



MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING COBALT RULES CONSIDERED & REAFFIRMED

Racing Australia's Veterinary and Analysts Committee (VAC) recently completed a review of matters raised in relation to Cobalt and provided the Board of Racing Australia with its expert advice on the matter.

The Board also considered that the view among international racing authorities continues to be consistent with Racing Australia that cobalt has the potential to positively affect performance and is a welfare risk at toxic levels and that Rules of Racing are required to protect against this risk.

In light of VAC's advice, the Board of Racing Australia reaffirmed its position in respect of cobalt and advises that it does not propose to make any amendments to the Australian Rules of Racing.

In summary the VAC report advised the following:

- there remains a view among international racing authorities that cobalt has the potential to positively affect performance and is a welfare risk at toxic levels;
- a typical daily diet of a racehorse meets a horse's cobalt requirement and there have been no reported cases of cobalt deficiency in horses;
- there is no nutritional, medical or welfare justification for the administration of cobalt salts by injection at any time;
- at doses higher than the nutritional requirements for B12 production, cobalt has been demonstrated to stimulate erythropoiesis (red blood cell production) in mammals by a mechanism completely separate and different from that of the production of B12;
- in addition to stimulating erythropoietin (EPO) production, by means of stabilising HIF, cobalt can induce the expression of more than 200 genes – some of the HIF-activated genes encode proteins that may increase physical performance (e.g. energy metabolism); and
- in the period 1 September 2016 (when the revised 100 ug/L threshold was introduced) to September 2019, 42,477 urine tests nationally have produced an average result of 5.1ug/L and only 59 positive samples (0.14%).

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For further information:

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