

## HARNESS INDUSTRY NOTICE WHIP RULE AMENDMENTS

On 1 May 2016 new rules relating to whips and their use will come into effect and will be enforced as of that date. All drivers are advised to familiarise themselves with the new rules and modify their actions so as to be compliant before the 1 May 2016 implementation date.

The new rules are as follows:

- 156. (1) (a) A driver shall only use a whip of a design and specification approved by the Controlling Body.**
- (b) A whip, once approved –**
- (i) Shall not be modified in any manner;**  
**(ii) Shall be maintained in a satisfactory condition;**
- (c) A whip that does not comply with sub-paragraph (b) may be confiscated by the Stewards.**
- (2) A driver shall hold a rein in each hand at all times unless he or she is adjusting approved gear.**
- (3) A driver shall not use a whip in an unapproved manner.**
- (4) For the purposes of sub-rule (3) a driver shall be deemed to have used the whip in an unapproved manner in the following circumstances which are not exclusive:-**
- (a) If the tip of the whip is drawn back further than the driver's shoulder.**  
**(b) If the whip hand is drawn back further than or above the driver's shoulder.**  
**(c) If the whip action involves more than a wrist and elbow action.**  
**(d) If the reins are lengthened so as to result in loose reining regardless of whether the whip is being used at the same time.**  
**(e) If the whip is used other than in a flicking motion.**  
**(f) If the whip is applied continuously and/or without allowing the horse time to respond.**  
**(g) If the whip is applied when the horse:-**  
**(i) Is not visibly responding;**  
**(ii) Is not in contention;**  
**(iii) Cannot maintain or improve its position;**  
**(iv) Is clearly winning;**  
**(v) Has passed the winning post at the finish of a race.**
- (5) A driver shall not use the whip in a manner which causes injury to a horse.**
- (6) A whip shall not be used so as to obstruct, strike or endanger another driver or horse.**
- (7) A driver shall not allow a whip to project outside the sulky.**
- (8) A whip shall not be used in a prodding or jabbing motion.**
- (9) A driver shall not be in possession of a whip that has not been approved by the Controlling Body.**
- (10) A person who fails to comply with any provision of this Rule is guilty of an offence.**

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**156A. The approved whip is a flexible whip of black or dark tan colour with a core of fibreglass with a handle base and shaft and either a leather keeper to a maximum of 60 millimetres in length and 20 millimetres in width or a non rigid tip amount to a maximum overall length of 1600 millimetres.**

**156B. (1) A person shall not instruct or offer an inducement to a driver to use a whip in a manner contrary to the provisions of Rule 156.**

**(2) A person who fails to comply with sub-rule (1) is guilty of an offence.**

A video is also available on the HRA website [http://www.harness.org.au/news-article.cfm?news\\_id=29141](http://www.harness.org.au/news-article.cfm?news_id=29141) which demonstrates both the correct usage of the whip and examples of incorrect usage of the whip under the new rules.

Stewards will work with participants throughout the lead-in time to assist with the transition.

Adrian Crowther  
**CHAIRMAN OF STEWARDS – HARNESS**  
8 March 2016