

Explanatory information for Participants

Screening limits, residue limits and therapeutic substances

To assist participant understanding of the technical nature of the proposed rule changes and what they mean in practice, the below explanation has been reproduced from Greyhounds Australasia's (GA) *National Rule Changes Report – 13 September 2021*. This report was written by GA with the endorsement of all Controlling Bodies to explain the purpose, objectives and process followed when similar National Rules were reviewed and updated in 2022.

To read the full report, visit <https://galtd.org.au/industry/rules/>.

5.5 What are screening limits and therapeutic substances?

Screening limits are simply the detection limits to be used by the laboratories when screening for certain therapeutic substances as instructed by the authorities; they are not thresholds.

When the screening procedure indicates the screening limit, in either urine or plasma, has been exceeded, all that is required is qualitative confirmatory analysis to confirm the presence or absence of the prohibited substance. Quantification is not required.

Improvement of analytical methods to detect banned performance modifying drugs is unambiguously a good thing for racing and other sport. However as analytical methods improve it becomes more likely that positives are called on either irrelevant levels of genuine therapeutic medications that are used legitimately for welfare reasons or contaminants from feed and environment.

5.6 What are residue limits and residue substances?

The concept of *residue limits for specified residue substances* (R147) is a concept similar to screening limits except the substances are identified as more likely to occur as a result of e.g. feed contamination rather than administration as a medication, even though they could be used by a veterinarian for therapeutic reasons.

5.7 What is the purpose of screening limits and residue limits, and do they affect liability?

Screening limits and residue limits are published within the rules for the purpose of objectivity, transparency and international harmonisation for certain specified therapeutic substances and residue substances so that increased sensitivity of analysis, as technology improves, does not result in a “moving of the goal posts” with the ability to detect the same substances at lower levels.

Screening limits and residue limits do not affect liability.

Consistent with the overarching principles regarding screening limits and residue limits:

- The implementation of screening limits in racing is not intended and does not operate to mean that for the purpose of the rules the therapeutic substance or residue substance only becomes a prohibited substance if and when the screening limit or residue limit is exceeded.
- It shall not be a defence to any charge relating to the presentation of a racing animal with a prohibited substance detected that the initial screening test should have been below the screening limit or residue limit for the substance in question.

- In making any decision regarding the administration of a prohibited substance to an animal that is nominated to race, participants are reminded of their responsibility in undertaking the appropriate level of due diligence and risk analysis in researching the available information, including the seeking of veterinary advice and applying adequate safety margins to account for biological variability.
- A “detection time” is not the same as a “withdrawal time” - a withdrawal time must always be longer. A suitable safety margin dependent upon various factors including, but not limited to dose, length of treatment, route of administration and other relevant factors including allowance for biological variation between animals must be considered when calculating withdrawal times.
- To ensure the rules of racing are not breached, in adopting withdrawal times a conservative approach should be taken and include specific veterinary advice for the situation.

5.8 Is prohibited substance testing otherwise changing?

Other than the introduction of screening or residue limits, there will be no change in the practice by laboratories of which substances they report as a prohibited substance.