

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

30 May 2018

HRV RAD Board Hearing – George Batsakis

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today considered a charge issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainer George Batsakis.

AHRR 190(1) reads as follows:

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

The charge under AHRR 190(1) related to a urine sample collected from the horse 'Our Fabiolla' after it finished first in Race 7, the 'Melton Saddlery Pace', at the Cranbourne harness racing meeting on 24 October 2017. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of that urine sample revealed the sample to contain capsaicin and dihydrocapsaicin, prohibited substances under the AHRR. The Racing Science Centre (RSC) in Queensland confirmed the reserve sample contained capsaicin and dihydrocapsaicin.

Mr Batsakis pleaded guilty to the charge before submissions on penalty were heard from HRV Stewards and Mr Batsakis. It was acknowledged by the Stewards that the use of a preparation called "Keep Tail" where the horse was stabled was a possible explanation for the presence of capsaicin and dihydrocapsaicin in the sample.

In deciding an appropriate penalty, the HRV RAD Board considered the circumstances of the offence, Mr Batsakis' guilty plea and cooperation throughout the investigation; Mr Batsakis' good record over a long period in the industry; and both general and specific deterrence. The HRV RAD Board also emphasised the purpose of the rules in relation to prohibited substances. Mr

Batsakis was subsequently fined \$3000, of which \$1500 was suspended for a period of 12 months.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that, under AHRR 195, 'Our Fabiolla' be disqualified from Race 7 at Cranbourne on 24 October 2017 and that the placings be amended accordingly.

HRV RAD Board Panel: Alanna Duffy (Chair), John Kearney, Kevin Carson.

The Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board (RADB) is established under section 50B of the Racing Act (1958). The RADB is an independent Board established to hear and determine appeals in relation to decisions made under the rules to impose penalties on persons and to hear and determine charges made against persons for serious offences.