

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

8 March 2019

HRV RAD Board Hearing – Tiana McMahon

On 7 March 2019, the Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board considered a charge issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainer-driver Tiana McMahon.

AHRR 190(1) reads as follows:

A horse shall be presented for a race free of prohibited substances.

The charge under AHRR 190(1) issued by HRV Stewards against Ms McMahon related to a pre-race urine sample collected from the horse 'Blissfully Unaware' prior to it competing in Race 1, the 'DNR Logistics Pace Final' at the Shepparton harness racing meeting on 1 November 2017. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the urine sample revealed the sample to contain a prohibited substance, namely cobalt, at a concentration greater than 200 µg/L. This result was confirmed by the Racing Science Centre in Brisbane.

The HRV RAD Board considered the statements of HRV Investigative Steward Stephen Svanosio, RASL Scientific Manager Paul Zahra and Veterinary Pharmacologist Professor Paul Mills.

Ms McMahon pleaded guilty to the charge, before the HRV RAD Board heard submissions on penalty from both parties.

In deciding an appropriate penalty, the HRV RAD Board considered Ms McMahon's relatively short license history, her good record over this period of time, and her guilty plea. Also considered was her very difficult personal and financial circumstances and her excellent character references.

In handing down its penalty, the HRV RAD Board highlighted the significance of the rules in relation to prohibited substances in harness racing, the importance of conducting races fairly and with integrity, along with the protection of horses and the participants involved in the industry.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board imposed a 12-month suspension of Ms McMahon's trainers and drivers licenses. It was ordered that the suspension commence at midnight Sunday 10 March 2019.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that 'Blissfully Unaware' be disqualified from Race 1 at Shepparton on 1 November 2017, and that the placings be amended accordingly.

HRV RAD Board Panel: Judge Graeme Hicks and John Kearney