



## AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRALIAN RULES OF RACING

### Harmonisation of Screening Limits – Xylazine and Dantrolene

#### **Background:**

Following the July 2024 meeting of VAAG, COSC were advised that VAAG had reviewed the current International Screening Limits (ISL's) and Asian Screening Limits (ASL's) to determine if there are any substances with a current ISL or ASL that should be added to the current Australian Screening Limit List.

VAAG advised that xylazine is an alpha-adrenergic agonist medication that has sedative properties. It is commonly used to provide sedation, muscle relaxation and analgesia in horses for routine husbandry procedures such as shoeing, transport and minor surgery. It is also commonly used to both sedate and treat visceral pain in horses with colic. Dantrolene is a muscle relaxant used to treat back and muscular pain in horses.

As a result of that review, VAAG unanimously agreed that the ISL's for xylazine in both urine and plasma, and for dantrolene in both urine and plasma, should be adopted into the Australian Screening Limit List.

#### **VAAG Recommendation:**

Consequently, VAAG unanimously supported and recommended that the following be added to the Australian Screening Limits;

- xylazine – 0.05 ng/mL in plasma
- xylazine – 10 ng/mL of the 4'-hydroxyxylazine metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 3 ng/mL in unhydrolysed urine of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 0.1 ng/mL of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in plasma

#### **COSC Consideration and Recommendation:**

At its August 2024 meeting, COSC was unanimous in their support of the inclusion of xylazine and its related Screening Limits in the Australian Screening Limit List, however, in respect of dantrolene, COSC was unable to reach unanimous support with one PRA not able to support Screening Limit adoption.

Consultation with and by the PRAs was undertaken between August 2024 and January 2025. The PRAs have confirmed their support for this amendment.

The proposed changes to the Australian Screening Limits are set out below in red.

**PART A**

The proposed Screening Limits (as detailed below) for xylazine, for inclusion in the Australian Screening Limit List;

- xylazine – 0.05 ng/mL in plasma
- xylazine – 10 ng/mL of the 4'-hydroxyxylazine metabolite in urine

**PART B**

The proposed Screening Limits (as detailed below) for dantrolene, for inclusion in the Australian Screening Limit List;

- dantrolene – 3 ng/mL in unhydrolysed urine of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in urine
- dantrolene – 0.1 ng/mL of the 5-hydroxydantrolene metabolite in plasma

**Date of effect: 1 May 2025**