

CONSULTATION NOTICE – RULES OF RACING

Code of Racing	Thoroughbred
Rule	1) AR 55A – Frequency of Race Starts; 2) AR 101B – Trainer responsible for administration of stable; 3) AR 184 – Method of weighing-out and weighing-in; 4) AR 283 – Penalties; 5) AR 299 – Death of named horse; 6) Australian Screening Limits (for Therapeutic Substances); and 7) LR 129 – Limit on the Frequency of Starts.
Authorised for Consultation	March 19, 2025
Consultation Closes	April 16, 2025
Submissions to	policies@racingqueensland.com.au

Racing Queensland (**RQ**) has received notice from Racing Australia (**RA**) that it has adopted amendments to the Australian Rules of Racing as follows:

- 1) Add new AR 55A – Frequency of Race Starts – as per attached;
- 2) Add new AR 101B – Trainer responsible for administration of stable – as per attached;
- 3) Amend AR 184 – Method of weighing-out and weighing-in – as per attached;
- 4) Amend AR 283 – Penalties – as per attached;
- 5) Amend AR 299 – Death of named horse – as per attached; and
- 6) Amend Australian Screening Limits (for Therapeutic Substances) – as per attached.

Additionally, in light of the proposed introduction of a new AR 55A dealing with the frequency of race starts, RQ is proposing to delete Local Rule 129 – Limit on the Frequency of Starts, and rely on AR 55A for alignment with the national rules.

Full details of the rule amendments are provided in the following documentation from RA and RQ.

RA has advised that the national effective date for the amendments to the Australian Rules of Racing is **May 1, 2025**. Accordingly, should the proposed new AR 55A be adopted in Queensland, the proposed deletion of Local Rule 129 will coincide with this date.

Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback on the proposed rule changes as per the details at the top of this document.



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 55A

Background:

At their meeting in May 2024 COSC considered a recommendation received from VAAG to note their report in respect of "Frequency of Race Starts" and endorse progression towards implementation of a national rule of racing restricting the number of race starts a horse may have within a specified period.

It was noted that while not all PRA's regulated in this regard, RNSW, QRIC, RWWA and RSA had already adopted Local Rules of Racing dealing with race start frequency, however they were not entirely consistent. There was unanimous in principle support for a national rule to be developed following further VAAG consideration.

At the August 2024 meeting of COSC, feedback from VAAG was considered noting that VAAG had reached general consensus on a baseline position – that position being to regulate for no more than 5 starts in any 30-day period.

VAAG did not reach consensus on whether a restriction of no more than 10 race starts in any 90-day period is required, however the concept of drafting a national rule of racing in such a manner as to allow for any PRA who wishes to extend a restriction beyond the initial 30-day period, to do so was not opposed.

VAAG also discussed restricting horses competing on more than one occasion on any given day, and racing in consecutive days

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

At their meeting in August 2024 COSC agreed on a unanimous basis to progress the draft rule proposed at that meeting and recommended that Racing Australia adopt a new national rule of racing in those terms. It was noted that "discretion" will apply in respect of whether a horse may start on consecutive days – hence the word "may" is used in sub-rule (2) rather than "shall".

Consultation with and by the PRA's was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRA's have confirmed their support for this amendment with RNSW support on the basis that the decision maker be the PRA or the stewards which is consistent with other similar rules. This amendment has been incorporated to the proposed rule.

Racing Australia has determined to add the new rule AR 55A to give effect to adoption of the limitation on frequency of race starts.

The proposed addition to the rules is set out below in red.

Add a new Rule AR 55A as follows:

AR55A – Frequency of Race Starts

Without derogating from, or limiting any other provisions in the Rules;

- (1) A horse shall not start in more than one race on any one day.
- (2) A horse may only start in a race on consecutive days with the express permission of a PRA or the Stewards.
- (3) A horse shall not be permitted to start in a race on more than five (5) occasions during any thirty (30) day period.
- (4) Notwithstanding sub-rules (1), (2) and (3) of this rule, a PRA or the Stewards may decline to receive, or at any time after having received, reject any nomination or entry when the frequency of race starts of the horse is, in the opinion of a PRA or the Stewards and in their sole discretion, not appropriate based on considerations of, but not limited to, horse welfare.

For the avoidance of doubt, and without being limited to any extent, in making a determination under sub-rule (4) of this rule, a PRA or the Stewards may impose further restrictions on the race start frequency of a horse beyond any thirty (30) day period.

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 101B

Background:

At their meeting in May 2024 COSC considered a submission received from RNSW to consider an equivalent Australian Rule of Racing to mirror RNSW LR 78, and to expand the provisions to require a trainer to report any incident or occurrence that might create integrity/welfare issues.

It was noted that AR 105 currently only requires a trainer to report any occurrence that might affect a horse's performance. The RNSW, Local Rule – LR 78 states;

- (1) A trainer is at all times responsible for the administration and conduct of his or her stable.
- (2) A trainer is at all times responsible for the care, control, and supervision of the horses in his or her stable.
- (3) If a trainer is to absent from his or her stables, for a period of longer than 48 hours, he or she must, with the Stewards' permission and approval, deputise a licensed or registered person to be in charge of such stables during his or her absence.
- (4) Such deputation does not relieve the trainer in any way from his or her responsibilities for the care, control, and supervision of his or her horses and the conduct of his or her stables.
- (5) The person to whom responsibility is delegated does not have the authority to further delegate this responsibility.

At their meeting in August 2024 COSC considered advice which recommended that the current RNSW LR 78 can be adopted nationally as AR 101B and COSC was unanimous in its support for the adoption of a national rule of racing in the terms suggested at the August 2024 meeting.

Consultation with and by the PRA's was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRA's have confirmed their support for this amendment.

The proposed addition to the rules is set out below in red.

Add a new Rule AR 101B as follows:

AR 101B – Trainer responsible for administration of stable

1. A trainer is at all times responsible for the administration and conduct of his or her stable.
2. A trainer is at all times responsible for the care, control, and supervision of the horses in his or her stable.
3. If a trainer is to be absent from his or her stables, for a period of longer than 48 hours, he or she must, with the Stewards' permission and approval, deputise a licensed or registered person to be in charge of such stables during his or her absence.
4. Such deputation does not relieve the trainer in any way from his or her responsibilities for the care, control, and supervision of his or her horses and the conduct of his or her stables.
5. The person to whom responsibility is delegated does not have the authority to further delegate this responsibility.

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 184

Background:

At their meeting in May 2024 COSC considered a submission received from RNSW that a modification to AR184 should be considered to allow a rider to weigh out without a breastplate, as occurs in Hong Kong.

COSC was advised that the incidence of riders struggling to make the weight owing to the addition of a breastplate, generally at the last minute, or after having weighed out being added by the trainer is creating unnecessary disruptions to raceday logistics. It was further submitted that given a breastplate is used as a safety measure, COSC should consider whether the requirement for a breastplate to be included in a rider's weight is still practical and necessary.

At the May 2024 meeting the following amendment to AR 184 was proposed:

"When calculating a rider's weight in weighing-out and weighing-in:

(b) the following items must be included by the rider in the weight:

(iii) any other gear attached or to be attached to the saddle except gear specifically exempted under subrule (iv) of this rule."

(iv) a breastplate."

It was unanimously agreed for COSC members to consult at PRA level with a view as to whether there would be support for an amendment to AR184 to progress to RA for consideration.

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

At its meeting in August 2024 COSC was unanimous in its support for an amendment to AR184 in the terms suggested at the May 2024 meeting.

Consultation with and by the PRA's was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRA's have confirmed their support for this amendment.

The proposed amendments to the rules are set out below in red.

AR 184 Method of weighing-out and weighing-in

When calculating a rider's weight in weighing-out and weighing-in:

- (a) no account is to be taken of fractions of 0.5kg; and
- (b) the following items must be included by the rider in the weight:
 - (i) all items of clothing worn by the rider except for the rider's helmet, goggles, other face protection and gloves;
 - (ii) the saddle, lead bag, associated packing (excluding the saddle cloth) and neck strap; and
 - (iii) any other gear attached or to be attached to the saddle **except gear specifically exempted under subrule (iv) of this rule.**
 - (iv) a breastplate.**

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 231, AR283

Background:

In June 2023 and May 2024 COSC discussed the possible application of a minimum mandatory penalty regime to the possession aspect of AR231(2)(b) and an increase to the minimum mandatory penalty regime for the use aspect of AR231(2)(a). At the COSC meeting in August 2024, advice was considered about the matter.

AR231(2) states; A person must not:

(a) use, or attempt to use, any apparatus or other device capable of affecting the performance of a horse in a race, official trial, jump-out or training gallop;

(b) have in the person's possession any electric or electronic apparatus or other device capable of affecting the performance of a horse in a race, official trial, jump-out or training gallop

COSC noted:

- That for the use of any electric or electronic apparatus – AR283(6)(e) makes provision for a penalty of disqualification for a period of no less than...2 years.
- That for the possession of any electric or electronic apparatus – AR283(6) makes no provision for a minimum period of disqualification as a penalty.

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

COSC considered that;

- For the use of an electric or electronic apparatus on a horse – the penalty of a disqualification referred to in AR283(6)(e) of 2 years is insufficient in context having regard for the seriousness of the matter regulated for in AR231(2)(a), and that a more significant period of disqualification should be prescribed to act as a strong deterrent.
- For the possession of an electric or electronic apparatus capable of being used on a horse - a penalty of a disqualification of no less than a specified period should be adopted under a new sub-rule to AR283(6) – that being AR283(6)(k) to introduce a penalty of disqualification for a period of not less than that specified.

Consultation with and by the PRA's was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025.

The increase to the mandatory minimum penalty for use for jiggers to 5 years was supported by all PRAs.

The adoption of a mandatory minimum for possession **only** of jiggers was not supported and will not be advanced.

The proposed amendments to the rules are set out below in red.

Amend AR 283(6)(e) to vary the “2 years” reference to “5 years”.

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 299

Background:

At their meeting in May 2024 COSC considered a submission received from RV in respect of AR 299(1) which states that;

“within 24 hours of the death of a named horse which has not been retired from racing in accordance with AR 297, the manager or his or her authorised agent must notify Racing Australia of that fact by lodging the relevant form.”

It was submitted, in applying AR299, there is an ambiguity as to who exactly the authorised agent might be, and as “named” horses are generally “active” horses, the trainer of a horse in this classification should be captured more specifically by the provisions of the rule to better regulate for traceability.

RV Recommendation – in May 2024:

Option 1 - Amend AR 299(1) as follows;

- (1) Within 24 hours of the death of a named horse which has not been retired from racing in accordance with AR 297, the trainer or manager of the horse (or his or her authorised agent) must notify Racing Australia of that fact by lodging the relevant form (including a Stable Return where applicable) prescribed by Racing Australia.

Option 2 – Amend the definition of authorised agent as follows;

AR 2 authorised agent means a person who has been validly authorised by his or her principal to act on behalf of the principal. [amended 1/5/21].

For the purposes of Part 14 -Traceability Rules, Division 2 – Named Horses, the manager’s authorised agent should be taken to include the trainer of the horse, unless another person has been validly authorised by that manager.

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

At their May 2024 meeting COSC agreed that the requirement to notify Racing Australia of the death of a named horse could be extended to include the trainer because he or she is ordinarily the person who has care and control of the horse.

At the COSC meeting in August 2024, the following recommended amendment was proposed to amend AR 299(1);

“Within 24 hours of the death of a named horse which has not been retired from racing in accordance with AR 297, *the trainer, manager or his or her authorised agent* must notify Racing Australia of that fact by lodging the relevant form (including a Stable Return where applicable) prescribed by Racing Australia.”

At the August 2024 meeting COSC was unanimous in its support for this proposed amendment to AR 299(1).

Consultation with and by the PRA’s was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRAs have confirmed their support for this amendment.

The proposed amendment to rule AR 299 is set out below in red.

AR 299 Death of named horse

- (1) Within 24 hours of the death of a named horse which has not been retired from racing in accordance with AR 297, **the trainer, manager or his or her authorised agent** must notify Racing Australia of that fact by lodging the relevant form (including a Stable Return where applicable) prescribed by Racing Australia.
- (2) A person must not dispose of the deceased horse without the written approval of the relevant PRA unless a veterinary certificate as to cause of death is provided to the relevant PRA.
- (3) Any person who fails to comply with subrule (1) is not guilty of a breach of that subrule if he or she proves to the satisfaction of the Stewards that he or she was not aware, and could not reasonably have been aware, of the death of the horse.

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Harmonisation of Screening Limits – Xylazine and Dantrolene

Background:

Following the July 2024 meeting of VAAG, COSC were advised that VAAG had reviewed the current International Screening Limits (ISL's) and Asian Screening Limits (ASL's) to determine if there are any substances with a current ISL or ASL that should be added to the current Australian Screening Limit List.

VAAG advised that xylazine is an alpha-adrenergic agonist medication that has sedative properties. It is commonly used to provide sedation, muscle relaxation and analgesia in horses for routine husbandry procedures such as shoeing, transport and minor surgery. It is also commonly used to both sedate and treat visceral pain in horses with colic. Dantrolene is a muscle relaxant used to treat back and muscular pain in horses.

As a result of that review, VAAG unanimously agreed that the ISL's for xylazine in both urine and plasma, and for dantrolene in both urine and plasma, should be adopted into the Australian Screening Limit List.

VAAG Recommendation:

Consequently, VAAG unanimously supported and recommended that the following be added to the Australian Screening Limits;

- xylazine – 0.05 ng/mL in plasma
- xylazine – 10 ng/mL of the 4'-hydroxyxylazine metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 3 ng/mL in unhydrolysed urine of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 0.1 ng/mL of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in plasma

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

At its August 2024 meeting, COSC was unanimous in their support of the inclusion of xylazine and its related Screening Limits in the Australian Screening Limit List, however, in respect of dantrolene, COSC was unable to reach unanimous support with one PRA not able to support Screening Limit adoption.

Consultation with and by the PRAs was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRAs have confirmed their support for this amendment.

The proposed changes to the Australian Screening Limits are set out below in red.

PART A

The proposed Screening Limits (as detailed below) for xylazine, for inclusion in the Australian Screening Limit List;

- xylazine – 0.05 ng/mL in plasma
- xylazine – 10 ng/mL of the 4'-hydroxyxylazine metabolite in urine

PART B

The proposed Screening Limits (as detailed below) for dantrolene, for inclusion in the Australian Screening Limit List;

- dantrolene – 3 ng/mL in unhydrolysed urine of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 0.1 ng/mL of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in plasma

Date of effect: 1 May 2025



PROPOSED RULE AMENDMENT: LOCAL RULES (THOROUGHBRED RACING)

CURRENT RULE

LR 129 Limit on the Frequency of Starts

- (1) A horse shall not compete in more than one race on any one day.
- (2) Except with the permission of the Stewards, a horse shall not compete:
 - (a) in a race on consecutive days; or
 - (b) in a race on more than five occasions during any 30-day period.
- (3) Notwithstanding sub-rules (1) and (2) of this rule, the Stewards may decline to receive, or at any time after having received, reject any nomination or entry when the frequency of starts of the horse is, in the opinion of the Stewards, considered detrimental to the welfare of such horse.

PROPOSED RULE (DELETE LR 129)

~~LR 129 Limit on the Frequency of Starts~~

- ~~(1) A horse shall not compete in more than one race on any one day.~~
- ~~(2) Except with the permission of the Stewards, a horse shall not compete:~~
 - ~~(a) in a race on consecutive days; or~~
 - ~~(b) in a race on more than five occasions during any 30-day period.~~
- ~~(3) Notwithstanding sub-rules (1) and (2) of this rule, the Stewards may decline to receive, or at any time after having received, reject any nomination or entry when the frequency of starts of the horse is, in the opinion of the Stewards, considered detrimental to the welfare of such horse.~~

PROPOSED DATE OF EFFECT: MAY 1, 2025