



With the racing season concluding shortly I thought it appropriate to highlight some of the initiatives implemented in the last 12 months from an integrity and animal welfare perspective.

HRV increased current swab numbers for 2018-19, which was an increase on the 2016-17 season of 100 per cent for post-race swabs, 50 per cent on out of competition swabs and 50 per cent on human samples.

HRV would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Victorian Government in providing financial support to conduct these greater levels of testing.

HRV continued its close working relationship with the Sporting Integrity Intelligence Unit of Victoria Police to monitor and address potential threats to the integrity of the industry. A number of investigations were undertaken, with three licensed persons found guilty for race fixing (at a Magistrates' Court) and another licensed person charged for criminal conduct that emanated from a harness race meeting.

The notification of Driving Tactics Policy came into effect requiring the trainer, or the person in charge in their absence, to notify the officiating Stewards at a race meeting of the intended driving tactics when a stable has multiple runners

engaged. The policy allows the Stewards the opportunity to question and/or place on notice the relevant drivers prior to the race should they deem it required.

HRV announced a crackdown on trainers presenting horses to race with an elevated TCO₂ (total carbon dioxide) level by announcing a new policy, which was designed to reduce the number of horses presenting with elevated TCO₂ levels and disrupt/prevent the likelihood of illegal race-day treatment.

HRV continued to proactively conduct surveillance and inspections to prevent, deter and detect prohibited pre-race treatment of competing horses.

HRV achieved its highest number of animal welfare and stable inspections this last season, which also resulted in a number of pre-race treatment offences being detected and successfully prosecuted before the HRV RAD Board and Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Industry assistance

In recent months, I have received calls from people within the harness racing industry who are dealing with mental health issues.

It is a significant community issue and I appreciate those people having the confidence to discuss their issues with me and seeking assistance.

The Industry Assistance Program was installed to assist industry participants and this month I would like to thank Evy Gomo from Benestar who discusses the important issue of mental health and wellbeing in this edition of Integrity Matters. Ms Gomo's article also appeared in a previous edition but due to the significance of the issue it again features this month.

Any licensed person who needs help in relation to mental health and wellbeing are strongly encouraged to contact the Industry Assistance Program on 1300 360 364.

Brent Fisher

HRV General Manager - Integrity

Throat Lash and Securing of Hopples Carrying Straps

Harness Racing Victoria Stewards remind trainers that all horses presented to start in a race must:



- Have a throat lash fitted to the bridle;
- Tape all buckles that fasten hoppers carrying straps.

Failure to comply with the above requirements may result in a penalty being imposed under the provisions of Australian Harness Racing Rule 238, which states: A person shall not fail to comply with any order, direction or requirement of the Controlling Body or the Stewards relating to harness racing or to the harness racing industry.

The following minimum penalty schedule will apply:

1st offence: \$50

2nd offence: \$100

3rd offence: Stewards discretion

A trainers offence record will reset every 28 days.

The HRV Stewards advise that should a horse be retired from a race due to the hoppers carrying strap becoming detached and it not be fastened as required above significant penalties may apply.

EIPH Endoscopic Examination Policy

Harness Racing Victoria's Board has approved a policy that clearly outlines to all industry stakeholders the action to be taken by HRV Stewards where a horse is observed displaying a significant degree of Exercise Induced Pulmonary Haemorrhage (EIPH) upon endoscopic examination.

In formulating this policy consultation was undertaken with the Victorian Trainers and Drivers Association.

The policy aims to:

- Guard the safety and welfare of all participants (equine and human) which is of paramount importance to HRV, the harness racing industry and a fundamental expectation of the general

public;

- Ensure the consistent performance of horses is protected to ensure wagering confidence.

The policy requires that any horse observed as displaying Grade 3 or Grade 4 EIPH upon endoscopic examination be subject to the following restrictions:

- The horse be stood down from racing for a minimum period of 28 days from the date of detection;
- The horse not be permitted to start in a race until a veterinary clearance is provided to HRV;
- The horse trial to the satisfaction of the Stewards on one occasion after a period of no less than 21 days expiring from the date of detection.

The restrictions outlined above are deemed necessary to allow sufficient time for healing to occur and the horse to demonstrate through certification from the stable veterinarian and trialling to the satisfaction of the Stewards that it is fit to resume racing.

Should a horse suffer a bleeding attack as defined by AHRR 101 (blood present at the nostrils) the mandatory provisions of that rule shall be acted upon when it is determined, in the opinion of the Stewards, such occurrence was not from external trauma.

This policy took effect from July 1 2019.

The full policy, including the EIPH Grading parameters, can be viewed at the following link: www.thetrots.com.au/for-participants/rules/policies

Any queries concerning this policy should be directed to the HRV Integrity Department on (03) 8378 0200.

Notification of Driving Tactics Policy

On June 1 2019 a policy developed by the Harness Racing Victoria Stewards came into effect where the trainer, or the person in charge in their absence, is required to notify the officiating Stewards of the intended driving tactics when a stable has multiple runners (two or more) engaged in a race.

This notification is to occur no later than 45 minutes prior to the relevant race. This timeframe allows the Stewards the opportunity to question and/or place on notice the relevant drivers prior to the race should they deem it required.

Continued: PAGE 40

Getting to know

HRV Senior Information and Intelligence Analyst Neal Conder

Tell us about your background?

As with many members of the Integrity Department, I have always been a passionate trots fan and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the harness racing industry. I grew up going to the trots in Port Pirie, South Australia, with my dad, who worked as a bookmaker's clerk but also had the odd horse with local legends Cyril Potts and Peter Thompson. My first job in harness racing was with HRV as graphic designer, but since 2003 I have worked primarily in integrity with the South Australian and Victorian Controlling Bodies. I have been lucky enough to work with some well-respected and knowledgeable stewards such as Gerrard Lalor, Andy Rogers and Barry Delaney.



Senior Information and Intelligence Analyst role at Harness Racing Victoria?

I learned a lot about what the role required by working with Lola Grech and, adding my blend of administrative skills and industry knowledge, I wanted to carry on the great work previously done in establishing the position. I believe the role is important in facilitating information flow throughout the whole Integrity Department so that it can operate productively and effectively to provide the highest integrity for the Victorian harness racing industry. Given my previous roles as a Raceday Steward and Investigative Steward, I have an understanding of the information that needs to be communicated to those teams.

How have you seen integrity evolve during your time in the industry?

The focus on integrity has intensified during my time in the industry. This comes from the levels of information available increasing dramatically and providing an avenue for people to be better informed. This has required integrity departments to improve their level of communication and transparency. Similarly, while equine welfare has always been of paramount significance to the horsemen and horsewomen in our industry, the public attention to animal welfare in the racing codes in recent years has ensured all codes are investing in programs that ensure the best welfare practices are being employed.

What does Integrity mean to you?

Integrity means upholding a code of fair play, even if it means sacrificing victory. Integrity requires courage to maintain your own values, honesty in all interactions and communications, accountability for your actions, words, decisions, effort and respect for your colleagues, your opponents, and your society, sport or industry.

Tell us about your current role at Harness Racing Victoria and what does that involve?

Currently I am the Senior Information and Intelligence Analyst, which means I gather and record all the information that the HRV Integrity Department obtains from a variety of sources. These sources include investigations, betting data, the HRV Integrity Hotline (phone, email and internet), other codes and controlling bodies. We utilise a case management system to store intelligence, record sample, swab and stable data and manage cases. The collection, collation and analysis of this information enables the Integrity Department to observe trends which leads to a more efficient use of investigative resources. I am also the point of contact for other states, codes, government bodies and law enforcement agencies when they are seeking information on Victorian harness racing integrity matters.

What led you to change roles and attracted you to apply for the

From: PAGE 39

To assist participants to comply with the requirements of the policy it is advised that in lieu of notifying in person at the race track they may instead notify the intended tactics by contacting the below telephone message service. The notification must still occur no later than 45 minutes prior to the relevant race.

The process for notifying via the telephone message service is as follows:

- Call 03 9214 0650
- Advise name and licence number
- Name of race meeting and race number
- Name of horses involved
- Intended driving tactics on each horse

The person advising the tactics must be available to be contacted at a later time should any clarification or further questioning be required by Stewards.

The full Notification of Driving Tactics Policy can be viewed on the thetrots.com.au website at the following link: www.thetrots.com.au/for-participants/rules/policies

Ratings Based Handicapping – Interference Compensation

Trainers are reminded of the below revised process of horses receiving compensation after suffering interference:

Field Selection

2.6.8 — Horses will be eligible for interference compensation if, in the opinion of the Steward-In-Charge, significant interference has occurred. Field Selection Points will be allocated accordingly and Rating Points from the race will be adjusted to that of the upgraded position. Compensation will only be applied upon application from connections of the horse on the day of the race.

Brett Day

HRV Chairman of Stewards



Contact **Integrity Matters** any time
via email: integritymatters@hrv.org.au
or phone: 03 9214 0651

Mental health & wellbeing

Evy Gomo, Benestar Clinical Manager



What is your name and background?

I have worked at Benestar for 16 years and have a background in mental health and assisting organisations with solutions for thriving and wellbeing.

What is mental health and wellbeing?

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with normal stresses in life, work productively and fruitfully and contribute to their community. Mental health affects how we think, feel and behave and can determine how we handle stress, connect and make decisions. Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness, positivity, satisfaction and how you feel about yourself.

What is the Industry Assistance Program (IAP) and what is its role in assisting harness racing industry participants in Victoria?

The IAP is a program sponsored by HRV to help individuals reach their potential and be their best. It is a counselling/coaching and consulting program to support employees in their emotional and psychological wellbeing at work and in their personal lives. The aim is to adopt early intervention, prevention and a proactive approach to workplace wellbeing, where participants have confidential conversations with experienced clinicians.

How does the IAP work?

It is short-term and solution focussed. Support can be offered face-to-face, over the phone, live chat and at Benestar. All of this information is available at www.thetrots.com.au.

What positive steps can people take to improve their mental health and wellbeing?

Make your mental health a priority,

look after your body and your mind, get a good, restful night's sleep, exercise and eat well, get early support for symptoms of depression or anxiety, connect to others, practise daily gratitude and focus on strengths and resilience. Bring awareness to the present moment, rather than focussing on the past or future, and focus on what you can control. Be sure to take regular breaks through your day, nourish and nurture yourself as well as looking after others and reduce technology, especially at night and weekends. IAP can assist with all of the above.

What are common signs that may indicate people need support?

It is recommended to see your GP immediately should you experience poor mental health symptoms, disturbances or changes in your thoughts or behaviours. Warning signs include increased stress, lack of self care, risky behaviour, confused thinking, uncharacteristic anxiety, anger or moodiness, symptoms of depression including sadness, irritability and loss of enjoyment; excessive anxiety or worry that interferes with your normal coping capacity, change in your diet, sleep and feelings; not wanting to be around others or engage in social activities, strong negative thoughts or feeling overwhelmed, dependence on alcohol or drugs and any thoughts of self-harm or to harm others.

What can friends or family do if they notice someone displaying those signs or symptoms?

Be prepared to listen, ask what support you can provide and encourage help-seeking behaviours. Offer to help them get to the GP or other health professional, continue to monitor them and ask 'RUOK' questions. Don't feel as though you have to have all the answers.

What can people do if they feel like they need assistance in relation to their mental health and wellbeing?

Consider the many forms of support available, get information about your symptoms, speak to people you trust, contact IAP or other help lines and remember asking for help is not weakness, it is your first step towards recovery.

For help call the Industry Assistance Program on 1300 360 364



HRV HORSE HEALTH & WELFARE

with Dr Lesley Hawson

Hendra virus

Hendra Virus has recently been reported on a property near Scone in the Upper Hunter Valley NSW. This case represents the most southerly latitude that known Hendra virus cases have been diagnosed.

Hendra virus is a notifiable animal disease in Australia because of the risk to humans. The death rate related to infection is very high — 50 per cent in humans and more than 70 per cent in horses. The natural hosts of Hendra virus are fruit bats (flying foxes), which are thought to pass the infection to horses via their faeces and bodily fluids. Human infection can occur through exposure to the blood, bodily fluids and tissues of an infected horse. Incubation period in horses is six to 31 days. Horses can shed the virus up to 72 hours before showing any clinical signs. Hendra can spread from horse to horse, but there is no evidence of human to human or bat to human transmission.

The signs of Hendra virus infection in horses include acute onset of illness, increased body temperature, increased heart rate, discomfort/weight shifting between legs and depression.

A horse infected with Hendra virus will then go on to develop rapidly deteriorating neurological and/or respiratory signs that usually lead

to death. Hendra virus has not been diagnosed in any Victorian animal to date.

Agriculture Victoria has provided the following advice to horse owners:

1) If you notice a sudden onset of illness in your horse or your horse has died suddenly and you live in an area where there is a population of flying foxes that could come in contact with your horse, and/or your horse has travelled from Queensland or northern NSW in the past two to three weeks you should contact your veterinary practitioner or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

2) There is a vaccine against Hendra virus available, which is fully registered with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, through specially accredited veterinarians. Horse owners moving horses from Queensland or northern New South Wales should consider vaccination.

3) Hendra virus is a public health concern and can create substantial workplace health and safety issues. There are several steps you should take while you are waiting for veterinary confirmation of Hendra virus:

- a) Avoid close contact with suspect infected horse/s and other horses that have been in contact with them;
- b) Isolate the suspected horse where possible, preferably by relocating other animals;
- c) Observe suspect horse from a

distance and notify your veterinarian if you notice changes in their condition;

- d) Where possible, provide feed and water for the suspect horse/s from a distance.

If close contact with the suspect horse is necessary ensure you take the following precautions:

- i. If you have any cuts or abrasions, ensure they are covered with a water-resistant dressing;
- ii. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), covering hands with gloves, feet with boots, and clothing with overalls;
- iii. Wear a P2 mask (particulate respirator) and safety glasses. This should help to protect your face from potential contact with the suspect horse's bodily fluids (saliva, nasal secretions, blood and urine);
- iv. Remove and dispose of PPE carefully;
- v. Wash your hands carefully with soap/disinfectant after all activities;
- vi. Ask your veterinarian for help with putting on, taking off and safe disposal of PPE. Ensure P2 masks are fitted correctly to reduce your risk of infection.

For more online information search 'Hendra Virus' at health.vic.gov.au and at agriculture.vic.gov.au.

To report any suspicion of Hendra virus infection contact your veterinarian or ring the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888. Harness Racing Victoria Stewards should also be contacted on 03 8378 0222.

