



AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

Amendment - AR 55A

Background:

At their meeting in May 2024 COSC considered a recommendation received from VAAG to note their report in respect of “Frequency of Race Starts” and endorse progression towards implementation of a national rule of racing restricting the number of race starts a horse may have within a specified period.

It was noted that while not all PRA’s regulated in this regard, RNSW, QRIC, RWWA and RSA had already adopted Local Rules of Racing dealing with race start frequency, however they were not entirely consistent. There was unanimous in principle support for a national rule to be developed following further VAAG consideration.

At the August 2024 meeting of COSC, feedback from VAAG was considered noting that VAAG had reached general consensus on a baseline position – that position being to regulate for no more than 5 starts in any 30-day period.

VAAG did not reach consensus on whether a restriction of no more than 10 race starts in any 90-day period is required, however the concept of drafting a national rule of racing in such a manner as to allow for any PRA who wishes to extend a restriction beyond the initial 30-day period, to do so was not opposed.

VAAG also discussed restricting horses competing on more than one occasion on any given day, and racing in consecutive days

COSC Consideration and Recommendation:

At their meeting in August 2024 COSC agreed on a unanimous basis to progress the draft rule proposed at that meeting and recommended that Racing Australia adopt a new national rule of racing in those terms. It was noted that “discretion” will apply in respect of whether a horse may start on consecutive days – hence the word “may” is used in sub-rule (2) rather than “shall”.

Consultation with and by the PRA’s was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRA’s have confirmed their support for this amendment with RNSW support on the basis that the decision maker be the PRA or the stewards which is consistent with other similar rules. This amendment has been incorporated to the proposed rule.

Racing Australia has determined to add the new rule AR 55A to give effect to adoption of the limitation on frequency of race starts.

The proposed addition to the rules is set out below in red.

Add a new Rule AR 55A as follows:

AR55A – Frequency of Race Starts

Without derogating from, or limiting any other provisions in the Rules;

- (1) A horse shall not start in more than one race on any one day.
- (2) A horse may only start in a race on consecutive days with the express permission of a PRA or the Stewards.
- (3) A horse shall not be permitted to start in a race on more than five (5) occasions during any thirty (30) day period.
- (4) Notwithstanding sub-rules (1), (2) and (3) of this rule, a PRA or the Stewards may decline to receive, or at any time after having received, reject any nomination or entry when the frequency of race starts of the horse is, in the opinion of a PRA or the Stewards and in their sole discretion, not appropriate based on considerations of, but not limited to, horse welfare.

For the avoidance of doubt, and without being limited to any extent, in making a determination under sub-rule (4) of this rule, a PRA or the Stewards may impose further restrictions on the race start frequency of a horse beyond any thirty (30) day period.

Date of effect: 1 May 2025