



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

RGRPSH308A Provide first aid and emergency care for horses

Release: 1

RGRPSH308A Provide first aid and emergency care for horses

Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor

This unit of competency specifies the outcomes required to measure and record vital signs of horses; identify and report signs of common illnesses and injuries; provide emergency care and follow first aid policies and procedures; make pre and post-race health and fitness assessments of horses; apply treatments under supervision; and follow the rules of racing related to the administration of prohibited substances.

To undertake this unit the candidate will be able to apply safe horse handling skills and workplace OHS standards. It is recommended that RGRPSH201A Handle horses be delivered before or in conjunction with this unit of competency.

This unit of competency operates in workplace environments of racing stables, paddocks, yards, racecourses and public areas.

Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements may apply to this unit. Check with your State Principal Racing Authority for current license or registration requirements.

Application of the Unit

Application of the unit

This unit of competency supports stablehands, foremen, trainers and others authorised to provide first aid and emergency care for horses.

Competencies attained in this unit apply to the harness and thoroughbred codes of the industry. Consequently when performance criteria are applied they will relate to the harness or thoroughbred code and statements of attainment will reflect this distinction.

This unit can be contextualised for other industries while also maintaining the integrity of the unit.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Refer to Unit Descriptor

Pre-Requisites

Prerequisite units

Employability Skills Information

Employability skills This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Recognise and report signs of ill health or injury in horses.	1. Temperature, pulse and respiration are measured and recorded . 2. Hydration levels and capillary refill are observed and reported . 3. Signs of common illnesses in horses are identified and reported. 4. Signs of shock in horses are identified and reported. 5. Signs of common injuries in horses are identified and reported.
Assess illnesses or injuries in horses.	6. Incident site is inspected and assessed prior to helping horses. 7. First aid policy and procedures with respect to obligations to owners, state regulations, stable policy and duty of care are followed. 8. Referral procedures for injury treatment and emergency care are followed. 9. Horses are calmed and restrained and risks are identified. 10. Threat to life of illness or injury is considered and plan of action is determined.
Apply basic first aid to horses.	11. Restraints are used to prevent further injury or to apply first aid to horses. 12. Wounds are cleaned and protected from further contamination or injury. 13. Swelling is controlled . 14. Bandages are applied for management of bleeding, swelling, wounds and possible fractures. 15. Horses are nursed to reduce impact of shock, distress and pain. 16. Horse behaviour and vital signs are monitored and observations recorded.
Respond to hoof and leg illnesses and injuries.	17. Feet and legs are inspected for signs of injury, soreness or foreign bodies . 18. Common injuries and ailments to hooves, feet and legs are identified. 19. Poultice is applied . 20. Condition and fit of horse shoes are assessed.
Assess health and fitness of horses.	21. Pre and post-race assessment of horse for injuries, distress, health and fitness is implemented.

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	22. Pharmaceutical or therapeutic treatments are applied under trainer or veterinary instructions and supervision.
	23. Rules relating to prohibited substances and alternative treatments are known and applied.

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

Required skills

- applying safe handling and work practices when dealing with horses
- applying basic first aid to horses
- applying quarantine control measures for isolation of sick horses and prevention of transference of disease by horses, other animals and humans
- assessing vital signs of horses
- assessing and responding to injuries in horses
- calming and restraining horses
- communicating with employer, supervisor, co-workers and others using assertive communication techniques to gather and relay information related to providing horses with first aid and emergency care
- evaluating risks associated with catching, handling and restraining horses
- following instructions of supervisor
- identifying behaviour of individual horses
- identifying and correctly using different treatments under supervision
- identifying common illnesses and injuries in horses
- incorporating safe operating procedures into all instructions
- providing assistance to others in the workplace
- reporting horse irregularities to stable nominated person
- reading and interpreting workplace documentation, including relevant rules of racing
- relating to people from a range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and with varying physical and mental abilities
- supporting others in handling and providing treatment to horses in the appropriate manner
- using numeracy skills to measure vital signs
- written communication skills to complete workplace documentation and reports.

Required knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- basic industry terminology related to handling and treating horses
- communication procedures within stable and wider racing industry
- common horse behaviour, social traits and vices
- common illnesses and injuries in horses
- disease control and reporting requirements
- effective working relationships, including teamwork
- handling techniques for horses
- horse first aid
- methods of restraining horses
- racing industry animal welfare requirements
- racing industry safety requirements, including safe operating procedures
- relevant rules of racing
- signs of shock in horses
- signs of lameness in horses
- types of treatments.

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

The evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this unit and include evidence of the following:

- knowledge of the requirements, procedures and instructions that are to apply when providing first aid and emergency care for horses
- implementation of procedures and timely techniques for the safe, effective and efficient provision of first aid and emergency care for horses
- working with others to undertake and complete first aid and emergency care procedures that meet required outcomes.
- Evidence should be collected over a period of time using a range of racehorses of different ages and sexes, and at different stages of preparation in racing stable and track environments.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Competency must be assessed in a racing workplace that provides access to the required resources or simulated environment approved by the relevant State Principal Racing Authority. Assessment is to occur under standard and authorised work practices, safety requirements and environmental constraints. It is to comply with relevant regulatory requirements or Australian Standards requirements.

Assessment of the practical components of this unit will be by observation of relevant skills.

The following resources must be available:

- a variety of harness or thoroughbred horses
- materials and equipment relevant to assessing candidate's ability to provide first aid and emergency care for horses
- safe handling areas, such as racing stables, and training and racetracks
- work instructions and related documentation.

EVIDENCE GUIDE

Method of assessment

Assessment methods must satisfy the endorsed Assessment Guidelines of the Racing Training Package.

The suggested strategies for the assessment of this unit are:

- written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge
- observed, documented and firsthand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks
- simulation exercises conducted in a State Principal Racing Authority approved simulated environment.

Evidence is required to be demonstrated over a period of time, therefore where performance is not directly observed any evidence should be authenticated by supervisors or other appropriate persons.

Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended, for example:

RGRCMN201A Follow OHS procedures and observe environmental work practices.

Guidance information for assessment

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording in the performance criteria is detailed below.

The range statement provides details of how this competency can be used in the workplaces of the racing industry to provide first aid and emergency care for horses. Workplaces include harness and thoroughbred racing stables and racecourses, training tracks and public areas.

RANGE STATEMENT

Measuring and recording may include:

- measuring rectal temperature with mercury and digital thermometers
- writing diary entries for temperature in degrees centigrade
- measuring heart rate over 30 seconds, then calculating in beats per minute
- writing diary entries for heart rate in beats per minute
- measuring respiration in breaths per minute
- writing diary entries for respiration in breaths per minute.

Hydration level reporting methods may include:

- verbal and diary entry of observation of neck skin pinch rebound time measured in seconds
- verbal and diary entry of observation of capillary refill time measured in seconds.

Common illnesses may include:

- circulatory disorders
- eye, nose and mouth disorders, including:
 - bleeding
 - conjunctivitis
 - ulcers
- digestive disorders, including:
 - colic
 - diarrhoea or scouring
- metabolic disorders:
 - exertional rhabdomyolysis (tying up)
 - thumps
- musculo-skeletal disorders:
 - back soreness
 - knocked down hip
 - shin soreness
- respiratory disorders, including:
 - exercise induced pulmonary haemorrhage (EIPH)
 - respiratory infections
 - travel sickness
- skin disorders, including:
 - girth galls
 - rain scald
 - ringworm
 - whither sores.

RANGE STATEMENT

Causes for shock may include:

- colic
- extensive wounds
- fractured limbs
- loss of blood
- snakebite
- traumatic accidents, for example hit by car.

Common injuries may include:

- bruises
- falls
- girth galls
- joint injuries
- over-reaching
- scalping
- speedy cutting
- sprained ligaments or tendons
- strained muscles
- tack rubs
- wounds.

Incident site may be inspected and assessed to identify:

- potential hazards for illness or injury of horses or people, including:
 - building or facility damage
 - crush or impact hazards
 - electrocution hazards
 - slip, trip or fall hazards
 - toxic substances
- rescue equipment required, including:
 - restraints
 - ropes
 - winches
- rescue specialist assistance requirements:
 - emergency services
 - veterinary assistance
 - animal health specialist services.

First aid policy and procedures may include:

- administration of treatments
- communication procedures when horses are treated
- disease prevention and control
- emergency care
- emergency phone numbers, for example veterinarian and fire department

RANGE STATEMENT

	• permissible treatments • procedure for recording treatments • procedure for recording and reporting vital signs • routine health checks • replenishing supplies of first aid kits • system of referral for injury treatment • staff access to first aid treatments and materials.
<i>Reasons referral to a specialist</i> may be necessary include:	• horse may: • be insured • have to be treated with race day or non-race day prohibited substances • have to be withdrawn from competition • require prescription medication • require stitching or specialist injury management or treatment • illness may be: • contagious condition • notifiable disease • passed on to humans • illness or injury may be: • life threatening or have consequences to ongoing career of horse • result of neglect or non-compliance with duty of care.
<i>Horses</i> may be restrained using:	• bit and head collar or bridle • crush • leg lift • skin pinch • twitch.
<i>Risks associated with handling horses</i> may include:	• bites • horse injury • kicks • personal injury • trampling.
<i>Controlling risks associated with handling horses</i> may include:	• adhering to responsibilities under OHS legislation and workplace practices • adhering to responsibilities under national and state codes of practice; federal, state and

RANGE STATEMENT

territory legislation; and local government regulations covering animal welfare

- considering variables that influence behaviour of horses, such as :
 - fences and equipment
 - other persons or animals
 - vehicles
 - wind and noise
- contributing to development of risk control measures
- following safe operating procedures
- identifying and reporting unsafe work practices
- identifying emergency situations, for example:
 - gear breakage
 - horse getting loose
- understanding individual horse behaviour
- wearing personal protective equipment.

Basic first aid may include:

applying bandages for:

controlling bleeding and swelling

drawing out foreign bodies or pus

splinting

wound protection

- cleaning wounds
- controlling bleeding
- managing shock
- nursing sick, in pain or anxious horses
- observing behaviour signs and symptoms of illness and injury
- preventing where possible further injury or spread of disease
- providing clean, warm or cool shelter out of inclement weather
- quarantining sick horses
- removing where possible cause of illness or injury
- restraining an injured or cast horse to prevent further injury
- taking and monitoring vital signs
- treating swelling and inflammation.

RANGE STATEMENT

- First aid equipment*** may include:
- antiseptic creams, lotions or sprays
 - bandages and wound dressings
 - infection control items
 - inflammation and swelling control items, including:
 - cold hosing
 - icepacks
 - pressure bandaging
 - poultices
 - scissors
 - wound cleaning solutions.
- Wounds*** are cleaned with consideration to:
- options for treatment when animal is in pain or reluctant to stand still
 - possible requirement for stitching of wound
 - potential for infection
 - presence of foreign bodies or internal damage.
- Swelling*** can be controlled by:
- cold water therapy:
 - hosing
 - whirlpool boots
 - walking in cold water
 - ice therapy:
 - ice boots
 - icepacks using available sources, such as frozen peas or ice blocks
 - pressure bandaging.
- Nursing*** may include:
- adjusting rugs to ensure adequate warmth
 - keeping horse quiet and calm
 - monitoring vital signs and behaviour regularly
 - sponging or hosing to lower temperature.
- Signs of injury, soreness or foreign bodies in horse's feet*** may include:
- distorted shape or angle of limbs
 - favouring a leg
 - heat
 - irregular movement in some or all gaits
 - reluctance to allow leg or foot to be handled
 - reluctance to move
 - resting a foot
 - swelling
 - visible object in foot.
- Types of injuries and ailments to***
- capped hocks

RANGE STATEMENT

hooves, feet and legs may include:

- corns
- laminitis
- loose shoe
- navicular disease
- sand cracks
- seedy toe
- shin soreness
- sole bruise and abscess
- thrush.

Application of poultice may include:

- selecting drawing agent, including:
 - commercial preparations
 - herbal or other treatments
 - heat treatment
- applying protective covering, such as:
 - paper, plastic or other layers
 - adhesive bandages and bandage cover
 - poultice boots
 - sole protectors.

Condition and fit of horse shoes would include:

- shoes display even wear
- shoe seated along hoof wall avoiding pressure on bars and sole
- shoes firmly fitted to hoof, and nails tight enough to ensure shoe fit is stable
- shoe removed if considered likely to cause further damage by:
 - identifying and describing function of shoeing tools required to remove a loose shoe
 - lifting and holding front and back legs in safe and appropriate position to remove shoe
 - removing shoe using personal protective equipment, appropriate tools and techniques by:
 - loosening and removing nail clenches
 - removing shoe with minimal damage to hoof wall
 - shoes shaped to fit hoof.

Pre and post-race assessment must include:

- pre-race assessment:
- assessing vital signs

RANGE STATEMENT

- checking horse for illnesses and injuries
 - checking feed and water intake
 - checking manure quantity and quality
 - checking shoe wear and fit
 - observing behaviour
 - post-race assessment:
 - black eyes
 - epistaxis
 - horse's recovery rate
 - heat stress
 - hydration
 - limb injuries or heat or swelling
 - muscle soreness
 - shifting or sprung plates.
 - pharmaceutical:
 - antibiotics and other anti-infective agents
 - antiparasitics
 - prescribed medications
 - inhalants
 - injectibles
 - oral medications and pastes
 - poultices
 - topical medications
 - vaccines
 - therapeutic :
 - acupuncture
 - chiropractic
 - electromagnetic
 - exercise
 - hydrotherapy
 - ice and heat
 - laser
 - massage
 - rest
 - ultrasound.
- Pharmaceutical or therapeutic treatments** may include:
- Rules** include:
- Australian and local rules of racing of the state or territory regulatory racing body.

RANGE STATEMENT

- Prohibited substances*** include:
- substances listed below as well as other items defined by racing regulatory authority from time to time, including:
 - acidifying agents
 - alkalising agents
 - analgesics
 - antihistamines
 - anti-inflammatory agents
 - bronchodilators
 - buffering agents
 - diuretics
 - general and local anaesthetics
 - hormones
 - muscle relaxants
 - narcotics
 - respiratory stimulants
 - sedatives
 - tranquillisers
 - vasodilators
 - vitamins administered by injection.

Unit Sector(s)

Unit Sector Harness and thoroughbred racing codes

Co-requisite units

Co-requisite units

Functional Area

Functional Area Racing performance services