbeing department approximately three months after the advanced imaging.

### **Related documents**

- AWF036 Advanced Imaging Rebate Form V2

### **Document Control**

Version 1.0 Scheme commenced February 2022

Version 2.0 Policy updated June 2023