

DECISION

Of

Queensland Racing Integrity Commission Stewards

Regarding

Ms Casey Waddell

Delivered on:	24 November 2025
Dates of hearing:	22 September 2025 2 October 2025
Panel:	Mr Joshua Adams (Chairperson), Mr Paul Zimmermann and Mr Brad Tamer
Appearances:	Ms Casey Waddell
Charge 1:	Australian Rule of Racing ("AR") 228(a) states: AR 228 Conduct detrimental to the interests of racing A person must not engage in: (a) conduct prejudicial to the image, interests, integrity, or welfare of racing, whether or not that conduct takes place within a racecourse or elsewhere;
Particulars of Charge:	1. Ms Casey Waddell was at all relevant times a licensed Jockey with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission. 2. On 16 November 2024, Ms Waddell attended a gathering at her residential premises, whereby a video was recorded on her mobile phone of Licensed Apprentice Jockey Amy Graham consuming a white powder, namely cocaine.

3. Ms Waddell shared the recording captured on her phone with another licensed person and has since been reported in the media.
4. Ms Waddell's conduct in sharing the video of Ms Graham consuming cocaine was detrimental to the image of racing and accordingly in breach of AR228(a).

Plea: Not Guilty

Plea Submissions:

Ms Waddell submitted that her conduct did not constitute a breach of AR 228(a) and entered a plea of not guilty. She stated that the recording depicting Apprentice Jockey Amy Graham consuming a white powder was made at her private residence during a personal gathering on 16 November 2024.

Ms Waddell submitted that the video was recorded on her personal device but was shared privately with a close friend in a moment of emotional distress. Ms Waddell emphasised that she made it explicitly clear the footage was not to be shared, and that she did not authorise, participate in, or have knowledge of its later dissemination to the media.

Ms Waddell submitted that her actions were confined to a private context and not motivated by malice or recklessness. The subsequent release of the footage occurred without her consent and should not be used to mischaracterise her integrity or intent.

She expressed ongoing commitment to the integrity of racing and invited Stewards to consider the mitigating circumstances, including the private nature of the incident, the emotional context in which it occurred, and the absence of any deliberate intent to prejudice the image of racing.

Stewards' Findings on guilt:

The Stewards gave full consideration to all of the evidence and to the matters raised in Ms Waddell's submissions. The Stewards acknowledged her explanation that the recording was made during a private gathering at her residence, that it was shared only with a close friend for personal support, and that she made it clear the video was not to be shared further. Ms Waddell also stated that the subsequent release of the footage to the media occurred without her knowledge, consent, or involvement.

The Stewards accepted that the initial context was private and that Ms Waddell did not intend or anticipate the video's eventual publication. The Stewards also acknowledged that she was under emotional distress at the time that she elected to share the recording of Ms Graham. In determining whether the conduct was prejudicial to the image, interests, or integrity of racing, the Stewards applied the same principle as that in *Pollett v Racing New South Wales*

(2021) NSWCA 233: that being that it is not necessary to prove that the industry was in fact brought into disrepute. It is sufficient that, viewed objectively, the conduct has a natural tendency to diminish public confidence in racing and that there is an element of public knowledge through publication or distribution.

On the evidence, the Stewards were satisfied that Ms Waddell had recorded a video on her phone depicting a licensed participant consuming an illicit substance, and that she chose to share that recording with another person who was also licensed within the industry. The video was later circulated publicly, identifying Ms Amy Graham as a licensee within the racing industry.

The act of sharing such material created a clear and foreseeable risk that it would be further shared or made public. As a licensed participant, Ms Waddell had an ongoing obligation to protect the reputation and integrity of the racing industry. Her decision to distribute that video represented a serious lapse in judgment and constituted conduct incompatible with those obligations.

Having considered all of the evidence, Ms Waddell's submissions, and the relevant legal principles, the Stewards were comfortably satisfied, to the *Briginshaw* standard, that Ms Waddell had engaged in conduct prejudicial to the image and interests of racing, contrary to Australian Rule of Racing 228(a).

The Stewards therefore formally found Ms Waddell guilty of the charge.

Submissions on Penalty:

Ms Waddell submitted that the circumstances of the incident were private, that the footage was shared solely with a trusted friend for emotional support, and that its public dissemination occurred without her knowledge or consent.

Ms Waddell highlighted that she had fully cooperated with the Commission, had no prior disciplinary record, and remained committed to upholding the integrity and reputation of racing. She contended that any lapse in judgment regarding whom to trust was unintentional and occurred during a period of emotional distress.

Ms Waddell also asked the Stewards to consider the significant personal and professional impacts that had arisen from the process, including financial hardship, reputational damage, and stress caused by delays and procedural uncertainty. In view of these factors, she requested that any penalty imposed be proportionate, fair, and rehabilitative rather than punitive, suggesting that an appropriate outcome could include a formal warning, educational measures, or other corrective action instead of exclusion from racing.

Ms Waddell requested that any penalty not result in a permanent adverse record affecting her future licensing prospects, given the mitigating circumstances and her continued cooperation with the Commission.

Stewards Penalty Determination.

In determining the appropriate penalty, the Stewards gave careful consideration to the nature and seriousness of Ms Waddell's conduct, her personal circumstances, and the matters raised in her written submissions. The Stewards acknowledged that the incident occurred within a private setting and that Ms Waddell expressed genuine remorse for the circumstances that gave rise to the offence. The Stewards also accepted that the subsequent dissemination of the recording occurred without her authorisation, and that she has endured significant personal and reputational consequences as a result.

However, the Stewards were obliged to consider the objective gravity of the conduct and its impact on public confidence in the racing industry. The recording and subsequent sharing of material depicting a licensed participant engaging in the use of an illicit substance created a clear and foreseeable risk that such footage could enter the public domain. Once that occurred, it inevitably brought adverse attention to racing and diminished the industry's reputation for professionalism and integrity.

In determining penalty, the Stewards were guided by the reasoning expressed in the matter of *Racing Victoria v Ruby McIntyre* (Victoria Racing Tribunal, 15 December 2023), where the Tribunal held that sending a recording of illicit substance use by another licensee to a third party constituted a serious breach of AR 228(a). The Tribunal in *McIntyre* found that even absent malice, such conduct demonstrated "recklessness of a significantly high degree" sufficient to undermine public confidence in racing. While the Stewards accepted that Ms Waddell's actions were not motivated by malice and occurred in circumstances of emotional distress, her decision to share the recording nonetheless reflected a serious lapse in judgment that carried similar reputational risks to those considered in *McIntyre*.

Balancing these factors, the Stewards considered both specific and general deterrence to be paramount. Licensed persons must appreciate that conduct occurring in private, once captured and circulated, can have immediate and lasting consequences for the image of racing. The Stewards also took into account Ms Waddell's cooperation, lack of prior disciplinary history, and the financial and emotional hardship that has already resulted from the process.

Human Rights

In considering this matter, proper consideration is required of Ms Waddell'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 Waddell 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 Waddell'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 Waddell'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 Waddell's licence or to disqualify Ms Waddell 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 Waddell 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

The Stewards have determined that the purposes of general and specific deterrence, together with the protection of public confidence, can be adequately achieved through a period of suspension. A suspension appropriately acknowledges the seriousness of Ms Waddell's conduct whilst recognising the strong mitigating factors and the period Ms Waddell has already served upon being stood down. Stewards are not of the opinion that a fine would adequately achieve those purposes.

Accordingly, the Stewards determined that Ms Waddell's licence be suspended, having full regard to the gravity of the conduct, the mitigating circumstances, and the need for deterrence, both general and specific.

The Stewards determined that a starting point of six (6) months suspension of licence was appropriate. Under Australian Rule of Racing 283(5), the Stewards order that such suspension is itself to be suspended after four (4) months for an operational period of two (2) years during which Ms Waddell must not commit another offence of a similar nature.

The period of suspension is to be backdated to commence on 14 September 2025, being the date on which Ms Waddell was initially stood down, and to conclude 14 January 2026.

Ms Casey Waddell 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).