

Media Release

Racing Appeals & Disciplinary Board

8 March 2018

HRV RAD Board – Ms Maryanne Laffan

The Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) Racing Appeals and Disciplinary (RAD) Board today heard a matter in regards to a charge issued by HRV Stewards under Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 190(1) against licensed trainer Maryanne Laffan.

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 Laffan related to a post-race blood sample collected from the horse 'Westvillageemily' after winning Race 4, the 'Great Northern Super Crisp 3YO Pace', on 25 July 2017 at the Kilmore harness racing meeting. Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) reported that analysis of the blood sample revealed the sample to contain a prohibited substance, namely alkalinising agents as evidenced by a total carbon dioxide (TCO₂) concentration in excess of 36.0 millimoles per litre in plasma. This analysis was confirmed by referee analysis of the blood sample at the Racing Science Centre in Brisbane.

Ms Laffan pleaded not guilty to the charge before submissions were heard from HRV Stewards and Mr Andrew Peace, acting on behalf of Ms Laffan.

The charge against Ms Laffan was subsequently found proven by the HRV RAD Board.

In determining penalty the HRV RAD Board considered the following:

- The serious nature of this particular rule breach, which was evidenced by a very high TCO₂ concentration of greater than 39 millimoles per litre in plasma;
- Ms Laffan's not-guilty plea;
- Ms Laffan's disciplinary record, which included a previous TCO₂ matter;
- Previous penalties for similar offences and the need for consistency;
- Specific and general deterrence;
- Ms Laffan's personal circumstances put forward by her representative.

In considering all of these matters, the HRV RAD Board disqualified Ms Laffan for a period of 12 months, deemed to commence immediately.

The HRV RAD Board also ordered, under AHRR 195, that 'Westvillageemily' be disqualified from Race 4 at Kilmore on 25 July 2017 and the placings amended accordingly.

HRV RAD Board Panel: John Doherty (Deputy Chair), John Kearney, Kerry Willcock

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.