

### **CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIAS**

Where a horse is detected with a pathological cardiac arrhythmia (including atrial fibrillation) on auscultation after a race or official trial the horse must undergo diagnostic procedures to determine the cause of the arrhythmia and provide a veterinary clearance declaring the horse suitable to return to racing. The protocols below must be followed according to the number of occasions the horse has been detected with a cardiac arrhythmia.

#### **1. Cardiac arrhythmia (pathological) found for the first time**

Where a horse is found to have experienced a pathological cardiac arrhythmia for the first time

- a) The horse must be examined by a qualified veterinary surgeon and a veterinary clearance report submitted to the RWWA Stewards which includes the results of an electrocardiography (ECG) performed at rest which records the horse to have normal sinus rhythm.
- b) The horse must complete a satisfactory trial, or gallop, of at least 1000m in the presence of a Steward.
- c) The horse must be examined immediately post-trial or gallop by an official veterinarian and declared free of cardiac arrhythmia.

#### **2. Cardiac arrhythmia (pathological) found for a second time**

Where a horse is found to have experienced a pathological cardiac arrhythmia for a second time

- (a) The horse must not start in a further race, official trial or jump out until the Stewards have received a satisfactory report from a qualified veterinary surgeon with specialist qualifications in equine medicine which should include the results of:
  - (i) echocardiography (heart ultrasound) performed by that veterinarian at rest;
  - (ii) electrocardiography (ECG) performed by that veterinarian at rest and at exercise which demonstrates the horse has normal sinus rhythm.
  - (iii) any other examination deemed necessary by the specialist veterinarian to determine the likely significance of the cardiac arrhythmia.

Following acceptance by the RWWA Stewards of the veterinary specialist report, the following applies

- (a) The horse must complete a satisfactory trial or gallop of at least 1000m in the presence of a Steward.
- (b) The horse must be examined immediately post-trial or gallop by an official veterinarian and declared free of cardiac arrhythmia.

#### **3. Cardiac arrhythmia (pathological) found for a third time**

Where a horse is found to have experienced a pathological cardiac arrhythmia for a third time, the horse will be ineligible to start in any race, official trial or jump out or be trained, unless otherwise determined by the Stewards in writing.