



HEARING AND DETERMINATION OF CHARGES ISSUED AGAINST LICENSED FOREPERSON MS SAMANTHA MURPHY

**Racing NSW Head Offices
Druitt Street, Sydney**

30 August 2025

**Stewards: D R Hadley (Chair)
M W Cleaver
J W Prior**

In June 2025, Racing NSW Integrity commenced an investigation into the care and welfare of thoroughbred horses kept at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass. It was identified that thoroughbred horses *Promesa* and *Miss Manzanilla* were deceased at the rear of the property in a 120-acre paddock.

On 25 June 2025, Racing NSW Officials including Racing NSW Investigators and Veterinarians with the assistance of external agencies attended 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass to conduct an inspection. *Promesa* was located deceased in a very poor body condition.

Racing NSW Investigators continued enquiries and on 26 June 2025, attended Queanbeyan racecourse and conducted an interview with licensed foreperson Ms Samantha Murphy. Following the interview, Ms Murphy's mobile phone was seized for examination.

On 8 July 2025, Ms Murphy took part in an interview with Racing NSW Investigators at Racing NSW Head Offices in Sydney. On 10 July 2025, Racing NSW Stewards issued nine (9) charges against Ms Murphy and placed her on the Racing NSW Excluded list on an interim basis.

On 13 July 2025, following submissions received by solicitor Mr Joe Bryant, Stewards enacted the provisions as per AR23 and suspended Ms Murphy's foreperson licence pending the hearing and determination of the charges.

On 30 July 2025, Racing NSW Stewards conducted a hearing to determine the charges issued against Ms Murphy. A brief of evidence compiled by Racing NSW Investigator Anna Tabet was tendered with oral evidence being taken from Ms Murphy who was assisted by solicitor Mr Joe Bryant. Ms Murphy initially entered pleas of not guilty to all nine (9) charges. The hearing was adjourned to allow Mr Bryant to provide written submissions.

On 13 August 2025, after considering submissions, Racing NSW Stewards determined the charges as detailed below;

Charges issued against Ms Samantha Murphy

Charge 1: LR114(2)(a)

The details of the charge being that, as at 20 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Promesa*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, she did not attend to *Promesa*, nor did she conduct any inspections of the horse. During the relevant time periods, she failed to ensure that *Promesa* was provided with proper and sufficient nutrition and water. The lack of proper and sufficient nutrition and water was either entirely, or in part, a contributing factor to the death of *Promesa*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Guilty

Charge 2: AR231(b)(iv)

The details of the charge being that, as at 20 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Promesa*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, she did not attend to *Promesa*, nor did she conduct any inspections of the horse. During the relevant time periods, she failed to provide and ensure that *Promesa* was ingesting proper and sufficient nutrition and water. The lack of proper and sufficient nutrition and water was either entirely or in part a contributing factor to the death of *Promesa*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Guilty

Charge 3: LR114(2)(a)


The details of the charge being that, as at 25 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Miss Manzanilla*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, she did not attend to *Miss Manzanilla*, nor did she conduct any inspections of the horse. During the relevant time periods, she failed to ensure that *Miss Manzanilla* was provided with proper and sufficient nutrition and water. The lack of proper and sufficient nutrition and water was either entirely, or in part, a contributing factor to the death of *Miss Manzanilla*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 4: AR231(b)(iv)

The details of the charge being that, as at 25 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Miss Manzanilla*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, she did not attend to *Miss Manzanilla*, nor did she conduct any inspections of the horse. During the relevant time periods, she failed to



provide and ensure that *Miss Manzanilla* was ingesting proper and sufficient nutrition and water. The lack of proper and sufficient nutrition and water was either entirely or in part a contributing factor to the death of *Miss Manzanilla*

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 5: LR114(2)(a)

The details of the charge being that, as at 25 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Buzz Bomb*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, Following the inspection and assessment of the thoroughbred horses, *Buzz Bomb* was found to have a body score condition of 0.5/5 as determined by Veterinarian Dr Ellie Merritt. The poor body condition of *Buzz Bomb* was due to insufficient or lack of nutrition, either entirely or in part

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 6: AR231(b)(i)(B)

The details of the charge being that, as at 25 June 2025, she was the person in charge of, or in possession, control or custody of thoroughbred horse *Buzz Bomb*. During the relevant time periods the horse was at 1531 Cooks Hill Road, Yass, Following the inspection and assessment of the thoroughbred horses, *Buzz Bomb* was found to have a body score condition of 0.5/5 as determined by Veterinarian Dr Ellie Merritt. You did fail to exercise reasonable care, control and supervision of *Buzz Bomb* to prevent the horses' body condition based on veterinary advice declining to an unacceptable level.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 7: AR232(i)

The details of the charge being that during an interview with Racing NSW Investigator Nikki Burke on 21 June 2025, she did provide false or misleading evidence relating to thoroughbred horse *Promesa*.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Not Guilty

Charge 8: AR232(b)

The details of the charge being that she did fail to comply with a direction following being issued a direction by Racing NSW Investigator Nikki Burke on 21 June 2025.

Plea: Guilty

Finding: Guilty

Charge 9: AR228(b)

The details of the charge being that on 17 April 2024 following a conversation via messenger with Ms Taran Kelly in which it was disclosed that Ms Taran Kelly previously had sent three horses to the zoo for the lion food after they were shot – an act that, if it related to thoroughbred horses, would otherwise constitute a contravention of LR114(4)— Ms Murphy continued to refer multiple industry participants to Ms Kelly as a location to retire their horses. On these occasions, she facilitated the retirement of the 27 thoroughbred horses and assisted with transportation to Ms Kelly.

Plea: Not Guilty

Finding: Guilty

Penalty

After receiving submissions provided by solicitor Mr Joe Bryant, the following penalty considerations were taken into account –

- Pleas entered
- Objective seriousness of the conduct
- Precedent penalties
- Ms Murphy's personal and professional circumstances
- Principle of specific and general deterrence and what message is sent to the industry in respect to such conduct
- The importance of equine welfare for the thoroughbred racing industry prior to, during racing and on retirement
- Purpose of issuing penalties as a protective measure for the image, interests and welfare of the thoroughbred racing industry.

Charge 1: LR114(2)(a) – 12 months disqualification of licence

Charge 2: AR231(b)(iv) – 12 months disqualification of licence (to be served wholly concurrent with charge 1)

Charge 8: AR232(b) – 6 months disqualification of licence reduced to 4 months.

Charge 9: AR228(b) – 6 months disqualification of licence (to be served wholly concurrent with charge 1)

Having regard to the pleas, principles of totality of penalty, and in addition to the orders in respect of concurrency as set out above. Stewards ruled that the total penalty imposed upon Ms Murphy is that her licence be disqualified for a period of 16 months to commence on 13 July 2025, being the date, she was stood down as per AR23 and to expire on 13 November 2026.

Ms Murphy was advised of her appeal rights.

THIS MATTER IS SUBJECT TO AN APPEAL

Relevant Rules:

LR114(2)(a) Equine Welfare

(2) A registered owner, trainer or any person that is in charge of or has in his or her possession, control or custody of any horses (Eligible Horses, Unnamed Horses and Named Horses) must ensure that any such horses are provided at all times with:
(b) proper and sufficient nutrition and water.

AR231(b)(iv) Care and welfare of horses

(b) if the person is in charge of a horse – fail at any time:
(iv) to provide and ensure that the horse is ingesting proper and sufficient nutrition

AR232(i) Failure to observe processes and directions of PRAs or Stewards

A person must not:

(i) give any evidence at an interview, investigation, inquiry, hearing and/or appeal which is false or misleading.

AR232(b) Failure to observe processes and directions of PRAs or Stewards

A person must not:

(b) fail or refuse to comply with an order, direction or requirement of the Stewards or an official;

AR228(b) Conduct detrimental to the interests of racing

A person must not engage in:

(b) misconduct, improper conduct or unseemly behaviour



AR23 Suspension pending the hearing and determination of a charge

Without limiting any other rules or Stewards' powers, if a person has been charged with a breach of the Rules or with the commission of an indictable criminal offence, and if the Stewards are of the opinion that the continued participation of that person in racing might pose an unacceptable risk of prejudicing the image, interests, integrity or welfare of racing, the Stewards may pending the hearing and determination of the charge:

(a) suspend any license, registration, right or privilege, granted to that person under these Australian Rules.

D R Hadley
General Manager – Investigations
Racing NSW