

**Media Release**

Thursday 10 October 2013

**HRNZ approves ban on Anabolic Steroids**

Following on from recent decisions by the Australian Racing Board and New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, the Board of Harness Racing New Zealand has approved a ban on the use of anabolic steroids for horses both in and out of competition.

The new ban will apply to all horses from the age of six months, with this period of permitted steroid use allowed only in the interests of animal welfare. Under the current rules, it is an offence to present a horse with anabolic steroids in its system on raceday.

HRNZ is just working through the process of amending its Prohibited Substances Regulations in light of this change. It is expected that the Regulations will be amended by 1 December 2013, with the ban effective 1 May 2014. This is consistent with the approach of the thoroughbred codes in Australia and New Zealand.

In adopting a zero tolerance policy to the use of anabolic steroids in competition, training and spelling, HRNZ will institute heavy penalties for breaches of the ban. The prohibition will apply to any horse that comes with the jurisdiction of the New Zealand regulatory authorities to conduct out of competition testing.

In adopting this change HRNZ has consulted with NZTR, Dr A Grierson (Veterinary Advisor to the Equine Codes), the NZ Veterinarians Association – Equine branch, the NZ Harness Racing Trainers & Drivers Association and Harness Racing Australia. The ban ensures New Zealand is consistent with most racing jurisdictions globally and from HRNZ's perspective it is important there be a consistent approach between the equine codes domestically.

Details of the changes to the HRNZ Prohibited Substance Regulations will be outlined in an upcoming issue of the Harness Racing Weekly.

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