

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

29 June 2018

HRV RAD Board Hearing – Craig Cross & Joe Taaffe

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today heard a matter in regards to charges issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainers Craig Cross and Joe Taaffe.

AHRR 190(1) reads as follows:

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

The charges under AHRR 190(1) issued by HRV Stewards against Mr Cross and Mr Taaffe related to a urine sample collected from the horse 'Ima Kennedy Two' after it finished first in Race 4, the 'Blue Hills Rise Pace', at the Cranbourne harness racing meeting on 28 January 2018. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of that urine sample revealed the sample to contain arsenic in excess of the allowable threshold.

'Ima Kennedy Two' was presented to race at Cranbourne on 28 January 2018 by Mr Taaffe on behalf of Mr Cross, who was not in attendance.

AHRR 190(3) reads as follows:

If a person is left in charge of a horse and the horse is presented for a race otherwise than in accordance with sub rule (1), the trainer of the horse and the person left in charge is each guilty of an offence.

Mr Cross and Mr Taaffe both pleaded guilty to the respective charges before the HRV RAD Board heard submissions on penalty from the HRV Stewards and Mr Cross and Mr Taaffe.

In determining penalty for Mr Cross and Mr Taaffe, the HRV RAD Board considered the early guilty pleas from both parties, co-operation with the Stewards; and their respective license histories with no previous history of similar matters.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board imposed a fine of \$2000 (with \$1000 suspended for a period of 12 months) upon Mr Cross and a fine of \$2000 upon Mr Taaffe (with \$1500 suspended for a period of 12 months).

The HRV RAD Board also ordered that, under AHRR 195, 'Ima Kennedy Two' be disqualified from Race 4 at Cranbourne on 28 January 2018 and that the placings be amended accordingly.

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