



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Proposed Amendment - AR 231

Summary

This rule change concerns the wording of the Care and Welfare Rule AR 231, with changes to the wording of sub clause (1) and the introduction of a new sub clause (7).

A draft rule in relation to this matter was first proposed in 2021 in response to a September 2020 Victorian Supreme Court decision in the matter of Jody Thompson which limited the ambit of AR 231(1)(b). The Chairmen of Stewards Committee considered that amendments should be made to reverse the precedent established in that case. It is considered that amendments are necessary for the promotion and championing of equine welfare

The draft rule to address this issue was then refined and finalized with multiple communications between VAAG and COSC between in 2022 and 2023.

Consultation with and by the PRA's was undertaken between May 2024 and August 2024. The PRA's have confirmed their support for these amendments.

Add the following to AR 231:

(1) A person must not:

(a) commit or commission an act of cruelty to a horse, or be in possession of any article or thing which, in the opinion of the Stewards, is capable of inflicting cruelty to a horse;

(b) if the person is in charge of a horse – fail at any time:

(i) to exercise reasonable care, control or supervision of the horse so as to prevent:

A. an act of cruelty to the horse; or

B. the horse's body condition from declining to, in the opinion of the Stewards based on veterinary advice, an unacceptable level;

(ii) to take such reasonable steps as are necessary to alleviate any pain inflicted upon or being suffered by the horse;

(iii) to obtain veterinary advice and provide treatment in accordance with that advice where such treatment is necessary for the welfare of a horse; and/or

(iv) to provide and ensure that the horse is ingesting proper and sufficient nutrition

.....

(7) For the purposes of subrule (1)(b)(iii), "veterinary advice" must include, but is not limited to, a diagnosis and/or advice and/or opinion from a qualified veterinary surgeon.

Date of effect: 1 November 2024