

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **For immediate release**

Date of issue 10 October 2017

Panel: J Zucal, D Farquharson, B Free & B Baudinette.

## ***Stewards Inquiry -Trainer Marion Dalco***

The Office of Racing Integrity Stewards today concluded an inquiry into Oripavine being present in the pre-race urine samples taken from SPECKIE at the Tasmanian Turf Club Race meeting on 27 March 2017 at Launceston and the Tasmanian Racing Club race meeting on 7 May 2017 at Hobart.

Oripavine was initially detected by Racing Analytical Services Ltd (RASL) and was confirmed by the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory (ARFL).

The inquiry was conducted over two hearings - 28 September 2017 and 5 October 2017.

Oripavine is an opiate that can be extracted from the Opium Poppy and is a Prohibited Substance under the Rules of Racing.

Evidence was taken from the trainer of SPECKIE, Mrs Marion Dalco, licenced stablehand Mr Larry Dalco, Scientific Manager (RASL) Mr Paul Zahra, and Harness Racing NSW Regulatory Veterinarian Dr Martin Wainscott.

Mrs M Dalco was found guilty under the provisions of AR178 in that Mrs Dalco bought SPECKIE to the Launceston racetrack on 22 March 2017 for the purpose of engaging in race 3 the BM 62 Handicap (1200m) with Oripavine being detected in a pre-race urine sample taken from that gelding.

Further, Mrs M Dalco was also found guilty under the provisions of AR178 for bringing SPECKIE to the Hobart racetrack on 7 May 2017 for the purpose of engaging in race 9 the BM 68 Handicap (1600m) with Oripavine being detected in a pre-race urine sample taken from that gelding.

In relation to penalty, the Stewards considered submissions from Mrs Dalco and after due consideration were of the opinion:

- That the presence of Oripavine, on the evidence before the Stewards, was most likely due to feed contamination.

- Mrs M Dalco had previously attended a Stewards inquiry in relation to the presence of Oripavine in a pre-race swab sample taken from SPECKIE in January 2016.
- Since that occurrence, Mrs Dalco had taken measures within her stable to prevent further contamination by changing her feed regime and distributors of her feed for the stable.

After considering all submissions, and accepting that feed contamination was the most likely reason for the presence of Oripavine and that Mrs M Dalco had taken measures to prevent further contamination, the Stewards, in these circumstances, recorded convictions against each charge but applied no penalty.

Acting under the provisions of AR177, SPECKIE was disqualified from its 3<sup>rd</sup> placing at Launceston on 22 March 2017 and its 4<sup>th</sup> placing at Hobart on 7 May 2017. Stewards amended placings accordingly.

John Zucal  
Acting Chairman of Stewards Thoroughbred