

IHRB | Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board

Equine Anti-Doping & Medication Control in Irish racing...the evolving anti-doping landscape and how it may impact participation in international sport

Lynn.hillyer@ihrb.ie, IHRB Chief Veterinary Officer

HORSE SPORT IRELAND

WBFSH 30th ANNIVERSARY 1994-2024







BHA







ECEIM

European College of Equine Internal Medicine

What do we have in common?

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- Prioritise accurate identification
- Strengthen traceability
- Welfare embedded – duty of care
- Improved data quality and transparency

WBFSH

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY 2024-2025

Renal Hart & Katy Holder-Vale, Development Department

‘the next chapter of sport-horse breeding will be shaped by **traceability**, **transparency**, and **welfare** governance as much as performance outcomes.’

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF HORSERACING AUTHORITIES

LONGINES OFFICIAL PARTNER

FEI FÉDÉRATION ÉQUESTRE INTERNATIONALE

An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

ACTION PLAN FOR

WALL REPORT

The implementation of reforms to strengthen equine identification, traceability and welfare



Integrity

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STRATEGIC PILLARS

PEOPLE
Empowering all our people to openly and consistently achieve the highest professional standards

INTEGRITY
Maximising our knowledge and professionalism to deliver with uncompromising integrity

WELFARE
A relentless focus on the safety and well-being of our human and equine participants

DIGITAL FIRST
Providing best-in-class information systems to support effective decision making and efficient operations

GOVERNANCE
Consistently applying a robust governance framework and rigorous probity regime

INTEGRITY

Commitment to excellence through agility and continuous improvement of rules, structures and processes

Fair, consistent, proportionate and impartial enforcement of our rules and imposition of sanctions

Enhanced transparency in relation to processes and disciplinary hearings

Ensure safety and well-being for participants on Raceday through a standards-based approach across all racecourses

Exercise a leadership role in global horseracing and benchmark ourselves against best international practice



Key Actions

- Conduct a thorough review and revision of the Rule Book to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose and supports highest standards of integrity.
- Create a cohesive sanctions framework and review annually, benchmarking against other leading racing jurisdictions.
- Carry out case reviews and sanctions audits to promote consistency and as a basis for education and training for Stipendiary and Raceday Stewards.
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- Publish monthly integrity statistics to increase visibility and understanding of our regulatory activities.

Fenton/Hughes Anabolic Steroids 2014

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YOUR ESSENTIAL DAILY GUIDE TO IRISH RACING

GOODWOOD IS SO GLO

...on what makes the five days on the Sussex Downs so special, pages 6-7

I always... a licenc... money

Kavanagh hails 'groundbreaking' lifetime bans for horses who have been doped

By Richard Forristal

A NEW anti-doping policy that will trigger lifetime bans for horses who test positive for substances such as anabolic steroids has been hailed as groundbreaking and unprecedented by Horse Racing Ireland chief executive Brian Kavanagh.

However, the industry-wide agreement, which was rubber-stamped at an HRI board meeting yesterday, includes the contentious provision for a one-day notice period for studs and yards that are not licensed by the sport's regulatory body.

Kavanagh has suggested that the policy, which will grant Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board vets the authority to access unlicensed premises for the purpose of testing horses not in training by dint of a service level agreement (SLA) with the department of agriculture, will be in place in time for the 2019 foal crop.

"The policy was unanimously approved by the board," he said. "It's unprecedented because it's an industry-wide approach to an issue that countries all around the world are tackling.

"Lifetime bans for horses is a groundbreaking development and it makes a very strong statement about the views of the Irish authorities on the issue of doping. It's a good day for the industry here."

As well as HRI and the IHRB, the agreement's other signatories are

Continues page 8

HE'S THE ON...

Gigginstown's... the Galw... weights

TODAY'S CARDS Ballinrobe 5.50 54 Ffos Las 2.00 46 Musselburgh 2.20 18

Why is Equine Anti-Doping & Medication Control important?

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- Horse welfare – judicious use of drugs is the only acceptable use
- Jockey Safety – horse has to be 100% right
- Integrity – the 'level playing field' – punter, sponsor, media
- Racing product – SLO to Social Value/Legacy – government, 'middle ground' at risk
- A drug is a drug in a headline – racing vs. mainstream press and changing societal values







Industry Wide Anti-Doping Policy 2018

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Building on the work of the Anti-Doping Task Force 2016

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Highest international standards
Full IFHA Articles 6-6E compliance

INTEGRITY OF IRISH RACING

ZERO-TOLERANCE ENFORCEMENT

Lifetime ban for prohibited-at-all-times positives

LIFETIME TESTING & SURVEILLANCE

Testing from foal notification to retirement
Increased sample analysis

TRANSPARENCY & OOC TESTING

Whereabouts requirements
Point-to-Point inclusion
Annual public reporting

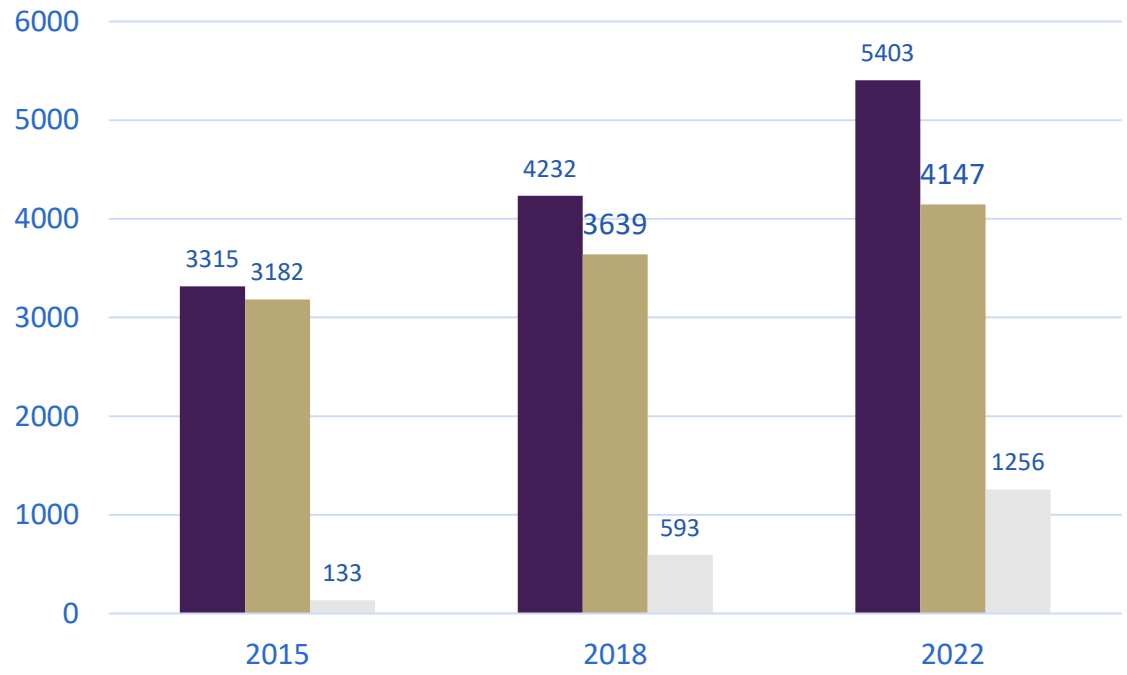
COMPREHENSIVE LIFETIME SURVEILLANCE • INTERNATIONAL COMPLIANCE • STRONG ENFORCEMENT • TRANSPARENT REPORTING

OOCT was Key…

& Key to OOCT …

- Strategic approach to Horse selection – risk, HSR/HP
- Access to Horse at right time – IHRB Authorised Officers under legislation and traceability
- Trained, expert staff
- Effective inspection
- Right matrices, logistics, analysis
- Responsible person – especially when unlicensed
- Effective disciplinary process/sanction
- Review and refinement

Evolution of OOCT in IHRB's Equine Anti-Doping and Medication Control



Total Samples (63% increase)

In Competition Samples (30% increase)

Out of Competition Samples (>800% increase)

Key Timeline

2018

- Establishment of IHRB
- Partnership with LGC for independent testing
- Industry wide Anti-doping Policy

2020

- Covid 19
- Digitized the sampling process

2021

- 12 IHRB granted **'Authorised Officer Status**
- Authority to sample 'any Thoroughbred in any place at anytime'

2022

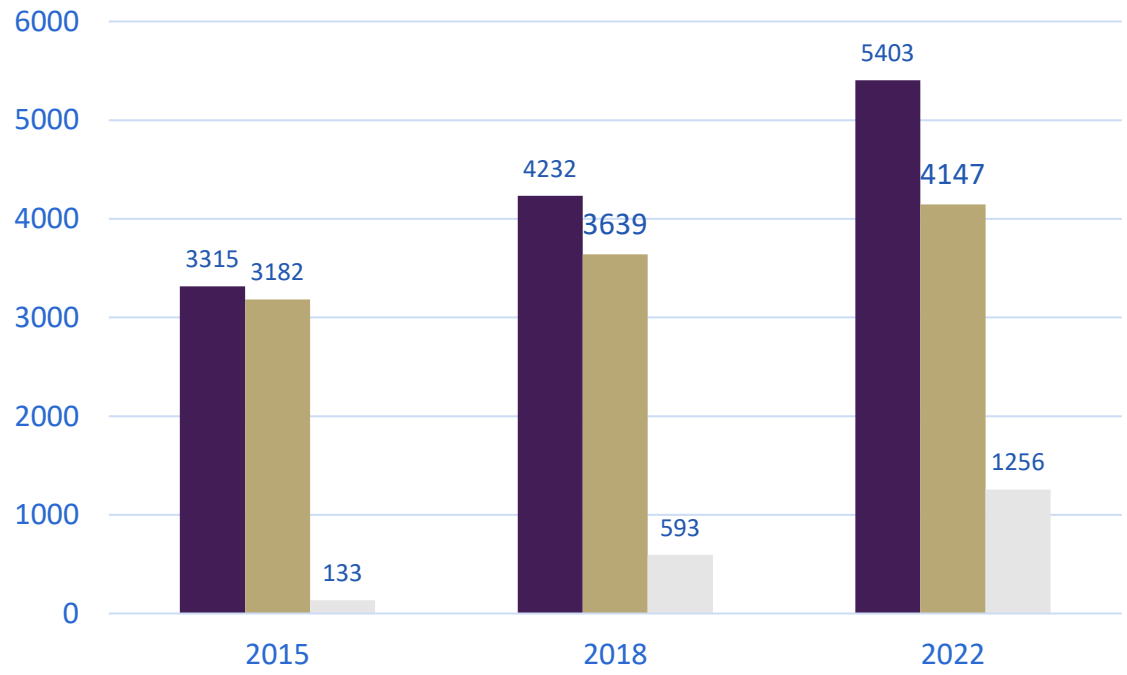
- Dr. Craig Suann independent external review
- Meet international best practice, more can be done

Authorised Officers

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- Key to accessing the Thoroughbred ‘racing pool’
- Brings younger horses in sales preparation, pre-training and on breaks into the mix
- IHRB Officials selected, trained and operate as AOs under Veterinary Medicinal Products legislation
- Able to access any Thoroughbred at any time anywhere in Ireland – test, documents including veterinary records

Importance of OOCT in IHRB's Equine Anti-Doping and Medication Control



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- **Dr. Craig Suann report**
- Meet international best practice, more can be done

Suann Recommendations

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The review has delivered significant enhancements to the integrity, transparency and effectiveness of the IHRB Equine Anti-Doping Programme, with the vast majority of recommendations now embedded in operational practice.

✅ **14 Recommendations Implemented**
🟡 **2 Under Active Review** (B-sample referee analysis provisions to be addressed through Rulebook revision/ Further expansion of race-day/OOCT testing in current EADMC Review)
🔵 **2 Scheduled** (Recommendations 2 & 3: Digital kit reconciliation planned 2027)
🟣 **2 Outstanding / Not Adopted (**Review of penalties for AAF cases/Long-term sample storage)

Key Achievements

- CCTV installed in all racecourse sampling units
- Enhanced sample kit security and chain-of-custody controls
- Improved electronic data capture and sample traceability
- Thoroughbred lifetime traceability system implemented (2026)
- Comprehensive sampling history database established
- Enhanced intelligence-led out-of-competition testing
- Formalised SOPs, governance processes and staff training
- Strengthened staffing structures and stakeholder collaboration

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Integrity Statistics

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EQUINE ANTI-DOPING

2026	RACEDAY				POINT TO POINT	OUT OF COMPETITION			TOTAL SAMPLES	AAFs
	URINE	BLOOD	HAIR	PRE-RACE	BLOOD	URINE	BLOOD	HAIR	TOTAL SAMPLES	AAF
January	129	35	0	0	51	0	50	50	315	0
February	132	28	9	0	90	0	42	42	343	2
March	149	26	1	0	103	0	50	50	355	0
April	220	39	35	0	107	0	57	57	515	0
May	295	57	14	0	88	1	117	117	689	2
June	202	38	9	0	0	0	75	75	398	1
July	268	51	43	0	0	0	77	78	517	2
August	267	42	23	0	0	0	57	57	446	0
September	237	45	17	131	0	0	36	36	502	
TOTAL 2025	**2,601**	**550**	**201**	**203**	**624**	**3**	**738**	**709**	**5,629**	**12**
TOTAL 2024	**2,526**	**520**	**238**	**193**	**628**	**1**	**659**	**651**	**5,421**	**9**

‘Not just about the numbers'

- Investigations at first sign
- Intelligent use of different matrices
- Depth and breadth of detection
- Initiation of Improvement Notice approach
- Continual review
- All activity coupled with measures on equine welfare and safety

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EADCMC & AAF Cases

No Investigation

Early evidence

IFHA-Certified Laboratory

DAFM/ Authorised Officers

Training Inv. Manual

Improvement Notices

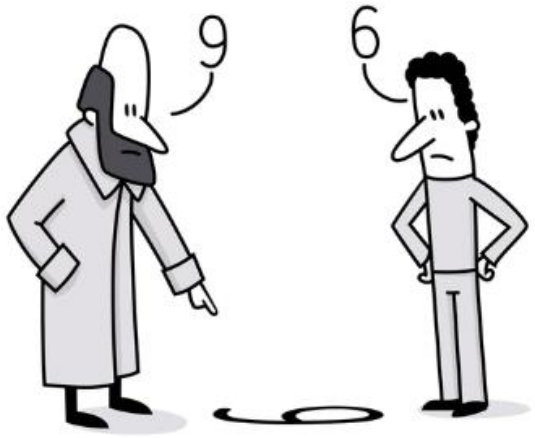
High Profile Cases

Formal Case Cycle

2016

2026



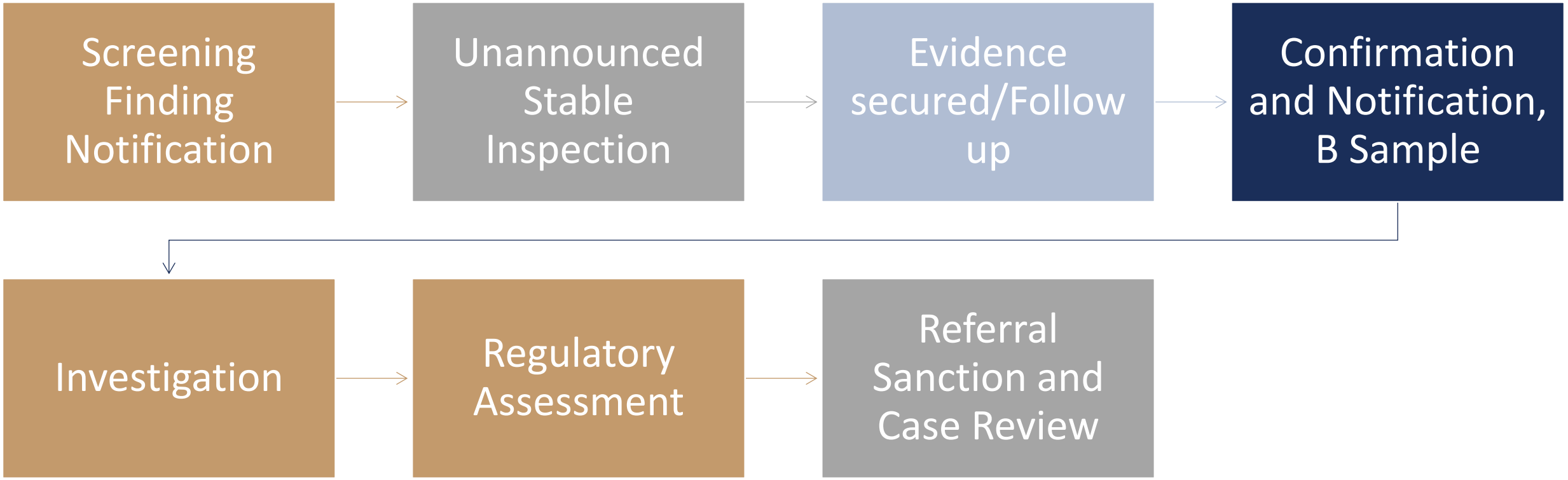




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AAF Case Cycle

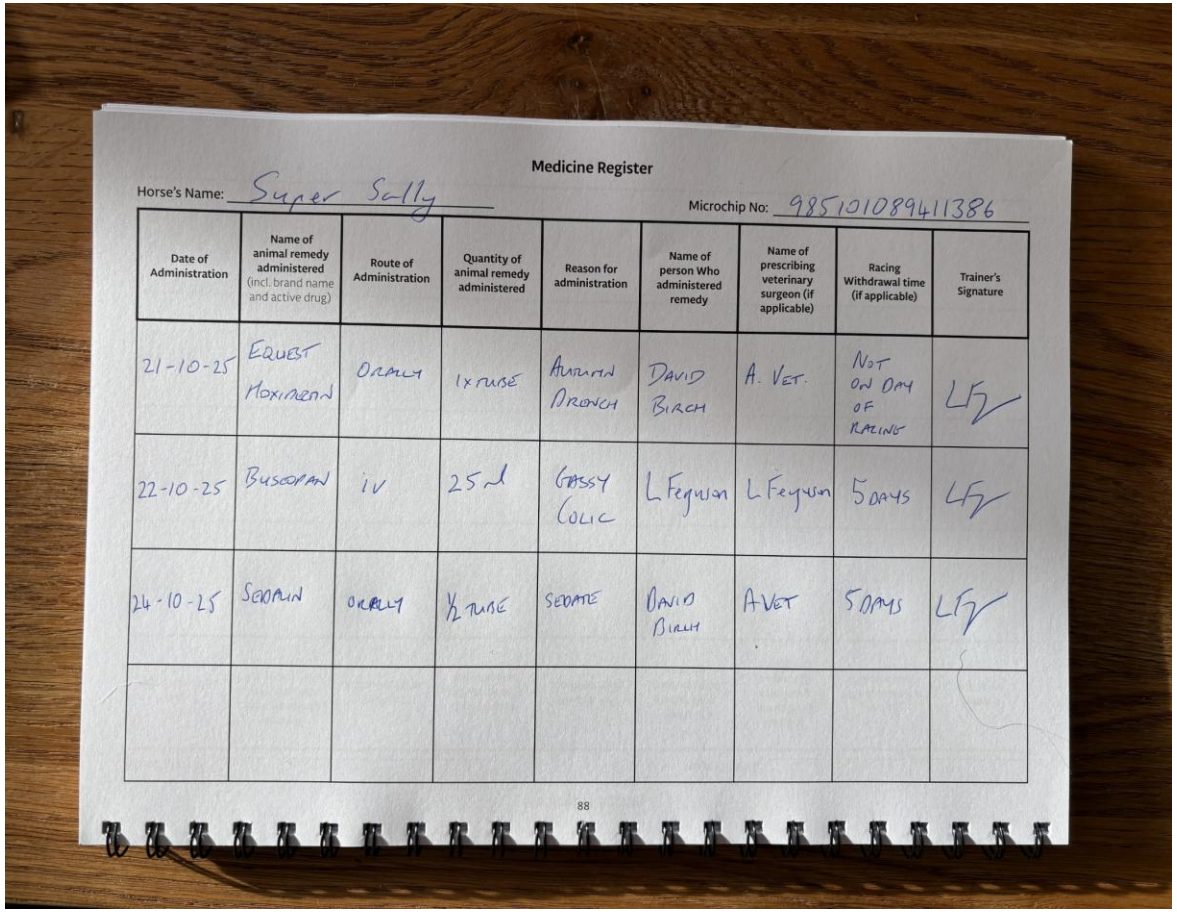
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Critical for effective EADMC

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- **Records** – Medicines Register
- **Passports** – Exclusion from Food Chain
- **Whereabouts** – on and off licensed premises
- **Law Enforcement Agency** when needed



Medicine Register

Horse's Name: Super Sally

Microchip No: 985101089411386

Date of Administration	Name of animal remedy administered (incl. brand name and active drug)	Route of Administration	Quantity of animal remedy administered	Reason for administration	Name of person Who administered remedy	Name of prescribing veterinary surgeon (if applicable)	Racing Withdrawal time (if applicable)	Trainer's Signature
21-10-25	EQUEST MOXIDECTIN	ORALLY	1x TUBE	AUTUMN BRONCH	DAVID BIRCH	A. VET.	NOT ON DAY OF RACING	LF
22-10-25	BUSCOPAN	IV	25ml	GASSY COLIC	L Ferguson	L Ferguson	5 DAYS	LF
24-10-25	SEDALIN	ORALLY	½ TUBE	SEDATE	DAVID BIRCH	A VET	5 DAYS	LF

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Phenylbutazone – wrong horse treated
Triamcinolone acetonide – short withdrawal, confusion with stand-down, complex sites
Omeprazole – close to/day of race
Fluticasone – too close to race
Tetramisole – too close to race
DIPA – too close to race (supplement)
Cobalt – vitamin B12 too close to race/salt blocks on day
Arsenic – unintended consequence of seaweed
Testosterone – ovarian tumour
Cetirizine - human use
Dexamethasone – 'home-made' throat wash containing it
Dex/TCA – too close to race, complex joint
Lidocaine – too close to race
Clenbuterol – given in error to horse in training
Salbutamol – too close to race
Oxazepam – insufficient withdrawal
MDMA – human cross-contamination
Nandrolone – vet administered in error
Flufenamate – topical administration
Gabapentin – canine cross contamination
Dantrolene – too close to race/accumulation
Meloxicam – too close to race
Venlafaxine – human medication error

OOCT Adverse Analytical Findings

Trendione – altrenogest (blood)

Clenbuterol (hair)

Methyltestosterone/methandienone (hair)

Testosterone (tumour)

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Adverse Analytical Findings Published

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Adverse Analytical Findings 2025 https://www.ihrb.ie/adverse-analytical-findings/

Horse	Trainer/Handler	Matrix of Sample	Date Taken	Substance	Status of B Sample	Status
Nevershedatear	Thomas Byrne	Blood Sample	2/3/2025 Borris House	Phenylbutazone	Not requested	Referral Committee convened on 19 May 2026 and found in breach of Rule 96(i), Rule 148 (i), (iii), (iv), (v), (ix), (vi), (xi)(b)
Nowwhatdoyouthink	Ray Hackett	Urine Sample	6/3/2025 Thurles	Cobalt	Confirmed	Referral Committee convened on 24 September 2026 and found in breach of Rules 96(i), 148(i), (iii), (iv), (v) and (ix)
Goldrush Kid	Patrick Magee	Urine Sample	16/3/2025 The Curragh	Dexamethasone	Confirmed	Referral Committee convened on 15 September 2026 and found in breach of Rule 96(i), Rule 148(i), Rule(ii) and (iii)
Rochestown	Brendan Maurice Walsh	Urine Sample	13/4/2025 Tramore	Arsenic	Confirmed	Referral Committee convened on 15 September 2026 and found in breach of Rule 96(i), Rule 148(i)
Kamille Au Kanada	Donnchadh Doyle	Blood Sample	4/5/2025 Stowlin (East Galway)	Testosterone	Confirmed	Referral Committee convened on 22 January 2026 and found in breach of Regulation 96(iii)
Balkito	John F O'Neill	Blood	11/5/2025	Furosemide	Not requested	Referral Committee convened on 24 September 2026 and found in breach of

‘Transparency & Welfare’

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Find Out More

Learn more about our veterinary



Equine Anti-Doping



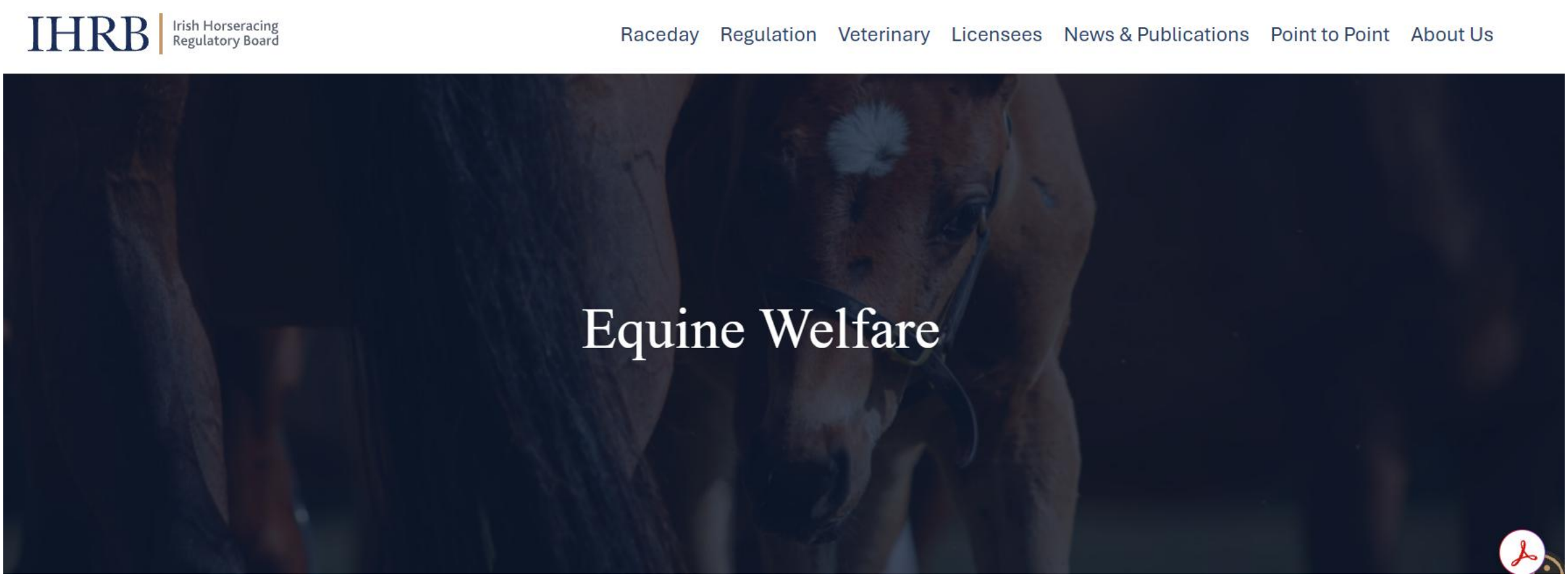
Equine Welfare



Veterinary Seminars

Another day's work…!

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Any Questions?

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