

## Stewards' Report

### Stewards Report: Kym & Sonia Afford – Interflora Express

**Date: 22 January 2020**

**Panel: D Aurisch, P Zimmermann & E Barron**

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) Stewards today opened an inquiry into telephonic evidence provided by licensed trainer Mr Kym Afford and licensed stablehand Mrs Sonia Afford on Sunday 5 January 2020.

The Stewards were questioning both parties regarding the welfare of the thoroughbred INTERFLORA EXPRESS, a gelding trained by Mr Afford, following it being a late scratching from race one (1) at the Kilcoy race meeting the day prior when it suffered a significant injury when it reared in the barriers and made heavy contact with the barrier partition.

A veterinary examination soon after the race revealed the gelding had fractured its right eye socket and the vet administered suitable pain relief medication and provided some advice to Mrs Afford to seek further veterinary treatment in the coming days.

The Stewards also questioned another person via telephone on Sunday 5 January 2020.

Further evidence was taken today from Mr Kym Afford and Mrs Sonia Afford.

After considering all the evidence, both Mr & Mrs Afford were issued a charge pursuant to AR 232 (I) which reads:

*A person must not give any evidence at an interview, investigation, inquiry, hearing and/or appeal which is false or misleading.*

The specifics of the charges being:

#### **Kym Afford**

As the licensed trainer of INTERFLORA EXPRESS, did give false and misleading evidence to a QRIC Steward when questioned on Sunday 5 January 2020 regarding the welfare of the horse:

- (1) He explained that he transported the gelding back from Kilcoy on 4 January 2020 to his registered stables in Kilkivan;
- (2) INTERFLORA EXPRESS received veterinary treatment after arriving at his registered stables and had to be euthanised humanely;
- (3) Following this euthanasia, he buried the gelding at a neighbouring property;

- (4) Mrs Sonia Afford, acted on behalf of Mr Afford to update the Stable Return for INTERFLORA EXPRESS with Racing Australia advising that the horse was deceased as it was euthanised on the morning of Sunday 5 January 2020.

### **Sonia Afford**

As a licensed Stablehand that assisted with INTERFLORA EXPRESS at Kilcoy on 4 January 2020, did give false and misleading evidence to two (2) QRIC Stewards when questioned on Sunday 5 January 2020 regarding the welfare of the horse:

- (1) She explained that the horse was transported back from Kilcoy on 4 January 2020 to Mr Afford's registered stables in Kilkivan;
- (2) INTERFLORA EXPRESS received veterinary treatment after arriving at the registered stables and had to be euthanised humanely;
- (3) Following this euthanasia, the gelding was buried;
- (4) Mrs Afford, acted on behalf of Mr Afford to update the Stable Return for INTERFLORA EXPRESS with Racing Australia advising that the horse was deceased as it was euthanised on the morning of Sunday 5 January 2020.

It was established that INTERFLORA EXPRESS was transported from Kilcoy on 4 January 2020 by another person to a different property and cared for and given appropriate pain relief.

Mr & Mrs Afford both pleaded guilty to the charge and made brief submissions regarding penalty.

The Stewards when assessing an appropriate penalty considered the serious nature of the offences that occurred and the need for both a specific deterrent to Mr & Mrs Afford and a general deterrent to the wider industry to reiterate that any false and/or misleading evidence, particularly regarding animal welfare, will attract a significant penalty as it undermines the integrity of racing which is critical for the proper conduct and administration of the industry.

Subsequently, Mr & Mrs Afford were both suspended for three (3) months to commence immediately and to expire at midnight on 22 April 2020.

On Tuesday 7 January 2020, two (2) QRIC IIT staff and a QRIC veterinary surgeon attended a property and identified INTERFLORA EXPRESS. The vet examined the injury to the right-side eye of the gelding and advised the person responsible for the horse to increase the relevant pain relief.

Both Kym and Sonia Afford were advised of their rights to an internal review.