



# Racing Victoria Procedure

## Racing in Hot Weather

Approved By: Jamie Stier  
Date Issued: 05/10/2018  
Version No: Revision 4  
Next review: October 2020

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### Purpose

The primary objective of this procedure is to protect the safety of horses, employees, jockeys and industry participants. This procedure details how Racing Victoria (RV) will manage the safety and welfare of its employees, racing participants and race horses during periods of hot weather experienced at race meetings and official trials. Controls outlined aim at reducing the heat related risks present during hot weather and provide guidance on race meeting scheduling and/ or abandonment in specific circumstances.

### Scope

This procedure applies to all RV employees, RV contractors engaged at a race meeting/ official trial and racing participants including jockeys and race horses.

### References

#### *Legislation / Standards*

- Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Victorian Occupation Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- Workplace Injury Rehabilitation & Compensation Act 2013
- Vic Compliance Code – Workplace Amenities and Working Environment 2008
- Vic Guidance Note – Working in heat 2012

#### *Racing Victoria Documents*

- Racing Victoria Limited OH&S Policy
- RV-IM-PO-201508 Injury Management Policy
- RV Management of OHS Risk
- RV Health and Safety Management and Consultation Arrangements
- RV Injury Management Procedure
- WMO Raceday Medical Procedures Manual
- RV Injury Report Form
- RV Incident Report Form
- Racing in Hot Weather Checklist
- Raceday Temperature Report Form

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## KEY RISKS OF RACING IN HOT WEATHER

The safety of personnel and horses are most likely to be compromised when both the ambient temperature and relative humidity are high, and wind speeds are low or absent.

A day with high ambient temperatures, low humidity and a breeze is generally not a particularly high risk day but a warm day with very high humidity and no breeze may well be high risk day. Horses cool themselves efficiently by evaporative cooling but high ambient temperature and high humidity will slow the rate of transfer of heat from the horse's body to the environment.

It should be noted that equine heat stress can occasionally be seen during the cooler months, especially in spring when the days can be quite warm, but horses might still be carrying a winter coat, are trained in the cooler hours of the morning, and may not have adapted to the warmer daytime temperatures.

## DEFINITIONS

Humidity	Humidity is the amount of water vapour in the air. Water vapour is the gaseous state of water and is invisible. Humidity is usually deemed high (gives the feeling of being very damp, stuffy, or sweltering when coupled with high temperature) or low (the air is dry). Higher humidity reduces the effectiveness of sweating which cools the body by reducing the rate of evaporation of moisture from the skin.									
Micro Climate	The climate of a very small or restricted area which differs from the climate of the surrounding area.									
Ambient Temperature	Ambient Temperature is the temperature of the surrounding environment. It is used in weather reports and is globally understood to describe the temperate of a given day (cold, hot, dry days). The ambient temperature on its own does not provide a basis for assessing the potential of heat exposure as there are numerous factors which contribute to this. The 35°C temperature at which this procedure applies is an indicator only, after which numerous variables should be considered in order to identify the inherent risk associated with either planning or continuing an activity.									
The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)	<p>To accurately assess the risk of physical exertion in hot weather conditions the WBGT measurement has been developed and is widely used in human sports, the military and in equine sports.</p> <p>The WBGT system measures ambient temperature, radiant heat, humidity and air movement (breeze) to calculate a safety index for physical exertion. If a risk of heat illness is identified, control measures need to be put in place.</p> <p>RV routinely measures the WBGT on racecourses on hot days and applies the following scientifically validated scale for assessing the safety of racing.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="491 1368 1437 1727"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">i.</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>WBGT below 28.0</b></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>Low risk conditions.</b> No special precautions are required.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">ii.</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>WBGT of 28.0 to 31.9</b></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>Moderate risk conditions.</b> Hot weather racing procedures should be instigated</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">iii.</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>WBGT 32.0 or higher</b></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"><b>High risk conditions.</b> Consideration in delaying races should be discussed by appropriate personnel</td> </tr> </table>	i.	<b>WBGT below 28.0</b>	<b>Low risk conditions.</b> No special precautions are required.	ii.	<b>WBGT of 28.0 to 31.9</b>	<b>Moderate risk conditions.</b> Hot weather racing procedures should be instigated	iii.	<b>WBGT 32.0 or higher</b>	<b>High risk conditions.</b> Consideration in delaying races should be discussed by appropriate personnel
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Code Red Day	A Code Red Day is one where the predicted level of grass and bush fire danger is most extreme. Code Red Days are declared by the State Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1pm on the day prior to the forecast extreme conditions. This information will be available of the CFA, BOM or Vic Emergency Websites.									

<p>Heat Illness (Human)</p>	<p>The risk of heat illness arises when the body is unable to dissipate heat by evaporation and the body's core temperature rises as a result. The following are typical symptoms of heat illness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light headache, dizziness;</li> <li>• Nausea;</li> <li>• Obvious fatigue;</li> <li>• Cessation of sweating;</li> <li>• Obvious loss of skill and coordination/clumsiness or unsteadiness;</li> <li>• Confusion;</li> <li>• Aggressive or irrational behavior;</li> <li>• Altered consciousness;</li> <li>• Collapse</li> <li>• Ashen pale grey skin.</li> </ul> <p>Heat illness presents as heat exhaustion or heat stroke, with heat exhaustion being the more common work related illness.</p> <p>Extra caution needs to be taken during heat waves, unusually hot days or during periods of high humidity, particularly where employees and participants lack time to acclimatise to the conditions.</p>
<p>Heat Exhaustion (Human)</p>	<p>Can occur after being exposed to high heat. Symptoms may include heavy sweating and a rapid pulse as a result of the body overheating. Is often accompanied by dehydration.</p>
<p>Heat Stroke (Human)</p>	<p>The most serious form of heat illness and is considered a medical emergency. Symptoms include altered mental function, loss of consciousness or collapse. During work anyone showing signs of confusion, loss of skill, loss of coordination or irrational behavior should be stopped immediately as heat stroke can be a life threatening.</p>
<p>Heat Distress – Horses</p>	<p>RV applies the following scale to assist Official Race Day Vets (ORV) in reporting the signs of heat distress in a consistent manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Slower than Normal Recovery</b> Applied to horses that show mild distress / exhaustion and a degree of tachycardia (raised heart rate) and tachypnea (raised respiratory rate) inconsistent with the recovery period. This may or may not be associated with heat stress.</li> <li>• <b>Heat Exhaustion</b> Applied to horses that show moderate distress, hyperthermia, tachycardia, tachypnea, lashing out with the hind limbs and fatigue. Affected horses may require cold hosing and other cooling aids but usually respond quickly to appropriate first aid treatment.</li> <li>• <b>Heat Stroke</b> Applied to horses that show severe distress with the above signs plus neurologic dysfunction such as manic behavior, lashing out with the hind limbs, a dull, 'vacant' look to the eyes, ataxia which may progress to collapse, seizures and death.</li> </ul>

## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In October each year RV Veterinary department will send communication to industry participants and Clubs to remind them of protocols RV implements when conducting races or trials in hot weather and to direct them to guidance material such as *Recognising and Managing Heat Stress in Horses* (refer to Appendix 3)

RV Risk Management department will send to all RV employees and jockeys information on RV protocols that are in place at race meetings and official trials during hot weather as well as guidance on how individuals should manage their personal safety when working in hot weather.

## HOT WEATHER FORECAST 30°C - 34°C

### RACE DAY PLANNING

Racing Victoria's Racing Operations Department should monitor weather conditions at locations of upcoming race meetings and official trials. Where the ambient temperature is forecast to be between 30°C – 34°C on the day of an upcoming race meeting an email shall be sent to the Club providing them of requirements that should be in place to mitigate the impact of hot weather conditions.

Whilst the suggested preparations at this point are not mandatory, implementing hot weather condition protocols provides for best practice welfare by the Clubs to both horses, employers and race day participants.

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### RACING OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

RV Racing Operations Department shall;

1. Send an email to Club Manager and Track Manager on what should be in place for hot weather conditions, including the Racing in *Hot Weather Check List* (refer to appendix 1)
2. Cc RV's Veterinary Services Group, Steward Chairing the Meeting, Raceday Services Department and Risk Department in that email.

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### VETERINARY DEPARTMENT

RV Veterinary Department shall;

1. Ensure that Official Raceday Veterinarians (ORVs) have all available equipment to monitor temperature at the race meeting / official trials
2. Ensure ORVs have been provided appropriate training and induction on the use of the equipment and ORV's responsibilities under this procedure.

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### RV CLERKS OF COURSE

- Contact RV Raceday Services Department if they plan to bring an additional mount to the race meeting or official trial. Note this applies when the forecast temperature at the venue on the day of the race meeting or official trial is forecast to be  $\geq 32^{\circ}\text{C}$

## RACE DAY OPERATIONS

### OFFICIAL RACEDAY VETERINARIANS (ORV)

#### Monitoring Temperature

The prior to each race the ORV will measure and record the ambient and WBGT temperatures. The temperature measurements should be taken in the following locations:

- In a tie up stall in the shade - **out of the sun ( WBGT OUT)**
- In the vicinity of the mounting yard - **in full sun ( WBGT IN )**

The temperatures should be recorded on the Raceday Temperature Report Form (refer to appendix 2) and be communicated regularly to the stewards. For instructions on the operation of temperature measurement equipment refer to the Raceday Temperature Report Form (Appendix 2).

In the event that the ambient temperature recorded is  $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$  or the WBGT is  $\geq 28$  the ORV must immediately notify the Chairing Steward and ensure that Racing in Hot Weather protocols are implemented for the remainder of the race meeting or official trial.

## HOT WEATHER FORECAST $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$

### RACE DAY PLANNING

The following is to be implemented when the forecast ambient temperature on the day of an upcoming race meeting at that location is  $35^{\circ}\text{C}$  or higher.

### RACING OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

- If the ambient temperature is forecast to be  $38^{\circ}\text{C}$  or higher at a location scheduled to conduct a race meeting or official trials, serious consideration will be given to transferring or abandoning the race meeting. This decision will generally be made based on the forecast provided at 4pm on the day proceeding the race meeting or official trial.
- Send an email to Club Manager and Track Manager copying in RV Veterinary Services Group on what must be in place for hot weather conditions, including the Racing in Hot Weather Check List (refer to appendix 1)
- Contact the Bureau of Meteorology to obtain a more detailed forecast for the location of the scheduled race meeting or official trial
- Based on the information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology, consider:
  - Modifying start time of race meeting or official trial to avoid peak hot weather conditions;
  - Schedule programmed distance races for the anticipated coolest part of the day where possible
  - Reduce gaps between races to reduce the duration of the race meeting or official trial;
- Liaise with Stewards to determine if the times horses are required to arrive on course can be altered.
- In the event that a Code Red Day is declared for any region in which a race meeting is scheduled to be conducted the race meeting must be abandoned or transferred. Consideration should also be given to abandoning a race meeting where it is likely that the majority of participants would be required to travel through a regional area where a code red day has been declared.

- Any amendments to the race meeting should be communicated to RVs Media and Communications department.
- Record details of whenever Racing in Hot Weather Checklist is sent to Clubs in addition to any modifications which are made to the racing program as a result of this procedure. This would include abandonments, transfers, modified starting times and changes to time gaps between races.

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#### VETERINARY DEPARTMENT

- Ensure that Official Raceday Veterinarians (ORVs) have all available equipment to monitor temperature.
- Consideration should be given to employing an additional veterinarian/s to patrol the stable area and monitor recovering horses.
- Ensure that the rostered ORV receives all email correspondence in relation to any hot weather protocols which must be enacted for the race meeting.

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#### RV CLERKS OF COURSE

- Contact RV Raceday Services Department if they plan to bring an additional mount to the race meeting or official trial.

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#### RACE CLUB

- Ensure that all requirements on the Racing in Hot Weather Check List are complied with. Create two copies of the completed check list with one to be left in the steward's room and one in the vet room prior to the commencement of the race meeting.

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#### RACE DAY HOT WEATHER PROTOCOL

The following protocol should be enacted in the following circumstances:

- for the entire meeting in the following where the forecast temperature at the location of the race meeting or official trial is 35°C or higher.
- for the remainder of a race meeting where the ambient temperature reaches 35°C or the WGGT 28 degrees as recorded by the ORV.

#### Monitoring Temperature

The prior to each race the ORV will measure and record the ambient and WBGT temperatures. The temperature measurements should be taken in the following locations:

- In a tie up stall in the shade - **out of the sun ( WBGT OUT)**
- In the vicinity of the mounting yard - **in full sun ( WBGT IN )**

The temperatures should be recorded on the Raceday Temperature Report Form (refer to appendix 2) and be communicated regularly to the stewards. For instructions on the operation of temperature measurement equipment refer to the Raceday Temperature Report Form (Appendix 2).

#### Pre and Post Race Arrangements

The time that horses are required to parade in the mounting yard both pre and post race as well as the time at the barriers should be reduced where possible.

The normal process of mustering horses should be amended so that where possible, the on course public address system may be utilised in place of clerks of course to call horses into the mounting yard.

### Cases of Equine Heat Stress

The occurrence of a case of equine heat stress during a race meeting is a sign that the weather conditions may be unsuitable for racing. Individual horse factors must be taken into account, for example are there any factors such as co-existing conditions or other circumstances that may have contributed to the distress of the individual horse. A single case of equine heat exhaustion or equine heat stroke on a raceday should raise the level of alert and result in an investigation of the individual circumstances of the incident. A review of the WBGT temperatures should be undertaken and the local weather forecast checked. Consideration should be given to abandoning the meeting depending on the results of the investigations and the weather forecast. All identified cases of Equine Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke must be recorded on the Raceday Temperature Report Form (refer to Appendix 2)

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### POSTPONMENT / ABANDONMENT DUE TO HOT WEATHER

In the following circumstances the Stewards would postpone or abandon a race meeting or official trial due to hot weather.

1. ORV records a wet bulb temperature of 32.0 or higher. Note that the reading should be validated by taking a second reading at least 5 minutes after the first reading in a separate location being either in the mounting yard or the tie up stalls area.
2. ORV records two or more cases of heat stroke in horses present at the race meeting.
3. Stewards in consultation with the ORV determine that there is a significant risk to the safety and welfare of participants and horses due to prevailing environmental conditions should the race meeting or official trials continue.

Prior to declaring the meeting abandoned it is important that the stewards consult with the Club and the ORV to determine if there are any controls that could be implemented to mitigate the situation prior to abandoning the race meeting. Stewards should also confirm that the temperatures recorded by the ORV are consistent with advice on local temperatures provided by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Once a decision to abandon a race meeting due to hot weather is made the Stewards should communicate this decision to RV's Media and Communications and Racing Operations departments.

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### RACE CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

- Liaise with Stewards and ORVs and respond to any requests from these personnel in relation to actions aimed at mitigating the effect of hot weather on the race meeting or official trial.

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### ORV RESPONSIBILITIES

- Prior to the first race review the "equine section" of the completed Racing in Hot Weather Check List submitted by the Club and complete an inspection upon arrival and ensure any inadequacies have been rectified prior to the first race.



- Notify stewards where any requirements are not in place.
- Measure the ambient and WBGT Temperatures in the mounting yard and tie up stalls prior to each race and record this information on the *Raceday Temperature Report Form*
- Provide advice to stewards on ambient and WBGT temperatures prior to each race.
- Notify stewards in the event that the WBGT is  $\geq 32.0$
- Monitor condition of horses for signs of heat discomfort by inspecting them at the following locations;
  - In the birdcage area prior to presentation in the mounting yard.
  - In the mounting enclosure prior to the race.
  - On arrival at the barriers.
  - On return to the enclosure after the race.
  - While being detained in the sampling area for whatever reason.
  - Post-race inspections
- Report signs of equine heat distress in a consistent manner according to RV's scaled definitions of
  - Slower than normal recovery
  - Heat exhaustion
  - Heat stroke
 (Refer to definitions section of this procedure)  
 Note all cases of heat exhaustion and heat stroke must be recorded on the *Raceday Temperature Report Form* (refer to appendix 2)
- If a horse appears to be unduly affected by the heat and/or humidity (e.g. agitation, panting, and/or excessive sweating), ORV must report these observation(s) to the stewards immediately and make an assessment of the horse's suitability to race.
- Monitor the post-race sampling procedure to ensure that horses are as cool and comfortable as possible. In particular, horses should be monitored for sweating and any signs of distress during sampling. In the event that a horse is distressed during the procedure it should be removed for the stall and hosed.
- Provide appropriate treatment as soon as possible to any horse found to be exhibiting signs of heat stress.
- Consult with stewards regarding any treatments provided if possible prior to administering the treatment, but in any case as soon as is practicable. The safety and welfare of the horse must be the primary consideration.

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## STEWARDS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Prior to the first race review the "Racing Participants Welfare Requirements Section" of the completed Racing in *Hot Weather Check List* submitted by the club and complete an inspection upon arrival and ensure any inadequacies have been rectified prior to the first race.
- Confirm with the ORV that all protocols for racing in hot weather have been implemented or that alternative suitable controls are in place.
- Regularly liaise with ORV during the race meeting, in relation to the ambient temperature and WBGT temperature.
- Monitor jockeys and RV personnel for any signs of heat related illness and refer any cases to raceday medical services team.
- If a medical assessment reveals that any employee or jockey under the management and control of RV is unwell, dizzy or unduly dehydrated, the Chairman of Stewards is to take appropriate actions to ensure the health and safety of that individual, including:
  - Providing an extended heat break;
  - Directing the individual to cease work immediately;
  - Act on the advice of contracted race day medical services personnel on the appropriate course of action/treatment for the employees and jockeys.

- Where available utilise the oncourse public address system to notify participants that raceday hot weather protocols are to be in place for the race meeting either prior to the first race or at the point during the race meeting that protocols are implemented.
- Where available utilise the oncourse public address system to advise all participants regarding time horse are required in the mounting yard.
- Where available the oncourse public address system may be used to call horses into the mounting yard for each race.
- Consult with ORV and Club prior to making a decision to abandon a race meeting due to hot weather.
- Consider whether any controls can be implemented to mitigate the effects of hot weather prior to abandoning the race meeting.
- Advise RV's Media and Communications and Racing Operations Departments in the event that a meeting is abandoned, postponed or modified due to hot weather.

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#### RV RACE DAY OFFICIALS & EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Immediately report any signs of heat illness to race day medical services personnel & RV supervisors present so that appropriate medical assistance can be administered.
- In protecting themselves against heat related illness, employees and race day officials should:
  - Apply sun screen regularly;
  - Wear broad brim hats outdoors;
  - Consume regular fluids mainly in the form of cool water;
  - Move to areas with shade, good ventilation, fans or air-conditioning where possible between races.
  - Remove safety vest when not mounted on horse between races.
  - Select uniform options of light loosely fitting clothing.
  - Clerks of Course should monitor the condition of their mounts and take opportunity between races to rest them in the shade and regularly cool them through hosing and use of ice water.
  - Clerks of Course should report to the ORV if they are concerned about the condition of their mount.

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#### JOCKEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that riding engagements agreed to do not extend to weights below the jockeys minimum riding weight;
- Minimise usage of saunas / spas on the day of the race meeting;
- Pre-cooling by water immersion or ice vests before riding;
- Between rides, use cold showers, cold water immersion or ice vests;
- On extreme heat days, jockeys should endeavor to regulate riding engagements so not to over commit themselves with regard to the overall number and spacing of rides;
- Report to the ORV if the jockey is concerned about the condition of a horse pre/post-race;
- Jockeys who have an inter-current illness or a past history of heat intolerance must make themselves known to race day medical service so that they can be specifically monitored throughout the course of the race meeting.

## APPENDIX 1 – RACING IN HOT WEATHER CHECK LIST

Date	
Race Club	
Club Personnel completing check list:	
Signature	
Vet Conducting Pre Race Inspection	
Signature	

### **Equine Welfare Requirements**

- Adequate wash bays and hoses should be available to enable rapid post-race cooling of horses
- Adequate drinking water should be available for horses
- Hoses with adequate water pressure should be available in the mounting yard and must be run prior to each race to flush water that may have been heated by the sun from the hose.
- Hoses must be of sufficient length to reach all points of the mounting yard.
- Large containers of ice water in mobile containers should be available at appropriate locations including the mounting yard, hosing bays and veterinary areas. Empty buckets should also be in these locations to allow water to be put on horses.
- Sweat scrapers should be available at the mounting yard to assist in stripping water that has been heated by contact with the horse from its skin to assist in cooling the body.
- The swabbing stalls should be kept as cool as possible for example the operation of sprinkler systems or hosing the roof, ensuring adequate ventilation and by providing fans/air-conditioning.
- Where possible horses should be located in tie up stalls out of the sun and in areas where there is good movement of air. Tie up stalls should be kept as cool as possible. Consideration should be given to using sprinkler or misting systems.

### **Racing Participants Welfare Requirements**

- Cold drinking water including appropriate drinking receptacles should be made available to Racing Victoria employees at the following locations –starting barriers, horse stalls
- Cold drinking water including appropriate drinking receptacles should be made available in the vicinity of the horse stalls area to licensed and registered persons who are required to work at the race meeting
- Cold drinking water, sports drinks and ice should be provided in the jockeys rooms
- Sunscreen to be made available in either the secretary's office or the scales area
- Ensure air conditioners or fans are operational in Jockey's rooms

# APPENDIX 2 – RACE DAY TEMPERATURE REPORT FORM



Racing  
Victoria

## Racing Victoria Form Raceday Temperature Report

### Racecourse Information

Racecourse:		Date:	
Industry Vet:			

### Temperature

	Time	Parade Ring ^			Time	Horse Stalls ^		
		T°C	WBGT	Humidity %		T°C	WBGT	Humidity %
1hr before Race 1								
Between Race 1-2								
Between Race 2-3								
Between Race 3-4								
Between Race 4-5								
Between Race 5-6								
Between Race 6-7								
Between Race 7-8								
Between Race 8-9								
Between Race 9-10								

^ If time permits please collect readings, official race day duties remain the first priority.

### Details of Incidents of Heat Exhaustion\* (HE) and Heat Stroke\*\* (HS)

Horse Name	HE/HS	Details

*\*Heat Exhaustion: moderate distress characterised by hyperthermia (elevated temperature), tachypnea (elevated respiratory rate), tachycardia (elevated heart rate), fatigue, lashing out with the hind limbs.*

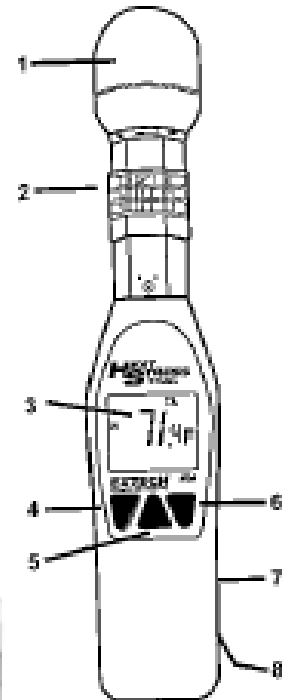
*\*\*Heat Stroke: severe distress with signs of heat exhaustion accompanied by neurologic dysfunction (such as manic behaviour, lashing out with hind limbs, dull vacant looks to the eye, weakness, ataxia, progressing to collapse, seizures, death).*

## EXTECH WBGT METER

1. Black Globe temperature sensor
2. RH and Temperature sensors with protective cover
3. LCD Screen

## DISPLAY

WBGT	Wet Bulb Globe Temperature
TG	Black Globe Temperature
TA	Air Temperature
RH%	Relative Humidity
<b>OUT</b>	<b>Indoor (NO SUN)</b>
<b>IN</b>	<b>Outdoor (IN FULL SUN)</b>
C/F	Celsius / Fahrenheit



## OPERATION

1. Press **ON/OFF** button to turn power on/off.
2. Slide down the protective cover before taking any measurements.
3. Press **MODE/▲** to select the desired display mode: WBGT, TA, TG, RH  
An icon will appear indicating the current selection.
4. To select preferred temperature unit (C or F), simultaneously press and release the **NEXT** and **MODE/▲**
5. **The meter measures WBGT index**
  - a. With (IN) and (IN in the SUN)
  - b. Without (OUT) (OUT of the SUN) direct sun exposure.  
Hold down **MODE/▲** for > 1 sec to alternate between settings.

# RECOGNISING AND MANAGING HEAT STRESS IN HORSES.

Heat stress is a potentially dangerous condition for horses and their handlers. It is very important that the condition is recognized as early as possible and that prompt treatment is provided.

## THE SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS

- Rapid shallow breathing (panting).
- Irrational behaviour such as lashing out with hind limbs.
- A 'glassy', vacant look to the eyes.
- An agitated and distressed appearance.
- Staggering, apparently uncontrollable gait.
- Very high body temperature (the skin can be hot to touch).
- Occasionally collapse

## FIRST AID TREATMENT

**The key objective of treating heat stress is to cool the blood travelling to the horse's brain by:**

The application of ice water to the head and over major superficial veins, for example

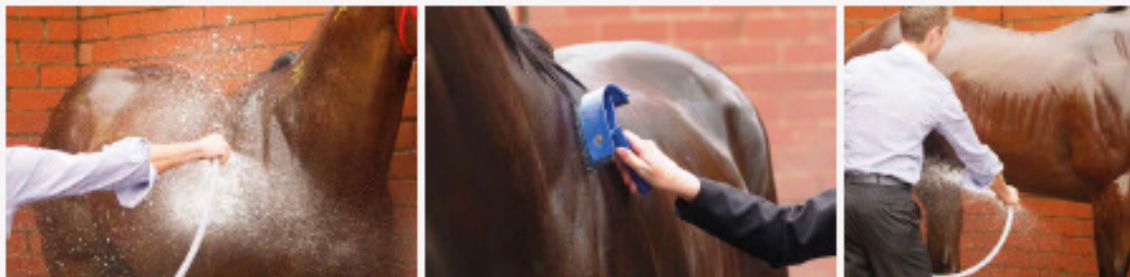
- the jugular veins (neck).
- the cephalic veins (inside of the forelimbs) and
- the femoral veins (inside of the hindlimbs) and
- the lower abdomen

Hosing affected horses will assist in cooling, especially if there is a breeze or fans to assist evaporative cooling.

The horse must be **frequently scraped** to remove the water that has been heated by the horse's body and to assist evaporative cooling.

Simply wetting the horse's skin and leaving the water sitting there leads to heating of the water and an insulating effect, not unlike the action of a wetsuit!

When the horse is able to walk it should be walked in a shaded breezy area to facilitate evaporative cooling.



## SUMMARY

- Take your own water bucket into the mounting yard and give your horse a drink after the race.
- Hose your horse in the mounting yard after the race if necessary.
- Recognize and treat heat stress early.
- Alert the vet team.
- Apply chilled water to the horse's head and large superficial veins.
- Hose and scrape, hose and scrape.
- Walk in a shaded, breezy area when possible.