

TPOL0001

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## 1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to:

- a. Describe the desired condition of a track at the start of a race meeting and over the course of the race meeting.
- b. Identify the restrictions that impact upon the preparation of a race track and its condition at the beginning of the race meeting and over the course of the race meeting.
- c. Outline the information collated and reported regarding the race track five days prior to the race meeting, two days prior to the race meeting, the day prior to the race meeting and race morning.
- d. Outline the distribution of the information described in (1c)

## 2. GOAL OF TRACK PREPARATION.

- a. Tasracing will use its best endeavors to provide a racing surface that is safe, consistent and conducive to racing that is suited to the needs of horse welfare, wagering customers and racing participants. The aim will be to present a track that is Dead 4 on the morning of the race (Dead 5 for night meetings) in accordance with the recognised track rating instrument (Racetrack Penetrometer and/or Aussie Thumper) with a view to the majority of the races being conducted on a track that is no firmer than Good 3 (subject to weather conditions).

## 3. RATING SCALE

- a. **The Tote Racing Centre:** This track rating will be calculated using the average of all of the measurements taken by the Racetrack Penetrometer or the Aussie Thumper.
- b. **Tattersall's Park:** This track rating will be the mean of:
  - a. the usual track rating (as described in 3a); and
  - b. the worst rated section of the track (firmest in summer and softest in winter)

Example #1 if the usual track rating is 4.5 and the worst section is 5, the track will be rated as: 
$$\frac{4.5 + 5}{2} = 4.75$$

- c. **Tapeta Park:** This track will be rated as a Good 3, which is the industry norm for synthetic tracks in Australia. In addition the track's firmness will be measured using the Aussie Thumper (Tasracing's preferred measurement tool for synthetic tracks) on race days and reported on the T4 sheet.
- d. The track rating scale based on penetrometer readings has been developed using historical race time data and feedback from racing participants and administrators. Penetrometer readings and the correlation to a track rating will differ between venues due to (among other things) variations in soil types.

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#### 4. INSTRUMENTS

- a. **The Racetrack Penetrometer.** This instrument is the industry standard for measuring the firmness of racetracks in Australia. The use of the instrument is described by the manufacturer's instructions.
- b. **The Aussie Thumper.** This instrument provides an alternative measurement to the Racetrack Penetrometer and is Tasracing's preferred method for synthetic track ratings. The Aussie Thumper may also be used on the turf tracks as a supplemental reading (if required). The use of the instrument is described by the manufacturer's instructions.

#### 5. RATING THE TRACK

- a. Tracks will be rated five times prior to a race meeting. The first three measurements are for internal purposes to evaluate the track and plan irrigation and other management practices. This information is presented in the form of a track sheet (T-sheet) distributed to the Stewards and the host racing club. The next two rating measurements are taken on race morning (at daylight) and two hours prior to the first race. The first four measurements will be recorded on T-sheets as per the Racetrack Preparation and Inspection Procedure, TPRO0037.

The fifth measurement will be a supplemental measurement to provide the Stewards with the latest information regarding any possible change in the track rating that has occurred since the measurement taken at daylight. For expediency, the final measurement will generally be taken utilising the Aussie Thumper. Table 1 provides a summary of the timing and methodology of each reading used for turf tracks.

**Table 1.**

<b>Rating Frequency prior to each race meeting</b>	<b>Methodology used for track rating</b>
1. 5 days prior to a race meeting.	Penetrometer reading
2. 2 days prior to a race meeting.	Penetrometer reading
3. 1 day prior to a race meeting.	Penetrometer reading
4. Race day at daylight	Penetrometer reading
5. 2 hrs prior to first race.	Penetrometer or Aussie Thumper

- b. The track rating measurements for turf tracks will be taken at a minimum of 30 locations at 1m and 3m off the rail. In each location 3 drops will be recorded. The locations measured must be taken from the same vicinity each time and each reading (drop) recorded. The track rating will be determined based on the penetrometer readings according to standard operating procedures.
- c. Where a variation of two rating points exist due to inconsistencies of the track, (e.g. Slow 6 and Heavy 8 in different sections) or if additional information is deemed to be appropriate to disseminate, an SMS message will be sent to all participants listed on Tasracing's SMS data base as soon as practically possible, and notification placed on Tasracing website and through social media.

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- d. The Racecourse Manager or his delegate will walk the track with the Stewards on race day before the races commence. The supplemental rating (if available) will be supplied to the Stewards at this time.
- e. The Racecourse Manager is responsible for the rating of the track and dissemination of information until the Stewards officially take control of the racecourse (this time is normally two hours prior to the first race).

## 6. IRRIGATION STRATEGY

- a. The irrigation strategy leading up to the race meeting is formulated to produce a track consistent with the goal. Weather may result in a track being presented at variance to the goal.
- b. The penetrometer readings and the weather forecast will be used as a guide to the amount of irrigation that is applied. Rainfall predictions will be used as a guide but will not be relied upon to ensure the goal is achieved.
- c. The Racecourse Manager may program higher volumes of irrigation to be applied in firmer areas of the track. All penetrometer and irrigation amounts will be recorded on the T-sheets and distributed as per the Racetrack Preparation and Inspection Procedure, TPRO0037.
- d. The information provided to RISA will be the average amount of irrigation applied to the track and will not specify differing amounts due to restrictions with the RISA system.  
The purpose of applying different amounts to various parts of the track is to even out the track, therefore improving the consistency of the track. Spot, localised and manual irrigation will not be included in the information supplied to RISA, but will be noted on the T-sheet.

## 7. FACTORS AFFECTING THE CONDITION AND PREPARATION OF THE RACETRACK

It is not always possible for a Racecourse Manager to precisely control the rating of a track due to various factors. The main factors are:

- a. **Weather conditions**  
A track may move through two rating points in a day due to prevailing weather conditions. A track may be Dead 4 and naturally progress to a Good 2 by the last race. Conversely the weather may be considerably cooler than predicted resulting in no rating change.
- b. **The type of track, its age and construction (especially soil type)**  
Older tracks with a fine soil texture and/or high organic matter content are unpredictable, especially during hot windy weather or wet weather. These tracks will have inconsistent sections that are not always possible to even out.

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**c. Irrigation systems and their control**

Historically it has not been common practice to irrigate a track within twelve hours of a race meeting. Modern free-draining tracks dry very quickly and may require irrigation closer to a race meeting. Certain types of older tracks are inconsistent and have areas of good drainage that dry out quickly and other areas that drain slower and remain fairly static. In both cases there is a need to adopt practices that can minimise the chance of tracks from becoming too firm during the course of a race meeting. The Racecourse Manager may only apply irrigation after scratching time of a race meeting with approval from the Chief Steward. This information will be recorded on the T-sheet and placed in a prominent position near the racing control centre at each club. Any resulting change to the track rating will also be forwarded to RISA and an SMS sent to participants as soon as practically possible (described in 5c and 7b).

**8. REPORTING****a.** Each T-sheet will be distributed to the:-

1. Chief Steward or his delegate.
2. The CEO or his delegate of the host Racing Club
3. Tasracing Management

**b.** Tasracing will provide SMS alerts to participants if it is deemed to be of benefit to provide additional information as described in clause 5.c, or should any situation arise whereby Tasracing staff believes that additional information is appropriate for dissemination.**c.** On race day, a copy of the T-sheets will be displayed in a prominent position near the racing control centre at each club.**d.** The Racecourse Manager will provide relevant information to RISA from 5 days prior to a race meeting to 2hrs prior to the first race.