

DECISION

Of

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards

Regarding

Ms Sophie Wilcock

Delivered on: 10 November 2025

Dates of hearing: 22 September 2025
30 September 2025
2 October 2025

Panel: Mr Joshua Adams (Chairperson), Mr Paul Zimmermann and
Mr Brad Tamer

Appearances: Ms Sophie Wilcock

Charge: Australian Rule of Racing ("AR") 232(i) states:

AR 232 Failure to observe processes and directions of PRAs
or Stewards

A person must not:

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

Particulars of Charge:

1. When questioned at a Stewards inquiry on the 22
September 2025 in relation to a video captured on the 16
November 2024 of Ms Amy Graham, you were asked by
Mr Adams,

Mr Adams: "Did you see cocaine?"

Ms Wilcock: "I didn't, no."

Mr Adams: "You didn't see cocaine consumed?"

Ms Wilcock: "No. I did not."

Mr Adams: "Did you consume cocaine?"

Ms Wilcock: "No. I did not."

2. The evidence of Ms Wilcock was false because a video was captured of Ms Wilcock consuming cocaine at Ms Amy Grahams' residence on 16 November 2024.

Plea: Guilty

Penalty Submissions:

Ms Wilcock submitted that she fully accepted responsibility for her conduct and the seriousness of the breach. She acknowledged that, when she gave evidence to the Stewards on 22 September 2025, she denied consuming cocaine because she had no recollection of doing so at the time, due to the significant amount of alcohol she had consumed during the gathering at Ms Graham's residence.

She stated that when she later viewed the video footage, she was shocked and immediately recognised that her earlier evidence was incorrect. She accepted that her initial statements were false but submitted that they were not intentionally misleading and were given in the honest belief that she had not engaged in the conduct depicted.

Ms Wilcock expressed remorse for the embarrassment and reputational damage her actions had caused to herself and to the racing industry. She stated that she had reflected deeply on the incident and accepted that as a licensed jockey she was held to a high standard of conduct, both professionally and personally.

She submitted that she had recently returned to riding after a lengthy period on the sidelines due to a delayed concussion injury sustained in 2024. Her financial circumstances were difficult, and racing was her sole source of income.

Ms Wilcock provided documentation confirming that she had voluntarily enrolled in a drug and alcohol counselling program. She submitted that the conduct occurred while she was not engaged in riding or any official duties and asked that the Stewards take into account her cooperation with the investigation, her early plea of guilty, her acceptance of responsibility, and the steps she had taken to address her personal wellbeing.

Stewards Penalty Determination.

In determining the appropriate penalty, the Stewards considered that Ms Wilcock's conduct in giving false and misleading evidence during a Stewards inquiry struck at the heart of the integrity framework that underpins the regulation of racing. The primary function of a Stewards inquiry is to gather facts accurately and efficiently so that findings can be made on reliable and truthful evidence. When a licensed participant provides false or misleading information, it undermines that fact gathering process and diminishes public confidence in the industry's ability to regulate itself with fairness and transparency.

The Queensland Racing Appeals Panel has consistently emphasised the seriousness of such conduct. In RAP 101 Jason Devine, the Panel observed that false or misleading evidence "must be met with a penalty which serves as a deterrent to the racing fraternity and greater public," while in RAP 165 Jeffrey McKay it reaffirmed that a breach of AR 232(i) represents a direct assault on the integrity of the Stewards processes. These findings are consistent with the approach taken in *Matt Schembri v Racing NSW (2019)*, where it was stated that "As a matter of obviousness, giving false evidence to Stewards, particularly in the course of a Stewards Inquiry, is obviously serious offending." These authorities make clear that the maintenance of racing integrity depends upon the honesty of those who appear before Stewards and the need for penalties that act as both general and specific deterrence.

Applying those principles, Ms Wilcock's false statements concerned matters that went directly to the core of the inquiry's purpose. Her denials that she saw, or consumed cocaine were contrary to clear video evidence and, had they remained uncorrected, would have frustrated the inquiry's ability to establish the true circumstances. The Stewards found that her conduct, while not premeditated, had the potential to erode confidence in the disciplinary process and the credibility of participant testimony.

In assessing penalty, the Stewards gave due weight to mitigating factors including Ms Wilcock's early plea of guilty, her candid acceptance of wrongdoing upon viewing the footage, her demonstrated remorse and her voluntary participation in counselling. We also recognise her financial hardship and personal circumstances, noting that racing was her primary livelihood.

Human Rights

In considering this matter, proper consideration is required of Ms Wilcock's human rights, and the necessity to act compatibly with human rights in accordance with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld). The Stewards acknowledge that any penalty imposed upon Ms Wilcock may limit or prevent her from earning a living from the racing industry and subsequently that the imposition of such a penalty may limit Ms Wilcock's human rights to own property (namely a licence), as well as the human right of privacy and reputation. The Stewards further acknowledge that a limitation upon Ms Wilcock's ability to participate in the racing industry, and earn income from that participation, may only be imposed where it is reasonably necessary to achieve the purpose of taking disciplinary action and there is no less restrictive

and reasonably available way to achieve the purposes listed above, than to suspend Ms Wilcock's licence or to disqualify Ms Wilcock from the industry.

In the circumstances of this case, the Stewards are satisfied that there is no lesser penalty that could be imposed that enables the purposes of taking disciplinary action against a Ms Wilcock for a contravention of the rules of racing, which are to:

- maintain public confidence in the racing of animals in Queensland for which betting is lawful;
- ensure the integrity of all persons involved with racing or betting under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* or the *Racing Act 2002*; and
- safeguard the welfare of all animals that are or have been involved in racing under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* or the *Racing Act 2002*.

Penalty

In determining the appropriate penalty, the Stewards have considered the seriousness of the offences, the need for both specific and general deterrence, the personal circumstances of Ms Wilcock, and all relevant mitigating factors.

The Stewards determined that Ms Wilcock's licence be suspended for a period of three (3) months.

The period of suspension is to be backdated to commence on 2 October 2025, being the date on which Ms Wilcock was initially stood down, and to conclude 2 January 2026.

Ms Wilcock is advised of her right to appeal this decision to the Queensland Racing Appeals Panel within three (3) business days pursuant to section 252AB(2) of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld).