

INDUSTRY NOTICE – New AR.178AB

New rule introduced to ban all injections to horses within One Clear Day of competition to commence on 1 October, 2015.

Trainers and other thoroughbred racing industry participants should be aware of new Australian Rule of Racing AR.178AB that becomes effective from 1st October 2015. This Rule prohibits the use of injections of any type in horses during the One Clear Day prior to racing and official trials.

“AR.178AB:

- (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.”

Implications of AR.178AB

The new rule makes it an offence for any person (including a trainer, anyone else in charge of a racehorse or a veterinarian) to insert a hypodermic needle into a horse within the one clear day prior to a race or official trial.

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.

The one clear day ban on injections prior to competition includes, but is not limited to, the administration by injection, whether intravenously, intramuscularly, subcutaneously or any other route, of the following medications and substances:

- intravenous infusions, fluids and electrolytes;
- vitamin and mineral supplements;
- haematopoietic (blood building) agents;
- all Schedule 4 Prescription Animal Remedies and Prescription Medicines for injection; and
- any other agents for administration by injection.

However, it is noted that, for the purpose of proving a breach of AR.178AB, it is not necessary to establish what (if any) substance was injected, or was attempted to have been injected, into the horse.

Importantly, under the new rule, a person must not, without the permission of the Stewards, insert a needle into a horse for the purpose of blood sampling for health and fitness assessment during the one clear day prior to competition. The obvious exception to the Rule is the collection of official pre-race or out-of-competition blood samples at the direction of the Stewards for the purpose of drug analyses.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The timing of the administration of many injectable products will be determined by the detection periods for the prohibited substances contained in those products. In most cases, the detection periods will be in excess of the one clear day prior to competition.