



Australian Carriage Driving Society Horse Welfare Policy Statement

The Australian Carriage Driving Society places the utmost importance on the welfare of the horse as the primary consideration in all carriage driving activities.

To this end, horse welfare must never be compromised by competitive or commercial interests and all ACDS members are expected to accept and abide by this principle.

ACDS Rules, Guidelines and Risk Management Policies are all intended to contribute to continuous improvement in horse welfare standards, and as such are subject to periodic and regular review to ensure they adequately and effectively promote best-practice in welfare of the horse.

Regardless of the carriage driving activity or discipline, the following over-arching horse welfare principles apply:

- ***At all stages during preparation, training and use of carriage horses & ponies, welfare must take precedence over other demands.***

This includes ensuring good horse management; using training methods which are appropriate to the physical and mental capabilities of the horse and which do not result in pain or fear; use of harness and vehicles which are correctly fitted and do not cause pain or injury; a high standard of farriery and foot care; and appropriate methods of transport.

- ***Horses & ponies must be fit, competent and capable and in good health, appropriate to the type of activity and the specific demands.***

This includes ensuring an adequate level of fitness for the activity, applying appropriate horse-health and biosecurity practices; and allowing adequate recovery time following veterinary treatment.

- ***Activities must not prejudice horse welfare.***

Venues, stabling / yards, courses and their components must be designed and maintained with the safety of the horse in mind. Competitions and activities must take into consideration the best interests of the horses involved. The effects of extreme weather must be taken into account and mitigated as appropriate.

- ***Every effort must be made to ensure horses & ponies receive proper and humane treatment during their lives.***

This includes provision of adequate veterinary and health care; the prompt and appropriate treatment of injury or illness; sympathetic and humane treatment during retirement; and where necessary, appropriate methods of euthanasia to minimise suffering.

The ACDS supports the ongoing awareness and skills development of its members in relation to horse welfare and encourages all those involved in equestrian sport to attain the highest levels of knowledge in relation to care & management of the horse.