
News Release

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

Group agrees Task Force required

Toronto, ON – A group of key influential officials from the Ontario horse racing industry met last week to discuss the impact of medication control issues affecting the industry. The group recognized that the health and well being of the horse is of paramount concern to the racing industry, and that, by far, the majority of those licensed in the industry conduct their business with professionalism and abide by the rules.

However, the group acknowledged that the recent search and seizure of, as well as rulings on, the acquisition and possession of illegal and non-therapeutic drugs is of concern to horse people, owners, trainers, bettors and the general public.

As well as committing to ongoing collaboration and cooperation, the group agreed that John Blakney, Executive Director of the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC), would launch a Task Force to take immediate and long-term action to deal with the medication control issue.

The goals of the Task Force will include:

- Dedication of resources that will concentrate on investigating those who are acquiring and distributing illegal and non-therapeutic drugs;
- Provide education on medication control to the industry, as well as information that will encourage a change of practice; and
- Proactive research into improved methods of testing and controls.



In addition to the Executive Director, the individuals attending the meeting were:

- Conrad Cohen, President, Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Ontario
- Hugh Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer, Western Fair Association
- James Whelan, President, Ontario Harness Horse Association
- David Willmot, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Woodbine Entertainment Group
- David Liston, Associate Executive Director, Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency
- Terry Stone, Director of Racing, Ontario Racing Commission
- Rob McKinney, Director of Investigations, Ontario Racing Commission

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