

MR BLAKE JONES – INQUIRY CONDUCTED

4 September 2026

On Wednesday 2 September 2026, Harness Racing NSW (HRNSW) Stewards conducted an Inquiry into a report from Racing Analytical Services Limited (RASL) that benzoylecgonine, a cocaine metabolite, was detected in a urine sample obtained from Mr Blake Jones at the Wagga harness meeting on Tuesday 28 July 2026.

The reserve portion was confirmed by the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL).

Mr Jones pleaded guilty to a charge pursuant to Australian Harness Racing Rule (AHRR) 250(1)(a) as follows:

AHHR 250. (1) *A driver commits an offence if:-*

(a) A sample taken from him is found upon analysis to contain a substance banned by Rule 251,

AHHR 251. *The following substances and/or their metabolites, artifacts, and isomers are declared as banned substances in drivers when present in a urine sample (unless otherwise stated) at a concentration above the applicable cut-off level:-*

(d) All stimulants – substances in this group include, but are not restricted to,Cocaine (100µg/L).

Mr Jones' drivers licence was wholly suspended for a period of 5 months to commence from 4 August 2026, the date upon which he was stood down.

Pursuant to AHRR 252A, Mr Jones was informed that upon completion of a drug and alcohol program approved by HRNSW Stewards, a period of 1 month suspension would be stayed.

Mr Jones was also informed that an application would be considered by HRNSW Stewards for him to return to trackwork one (1) month prior to the expiration of the suspension period, if the drug and alcohol program has been completed and a negative urine sample has been provided by him.

In considering penalty Stewards were mindful of the following;

- Mr Jones' 1st offence of this nature;
- Extreme seriousness of the offence considering the subject Rules are designed and exist to ensure the safety of human and equine participants in the harness racing industry;
- Mr Jones' guilty plea, licence history, personal/financial subjective factors, together with his driving performance record;

- Sponsorship and mentoring provided by Mr Jones' in the harness racing industry.

Mr Jones was advised of his right to appeal this decision of HRNSW Stewards.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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