

AERA RULEBOOK ©

Amendments to AERA RULEBOOK applicable from 1 January 2024

[NOTE: where part of a rule is amended, the full rule is included with changes identified in [blue](#)]

SECTION 1 - GENERAL RULES

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION, DEFINITIONS AND COMPLIANCE

1.3 The Australian Endurance Riders Association Incorporated Rulebook (hereinafter 'Rulebook') comprises the following documents:

- Section 1: General Rules (this document).
- Section 2: Complementary Competition Rules.
- Section 3: Veterinary Rules.
- Section 4: Social Media Engagement Rules.
- Section 5: Equine Anti-doping & Controlled Medication (EADCM) Rules.
- Section 6: Risk Management Rules.
- Section 7: [AERA Forms as listed on the Forms page on the AERA website.](#)

CHAPTER 2. DEFINITIONS & RIDE CONTROLS

2. DEFINITIONS

Table 1 Acronyms

AERA	Australian Endurance Riders Association Incorporated
BC	Best Conditioned
BM	Best Managed
DA	Division Association
EA	Equestrian Australia
FEI	Fédération Equestre Internationale
HEWS	Horse Early Warning System
REWS	Rider Early Warning System
ROC	Ride Organising Committee
TPR	Temperature and Pulse Rate steward

CHAPTER 3. RIDE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

No changes

CHAPTER 4. RIDE OFFICIALS

[This rule has been changed to remove respiration as a function of a TPR Steward and to change the role title to Temperature and Pulse Rate Steward.](#)

24. TEMPERATURE AND PULSE RATE STEWARDS (TPRs)

24.1 A sufficient number of accredited AERA TPR stewards shall be appointed by the ROC, preferably a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the event pursuant to Clause 14.3.

24.2 All TPR stewards at a ride are under the control and direction of the chief steward.

24.3 TPRs are responsible to check and if directed, record a horse's pulse [rate](#) and temperature according to parameters decided at the pre-ride briefing between the head veterinarian, chief steward and TPR stewards.

24.4 The procedure for taking a horse's pulse is:

- a) approach the horse in a non-threatening manner and de-sensitise the chest area over the heart by rubbing with the back of the hand before applying the stethoscope.
- b) before beginning to take the pulse **rate**, listen to the heart for up to 15 seconds so the rhythm of the pulse becomes obvious.
- c) TPRs are required to take the pulse **rate** over a full minute.

24.5 Occasionally it may be necessary to take into account other factors not associated with the horse being examined that may cause a temporary elevation and/or aberration to the pulse **rate** and which would be unfair if included in the count. If this is the case, the count is started again.

24.6 The TPR steward must use a digital stopwatch or similar digital device to determine the pulse rate. The timing device is started at a pulse beat. The pulse count is commenced at the next pulse beat.

24.7 When a horse's pulse **rate** is above the maximum permitted for that leg:

- a) the TPR steward will not indicate the result to the handler or support personnel, nor record any result in the logbook, but must request a veterinarian's verification of the pulse **rate** through the chief steward. The handler may reserve the right not to move the horse for the verification of the pulse **rate**.
- b) the chief steward shall request a veterinarian to perform an immediate re-count of the pulse **rate**. If a veterinarian is not immediately available, the chief steward may perform an independent re-count, however, a veterinarian is still required to ultimately verify the pulse **rate**.
- c) if the pulse **rate** taken by the veterinarian is above the maximum set for that leg, the horse is eliminated irrespective of any variation in count between the TPR steward, chief steward and the veterinarian, and the pulse **rate** taken by the veterinarian will be recorded in the logbook.
- d) if the pulse **rate** taken by the veterinarian is below the maximum set for that leg, the counts taken by the TPR, and the Chief steward (if taken) shall be relayed to the veterinarian and the veterinarian has the discretion to make the final decision on the count to be recorded in the logbook.

24.8 A TPR shall be accredited in accordance with the prevailing AERA TPR Accreditation [Procedure](#) as amended from time to time.

CHAPTER 5. RIDER RULES

28. RIDER STATUS

28.1 Every *rider* is deemed to be of novice *rider* status unless the *rider* has satisfied the requirements to progress to endurance *rider* status pursuant to Clause 29.3.

28.2 [removed](#)

29. NOVICE RIDER RESTRICTIONS & REQUIREMENTS

29.1 A novice status *rider* shall:

- a) attend the *pre-ride briefing* or they may be eliminated by the chief steward before the start of the *ride*.
- b) not enter a *marathon ride* of any distance.
- c) successfully complete a minimum of two (2) *intermediate rides* before they are permitted to:
 - i. enter an *endurance ride* where the total distance of the *ride* is no longer than 120 km.
 - ii. enter a *mini-marathon ride*.

29.2 A novice status *rider* is subject to a minimum *riding time* for each individual leg of every *ride*. The minimum *riding time* as determined in Table 2 is determined by the chief steward in consultation with the *ROC* and the head veterinarian.

- a) When the Standard *ride* control is used, the minimum *riding time* permitted for every individual leg cannot be less than the resultant calculation of dividing the distance of the leg by 14 km/hr.
- b) When the VGIIH *ride* control is used, the minimum *riding time* permitted for every individual leg cannot be less than the resultant calculation of dividing the distance of the

leg by 14 km/hr. For the sole purpose of calculating the minimum riding time pursuant to this clause, the riding time will be deemed to cease when the rider is timed in off the course.

29.3 To progress from novice *rider* status to endurance *rider* status, the *rider* shall:

- a) Successfully complete two (2) *intermediate rides* as required in Clause 29.1 (c), and
- b) Successfully complete three (3) *endurance rides* in any riding division, and
- c) **When a) and b) have been satisfied, rider status will be automatically upgraded to 'endurance' on the AERASpace database.**

40 RIDER EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (REWS)

40.1.1 Every *rider* in every *endurance, marathon, mini marathon* and *intermediate ride* is subject to the Rider Early Warning System (REWS). The *rider* attracts penalty points as per Table 15.

Table 15 Rider early warning system penalty points	
Reason for Non-Completion	Penalty Points
Vet out pulse less than 66 bpm	10
Vet out pulse 66 bpm or over	20
Vet out lame	6
Vet out lame at a 2nd consecutive ride	12
Vet out lame at a 3rd and any consecutive rides	18
Vet out metabolic - non-invasive	10
Vet out metabolic - moderate	20
Vet out metabolic - severe	30
Vet out other – back	6
Vet out gall or injury	4
Disqualification – finishing quicker than novice time by less than 5 minutes	10
Disqualification – finishing quicker than novice time by 5 minutes or greater	30

CHAPTER 6. HORSE RULES

Rule 57 HORSE TACK

57.1 reads "It is the responsibility of the rider to ensure that their riding tack is 'fit for the purpose', safe and that all tack and material placed on a horse, fits appropriately and does **not** cause harm or injury to the horse."

61. HORSE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (HEWS)

61.1 Every horse in every *endurance, marathon, mini marathon* and *Intermediate ride* is subject to the Horse Early Warning System (HEWS). The horse attracts penalty points as per Table 18.

Table 18 Horse early warning system penalty points

Reason for Non-Completion	Penalty Points
Vet out pulse less than 66 bpm	10
Vet out pulse 66 bpm or over	20
Vet out lame	6
Vet out lame at a 2nd consecutive ride	12
Vet out lame at a 3 rd and any consecutive rides	18
Vet out metabolic - non-invasive	10
Vet out metabolic - moderate	20
Vet out metabolic - severe	30
Vet out other – back	6
Vet out gall or injury	4
Disqualification – finishing quicker than novice time by less than 5 minutes	10
Disqualification – finishing quicker than novice time by 5 minutes or greater	30

65 PRE-RIDE VETERINARY INSPECTION

65.1 The examining veterinarian shall:

- 65.1.1 observe, determine and notate all the parameters shown on the horse's *logbook* page or vet card. The head veterinarian may delegate the authority to collect the **heart rate and temperature** to accredited TPR stewards or to suitably qualified veterinary students from any Australian University facility.

66 END-OF-LEG VETERINARY INSPECTION

66.1 The examining veterinarian shall:

- 66.1.1 observe, determine and notate all the parameters shown on the horse's *logbook* page or vet card. The head veterinarian may delegate the authority to collect the **heart rate and temperature** to accredited TPR stewards or to suitably qualified veterinary students from any Australian University facility. At the end-of-leg veterinary inspections, the horse's respiratory rate and temperature is collected at the discretion of the head veterinarian.

CHAPTER 7. VETERINARY CONTROLS & PROCEDURES

No changes

SECTION 2 – COMPLEMENTARY COMPETITION RULES

No changes

SECTION 3 – VETERINARY RULES

No changes

SECTION 4 – SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT RULES

No changes

SECTION 5 – EQUINE ANTI-DOPING & CONTROLLED MEDICATION RULES

8.4.1 Upon receipt of the notification from the AERA review panel, the relevant DA shall provisionally suspend the *person responsible*, members of the *support personnel* (where appropriate), and/or the *person responsible's horse* prior to the opportunity for a full hearing based on:

- a) an admission that an EAD Rule violation has taken place (for the avoidance of doubt, an admission by any *person* can only be used to provisionally suspend that person); or
- b) all of the following elements:
 - i. an *Adverse Analytical Finding* from the *A Sample* or the *A and B Samples*;
 - ii. the review described in Clause 8.1.2 above; and
 - iii. the Notification described in Clause 8.1.3 above.

Where the *person responsible* was a minor at the time of the *Event* and to whom Clause 9.4 (Special Procedure for Minors) applies, the relevant DA will not provisionally suspend the minor but shall provisionally suspend the relevant *horse*.

Where the *person responsible* was a minor at the time of the event and Clause 9.4 does not apply, the DA may provisionally suspend the minor but shall provisionally suspend the *horse*.

8.4.2 The DA may also provisionally suspend a *person responsible*, member of the *support personnel*, and/or the *person responsible's horse* prior to the opportunity for a full hearing based on evidence that a violation of these EAD Rules is highly likely to have been committed by the respective *person*.

Where the *person responsible* was a minor at the time of the *Event* and to whom Clause 9.4 (Special Procedure for Minors) applies, the relevant DA will not provisionally suspend the minor but shall provisionally suspend the relevant *horse*.

Where the *person responsible* was a minor at the time of the event and Clause 9.4 does not apply, the DA may provisionally suspend the minor but shall provisionally suspend the *horse*.

9.4 Special Procedure for Minors

9.4.1 For Adverse Analytical Findings involving one or more Banned Substances, where the Person Responsible is a Minor, the Minor may elect to have their case processed under the "Special Procedure for Minors" provided that:

- a) The Minor and the Horse are first-time offenders (namely, no record of any EAD or ECM Rule violations, or violations of any predecessor rules) without any pending or concluded cases within the last four (4) years preceding the Sample which caused the Adverse Analytical Finding; and
- b) The Special Procedure form for Minors has been submitted as per Clause 9.4.4.

9.4.2. Where the Special Procedure for Minors is applied by the AERA, the following consequences shall be imposed and no other consequences, including those set forth elsewhere in these EAD Rules, shall be applicable to any Minor who has elected to avail of this Special Procedure for Minors:

- a) Disqualification of the Minor and the Horse from the whole Event and forfeiture of all prizes won at the Event;

- b) Two-month period of Ineligibility for the Minor, such period of Ineligibility to commence on the date that the Acceptance Form referred to in Clause 9.4.4 below is received by the AERA;
- c) Two-month period of suspension for the Horse, such period of suspension to commence as of the date of Notification (i.e. the date the provisional suspension of the Horse commenced);
- d) A Fine of \$1,500 and costs of \$1,000. However, if a B Sample analysis is requested and the Special Procedure for Minors is accepted after the B Sample Analysis, the costs payable shall be increased to \$2,000.

9.4.3 In order to apply this Special Procedure for Minors, the Minor and their legal guardian must execute an Acceptance Form within fourteen (14) calendar days following the date of the Notice in which the AERA offers this Special Procedure for Minors to the Minor alleged to have committed the EAD Rule violation. The AERA may reasonably extend such deadline provided the file has not yet been circulated to the DA Hearing Panel or any of its members.

9.4.4 If the Minor does not elect to avail of the Special Procedure for Minors within the fixed time limit, the Special Procedure for Minors shall be considered declined, and the case shall be submitted to the DA Hearing Panel for final Decision. The relevant Division Association may impose Sanctions and costs which may be more or less severe than the ones provided under Clause 9.4.3 above.

14.2 Public Disclosure

14.2.1 Neither the AERA or its Affiliates shall publicly identify *horses or persons responsible* whose *horses' samples* have resulted in *Adverse Analytical Findings*, or *persons responsible* and/or members of the *support personnel* who were alleged to have otherwise violated these Rules, until the earlier of completion of the administrative review and Notification described in Clauses 8.1.2 and 8.1.3 above or the start of the *provisional suspension* of the *person* alleged to have violated the EAD Rule. Once a violation of these EAD Rules has been established, it shall be *publicly reported* in an expeditious manner on the AERA website unless another mechanism for *publicly reporting* the information is warranted at the discretion of the AERA. Public reporting shall be for a period of 12 months from the date of notification. If the *person responsible* and/or member of the *support personnel* or the AERA makes information concerning an EAD Rule violation or alleged EAD Rule violation public prior to release of this information on the AERA website, the AERA may comment on such public information or otherwise *publicly report* the matter.

14.2.2 In any case where it is determined, after a hearing or appeal, that the *person responsible* and/or member of the *support personnel* did not commit an EAD Rule violation, the *decision* may be disclosed publicly only with the consent of the *person* who is the subject of the *decision*. The AERA shall use reasonable efforts to obtain such consent, and if consent is obtained, shall *publicly disclose* the *decision* in its entirety or in such redacted form as such *person* and the AERA Affiliate may jointly approve.

14.2.3 Neither the AERA, EA, any FEI approved *laboratory*, or any official of any of the above, shall publicly comment on the specific facts of a pending case (as opposed to a general description of process and science), except in response to public comments attributed to the *person responsible* and/or member of the *support personnel* or their representatives.

14.2.4 Recognition of *decisions* by AERA Affiliates

Any decision of the AERA and/or a DA regarding a violation of these EAD Rules shall be recognised and enforced by all Division Associations affiliated with the AERA who shall take all necessary action to implement any and all ramifications relating to such *decisions*. Failure to do so may be considered a violation of these EAD Rules and the AERA Division Association Affiliation Agreement.

14.2.5 The mandatory Public Reporting required in Clause 14.2.1 shall not be required where the Person Responsible and/or member of the Support Personnel and/or other Person who has been found to have committed an antidoping rule violation is a Minor. Any optional Public Reporting in a case involving a Minor shall be proportionate to the facts and circumstances of the case.

SECTION 6 – RISK MANAGEMENT RULES

No changes