



# Media release

2 November 2017

## Caring for racing animals in hot weather

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) has released advice on caring for racing animals in extreme heat.

“With Summer almost upon us, it’s a good time to be able to provide this advice through the Commission’s extreme heat policy which sets out the key principles for caring for racing animals in hot weather,” Commissioner Ross Barnett said.

“The policy defines the measures to be taken in hot weather when temperatures rise above 35°C including the allocation of extra staff and other resources to race meetings to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all racing animals.”

The advice includes two fact sheets to assist with preventing and treating heat stress in horses and greyhounds as the two species respond to heat in different ways.

“For example, horses possess an effective cooling mechanism that relies on the evaporation of sweat from the skin whereas greyhounds release heat primarily through panting with only a small amount of sweating through the footpads and nose,” Commissioner Barnett said.

“The two factsheets describe the signs of heat stress and the appropriate actions to be taken if the racing animal requires treatment.”

These include the repeated application of cool water to the entire body of a horse and hosing down greyhounds as soon as possible until the dog’s panting decreases.

It may also be appropriate not to parade animals before they race to ensure they’re kept out the heat for as long as possible.

“The Commission works closely with all racing stakeholders to ensure the highest standards of animal welfare are maintained,” Commissioner Barnett said.

“The Chairman of Stewards has the authority to take further action on the advice of the official veterinarian, if the health, safety and well-being of racing animals is at risk in any way.”

The Commission’s extreme heat policy applies to all race meetings and official trials for all approved codes of racing in Queensland.

**If you have any information about serious misconduct in racing, contact Crime Stoppers on their toll free number 1800 333 000 or e-mail [reportsomething@qric.qld.gov.au](mailto:reportsomething@qric.qld.gov.au)**

“It’s important to note that the policy shares the responsibility for monitoring the condition and well-being of racing animals in hot conditions amongst licensees, race club officials and the Commission’s staff,” Commissioner Barnett said.

“That’s because everybody involved in racing in Queensland has a responsibility for the welfare of racing animals.”

The QRIC’s extreme heat policy and associated fact sheets can be viewed at <https://www.qric.qld.gov.au/veterinary-services-animal-welfare/heat-policy-and-factsheets/>

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