



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

AR 88D Chemical Castration or Immunocastration

Summary

A Paper / Submission was sent to COSC from VAAG for consideration relating specifically to Prohibited Practices and Eligibility to Race including Chemical Castration or Immunocastration.

Chemical Castration or Immunocastration

VAAG is concerned about the potential abuse of the practice of “chemical castration” to temporarily modify the behaviour of an entire male horse, principally to reversibly suppress the overt expression of stallion-like aggressive behaviour, and therefore render the animal a temporary gelding. Chemical castration can be achieved by pharmacological means, usually the administration of progestogens, or by immunological means by the administration of anti-GnRH vaccine. However, there is a technical distinction between these two methods, and therefore both the terms “chemical castration” and “immunocastration” need to be specified.

Period of Ineligibility:

VAAG also sought COSC’s opinion as to whether the ineligibility attached to a breach of the chemical castration and immunocastration should be more limited rather than be for “life”. It has been suggested and supported that the minimum period of ineligibility should be for a period of 12 months, and that this provision should apply to this practice.

COSC unanimously agreed to support a new rule to formalise a period of ineligibility of 12 months to participate in any race, trial, jump out or track work.

Racing Australia has introduced AR 88D to give effect to this recommendation.

1. Add AR 88D as follows:

AR 88D Horses that have had chemical castration or immunocastration.

- (1) If a horse has been subjected to a chemical castration or immunocastration procedure in Australia:
 - (a) the horse is ineligible for a minimum period of 12 months; and
 - (b) a person must not enter or start the horse in, any race, official trial, jump-out or trackwork.
- (2) If a horse is subject to a chemical castration or immunocastration, the owner of the horse or that owner's authorised agent must provide written notification of that to the Stewards as soon as practicable. The Stewards will then seek to ensure that:
 - (a) details of the procedure and the horse's ineligibility to race are recorded in Racing Australia's national online database; and
 - (b) if applicable, the Thoroughbred Identification Card of the horse is endorsed with details of the procedure and the horse's ineligibility to race.

Date of effect: 1 February 2024