

CONSULTATION NOTICE – PROTOCOL & RULES OF RACING

Code of Racing	Thoroughbred
Description	1. Protocol – Official Trials. 2. Local Rule 72 – Provisions for Nomination, Rider Declarations and Scratchings for Official Trials.
Authorised for Consultation	January 24, 2025
Consultation Closes	February 21, 2025
Submissions to	policies@racingqueensland.com.au

Protocol – Official Trials

Racing Queensland (**RQ**), in conjunction with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (**QRIC**), the Australian Trainers' Association Queensland Branch (**ATA QLD**) and the Queensland Jockeys' Association (**QJA**), has recently reviewed the protocols that apply to official trials.

This review has resulted in the development of a new “*Protocol – Official Trials*” (the **Protocol**), which formalises many of the existing principles applied by RQ and the QRIC Stewards to the conduct of official trial meetings. This includes procedures relating to:

1. Programming and Conduct of Official Trials
2. Nominations and Compilation of Official Trials
3. Rider Declarations for Official Trials
4. Scratchings for Official Trials
5. Minimum Conditions for a Satisfactory Trial
6. Fees for Official Trials

The draft Protocol is available for review at Annexure A of this Consultation Notice.

One particular item to note is the QRIC's stipulation regarding the minimum conditions that must apply before a trial may be considered 'satisfactory' for the purposes of a horse passing a barrier test, or for the lifting of a Stewards' embargo. It is important to note that these are *minimum conditions*, and the Stewards will retain full discretion to determine whether or not a horse has trialed satisfactorily (from a behavioural/performance perspective) in accordance with their powers under the Rules of Racing.

Given this stipulation, the QRIC Stewards will review the fields for a trial meeting subsequent to the scratching deadline and may determine to amend fields where necessary or appropriate to ensure sufficient starters in certain trials. If this occurs, QRIC and/or RQ will endeavour to contact the trainer of each horse that has been moved into another trial, or that is competing in a trial with additional runners, and these trainers will be given the opportunity to scratch such horse/s without payment of a scratching fee.

Other items to note include new deadlines for the declaration of riders and the scratching of horses in official trials, which are proposed to be more stringently enforced through the introduction of new Local Rules of Racing (see below).

LR.72 Official Trials – Nominations, Riders, Scratchings

New Local Rule 72 is proposed to introduce provisions to formalise the processes of nominations, declaration of riders and scratchings for official trials. A copy of the proposed rule is available at Annexure B of this Consultation Notice (noting the deletion of an old heading within the rules).



It has been identified that a deadline for the declaration of riders for official trials would improve the accuracy of information submitted to Racing Australia, in turn facilitating the timely payment of rider fees.

It is proposed that this new rider declaration deadline will be 4.00pm on the business day prior to the day of the official trials (or as otherwise set out in the RACE Magazine).

To facilitate processes on the morning of the official trials, it is proposed to introduce a consistent time for scratchings for stand-alone official trial meetings, and a consistent time for official trials conducted at race meetings. The proposed scratching deadlines are as follows on the day of the official trials (or as otherwise set out in the RACE Magazine):

- For stand-alone official trial meetings – 6:30am; and
- For official trials conducted at race meetings – 8:00am.

To support the administration and professionalism of official trials, including the procedures outlined in the Protocol, it is expected that the deadlines outlined will be enforced stringently through the application of the proposed LR.72.

Trainers who fail to meet the deadlines may be subject to a monetary penalty imposed by the QRIC Stewards (in addition to any scratching fees that may apply).

Stakeholders and interested parties are invited to provide feedback on the proposed protocol and rule amendments as per the details at the top of this document.

RQ and QRIC will assess consultation feedback before determining a proposed implementation date.



PROTOCOL – OFFICIAL TRIALS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Protocol is to outline key principles and processes related to the conduct of official trials for the information of participants.

This Protocol is a joint Racing Queensland (**RQ**) and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (**QRIC**) Protocol. RQ and QRIC have prepared the Protocol collaboratively, and any future versions or updates and amendments to the Protocol will be managed in the same way. The Protocol will be enforced by the QRIC and its Stewards.

The following parties should familiarise themselves with this Protocol: Australian Trainers' Association Queensland Branch (**ATA QLD**) and licensed trainers, Queensland and Australian Jockeys' Associations (**QJA** and **AJA**) and licensed jockeys/apprentice jockeys, and licensed race clubs.

2. Relevant Rules & Scope

- (1) The Australian Rules of Racing provide as follows:

AR 2 Dictionary

In the interpretation of these Australian Rules (and any race meeting held under them), unless the context requires otherwise, the words and phrases below have the meanings set out in this rule.

official trial means a trial:

- (a) *that is approved by a PRA;*
 - (b) *that is conducted in accordance with the conditions set by a PRA;*
 - (c) *that is supervised by the Stewards; and*
 - (d) *for which official entries are taken and results are officially recorded.*
- (2) This Protocol applies to all official trials conducted in Queensland under the Rules of Racing.
- (3) For the purpose of this Protocol 'rider' means a licensed jockey, apprentice jockey or trainee apprentice jockey only.
- (4) If there is any inconsistency between this Protocol and the Rules of Racing, the Rules of Racing will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

3. Key Principles

3.1 Programming and Conduct of Official Trials

- (1) The dates and conditions (i.e., distances, classes, etc.) for official trials are determined by RQ in consultation with licensed clubs.
- (2) The dates for official trials, with relevant nomination, rider and scratching deadlines are as published in the Racing Calendar, generally as follows:
- (a) Nominations: 9:00am on the business day prior to the day of the official trials;
 - (b) Riders: 4:00pm on the business day prior to the day of the official trials; and
 - (c) Scratchings (on the day of the official trials):
 - i. For stand-alone official trial meetings – 6:30am; and
 - ii. For official trials conducted at race meetings – 8:00am.
- (3) Official trials must be conducted under the control and supervision of the QRIC Stewards.



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- (4) For the official trials to proceed, the QRIC Stewards require the following to be present at the venue (at a minimum):
 - (a) Ambulance;
 - (b) Veterinarian;
 - (c) Starter;
 - (d) Barrier Attendants (of such number as agreed between the race club and the QRIC Stewards); and
 - (e) Judge.

3.2 Nominations and Compilation of Official Trials

- (1) The program for official trials will generally comprise various options for horses with a range of different conditions (distances, classes, age, sex, etc.).
- (2) Following the closure of nominations, RQ will compile the horses nominated for each option into an appropriate number of heats, having regard to the number of nominations received and the relevant field limit/s applicable at the venue.
- (3) Where a trainer has multiple entries for a specific option, RQ will endeavour to split the entries across heats if there are sufficient total entries to do so.
- (4) In circumstances where:
 - (a) there are insufficient nominations for a specific trial option, or
 - (b) after compiling the horses nominated for a particular option into an appropriate number of heats, there are surplus horses nominated for a specific option,

RQ may, in its sole discretion, aggregate horses into a combined trial, notwithstanding that the conditions of the trial may be different to the specific option for which the horse was nominated.

- (5) In these circumstances:
 - (a) RQ will endeavour to aggregate horses of similar class and distance;
 - (b) RQ may contact the trainer of a horse that is aggregated (or proposed to be aggregated) into a trial with different conditions to the specific option for which it was nominated; and
 - (c) the trainer of each such horse will have until 4:00pm on the day the fields are published to scratch their respective horse/s without payment of the scratching fee.
- (6) Where a race club/venue has a maximum number of horses that it allows to trial on a given day, the fields for the official trials will be determined and excess horses will be eliminated at RQ's discretion.

3.3 Rider Declarations for Official Trials

- (1) Trainers are required to declare riders for official trials via the Racing Australia Service Centre by the rider declaration deadline (generally 4:00pm on the business day prior to the day of the official trials unless otherwise advertised).
- (2) Where a trainer fails to declare a rider for an official trial by the rider declaration deadline, the trainer may be subject to a monetary penalty imposed by the QRIC Stewards.
- (3) Any changes to a previously declared rider must be notified to the QRIC Stewards prior to the horse leaving the mounting yard for its trial.



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- (4) Following the trials, the QRIC Stewards are responsible for endorsing the result of each official trial before they are transmitted to Racing Australia, with this information used to facilitate the payment of riding fees to riders.

3.4 Scratchings for Official Trials

- (1) Trainers are required to notify scratchings for official trials via the Racing Australia Service Centre by the scratching deadline.
- (2) Where a trainer fails to notify a scratching from an official trial by the scratching deadline, the trainer may be subject to a monetary penalty imposed by the QRIC Stewards (in addition to any scratching fee).
- (3) QRIC Stewards will review the fields for official trials subsequent to the scratching deadline and, where necessary or appropriate, may determine to amend the fields for two or more trials to ensure sufficient starters.
- (4) If fields are amended in accordance with subclause (3), the QRIC and/or RQ will endeavour to contact the trainer of each horse that has been moved into another trial, or is competing in a trial with additional runners, at the earliest opportunity to provide notice of this decision.
- (5) The trainer of each such horse will be given the option to scratch their respective horse/s from the relevant trial and, in these circumstances, the scratching fee will be waived.

3.5 QRIC Stipulation for a Satisfactory Trial

- (1) QRIC stipulates that, where a horse is required to take part in an official trial to the Stewards' satisfaction for the purposes of a passing a barrier test or any other embargo relating to racing manners or behaviour, for the lifting of a Stewards' embargo, or for any other purpose under the Rules of Racing, the relevant trial must:
 - (a) be conducted over a distance of at least 800 metres; and
 - (b) contain a minimum of four starters.
- (2) For the purposes of subclause (1)(b) above, where four horses proceed to the barriers for the purpose of starting in an official trial:
 - (a) if there is one late scratching at the barriers, resulting in three starters, the horse's participation in the trial may be deemed satisfactory; and
 - (b) if there is more than one late scratching at the barriers, resulting in two or less starters, the horse's participation in the trial will not be deemed satisfactory.

For the avoidance of doubt, where three or less horses proceed to the barriers and compete, the horse's participation in the trial will not be deemed satisfactory.

- (3) The Stewards may, at any time, stipulate additional requirements that must apply before a horse's participation in an official trial may be deemed satisfactory for the purposes of the Rules of Racing.
- (4) Nothing in this Protocol limits the factors the Stewards may take into account when determining whether a horse's participation in an official trial is satisfactory for the purposes of the Rules of Racing.

3.6 Fees for Official Trials

- (1) The fees for official trials are as published in the Racing Calendar.
- (2) The following fees apply as at the date of this Protocol:



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Description	Fee
Starter Fee	\$100 plus GST
Riding Fee*	\$80.30 plus GST
Scratching Fee	\$100 plus GST (unless Vet Certificate is received by RQ within two business days of the official trials, in which case the fee will be waived)

*Racing Queensland makes payment of barrier trial riding fees to jockeys, on behalf of owners. Superannuation is applicable to barrier trial riding fees at the rate prescribed in relevant federal legislation.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

Licensed clubs are required to ensure that Queensland Ambulance Service has been engaged to provide the required ambulance and personnel to attend official trials, and that relevant officials are rostered to attend official trials (where the licensed club has responsibility for engaging the relevant officials).

Licensed trainers are reminded of their obligations and the requirement to notify (via the Racing Australia Service Centre) scratchings from official trials by the stipulated scratching deadline. Further, trainers must declare riders (via the Racing Australia Service Centre) by the rider declaration deadline, and must inform the QRIC Stewards of any changes to a previously declared rider prior to the horse leaving the saddling/mounting area for its trial.

QRIC is responsible for providing oversight and control of official trials, including reviewing and adjusting (if necessary or appropriate) fields for official trials subsequent to the scratching deadline, and endorsing the results of the official trials to ensure correct horses and riders. QRIC will ensure that relevant officials are rostered to attend (where the QRIC has responsibility for engaging the relevant officials), and in attendance for official trials to proceed.

RQ is responsible for programming official trials and will assist the QRIC where required to review/adjust fields for official trials subsequent to the scratching deadline.

5. References & Related Documents

Document
Rules of Racing of Racing Queensland - Thoroughbred

6. Version History

Current Version:	1	Date Made:	xx/xx/2025	Effective Date:	xx/xx/2025
Document Owner:	Chief Executive Officer			CEO Approved:	xx/xx/2025
Enquiries to:	RQ Senior Racing Manager - Thoroughbred QRIC Chief Steward - Thoroughbred			Due for Review:	xx/xx/2026

Version	Effective	Document Owner	Changes Made
1	xx/xx/2025	Chief Executive Officer	New Protocol



ANNEXURE B

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO LOCAL RULES

Delete:

~~BOOKMAKERS, BOOKMAKER'S CLERKS, BETTING~~

~~LR.72 – LR.114 Deleted effective 1 May 2022.~~

~~Refer to Local Rules of Racing All Codes – Rules of Betting~~

New:

OFFICIAL TRIALS

LR.72. Official Trials – Nominations, Riders, Scratchings

- (1) The trainer of any horse intended to run in an official trial shall:
 - (a) lodge a nomination for the horse; and
 - (b) declare a rider for the horse,with the Racing Australia Service Centre by not later than the respective times advertised in the Racing Calendar.
- (2) If a trainer intends to scratch a horse from an official trial, the trainer shall give notice of the scratching to the Racing Australia Service Centre by not later than the time advertised in the Racing Calendar.
- (3) The Stewards may, in their absolute discretion, extend the time or times provided for by this rule.