

## NOTICE TO INDUSTRY - DRIVERS SAFETY EQUIPMENT

OCTOBER 19, 2023

**Recently a number of driver's vests were confiscated by HRNSW Stewards after it was found that modifications had been made which included the cutting of stitching which reduced the protection provided to drivers.**

HRNSW Stewards remind industry participants that the use of damaged or modified vests or helmets could result in the voiding of insurance in the event of an accident.

HRNSW Stewards also remind industry participants that safety equipment required to be worn during races and trials must also be worn during training regardless if this occurs on private or public property.

The Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR) state the following:

### Helmets

AHRR159A. (1) When driving or riding a horse the driver must wear a properly affixed helmet the make and model of which has been approved by HRA and entered in the Register of Helmets and which:

- (a) Is in a satisfactory condition.
- (b) Has not been modified in any way save and except for any art or decorative work.
- (c) Has attached to it a manufacturers label that states:-
  - (i) The date of manufacture; and
  - (ii) That it complies with a standard approved by HRA.
- (2) Every driver is responsible for the care and condition of their own helmet.
- (3) A helmet will be deemed not in a satisfactory condition and must be immediately replaced by a driver if:-
  - (a) Five years have expired since its date of purchase or acquisition as a brand new helmet or eight years have expired since its date of manufacture, whichever is earlier; or
  - (b) It sustains a severe impact; or
  - (c) The wearer suffers from concussion following a fall.
- (4) Further to sub-rule (3)(a) a driver is required to:-
  - (a) Retain and maintain documentary evidence (such as a receipt) of the date on which the driver purchased or acquired a helmet in his or her possession; and
  - (b) Produce such evidence to a Controlling Body or the Stewards at any time required by either of them.
- (5) The Stewards may at any time seize a helmet for inspection and may in their absolute discretion confiscate any helmet that does not comply with the requirements of this rule, including (without limitation) where the Stewards are of the opinion that a helmet is not in a satisfactory condition including as a result of general wear and tear or the manner in which it has been stored or maintained.
- (6) When driving or mounted on a horse during darkness every driver must affix to his or helmet a safety warning light of a type approved by a Controlling Body or the Stewards (except that this rule does not apply to any location where the Stewards have ruled that sufficient artificial lighting exists).
- (7) A driver who fails to comply with any provision of this rule is guilty of an offence.

### Protective Vests

AHRR 159B. (1) When driving or riding a horse the driver must wear a properly fastened protective vest the make and model of which has been approved by HRA and which:-

- (a) Is in a satisfactory condition.
- (b) Has not been modified in any way.
- (c) Has attached to it a manufacturer's label that states it complies with a standard prescribed by HRA.
- (2) A driver required by these Rules to wear a protective vest must not have in his or her possession a protective vest that does not comply with the requirements in sub-rule (1).
- (3) The Stewards may confiscate or order the satisfactory repair of any protective vest that does not comply with the requirements in sub-rule (1).
- (4) A driver who fails to comply with any provision of this rule is guilty of an offence.

The Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR) outline the definition of a 'Driver' as:

"Driver" means a person who is on a racecourse, racetrack or a registered or unregistered training track for the purpose of driving or riding a horse.

**For further information on this matter contact:  
HRNSW Integrity Department  
(02) 9722 6655**