

Harness
Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

HRV RAD Board Hearing - Andrew Farrugia

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today heard a matter in regards to charges issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Rules of Harness Racing (ARHR) 190(1) and 190B against licensed trainer Mr Andrew Farrugia.

ARHR 190(1) reads as follows:

A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances.

The charge under ARHR 190(1) issued by HRV Stewards against Mr Farrugia related to a pre-race urine sample collected from the horse 'Sumo Grin' prior to it placing 4th in Race 1, the 'Victorian Square Trotters Association Ralph Ford Memorial Trot', at Maryborough on 2 August 2015. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the urine sample revealed the sample to contain a prohibited substance, namely cobalt, at a level of 244 mcg/L in urine, above the allowable threshold of 200 mcg/L in urine.

The HRV RAD board considered the statements of Investigative Steward Mr Anthony Pearce, RASL representative Mr Paul Zahra and veterinary consultant Dr Stuart Paine, as well as additional statements by HRV Chairman Of Stewards Mr Nicholas Murray, Mr David Batty (RASL) and Racing Science Centre (Brisbane) representative Mr Mark Jarrett. Oral evidence was also heard from Mr Zahra and Mr Jarrett.

Mr Farrugia was found guilty of the charge before the HRV RAD Board heard submissions on penalty from the HRV Stewards and Mr Farrugia's representative, Mr Joseph Farrugia. In deciding an appropriate penalty the HRV RAD Board considered Mr Farrugia's 35 year involvement in the industry, his good record over this period of time, both specific and general deterrence, consistency of penalty and Mr Farrugia's not guilty plea. In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board imposed a 15 month disqualification upon Mr Farrugia. The RAD Board ordered the disqualification commence with immediate effect.

Mr Farrugia pleaded guilty to the additional charge under ARHR 190B in that he failed to keep and maintain a log book and Mr Farrugia was subsequently fined \$250.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that 'Sumo Grin' be disqualified from Race 1 at Maryborough on 2 August 2015 and that any prizemoney be refunded.

The Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board (RADB) is established under section 50B of the Racing Act (1958). The RADB is an independent Board established to hear and determine appeals in relation to decisions made under the rules to impose penalties on persons and to hear and determine charges made against persons for serious offences.