

# Stewards' Report

## Stewards Report: Mr Joshua Morrow

**Date: 31 July 2023**

**Panel: Clayton Warren, James Williamson & Emily Tickner**

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards today concluded an inquiry into the events leading up to and circumstances surrounding the seizure of four (4) thoroughbreds by QRIC from the care of licensed trainer Mr Joshua Morrow on 3 April 2023, after they were identified to be in an emaciated condition.

After considering all relevant evidence and submissions, stewards issued the following charges:

For the purposes of charges one (1) – four (4) the horses referred to are identifiable as follows:

**Horse 1:** Unnamed Chestnut Filly by BENFICA out of COLD SHOULDER

**Horse 2:** Registered name: EXCITING AMIE

**Horse 3:** Unnamed Black Colt by SIDESTEP out of SUBSERVIENT

**Horse 4:** Registered name: LIGHTNING DUKE

**Charges 1 – 4:** Pursuant to AR 231(1)(b)(iv) which reads;

*(1) A person must not:*

*(b) if the person is in charge of a horse – fail at any time:*

*(iv) to provide proper and sufficient nutrition for the horse.*

The particulars of the charges being that during the time from December 2022 and January 2023 that the four (4) horses came into Mr Morrow's care, up to and including 3 April 2023, Mr Morrow did fail to provide those horses with proper and sufficient nutrition, which resulted in their deterioration into emaciated conditions ranging in body condition scores of 1.5-2 out of 9, as identified on 3 April 2023.

**Charge 5:** Pursuant to AR 232(b) which reads;

*A person must not:*

*(b) fail or refuse to comply with an order, direction or requirement of the Stewards or an official;*

The particulars of the charge being that Mr Morrow did fail to comply with a stewards direction issued on 5 April 2023, to not take into his care any additional horses by bringing into his care three (3) registered thoroughbreds on 8 and 9 May 2023.

**Charge 6:** Pursuant to AR 232(i) which reads;

*A person must not:*

*(i) give any evidence at an interview, investigation, inquiry, hearing and/or appeal which is false or misleading.*

The particulars of the charge being that during an interview on 2 April 2023, when being questioned by Stewards, Mr Morrow did provide false and misleading information to Stewards regarding the location of horses in his care.

Mr Morrow pleaded not guilty to all charges and after considering further submissions to that effect, dtewards found Mr Morrow guilty of all charges and issued the following penalties;

**Charges 1 – 4:** Twenty-one (21) months disqualification to commence effective immediately on 31 July 2023, up to and including 30 April 2025.

**Charge 5:** Six (6) months disqualification to commence upon the completion of the term of disqualification imposed for Charges 1 – 4 on 30 April 2025, up to and including 30 October 2025.

**Charge 6:** Three (3) months disqualification to commence effective immediately 31 July 2023, up to and including 31 October 2023.

Additionally, as a breach under the provisions of AR 231 had been confirmed a penalty of a sixty-three (63) day suspension, which was previously suspended for a period of two (2) years on 16 March 2023, was also enlivened, to be served concurrently with the aforementioned disqualifications and to commence effective immediately on 31 of July 2023, up to and including 1 October 2023.

Further, acting under the provisions of AR 283(7), stewards ordered a period of seven (7) days be granted, to conclude on 7 August 2023, for Mr Morrow to make arrangements for the horses currently in his care to be moved into the care of other persons.

In determining penalty, stewards were mindful of the specific circumstances of the case, Mr Morrow's record in relation to similar rules, as well as his personal circumstances and submissions. Stewards considered relevant precedents and also noted the serious nature of the breach and the need for any penalty to serve not only as a specific deterrent to Mr Morrow but to the industry cohort as a whole to ensure racing is conducted with the appropriate care to be given to all animals involved. Stewards were additionally aware of the negative impact breaches concerning animal welfare have on the integrity of the industry generally and the need to maintain public confidence in the industry with the need for any penalty imposed to be reflective of the expectations of the broader community.

Stewards further ordered under the provisions of AR 263 that Mr Morrow was not permitted to have in his care or be involved with in an capacity any registered, eligible to be registered or retired thoroughbred for the purposes of breaking-in, educating, re-educating, spelling, re-homing, retiring or any other reason for the duration of the disqualification period, that being 31 July 2023 – 30 October 2025, as this would constitute conduct that could be prejudicial to the image, interest and welfare of racing and be in contravention of the prohibitions placed upon a disqualified person.

Mr Morrow was advised of his right to appeal to the Queensland Racing Appeals Panel.