

## **Endurance Medication Control Protocol, AERA/EA**

### **1. Event Planning Summary**

The State Management Committee (AERA), in the State where an event is held, at which medication control/Sampling of horses is to take place, must plan the following:

1. The presence at the event of appropriately qualified personnel, a Veterinarian and an EA/FEI accredited Swabbing Steward.
2. Access to a “swabbing box” or a facility where samples can be collected at the event
3. Availability of an adequate number of sample collection kits and equipment. These kits are available from the AERA Endurance MCO.
4. The method of selection of horses should be left to the Chief Steward (AERA)/Ground Jury (FEI) of the day. The Swabbing Steward should not be involved in the selection of horses for drug testing
5. Financial budgeting for the required sampling

### **2. Qualified Personnel**

The EA Branch Offices and the EA National Medication Control Officer maintains a list of members that have experience as Swabbing Stewards and a list of experienced veterinarians. As from 01 January 2005, the EA Steward in charge of drug testing of horses must be accredited for this function under the EA National Officiating Accreditation Scheme.

At Endurance events, a Line vet should be used to draw the blood samples. A treatment vet or a vet who has administered any drugs during the event must never draw samples. The Swabbing steward or the Veterinarian can collect the urine samples. There is no requirement for the Line Vet to be accredited under the EA MCP Steward Programme.

### **3. Supply of Sample Collection Kits**

Sample Collection Kits will be ordered from the ARFL (Sydney) Testing Laboratory by the AERA MCO, and will be provided to the Swabbing Steward prior to the event.

Upon arrival the kit(s) should be checked to ensure that the expiry dates are current. The ID number must also be checked. It is the duty of the person ordering the kit(s) (AERA MCO, Veterinary Surgeon or the EA Steward) to bring the kit(s) to the event.

Sample kits come in a security bag, which has a tamper evident seal at the end of the zipper. The security bag has been sealed with a uniquely numbered tamper evident seal. The seal is ONLY broken, and the bag opened IMMEDIATELY prior to the collection of samples AT THE COMPETITION. The opening of the bag must occur in the presence of the sample collection officials (usually the veterinarian and the EA Swabbing Steward), overseeing the collection of samples, and the Person Responsible. All kits, whether used or unused, must be returned to the EA laboratory. Some laboratories also supply (usually on request) large disposable plastic cups and a holder with a handle for the collection of urine. The use of these is not mandatory, but a washed purpose built urine catching receptacle is required.

### **4. On-site Facilities**

It is preferable to have a separate stable dedicated to the collection of samples. This “swabbing box” should be in a quiet and private area, be clean and preferably have a supply of fresh straw/sawdust in it. There should be chairs for Person Responsible, veterinarian and steward(s), and a table on which the sampling kits can be processed.

In the absence of such facility, the sampling can be done in other areas, preferable in an area with which the Person Responsible and sampling personnel are comfortable. This area must be isolated and quiet, and safe for the horse and handlers.

## **5. The Selection of Horses to be sampled**

Normally, as the analysis of samples is expensive, the State Management Committee (AERA) determines the number of samples that are to be taken. However both the EA and FEI have a policy regarding the number of horses that must be sampled.

The AERA and EA maintains a Medication Control Program (MCP)/Swabbing Program that ensures that drug testing (swabbing) is carried out during official competition in conformance with requirements listed below.

There are many methods for selecting horses to be swabbed at AERA events and competitions. Only horses where the Person Responsible is an AERA member can be selected for swabbing. This includes Senior and Junior members in any AERA affiliated competition. The Chief Steward (AERA) or Ground Jury (FEI) may delegate the responsibility to the Head veterinarian to decide upon the method of selection. The selection processes available to the Chief Steward (AERA) Ground Jury (FEI) include any of the following:

1. Horses may be chosen specifically because their behaviour raises suspicion, in other words, they appear drugged or under the effect of medication (deemed a Chief Steward (AERA)/Ground Jury (FEI) "spot test")
2. Horses may be chosen at random from all competitors entered, or chosen at random from a group of winners or Place getters (deemed a random selection)
3. Horses may be chosen because they are winners or placegetters (deemed a "required selection", e.g. at certain FEI Events)
4. Horses may be chosen because they have been withdrawn, vetted out or scratched (deemed a Chief Steward (AERA)/Ground Jury "spot test")
5. Horses may be chosen because of poor performance (deemed a Chief Steward (AERA)/ Ground Jury (FEI) "spot test")
6. Horses may be chosen at a Chief Steward (AERA)/ judge's (FEI) request (deemed a Ground Jury "spot test")
7. The Chief Steward (AERA) Ground Jury (FEI) may delegate the responsibility to the Veterinarian, or another senior member of the Organising Committee to decide upon the method of selection or select the horse(s). The Ground Jury (FEI) can also delegate the responsibility to the FEI Chief Steward (not the Swabbing Steward)

Once the Chief Steward (AERA)/Ground Jury (FEI) have selected the required number of horses for swabbing, a Chief Steward (AERA)/ground jury member/event organising committee member must sign the EA Medication Control Notification form(s) that will be used for the notification of the person(s) responsible

## **6. Reporting of Results**

The reporting of the sample results will only be made to the President of Australian Endurance Riders Association (AERA) for non-FEI events. Reporting of sample results for FEI events is directly to the FEI.

OCs, MCO and Sampling Officials are only informed of the sample results at the discretion of the AERA President. This would not usually occur until after a judicial enquiry (if needed) or after the Person Responsible has been informed.

## **7. List of EA and FEI Reference and Associate Laboratories**

These are the EA/FEI Approved Laboratories within Australia:

NSW: Australian Racing Forensics Laboratory

(REFERENCE LABORATORY)

Royal Randwick Racecourse

Randwick NSW 2031

Ph: 02 8344 5000

## **8. Other Contact Details**

EA Medication Control Officer:

Dr Warwick Vale

106 Chittering Rd., Bullsbrook WA 6084

Mobile: 0418 903 095, Email: [vale@nw.com.au](mailto:vale@nw.com.au) Ph: (02) 8762 7777

AERA MCO:

Dorte Colja

49 Fairley St., Redlynch, Qld 4870, email: [dorte@internode.on.net](mailto:dorte@internode.on.net)

Mobile: 0419825883

## **9. Endurance event flow**

1. Pre –Ride Vetting
2. Ride Start- each leg has arrival at finish line– strapping –vetting- rest- then depending on how many legs a ride has, the procedure starts again.

A horse has not finished the event until it has passed final vet check.

160km rides will have 5 legs (AERA)/6 phases (FEI) and will run over 24hrs (AERA) 24hrs or less (FEI)

80km – 120km rides will be run over 2-3 legs/phases and 8-12 hrs (AERA/FEI)

3. Best conditioned judging

Best conditioned horse is judged after all legs have been completed. In case of a 160km this is usually done the following day.

## **9. Notification and Supervision**

The Swabbing Steward or a trained assistant seeks out the selected rider/horse combinations without significantly interfering with their competition or preparation. Horses may be sampled at any time during competition. Horses may be sampled more than once.

In practice it is best that the riders/drivers/handlers (person's responsible) are notified and swabbed immediately after they have finished competing, completed Best Conditioned presentations or have taken part in the presentation of prizes or within 30 minutes of the announcement of the final competition results. Persons Responsible may be notified up to 30 minutes after the finish of competition.

The handler/rider or owner or their designated representative (hereafter termed the Person Responsible or PR) must stay with the horse from the point of notification until the sampling procedure is completed. When the PR is not an adult (18 years old or over), they must be accompanied by a guardian.

The EA steward/trained Steward must notify the PR formally by handing PR the completed and signed EA/FEI Horse Drug Testing Notification form. The PR MUST complete and sign the EA/FEI Horse Drug Testing Notification form.

The horse must then be accompanied by the EA steward/trained steward at all times after notification. The Swabbing Steward/trained steward should supervise the selected horse from the moment the PR is notified and until handing over to the EA Swabbing Steward who will supervise until the swabbing process has been completed.

Endurance horses can be dehydrated and also in need of feed. If this is the case, the person responsible, must bring water and feed in their own containers, and let the horse eat and drink only out of these, with feed and water being supplied from the horse's usual stores. The horse may be hosed down, may have its tack removed and may be presented quickly for photographs before making its way to the sampling box/area. However, after notification the PR must present the horse at the swabbing area as soon as possible for sample collection.

A refusal or wilful obstruction by any person to submit a horse for sampling must be reported immediately to the Chief Steward (AERA)/Ground Jury (FEI)/Event Organising Committee. If the Chief Steward (AERA) Ground Jury (FEI)/Committee decide there are no grounds for such a refusal or obstruction, and the Person Responsible persists, the horse must be disqualified from the entire event. The matter must be reported in writing to the relevant State Management Committee (AERA)/ National Anti-Doping Control Officer (EA).

Once at the swab box/area, the identity of the horse should be confirmed in the best way possible. The veterinarian must identify the horse against its AERA log book/EA/FEI papers. If the documents are absent or an AERA novice log book is the identification, the veterinarian must write a description on the horse ID forms provided.

## **10. The Sampling Process**

The accredited swabbing steward/veterinarian must open the swab kits in the presence of the PR, conduct the wash-through procedure and sample the horse, waiting for urination for a reasonable time, but no more than one (1) hour. The length of wait for urine may be shortened if the sampling officials are of the opinion that an expedited collection of urine is not probable. Endurance horses are encouraged to urinate before final vetting for a lowering of heart rate and may not be able to provide any sample after this, in which case a lengthy wait for urine is unreasonable. Detailed procedures for the use of sampling kits may vary from kit to kit, lab to lab. Please consult the appropriate laboratory resource material provided with the sample kits.

If a horse becomes dangerous, while being swabbed, then the sampling procedure may be curtailed or abandoned by the approval of the sampling officials.

## **11. EA Swabbing Stewards Personal Kit**

All EA Swabbing Stewards should obtain a personal kit, which should contain the following:

Identity badge (available from the EA)

Swabbing sample kit(s)

A pair of cheap reading glasses +2 ( many riders PR do not carry these but need these to read documents)

Scissors

Stapler

Collection pan/urine collector

File/notebook

Pens

Plastic Gloves

Sunscreen lotion

Sun hat or cap

Swabbing Procedures

Spare coded seals to close the sample kit

Where available, the Laboratory's Sample Collection Procedures Booklet (It is advisable to read this booklet thoroughly and carry it with you on swabbing days.)

EA Notification Forms

Blank Horse Identification Forms

Express Post Envelopes for paperwork return to the National Medication Control officer

Express Post secure bags for the posting of samples to the laboratory (if needed)

Upon arrival at grounds, check that the following are available:

Swabbing Area/Stable is available/clean/ready

Competitor List/Event program (the Chief Steward (AERA)Ground jury (FEI)/event organiser, must supply the swabbing team with an event program and competitor listing upon request)

The Swabbing Steward, the Chief Steward (AERA),a member of the ground jury (FEI) or event coordinator and veterinarian must meet to discuss procedures for the day

## **12. After Sampling Completion**

As soon as possible after a sample is taken and sealed, it needs to be kept chilled or frozen in a suitable secure (Locked) cooler, container or refrigerator. This is to ensure the biological integrity of the sample

Used and unused sample kits are to remain in the custody of the EA sampling steward or the MCO.

Arrangements for delivery/sending of the samples on the first working day after the competition/event are essential

When swabbing samples are sent from a distance, then they should be express registered, posted or courier freighted back to the approved laboratory

## **13. Risk Management Measures**

To ensure that PR is confident that the correct processes have been followed and need not be challenged, the following measures should be observed:

The Swabbing Steward should not be involved in the selection of horse to be swabbed

The PR must have a clear view of all procedures and be given an explanation about each step of the process

Only a Veterinarian is to take blood; either the veterinarian or the Swabbing Stewards may take the urine samples

Stewards should be well versed with regulations, procedures and equipment required

The Swabbing Steward is ultimately responsible for the swabbing conducted, and will be scrutinised more than the competitor

Identification of the horse should be through a suitable I.D. like an AERA Log Book (AERA rides)/ EA/FEI passport (FEI rides)

Stewards need to be consistent with their procedures

The Swabbing Steward should ensure the veterinary surgeon has disposed of sharps into a sharps container

Security for the completed kits/chain of custody