

## **Rational Intervention Management Strategy Involving Trainers, Clinicians, and Regulatory Vets in Monitoring Equine Clinical Health at The Hong Kong Jockey Club**

*K. Lam<sup>1</sup>, B. Stewart<sup>2</sup>, and C. Riggs<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Executive Manager, International Veterinary Liaison, Sha Tin Racecourse, Hong Kong Jockey Club, Hong Kong, China

<sup>2</sup>Head of Equine Welfare and Veterinary Services Racing Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

<sup>3</sup>Head of Veterinary Clinical Services Sha Tin Racecourse, Sha Tin, N.T. Hong Kong, China

**P**urpose of Relevance of the Study: Intervention management strategy has been implemented to identify potential unreported clinical findings in racehorses in training that were not available in clinical history presented at pre-race veterinary inspection (for example, undiagnosed lameness, sore tendon, and suspensory ligament), resulting in withdrawal of declared runners from racing.

**Brief Description of Method:** A programmed ACCESS (Microsoft Inc USA) database query system was set up in 2006 to identify racehorses that had not appeared on the training track for at least 30 days and or had not raced for 60 days but were not under Official Veterinary Examination (OVE) restriction to enter to race: another To-Watch List system aimed to encourage Trainers to present clinical cases at an early stage, to allow continual monitoring of progress, rather than at a late advanced stage that warranted an issue of OVE notice. This system requires that a Veterinary Officer (VO) checks the horses prior to acceptance to race again.

**Results:** The impact of the intervention strategy was reviewed by assessment of the number of pre-race inspection failures, the number of official veterinary examination (OVE) notices issued, and the number of horses in the “To-Watch” category.

There was a reduction in OVE of from approximately 0.8 events per horse per racing season to 0.56 OVEs per horse per racing season. The total number of OVEs and “To-Watch” notices given out exceeded the OVEs in the year before introduction, indicating that an additional 0.4 event of illness and injury events in horses that were not previously monitored were being identified by this process.

**Statement of Conclusion:** The study reflected the potential importance of data analysis and of the consultative process involving trainers, clinicians and regulatory vets needed to introduce rational interventions.