HARNESS RACING AUSTRALIA
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AUSTRALIAN HARNESS RACING RULES
Rules Amendments - HRA approved 17 July 2026
(date of effect: 1 October 2026 except where otherwise noted)

4. LICENCES

Grant of Licences and Other Matters – Drivers Licence

- **Amend Rule 90A(1.9)(a)**

90A. (1.9) The holder of a driver's licence -

(a) Grade C, is licensed to drive at trials *and to carry out track work.*

5. HORSES

Medical and surgical procedures

- **Amend Rule 99A(2)**
- **Renumber Rule 99A(3) to 99A(5) and Amend**
- **Add new Rule 99A(3)(a), (b), (4)**

99A. (1) A person shall not perform, attempt to perform or authorise the performance of the procedure of blistering.

(2) For the purposes of this rule blistering means the application of a substance to cause blistering (vesiculation) and inflammation of the skin and underlying tissues.

(3) If a horse has been subjected to a blistering procedure:-

(a) The horse is ineligible for a minimum period of twelve months; and

(b) A person must not enter or start the horse in any race or track work whilst ineligible.

(4) If a horse is subject to a blistering procedure the connections of the horse must provide written notification of that to the Stewards as soon as practicable.

(5) A person who fails to comply with any provision of this rule is guilty of an offence.

- **Add new Rule 99B(1), (2)(a), (b), (c), (3)(a), (b), (4)**

99B. (1) A person shall not perform, attempt to perform or authorise the performance of the procedure of blood letting.

(2) For the purposes of this rule blood letting means the withdrawal of blood from a horse for any purpose, including the withdrawal, manipulation and reinfusion of homologous, heterologous, or autologous blood products or blood cells into the circulatory system other than for:-

(a) Diagnostic/laboratory testing procedures; or

(b) Use by a veterinary surgeon in any procedure/s performed for life saving purposes; or

(c) In the use of veterinary regenerative therapies for the treatment of musculoskeletal injury or disease as the case may be.

(3) If a horse has been subjected to a blood letting procedure:-

(a) The horse is ineligible to race for a minimum period of twelve months; and

(b) A person must not enter or start the horse in any race whilst ineligible.

(4) A person who fails to comply with sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

- **Amend Rule 100(3)**
- **Repeal Rule 100A**
- **Add new Rule 100A(1)(a), (b)**
- **Add new Rule 100A(2)**

100. (3) Except as provided for in Rule 100A, where a horse has been gelded the connections of such gelding shall not nominate such gelding for a race to be run within a period of 28 days of the horse being gelded.

100A. ~~Notification of gelding or performance of other specified procedures shall be given to the Controlling Body or Stewards in such form as the Controlling Body may determine.~~

100A. (1) If a horse has been subjected to a chemical castration or immunocastration procedure:-

(a) The horse is not permitted to start in any race or be used for the purposes of breeding for a minimum period of twelve months; and

(b) A person must not enter or start the horse in any race.

(2) If a horse is subject to a chemical castration or immunocastration the connections of the horse must provide written notification of that to the Stewards as soon as practicable.

Bleeding Attacks

- **Add new Rule 101BB(1), (2)**

101BB. (1) Upon a person becoming aware of the presence of blood in a horse's nostril and/or nostrils at a meeting this shall not be interfered with in any manner until such occurrence has been confirmed by the official on course veterinarian and permission has been granted by the veterinarian or the Stewards.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with this rule is guilty of an offence.

Atrial Fibrillation

- **Amend Rule 101C(2)(a)**
- **Amend Rule 101C(2)(b)**
- **Renumber Rule 101C(2)(c) to 101C(2)(e) and Amend**
- **Add new Rule 101C(2)(c)**
- **Amend Rule 101C(2)(d)**
- **Add new Rule 101C(2)(f)**
- **Amend Rule 101C(3)**

101C. (1) If a horse suffers atrial fibrillation the trainer shall immediately and in any event within 24 hours notify the Stewards.

(2) If the Stewards are satisfied that a horse has suffered atrial fibrillation the Stewards shall:

(a) After the first episode stand the horse down from racing for a period of fourteen (14) days, and such further period as required by the Stewards to obtain a veterinary clearance which includes a normal ECG prior to a trial and then trial to the satisfaction of the Stewards.

(b) If the horse suffers a second episode within twelve months after the first episode, stand the horse down from racing for a period of twenty eight (28) days, and such further period as required by the Stewards to obtain a veterinary clearance which includes a normal ECG before trialling and then trial on two occasions to the satisfaction of the Stewards.

(c) If the horse suffers a second episode more than 12 months after the first episode, the provisions of sub-rule (2)(a) apply.

(d) If the horse suffers a third episode more than twelve months after the second episode, the provisions of sub-rule (2)(b) shall apply.

(e) If the horse suffers a third episode within twelve months after the second episode, bar the horse for life.

(f) If the horse suffers a fourth episode at any time, bar the horse for life.

(3) A trainer who fails to comply with sub-rule (1) or races a horse while it is stood down or barred under sub rule (2) is guilty of an offence.

9. DRIVERS

Whips

- **Amend Rule 156(2)(a)**
  Repeal Rule 156(2)(b)(ii)
  Renumber Rule 156(2)(b)(iii) to 156(2)(b)(ii)
  (date of effect 01/01/2027)

156. (2) (a) A driver shall only apply the whip and/or the rein in a wrist only flicking motion whilst holding a rein in each hand with the tip of the whip pointed forward.

(b) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (a), "*wrist only flicking motion*" means:-

(i) Ensuring no force is generated by the use of the elbow or shoulder when applying the whip.

(ii) ~~The forearm is not raised beyond forty-five degrees relative to the racing surface.~~

(ii) Not applying the whip with overt force.

Offences – relating to matters at the start and during the race

- **Add new Rule 162(1)(vvv)**

162. (1) A driver shall not -

(vvv) forcefully apply pressure to the reins alternately, when attempting to return the horse to its correct gait, or for any other purpose.

- **Renumber Rule 166(2) to 166(3) and Amend**
- **Add new Rule 166(2)**

166. (1) Except in the final lap of a race a horse shall not enter any part of the sprint lane in an attempt to pass other horses or improve its position.

(2) If a driver's horse or sulky shifts inside the line of the sprint lane prior to the final lap, the driver shall restrain the horse and, without interference to another runner, return to a position outside the line of the sprint lane at the first opportunity; and

(3) The driver of a horse in contravention of sub-rule (1) or (2) is guilty of an offence and the horse may be disqualified or given a lower placing.

12. PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Out of Competition Testing

- **Amend Rule 190A(1) preamble**
- **Amend Rule 190A(1)(a)**

190A. (1) When a sample taken at any time from a horse has detected in it any prohibited substance specified in sub-rule (2):-

(a) The trainer and/or any other person who had the care, custody or control of such horse at the relevant time shall be guilty of an offence.

(b) The horse may be disqualified from any race in which it has competed subsequent to the taking of such a sample where, in the opinion of the Stewards, the prohibited substance was likely to have had any direct and/or indirect effect on the horse at the time of the race.

Log Book

- **Amend Rule 190B(1) preamble**

190B. (1) A trainer shall at all times keep and maintain a log book *in the form specified by the Stewards:-*

(a) listing all therapeutic substances in his or her possession;

(b) recording all details of treatment administered to any horse in his or her care and including as a minimum requirement:

(i) the name of the horse

(ii) the date and time of administration of the treatment

(iii) the name of the treatment (brand name of active constituent)

(iv) the route of administration

(v) the amount given

(vi) the name and signature of the person or persons administering and/or authorising treatment.

Injectable product containing cobalt salts

- **Renumber Rule 194B(2) to 194B(3)**
- **Add new Rule 194B(2)**
  (date of effect 01/01/2027)

194B. (1) A person must not have in his or her possession or on his or her premises any injectable product which contains cobalt salts.

(2) Cobalt salts means an ionic compound containing cobalt, including but not limited to cobalt gluconate, cobalt chloride, cobalt sulphate, cobalt nitrate and cobalt acetate, whether contained in a preparation alone or in combination with one or more other substances.

(3) A person who fails to comply with sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence.

14. GENERAL OFFENCES

Horses

- **Amend 218A(1)(c)**

218A. (1) A person having responsibility for the welfare of a horse shall:-

(a) Exercise reasonable care, control or supervision of the horse so as to prevent:-

(i) An act of cruelty to the horse; or

(ii) The horse's body condition from declining to, in the opinion of the Stewards based on veterinary advice, an unacceptable level.

(b) Take such reasonable steps to alleviate any pain inflicted upon or being suffered by the horse.

(c) Promptly obtain veterinary advice and provide treatment immediately when necessary in accordance with that advice.

(d) Provide and ensure that the horse is ingesting proper and sufficient nutrition.

Blood Doping

- **Amend Rule 254A(2)**

254A. (1) Subject to sub-rule (2) a person shall not either directly or indirectly withdraw from a horse, manipulate and reinfuse into a horse homologous, heterologous or autologous blood products or blood cells.

(2) A registered veterinary surgeon may for lifesaving purposes or through use of veterinary regenerative therapies for the treatment of musculoskeletal injury or disease, or for diagnostic/laboratory testing procedures, withdraw from a horse, manipulate and reinfuse into a horse, homologous, heterologous or autologous blood products or blood cells.

(3) A horse that is treated in accordance with sub-rule (2) shall not be permitted to start in any race for a period of eight clear days from the date of the treatment.

(4) A person who fails to comply with sub-rules (1), (2) or (3) is guilty of an offence.

16. DISQUALIFIED PERSONS

Sale of Horses

- **Amend Rule 265(1), (4), (5)**

265. (1) Unless the Controlling Body or the Stewards otherwise approve(s), a disqualified person must within 28 days from the date of disqualification or such further period as the Controlling Body or the Stewards may allow, sell by public auction or any other way approved by the Controlling Body or the Stewards, any horse of which that person is the owner.

(2) A sale must be advertised to the satisfaction of the Controlling Body.

(3) Where the sale occurs other than in the jurisdiction of the Controlling Body the recognised harness racing authority in the place of sale must be given reasonable notice of sale and it must be advertised to that authority's satisfaction.

(4) If the Controlling Body or the Stewards are not satisfied that a sale was effected in good faith it/they may refuse to approve a transfer or lease of a horse subject to the sale whether from the disqualified owner or anyone else.

(5) If the Controlling Body or the Stewards are satisfied that horses owned by a disqualified person are not being used and will not be used for any purpose connected with the harness racing industry, it/they may permit the disqualified person not to sell them.

(6) A person in breach of any provision of this rule or who is guilty of lack of good faith in effecting a sale is guilty of an offence.

17. EQUIPMENT AND COLOURS

Offences

- **Renumber Rule 273(1) to 273(1)(a)**
- **Add new Rule 273(1)(b)**

273. (1) (a) A person shall not use or permit the use of any gear or equipment that is not listed on the HRA Approved Gear List, except with the permission of the Chairman of Stewards.

(b) A person shall not have in their possession any gear or equipment that is listed on the HRA Banned List, except with the permission of the Chairman of Stewards.

19. ARTIFICIAL BREEDING

Artificial Breeding Requirements – Embryo Transfer

- **Amend Rule 285A(10)(a), (b)**
- **Amend Rule 285A(11)**
- **Add new Rule 285A(16)**

285A. (10) (a) Application for approval to perform an embryo transfer procedure is to be made in such manner or form as may be determined by the Controlling Body.

(b) Notification of a completed embryo transfer procedure is to be given within seven (7) days of completion and made in such manner or form as may be determined by the Controlling Body.

(11) A mare who has not attained the age of 2 years or is not registered in Australia cannot be used as a donor or recipient for an embryo transfer procedure.

(12) A donor mare which has been used in a breeding season for an embryo transfer procedure in respect of which there has been official notification of a 42 day positive test result to such transfer shall not be used in the same breeding season for any method of breeding.

(13) In a breeding season only 1 fertilised ovum may be transferred from the donor mare to a recipient mare at each breeding cycle until a successful pregnancy results.

(14) A recipient mare must be of a breed type which in the opinion of the veterinary surgeon is compatible.

(15) In a breeding season if more than one foal is born of a donor mare then only the first born foal is eligible for registration.

(16) A person who fails to comply with any provision of this rule is guilty of an offence.

Summary of Amendments – HRA approved 17 July 2026
(date of effect: 1 October 2026 except where otherwise noted)

RULES AMENDED
90A(1.9)(a), 99A(2), (5), 100(3), 101C(2)(a), (b), (d), (e), (3), 156(2)(a)*, 166(3), 190A(1) preamble, (1)(a), 190B(1) preamble, 218A(1)(c), 254A(2), 265(1), (4), (5), 285A(10)(a), (b), (11)

HEADINGS
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NEW RULES / SUB-RULES
99A(3)(a), (b), (4), 99B(1), (2)(a), (b), (c), (3)(a), (b), (4), 100A(1)(a), (b), (2), 101BB(1), (2), 101C(2)(c), (f), 162(1)(vvv), 166(2), 194B(2)*, 273(1), (b), 285A(16)

RULES REPEALED
100A, 156(2)(b)(ii)

RULES RENUMBERED
99A(3) to 99A(5), 101C(2)(c) to 101C(2)(e), 156(2)(b)(iii) to 156(2)(b)(ii)*, 166(2) to 166(3), 194B(2) to 194B(3)*, 273(1) to 273(1)(a)

* date of effect 01/01/2027