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# Media Release

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## **Ban on injections One Clear Day before racing Commencement Date 1 October, 2015**

Racing Australia has today announced a ban on injections One Clear Day before races and official trials from 1 October, 2015. The ban extends to blood tests, vitamin injections and all other injections of any kind.

Racing Australia believes there are compelling reasons for the introduction of a new rule to prohibit the use of hypodermic needles during the one clear day prior to racing or official trials.

In introducing AR.178AB, Racing Australia formed the following views:

- There is no scientific evidence to support a health and welfare imperative to treat horses by hypodermic injection within one clear day of racing whilst there are a number of very good integrity reasons to restrict the administration of any substances by hypodermic injection within that period.
- Although evidence of hypodermic injections may be detected by physical observation or inspections, it is important to have a prohibition close to race day to deter such practices.
- The standard explanation/defence to the detection of an apparently very recent hypodermic needle puncture to a major vein on race day is that the horse received an injection, often an intravenous drip via a large bore catheter, on the day prior to the race day.
- Banning injections within one clear day of racing makes it much easier for an official veterinarian to form an opinion that a hypodermic needle wound leaking blood, and/or with a fresh subcutaneous haematoma over a major vein, was the result of an injection within the restricted period.

Racing Australia believes that there is an unjustifiable reliance on intravenous injections close to race day. Integrity concerns demand a reform to long established practices that are not essential to the health and welfare of the horse.

Some may object on the basis of measuring a horse's blood count either with a view to withdrawing it from racing or for comparison purposes. But this is highly contentious with any tangible evidence of a condition far from clear. In any event, blood tests taken late on the Thursday before racing on the Saturday should give the same, or close to the same, information.

It is important to note that AR.178AB allows a trainer to seek the permission of stewards for an exception to the ban if clinical issues in the horse are apparent.

For the purpose of definition a "Clear Day" means a 24 hour period from 12.01am to 12.00 midnight. By way of example, if a horse is racing on a Saturday, the last time that the horse may be injected is midnight on the Thursday prior to the race. The horse must not be injected on the Friday or at any time on the Saturday prior to the running of the race.

**AR.178AB: Prohibition on use of injections during the One Clear Day prior to racing and official trials**

- (1) A person must not, without the permission of the Stewards, inject a horse, cause a horse to be injected or attempt to inject a horse, which is engaged to run in any race or official trial:
  - (a) at any time on the day of the scheduled race or official trial, prior to the start of such event; and
  - (b) at any time during the One Clear Day prior to 12.01am on the day of the scheduled race or official trial.
- (2) Where there has been a breach of AR.178AB(1), or the Stewards reasonably suspect that there has been a breach of AR.178AB(1), the Stewards may order the withdrawal of the horse from the relevant race or official trial.
- (3) Where there has been a contravention of AR.178AB(1), the horse may be disqualified from the relevant race in which it competed.
- (4) Any person who breaches, or is a party to a breach of, AR.178AB(1), commits an offence and may be penalised.
- (5) For the purpose of this rule:
  - (a) injection includes, but is not limited to, the insertion of a hypodermic needle into a horse;
  - (b) it is not necessary to establish whether any substance was injected, or the nature of any substance injected.

**For further information please contact:**

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