Animal Welfare Code

National mandatory standard for APRA sanctioned rodeos, rodeo schools, training activities and animal-facing operations.

Animal welfare first. Every animal. Every event. Every decision.

Prepared for AU Professional Rodeo Association Limited, trading as Australian Professional Rodeo Association.

This Code is an APRA governance and operational standard. It does not replace legislation, regulations, mandatory codes, official application forms, permits, licences, veterinary directions or lawful instructions of regulators.

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1. Status, Purpose and Authority

1.1 Status of this Code

This Code establishes APRA's mandatory national animal welfare standard. It is a governance, accreditation, event-approval, operational and disciplinary document. It is not merely guidance or a training handout.

Once approved, compliance with this Code is a condition of APRA event sanction, accreditation, appointment, engagement, membership participation and continued eligibility to act in an animal-facing role, subject to the APRA Constitution, Rule Book, contracts and disciplinary procedures.

MANDATORY STANDARD - No person may rely on custom, industry habit, event timing, competitor expectation, production pressure or contractor convenience to justify conduct inconsistent with this Code, applicable law, permit conditions or veterinary directions.

1.2 Purpose

Establish one national APRA animal welfare baseline that can be applied consistently across Australia.

Protect the physical and behavioural welfare of cattle and horses before, during and after APRA activities.

Clarify who must plan, monitor, stop, assess, report, investigate and close out animal welfare matters.

Ensure APRA's national rules are supported by enforceable state and territory compliance controls.

Create evidence that APRA actively communicates, monitors, audits and enforces its animal welfare requirements.

Provide a direct link between APRA governance, annual training, event-day operations and disciplinary action.

1.3 Welfare priority

Where an animal welfare decision conflicts with competition flow, broadcast schedules, prize outcomes, contractor arrangements or public presentation, the welfare decision takes priority. A welfare stop, withdrawal, treatment direction or event modification is a normal professional control and must be respected.

2. Scope and Application

2.1 Activities covered

This Code applies to every APRA sanctioned, APRA approved, APRA accredited or APRA promoted activity in which cattle or horses are transported, held, selected, handled, trained, used, released, caught, treated, displayed or recovered, including:

- rodeos and bull rides;
- rodeo schools, clinics and training events;
- qualifying, junior, development and exhibition events;
- practice, stock-testing and demonstration activities conducted under APRA authority;
- event set-up, livestock arrival, drafting, warm-up, competition, recovery and departure;
- any related activity where APRA personnel or contractors exercise control over animals.

2.2 Persons covered

APRA directors, employees, committees, delegates and event-approval personnel; permit holders, licence holders, event organisers, host committees and venue managers; stock contractors, animal suppliers, owners, agents, transporters and handlers; veterinary practitioners, animal welfare coordinators and competent stock persons; judges, arena directors, chute bosses, secretaries and other officials; competitors, assistants, pick-up personnel, protection athletes and arena crews; volunteers, contractors, media and production personnel whose actions may affect animals.

2.3 Personal responsibility

Animal welfare is a shared duty. Each person remains responsible for their own conduct and must immediately report a concern. A person must not assume that the permit holder, stock contractor, veterinarian or judge has already identified or reported the issue.

3. Legal Hierarchy and Interpretation

3.1 Cumulative application

All applicable animal welfare, safety, transport, biosecurity, licensing, permit and APRA requirements must be complied with cumulatively.

The following hierarchy applies:

1. Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation and regulations.
2. Mandatory or legally adopted codes, standards and prescribed requirements.
3. Conditions of an applicable permit, licence, approval, accreditation or venue authority.
4. Lawful directions of regulators, inspectors, veterinary practitioners and emergency authorities.
5. APRA rules, this Code and other APRA mandatory standards.
6. Event-specific Animal Welfare Plans, risk controls and written APRA conditions.

A requirement at a lower level must not be applied in a manner that conflicts with a higher-level legal requirement.

3.2 Relationship with APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules

References to the Rule Book in this Code mean the APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026, document RB-01 Revision 01, revision date 23 September 2026, unless a later controlled revision has replaced it.

The Rule Book states that the Constitution prevails over the By-Laws to the extent of any inconsistency (Rule 1.2). Rules 1.23-1.26 identify animal welfare as a paramount APRA issue, require humane care in accordance with applicable law, prohibit avoidable harm and require members to comply with reasonable animal welfare directions given by the Competition Committee or a person it authorises.

This Code must be read consistently with APRA governance. Where a proposed Code amendment would materially amend a Competition Rule or create a new competition rule, APRA must follow the applicable Constitution, By-Law and publication/approval process, including Rule 18.1 where relevant. The Code must not be used to bypass that process. Event conditions must also be imposed through a person or body with authority under the Constitution, By-Laws, contract, accreditation or event approval.

3.3 Stricter APRA requirements

APRA may impose a stricter internal animal welfare requirement where the requirement is lawful and does not purport to replace or modify a statutory obligation.

Where APRA imposes a stricter requirement, that requirement forms part of the conditions of APRA sanction, accreditation or participation.

3.4 Apparent conflicts

Where two requirements appear inconsistent, the event organiser or APRA approver must not resolve the conflict by selecting the less restrictive requirement.

The conflict must be escalated to the Animal Welfare Committee Chair and/or Business Operations Manager and, where necessary, APRA's legal adviser. The event must not proceed where the unresolved conflict concerns a legal prerequisite, permit or licence condition, mandatory veterinary requirement, animal fitness issue or serious welfare risk.

Nothing in this Code authorises a person to waive, suspend or disregard legislation, a mandatory code, permit or licence condition, or a lawful direction of a regulator or veterinary practitioner.

3.5 Event-specific requirements

An Event-Specific Animal Welfare Plan may impose additional controls where justified by the jurisdiction, animal numbers, event type, venue, weather, equipment, veterinary advice or risk assessment.

An event-specific control must not reduce or remove a legal, permit, licence or mandatory APRA requirement unless the relevant legal authority expressly permits the variation.

3.6 Verification

Before final APRA event approval, the event organiser and APRA event approver must verify the current:

- legislation and regulations;
- mandatory or adopted codes;
- permit, licence and accreditation requirements;
- official government guidance relevant to the event;
- APRA rules and current jurisdictional compliance module.

The verification must be recorded in the event file.

3.7 Status of government guidance

Government guidance is to be followed where it states a legal requirement, explains an applicable statutory obligation or forms part of a permit/licence condition.

Guidance that is not legally binding must not be described by APRA as legislation or a mandatory code. APRA may nevertheless adopt such guidance as a mandatory internal APRA standard where the requirement is expressly identified as an APRA requirement.

3.8 Australian Capital Territory

APRA must not sanction, approve, promote, advertise, administer, officiate at, accredit or otherwise facilitate a rodeo in the Australian Capital Territory while section 18 of the Animal Welfare Act 1992 (ACT) prohibits conducting or taking part in a rodeo.

No APRA member, official, contractor or representative may accept an APRA rodeo appointment in the ACT unless APRA has first obtained written legal advice confirming that the proposed activity is lawful.

3.9 No reliance on custom

Custom, industry practice, historical event practice, competition pressure, broadcast requirements, contractor convenience, commercial considerations or competitor expectation do not justify conduct that is inconsistent with applicable law, permit or licence conditions, veterinary directions or this Code.

CONFLICT RULE - If a requirement in this Code is lower than the law or a permit condition, the law or permit condition applies. If this Code is higher and lawful, the APRA standard applies as a condition of APRA approval.

4. Definitions

Business Operations Manager / Animal Welfare Committee Chair	The named person responsible for coordinating monitoring, records, communication and escalation at an event. The role does not replace the statutory responsibility of a permit/licence holder or veterinarian.
APRA event approval	Written sanction, approval or accreditation issued under APRA processes, subject to conditions and evidence requirements.
Competent stock person	A person with current practical knowledge, skill and experience sufficient to assess and handle the relevant species and event stock.
Event	Any activity within the scope in section 2.1.
Fit for use	An animal is healthy, sound, suitable, adequately rested and able to participate without unreasonable risk of pain, injury, distress, exhaustion or compromised recovery.
Person in control	A person who owns, possesses, handles, transports, directs, supervises or otherwise controls an animal or the circumstances affecting it.
Rodeo animal	A head of cattle or a horse used, intended for use, held or transported for an APRA activity.
Serious welfare incident	An incident involving death, euthanasia, suspected fracture, collapse, significant injury, prolonged distress, suspected cruelty, regulator attendance, serious equipment failure or a matter likely to attract regulatory or disciplinary action.
Welfare stop	An immediate instruction to hold, stop, release, withdraw, remove, assess or modify an activity because of an actual or potential animal welfare risk.
Withdrawn animal	An animal removed from use pending rest, assessment, treatment or permanent exclusion from the event.

5. APRA Animal Welfare Principles

Principle	APRA requirement
Welfare before competition	The animal's welfare is the first consideration in any decision concerning use, handling, equipment, facilities, timing or continuation.
Fitness and suitability	Only animals that are fit, suitable and legally eligible may be transported, drawn, loaded, released, used or re-used.
Prevention	Risks must be controlled before animals enter the affected area. Early withdrawal is preferred to emergency response.
Competent handling	Animals must be handled calmly and purposefully by people who understand pressure, release, species behaviour and event risks.
Prompt intervention	Any person may report a concern. Officials must act immediately where continued activity may worsen pain, injury, distress or risk.
Veterinary authority	Clinical directions concerning examination, withdrawal, treatment, transport and euthanasia must be followed.
Accountability	Welfare decisions, incidents, treatments, complaints, breaches and corrective actions must be recorded accurately.
Continuous improvement	APRA must learn from incidents, complaints, veterinary reports, audit findings and changing law.

6. Governance and Accountability

6.1 APRA Board

- approve and review this Code;
- ensure animal welfare objectives are reflected in APRA governance;
- appoint or delegate Animal Welfare Committee and Business Operations Manager;
- receive annual welfare, complaint, investigation and enforcement reporting;
- ensure serious or repeated non-compliance results in accreditation or disciplinary review;
- maintain evidence required for Approved Rodeo Organisation or equivalent approvals.

6.2 Animal Welfare Committee & Business Operations Manager

- maintain the national legislative and code register;
- issue state-specific updates and event conditions;
- maintain training, accreditation, complaint and enforcement registers;
- audit event files and verify corrective actions;
- coordinate regulator notifications and APRA disciplinary referrals;
- prepare an annual Board report on incidents, trends, audits and actions.

6.3 Approved Rodeo Organisation controls for Victoria

APRA must maintain evidence that it continues to satisfy the Victorian Approved Rodeo Organisation requirements, including current approval, industry representation, animal welfare objectives, current welfare rules, accreditation controls and active enforcement. APRA must retain the Gazette approval, renewal application, annual review, accreditation register and welfare complaint/enforcement register.

6.4 Delegation does not remove responsibility

A role may be delegated operationally, but the person or body holding the legal, permit, licence, contractual or APRA responsibility remains accountable for ensuring the duty is performed and recorded.

7. Event Approval and Animal Welfare Planning

7.1 No approval, no event

APPROVAL GATE - APRA must not give final event approval, and an event must not begin, until mandatory permits /licences, the event-specific Animal Welfare Plan, veterinary arrangements, stock declarations, venue controls and reporting systems have been verified.

7.2 Minimum pre-event evidence

Control	Required evidence
Jurisdiction	Current legislation, regulations, code, permit and government guidance identified.
Permit/licence	Issued approval and all special conditions attached; application timing verified.
Animal Welfare Plan	Event-specific plan with named roles, communication chain, inspection times, stop authority and emergency arrangements.
Veterinary arrangements	Named veterinarian, attendance/availability, replacement process, treatment area, emergency transport and reporting requirements.
Stock supply	Declaration from every supplier covering fitness, eligibility, identification, use limits and compliance.
Venue plan	Arena, chutes, yards, water, shade, recovery, veterinary/isolation area, loading route and emergency access.
Equipment process	Named inspector and pre-use inspection arrangements.
Briefing process	Annual Code/acknowledgement currency; operational personnel event-day briefing arrangements; and the method for communicating event-specific welfare directions to competitors.
Traceability	PIC, NLIS and movement record responsibilities where applicable.
Incident system	Forms, contact list, evidence preservation and regulator/APRA escalation pathway.

7.3 Event-specific Animal Welfare Plan minimum contents

- event name, date, venue, program and jurisdiction;
- permit/licence holder and approval numbers;
- named veterinarian and replacement process;
- named Animal Welfare Coordinator and all assisting roles;
- radio channel, emergency stop phrase and reporting chain;
- pre-event facility, equipment and animal inspection times;
- animal eligibility, use-limit, feed, water, shelter, penning and recovery controls;
- injury treatment, isolation, transport and humane destruction arrangements;
- weather, heat, footing, lighting and emergency modification controls;
- incident, complaint, regulator, APRA notification and post-event close-out process.

7.4 Conditional approval

APRA may issue conditional approval only where the outstanding matter is not a legal prerequisite and the condition, responsible person, due time and verification method are recorded. A permit, required veterinarian, unsafe facility or unresolved serious welfare risk cannot be waived through conditional approval.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Minimum responsibility
Permit/licence holder or event organiser	Hold and produce approvals; attend where required; accept responsibility for all animals at the event; implement the Animal Welfare Plan and veterinary directions; ensure required records and notifications are completed.
APRA event approver	Verify the approval gate; impose conditions; refuse or withdraw approval; audit event evidence; refer breaches for investigation.
Animal Welfare Coordinator	Coordinate inspections and monitoring; maintain welfare logs; receive concerns; contact the veterinarian; ensure reports and corrective actions are completed.
Veterinary practitioner	Examine animals; determine fitness; direct withdrawal, treatment, isolation, transport or euthanasia; supervise injured-animal loading where required; complete statutory and APRA reports.
Stock contractor / supplier	Supply eligible, fit and traceable animals; manage transport, rest, feed, water, shelter and penning; disclose health concerns; observe use limits; follow veterinary and official directions.
Judges	Treat animal welfare as part of judging; observe fitness, handling, equipment and arena conditions; stop, penalise or report unsafe conduct; provide factual incident evidence.
Arena Director / Chute Boss	Control readiness and release; stop unsafe loading or release; apply chute-release triggers; coordinate animal removal and radio communication.
Competitors and assistants	Maintain a current annual APRA Competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement, or the event-limited Day Member acknowledgement required by section 17.1; use compliant equipment and handling; present fit horses; comply with event-specific welfare information and official directions; report concerns; accept welfare withdrawal or stop decisions.

Pick-up personnel	Assist riders and animals safely; avoid prolonged pursuit; identify abnormal movement or injury; ensure prompt exit and report concerns.
Protection athletes	Protect people while preserving a safe path for livestock; avoid unnecessary contact or pressure; report injury or abnormal behaviour.
Handlers, volunteers and contractors	Work within their training and authority; follow directions; avoid prohibited handling; report hazards and welfare concerns immediately.

8.1 Stop authority

The veterinarian, permit/licence holder, Animal Welfare Delegate, Judge, Arena Director and Chute Boss may direct an operational welfare stop within their lawful, contractual or APRA-delegated area of responsibility. Rule Book 1.26 requires members to comply with reasonable animal welfare directions given by the Competition Committee or a person it authorises. Any person may call attention to an urgent risk. No person may retaliate against someone who raises a genuine welfare concern in good faith. A welfare stop does not itself reopen a completed judging decision that is final under Rule Book 31.1; any later review must proceed under the applicable APRA review, disciplinary or legal process.

9. Animal Selection, Fitness and Use

9.1 Species and eligibility

- Only cattle and horses may be used in APRA rodeo events.
- Animals must meet the age, weight, class, identification and event eligibility rules applying in the jurisdiction.
- As the APRA national baseline, rodeo cattle and horses must be of sufficient size, maturity, condition and training for the intended activity.
- For Victorian and South Australian events, the statutory minimum 200 kg requirement must be observed; bucking horses must be at least three years where required.
- Mares with foals at foot and cows with calves at foot must not be yarded or used where prohibited and must not be used under the APRA National standard.

9.2 Fitness inspection

Rule Book 35.5 requires animals for all events to be inspected before the draw and excludes sore, lame, sick, injured animals and animals with defective eyesight from the draw. Rule Book 30.13 also allows the Event Competition Committee Member, with the Judges, to remove unsuitable stock before an event starts. This Code additionally requires continuing observation during holding, loading, performance, recovery and departure. Where there is doubt, the animal must be held from use pending assessment.

Indicator	Required response
Lameness, uneven gait or reluctance to bear weight	Hold from use; veterinary or competent stockperson assessment; record decision.
Open wound, fresh bleeding or swelling	Stop use; assess, treat or refer; record and photograph where appropriate.
Abnormal breathing, heat stress or failure to recover	Move to a quiet recovery area; cool and assess; veterinary escalation.

Collapse, dullness, severe distress or suspected fracture	Emergency stop; immediate veterinary response; control the area.
Poor body condition, illness or transport fatigue	Withdraw or rest; do not use until clearly fit and suitable.
Repeated slipping, falling or abnormal behaviour	Assess animal and facility/equipment cause; pause event if risk affects others.

9.3 Withdrawal and re-clearance

An animal withdrawn for a welfare concern must not be re-entered, re-loaded or transported onward contrary to veterinary direction. Any re-clearance must be made by the authorised decision maker and recorded with the reason, time and conditions. In addition, Rule Book 33.22 provides that rough stock withdrawn from a rodeo event because of injury or sickness must not enter a draw for a minimum of ten days.

9.4 Daily use limits and event allocation

- Rule Book 33.12 limits timed-event stock to three runs in one day, or the limit required by the relevant state code where applicable. As a separate APRA Code standard, bucking animals are limited to three uses in one day unless a stricter legal, permit or event condition applies.
- Event allocation must comply with Rule Book 33.5. In particular, cattle used for Steer Roping or Team Roping must not be used for Steer Wrestling or Rope and Tie, and any other cross-use restriction in Rule 33.5 or a stricter state requirement must be observed.
- Use records must identify the animal, event, time and post-use status.
- An animal showing fatigue, distress, injury or abnormal recovery must be withdrawn regardless of the remaining numerical limit.
- Use means each occasion on which an animal is loaded, released, handled or otherwise deployed for an APRA animal-facing competition, training, practice, exhibition or testing activity, whether or not the activity is completed, unless an applicable state requirement defines the activity differently.

9.5 Substances

No stimulant, hypnotic, sedative, performance-altering substance or treatment may be used to force participation, disguise unfitness, alter normal response or avoid withdrawal. Legitimate veterinary treatment must be recorded and the animal used only if the veterinarian confirms fitness and applicable rules permit use.

10. Transport, Arrival, Holding and Recovery

10.1 Transport and arrival

- Comply with applicable livestock transport standards, state transport law, biosecurity, PIC and movement-document requirements. Rule Book 35.17 also sets an APRA control against confining stock in vehicles beyond 28 hours without unloading, proper feed and water, subject to its stated exception where the conveyance provides proper food, water, space and opportunity to rest. Any stricter legal transport requirement prevails.
- Plan journey duration, loading density, rest, water, weather and contingencies.
- Observe unloading and check for injury, fatigue, dehydration or abnormal behaviour.
- Do not unload into unsafe, overcrowded or unsuitable yards.

- Record arrival, source, identification, condition and any restriction.

10.2 Feed, water and shelter

Proper and sufficient feed, water and shelter must be available according to species, weather, duration and legal requirements. Water access must be actively checked rather than assumed. Animals must be protected from avoidable heat, cold, rain, dust and prolonged exposure.

10.3 Penning and separation

- Cattle and horses must be penned separately.
- Aggressive, incompatible, injured or compromised animals must be isolated as directed.
- Yards and races must not be overcrowded.
- Animals must have a clear, safe route between holding, chutes, arena, recovery and loading areas.
- Recovery pens must permit observation and timely access by the veterinarian.

10.4 After each run

Each animal must be removed promptly from the arena, observed for abnormal gait, bleeding, respiratory difficulty, distress or equipment injury, and returned to an appropriate recovery or holding area. Any concern must be reported before the animal is considered for further use.

10.5 Departure

Before departure, any animal involved in an incident, treatment or withdrawal must be checked against veterinary instructions. An unfit animal must not be transported without appropriate treatment, rest, loading supervision and destination arrangements.

11. Facilities, Environment and Emergency Readiness

11.1 Venue standard

Area	Minimum standard
Fencing and panels	Strong, secure, visible, correctly installed and free from sharp projections, gaps or entrapment points.
Arena surface	Suitable for the event; free from rocks, holes, dangerous obstacles, excessive slipperiness and avoidable dust.
Chutes and gates	Correct dimensions for the jurisdiction; safe operation; no pinch points; immediate emergency release possible.
Yards and races	Adequate capacity, safe footing, clear movement paths, suitable gates and calm handling design.
Water and shelter	Accessible and adequate for expected numbers, weather and holding duration.
Veterinary area	Quiet, accessible treatment and isolation area with lighting, water and equipment access.
Emergency access	Clear route for veterinary vehicle, livestock transport, ambulance and emergency services.
Communication	Tested radios, named channels, backup phones and a clear emergency stop phrase.

11.2 Inspection and reinspection

The venue must be inspected before animals enter competition areas and rechecked after significant weather, damage, surface change, crowd movement or operational modification. Defects must be controlled, assigned and verified closed before use continues.

11.3 Weather and environment

- Monitor heat, humidity, wind, rain, lightning, visibility, dust and footing.
- Modify timing, rest, use limits, yard density or event sequence where conditions increase risk.
- Pause or stop the event where controls are inadequate.
- Fireworks, flares and other sudden disturbance must not be used in conflict with law, permit conditions or animal safety; they are prohibited while animals are in the arena or chutes under the APRA standard.
- No unrelated animals or non-emergency motor vehicles may enter the arena during animal events.

12. Handling, Conduct and Prohibited Practices

12.1 Required handling standard

Handling must be calm, competent, purposeful and based on appropriate pressure and release. People must allow a clear exit, avoid unnecessary excitement and use the least force reasonably necessary for safe movement.

12.2 Prohibited or unacceptable conduct

- striking, poking, kicking, tail twisting or bending, dragging, lifting or forcing an animal in a way likely to cause unreasonable pain, injury or distress (including Rule Book 35.22);
- pulling a roped animal backwards off its feet or allowing it to be dragged;
- placing fingers in the eyes, lips or nose of a steer while steer wrestling, or unnecessary rough handling after time (Rule Book 35.4);
- using a wooden paddle (Rule Book 35.2);
- whipping a horse with the rope while in the box or during a roping run (Rule Book 35.25);
- prolonged pursuit, blocking a safe exit or unnecessary contact after the event action is complete;
- using unsafe, damaged, sharp, cutting, excessively tightened or improperly fitted equipment;
- using an electric prodder contrary to law, permit conditions or section 12.3;
- using dogs where prohibited or in a manner that causes avoidable distress;
- continuing to load, release, use or re-use an animal after a welfare stop or withdrawal;
- retaliating against or obstructing a person who raises a welfare concern;
- participating in or handling animals while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

12.3 Electric prodders and electrical devices

RESTRICTED USE - Electric prodders must never be used on horses under the APRA national standard. Use on cattle is permitted only where lawful, necessary for immediate safe movement, applied to an approved area, the animal can move away, and no prohibited age, condition or location applies. Repeated, excessive or punitive use is prohibited. State rules may be stricter.

APRA Rule Book controls also apply nationally: Rule 35.6 requires electric prods to be used as little as possible and only on the hip or shoulder area; Rule 35.23 restricts use to an approved Stock Contractor/Sub-Contractor, or a worker approved by and under the responsibility of the Contractor, when necessary, and limits the prodder to a maximum of 6900 volts and 33 cm in length; Rule 33.21 prohibits hotshots over or above the chutes; and Rule 35.24 bans hotshots on all horses at APRA events. State or territory law, codes, permits and licence conditions may impose stricter restrictions and prevail where stricter. Victorian events must also comply with the current POCTA Regulations and Agriculture Victoria participant guidance, including cattle-age, location and circumstances-of-use restrictions.

12.4 Alcohol and drugs

No person may participate in an animal-facing role while impaired. For Victorian events, the statutory restriction concerning a blood or breath alcohol concentration of 0.05% or more and being under the influence of drugs must be communicated through event-specific participant information and included in operational briefings for personnel required to attend them. APRA may remove any person whose capacity appears impaired, regardless of jurisdiction.

13. Equipment Standards

13.1 General standard

- All equipment must be fit for purpose, maintained, clean where appropriate and checked before use. The applicable Rule Book event controls also apply, including Rule 35.1 (rowels/spurs), Rule 35.8 (sharp objects and lined quick-release flank straps), Rule 35.9 (no loose ropes in bareback) and the event-specific equipment rules in sections 36-51.
- Equipment must not conceal lameness, restrict normal breathing, prevent release or create an avoidable risk of pain, injury or entrapment.
- A judge, chute official, veterinarian or equipment inspector may require removal, adjustment or replacement before participation.
- Non-compliant equipment must be tagged or physically removed from the operational area and the action recorded.

13.2 Rough stock equipment

- Saddles and rigging must be correctly fitted.
- Rear cinches or girths must not be over-tightened.
- Protective pads must be used under bareback rigging and extend sufficiently beyond the rigging to prevent injury.
- Flank straps and ropes must be lined, include an effective quick-release and must not contain sharp or cutting objects.
- Flank equipment must not be tightened repeatedly or excessively; Victorian limits must be applied at Victorian events.

13.3 Horn wraps, rowels and spurs

- Horn wraps must protect the ears and base of horns from rope injury in roping events.
- Rowels must comply with the relevant jurisdiction and APRA rules; they must be dulled and free-moving to the extent required.
- Sharp, fixed or cutting points and hidden objects are prohibited.
- For Victorian events, the dimensions and movement requirements in the current POCTA Regulations must be verified on the event equipment checklist.

13.4 Victorian measurements and controls

Equipment	Victorian minimum control
Front cinch/girth on bucking animals	At least 12 cm wide when fully tightened.
Bareback rigging pad	Protective pads underneath; pad extends at least 5 cm past the back of the rigging.
Flank straps/ropes	Not tightened more than twice while the animal stands in the chute; lined; working quick-release.
Rowels	Free-running on horses; capable of at least half a turn on bulls; dulled and compliant with statutory dimensions.

14. Event-Specific Welfare Standards

14.1 Rough stock events

- Apply the general humane-treatment rules in Rule Book section 35 and the applicable roughstock event rules (including sections 36-40). Inspect fitness before loading and observe the animal at chute exit and recovery.
- Load only when the arena and pick-up/protection crew are ready.
- Release immediately where the animal is caught, is at risk of injury or self-harm, or where a statutory chute-release trigger is met.
- Avoid unnecessary time under pressure in the chute.
- Ensure prompt, controlled arena exit and post-run observation.

14.2 Roping events

- Rope & Tie, Steer Roping, Team Roping and Breakaway must comply with the applicable event rules (Rules 46, 47, 49 and 51) and Rule Book section 35. Key welfare controls include approved roping devices, drag and jerk-down controls, legal catches, horn wraps where required, state-aligned stock weights and disqualification for ill-treatment. Monitor release, catch, stop, handling and recovery, not only the competitor result.
- Horn wraps and rope equipment must be checked where required.
- An animal must not be pulled backwards off its feet or dragged. In Rope & Tie, Rule 46.15.1 disqualifies and fines a competitor where the horse drags stock more than one metre after time is recorded; Rule 35.3 also requires the neck rope, rope, reins and training aids to be adjusted to prevent dragging.
- Excessive jerking, prolonged restraint, rough handling or unnecessary delay in release is prohibited. Steer Roping Rule 47.9 addresses a hard jerk-down, while Team Roping Rules 49.9 and 49.22 address rough handling and jerking a steer off its feet.

- Any animal showing injury, distress or abnormal recovery must be stopped and assessed.

14.3 Steer wrestling and related cattle events

- Confirm cattle eligibility, state-aligned weight and event allocation requirements (including Rule Book 48.8 and Rule 33.5). Rule 35.4 prohibits placing fingers in the eyes, lips or nose of a steer and unnecessary rough handling after time; Rule 48.17.6 disqualifies ill-treatment of stock.
- Monitor the catch, turn and throw for unsafe or excessive force.
- Observe recovery and gait before the animal leaves the area.
- Apply the Rule Book 33.5 cross-use restrictions and any stricter jurisdictional requirement.

14.4 Barrel racing and horse events

- Competitors must present horses that are sound, fit and suitable.
- Arena footing must be monitored throughout the event and corrected where it becomes unsafe.
- Falls, lameness, exhaustion, bleeding, or any use of a whip or spur that causes avoidable pain, injury or distress must be acted on under this Code and applicable law. Rule Book 50.14 also restricts a barrel-racing horse to one run per round.
- A horse withdrawn by a veterinarian or official must not return without authorised clearance.

14.5 Rodeo schools, clinics and training

The same welfare principles apply to schools, clinics and practice activities. Training status does not justify repeated use, inexperienced handling without supervision, unsuitable animals, reduced veterinary planning or departure from legal requirements. Participants must receive a welfare induction before animal-facing activity.

15. Veterinary Oversight and Emergency Response

15.1 Veterinary engagement

As an APRA Code standard, every APRA rodeo must have a veterinarian formally appointed or otherwise engaged. This is a stricter internal standard than Rule Book 35.5, which states that an official veterinarian should be available at all events where possible. The event approval must identify the veterinarian, scope of attendance or availability, replacement arrangements, contact details, expected response and required reporting. On-site attendance is mandatory wherever required by legislation, a mandatory code, permit, licence or APRA event condition. APRA may also require on-site attendance based on event type, stock numbers, remoteness or risk.

15.2 Veterinary authority

- inspect animals and determine fitness;
- withdraw or restrict an animal;
- direct isolation, treatment, transport or euthanasia;
- require an event stop or facility/equipment correction where necessary;
- supervise loading of an injured animal where required;
- complete statutory, clinical and APRA records.

15.3 Emergency capability

- Suitable animal transport must be available and accessible.
- A quiet isolation and treatment area must be prepared.
- Lawful humane destruction means and a qualified person must be available where required by law or event plan.
- Where euthanasia may reasonably be required, the event plan must identify the lawful veterinary/euthanasia pathway, competent person(s), required equipment or facilities, transport arrangements and after-hours contingency. No person may undertake euthanasia except as authorised by law and within their professional or legal authority.
- Emergency access routes must remain clear.
- Relevant contacts, including after-hours clinic, regulator, APRA compliance and emergency services, must be displayed or immediately accessible.

15.4 Death and euthanasia

Any death or euthanasia is a serious welfare incident. The area must be controlled, the veterinarian must direct clinical action, evidence must be preserved, required notifications must be made, and the matter must be referred to APRA for review. Public communication must be factual and authorised.

15.5 Veterinary reporting

The event organiser must obtain and retain veterinary attendance, inspection, treatment and post-event reporting evidence. Statutory reports must be submitted within the required period. For Victorian events, the veterinarian's Department report pathway and 28-day requirement must be included in the event close-out checklist.

16. Welfare Stops, Incidents and Reporting

16.1 Immediate response sequence

1. Identify the concern and call a welfare stop where continued activity may increase risk.
2. Control the area and move the animal only where safe and necessary.
3. Notify the veterinarian, permit/licence holder and Animal Welfare Coordinator.
4. Assess and decide: withdraw, rest, treat, isolate, transport, euthanise, correct or resume.
5. Record facts, times, people, instructions, evidence and outcome.
6. Escalate serious matters to APRA and the regulator where required.
7. Assign and verify corrective action before close-out.

16.2 Reportable matters

- injury, lameness, illness, bleeding, collapse, death or euthanasia;
- fall, collision, entrapment, escape or significant near miss;
- heat stress, exhaustion or abnormal recovery;
- equipment failure or non-compliant equipment;
- rough handling, prohibited conduct or suspected cruelty;
- veterinary instruction, animal withdrawal or treatment;
- regulator attendance, complaint or media/public allegation;

- repeat concern involving the same person, contractor, animal or facility.

16.3 Evidence and factual reporting

Reports must distinguish observed fact, professional opinion and information supplied by another person. Relevant photos, video, equipment, draw/use records, veterinary notes, radio logs and witness details must be preserved. Records must not be altered after signature except through a dated amendment.

16.4 Notification

The event plan must identify who notifies APRA, the regulator, police, insurer, venue and other authorities. Notification must occur promptly where required by law, permit condition, inspector direction or APRA procedure. Uncertainty must be escalated rather than used as a reason to delay.

17. Training, Operational Briefing and Annual Acknowledgement

17.1 Annual Code requirement

ANNUAL / DAY MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - Each annual APRA competitor must complete the APRA Competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement once for each applicable APRA membership year before participating. A Day Member must complete the competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement, or a Board-approved equivalent, before competing at the nominated event; because Day Membership is event-specific under Rules 5.1-5.4, that acknowledgement applies to that nominated event. Each Victorian rodeo operator and stock provider accredited by APRA, and each APRA judge, Animal Welfare Coordinator and other role identified by APRA, must complete the annual animal welfare refresher and acknowledgement required for that role before acting in the relevant period. APRA may require re-acknowledgement following a material Code change or for a specific compliance reason.

17.2 Minimum annual refresher content

- changes to national and state/territory legislation, codes and permits;
- this Code and relevant APRA Rule Book changes;
- fitness, withdrawal, use limits and equipment controls;
- role authority, welfare-stop communication and veterinary escalation;
- incident reporting, evidence preservation, complaints and enforcement;
- scenario-based review of recent incidents and corrective actions;
- jurisdiction-specific requirements for the person’s intended events.

17.3 Event-day operational briefing and competitor communications

An event-day animal welfare operational briefing is mandatory under this APRA Code for stock contractors, stock handlers, judges, chute personnel, pick-up teams, protection athletes, the Animal Welfare Coordinator, event management and any other animal-facing personnel designated by APRA or the event Animal Welfare Plan. The briefing must occur before those persons undertake their event duties. A late arrival in one of these roles must receive the operational briefing before commencing those duties. Competitors are not required by this Code to attend or sign a separate animal welfare briefing at every event solely because they are competing.

The operational briefing does not replace annual training or acknowledgement. It communicates the actual permit or licence conditions, named welfare roles, hazards, radio channel, stop phrase, veterinarian and emergency arrangements for that event. Annual competitors must maintain a current APRA Competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement; Day Members must hold the event-limited acknowledgement required by section 17.1. All competitors must comply with event-specific ground rules, permit or licence conditions, welfare notices and directions communicated by APRA, the event organiser, veterinarian or authorised officials. Where legislation, a permit, licence or lawful direction specifically requires a competitor briefing, that stricter requirement applies.

17.4 Training, acknowledgement and briefing records

APRA must maintain annual training and acknowledgement records, including completion date, applicable module or Code version, acknowledgement outcome, expiry/review date, restrictions and supporting evidence. Each annual competitor must have a current Competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement for the applicable membership year before participating. A Day Member must complete the event-limited acknowledgement required by section 17.1 before competing at the nominated event. Event organisers must retain attendance/declaration records for personnel required to complete the event-day operational briefing. A competitor event-day briefing declaration is not required merely because the person is competing unless imposed by legislation, a permit or licence condition, or a specific lawful APRA event condition.

18. Complaints, Investigations and Enforcement

18.1 Duty to enforce

APRA must be able to demonstrate that this Code is actively enforced. Welfare complaints, alleged legal or permit breaches, adverse veterinary findings and repeated non-conformances must be logged, assessed and closed through a documented process.

18.2 Immediate controls

- withdraw an animal or equipment;
- remove or stand down a person from an animal-facing role;
- stop or modify an event;
- impose temporary conditions on a contractor, official or event;
- preserve evidence and notify authorities;
- suspend APRA approval or accreditation pending investigation where justified.

18.3 Investigation principles

- animal welfare and evidence protection take priority;
- the investigator must be impartial and appropriately authorised;
- the person concerned must receive sufficient particulars and a reasonable opportunity to respond, subject to urgent controls;
- findings must be based on evidence and the applicable standard;
- decisions, reasons, sanctions and review rights must be documented;
- regulatory processes and APRA disciplinary processes may proceed separately.

Conflict of interest: A person must not investigate or determine a matter where they have a material personal, financial, operational or relationship-based conflict. Conflicts must be disclosed and recorded. APRA must appoint an alternative appropriately authorised decision-maker where necessary.

Review and appeal: Disciplinary decisions must identify any applicable review or appeal right, decision-maker, timeframe and method. Nothing in this section limits any statutory right or external regulatory process.

Code enforcement and sanctions must be exercised only to the extent authorised by the APRA Constitution, By-Laws, contracts, accreditation terms and disciplinary procedures. Relevant Rule Book provisions include Rule 13.1 (disciplinary action), Rule 15.6 (mistreating stock as a major offence), Rule 33.8 (Stock Contractor mistreatment referral), Rule 35.16 (competitor disqualification for mistreatment) and Rules 35.19-35.23 (fees, escalation and electric-prodder controls).

18.4 APRA outcomes

Outcome	Examples
Education / advice	Minor first occurrence with no harm and prompt correction.
Corrective action	Required training, equipment replacement, facility change, supervision or process improvement.
Warning / condition	Formal warning, restricted duties, conditional approval or increased audit.
Disqualification / removal	Removal from event, result or animal-facing role under applicable rules.
Suspension / cancellation	Suspension or cancellation of accreditation, appointment, sanction or membership rights under APRA processes.
Regulator referral	Suspected cruelty, statutory breach, permit breach, death or other reportable matter. The imposition of an interim restriction does not predetermine the outcome of an investigation or disciplinary process

19. Records, Audit and Continuous Improvement

19.1 Minimum records

- permits, licences, applications, approvals and conditions;
- event-specific Animal Welfare Plan and role register;
- veterinary appointment, attendance, inspection, treatment and reports;
- stock contractor declarations, stock lists and use records;
- venue, equipment and emergency readiness inspections;
- annual training and acknowledgement records, including annual competitor acknowledgements, and required operational briefing records;
- welfare monitoring, incident, injury, death, complaint and corrective-action records;
- PIC, NLIS, transport and movement records where applicable;
- APRA audit, investigation, disciplinary and accreditation decisions.

19.2 Retention and security

As an APRA records-policy minimum, complete event files must be retained securely for at least seven years and longer where an investigation, claim, prosecution, insurance matter, legal hold or accreditation action remains open. A longer statutory or permit period prevails. Access must be limited to authorised persons and personal or clinical information handled appropriately.

19.3 Audit

APRA may conduct pre-event, event-day and post-event audits. Event organisers, accredited persons and contractors must provide requested evidence. Missing, inconsistent or late records may be treated as non-compliance even where no injury occurred because records are part of the welfare control system.

19.4 Annual review and improvement

For annual competitors, annual currency means the applicable APRA membership period defined by the current Rule Book (including Rules 1.13-1.14). Day Membership is event-specific under Rules 5.1-5.4. For officials, coordinators, accredited stock providers and other designated roles, annual currency means the period specified by APRA's accreditation/training framework.

- review law, codes, permits and government guidance;
- analyse injury, withdrawal, complaint and equipment trends;
- review contractor, official and venue performance;
- verify corrective actions and repeat issues;
- update training and event templates;
- report significant findings and recommendations to the Board.

20. State and Territory Requirements

OPERATIONAL SUMMARY ONLY - This section identifies the current compliance framework verified for this edition. The event organiser must still check the current official source and every issued permit or licence before the event.

20.1 Victoria

The Victorian rodeo framework is principally governed by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (Vic), the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019 (Vic), as currently in force, applicable Agriculture Victoria guidance, the relevant rodeo permit or annual licence, and any applicable Approved Rodeo Organisation requirements.

Rodeos and rodeo schools may only be operated under the applicable Victorian permit or annual licence arrangements. A permit application must generally be made at least 28 days before the rodeo start date, and an annual licence application must generally be made at least 28 days before the first rodeo conducted under that licence. The application must include the required Animal Welfare Plan.

APRA Victorian Approved Rodeo Organisation control

APRA's status as a Victorian Approved Rodeo Organisation (ARO) must be current and verified before APRA relies on that status for a Victorian event.

Legal entity verification

RB-01 Revision 01 identifies AU Professional Rodeo Association Limited, trading as Australian Professional Rodeo Association. Before relying on the Victorian ARO approval or renewal, APRA must verify that the approval names the current legal entity, or that Agriculture Victoria has formally recognised any entity transition. An approval issued to a different legal entity must not be assumed to transfer automatically.

APRA was approved as an Approved Rodeo Organisation by Victoria Government Gazette No. S 654, published 6 December 2023. The approval was expressed to remain in force for three years unless earlier revoked.

APRA must maintain documentary evidence of:

- the current ARO approval;
- renewal or continuation of the approval;
- APRA accreditation arrangements;
- applicable animal welfare rules;
- welfare training and competency controls;

- complaints and enforcement activity; and
- material correspondence with the Victorian regulator concerning ARO status.

APRA must obtain and record evidence of renewal or continuation of its Victorian Approved Rodeo Organisation status **before the current approval expires on 6 December 2026**. The APRA compliance register must record the approval status, effective date, expiry date and evidence reference.

Event approval controls

Before approving a Victorian event, APRA must verify:

- the current rodeo permit or annual licence;
- all permit or licence conditions;
- the current Victorian Animal Welfare Plan requirements;
- the nominated veterinarian and replacement arrangements;
- required attendance of the permit/licence holder and veterinarian;
- animal eligibility and fitness requirements;
- equipment requirements;
- statutory chute-release requirements;
- electric-prodders restrictions;
- alcohol and drug restrictions;
- PIC, NLIS and movement requirements; and
- required veterinary reporting.

The permit/licence holder and nominated veterinarian must comply with the applicable attendance requirements while the rodeo is in progress. Veterinary directions concerning animal welfare must be implemented in accordance with the applicable legislation, permit or licence conditions and APRA requirements.

Participant controls

APRA must communicate the current Victorian participant requirements to all persons whose conduct may affect animals. These requirements include controls concerning:

- use of fit and suitable animals;
- striking, poking or otherwise mistreating animals;
- horn wraps;
- rowels and spurs;
- sharp or cutting objects;
- flank equipment;
- chute-release requirements; and
- electric prodders.

Current Agriculture Victoria participant guidance confirms that electric prodders must not be used on horses and are subject to restrictions concerning cattle age, location and circumstances of use.

The current Victorian Regulations and official Agriculture Victoria guidance must be checked before each Victorian event approval. The APRA Victorian compliance module must record the date of verification and identify any legislative, regulatory, permit, accreditation or guidance change since the previous event.

VICTORIA APPROVAL RENEWAL - The APRA Approved Rodeo Organisation approval published on 6 December 2023 is effective for three years unless earlier revoked. APRA must obtain and record renewed approval before 6 December 2026.

20.2 Queensland

Primary framework: Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 (Qld) and the mandatory rodeo code of practice, in force as a mandatory code since 1 January 2022. The code applies to cattle and horses used at rodeos and rodeo schools.

- Treat the mandatory code as a legal minimum, not optional guidance.
- Appoint and brief the required animal welfare role(s).
- Apply facility, handling, equipment and particular-event requirements.
- Maintain inspection, withdrawal, incident and treatment evidence.
- Check any separate local, venue, biosecurity or event approvals.

20.3 New South Wales

Primary framework: Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 (NSW), Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2025 and the NSW Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals Used in Rodeo Events.

- Include owners/agents, rodeo personnel and competitors in welfare duties.
- Inspect animals on site on the day of the rodeo by a veterinarian when available or an experienced stockperson in accordance with the Code.
- Do not use sore, lame, sick or injured animals; record withdrawals and substitutions.
- Use competent stockpersons and experienced pick-up personnel.
- Confirm current council, venue and event requirements separately.

20.4 South Australia

Primary framework: Animal Welfare Act 1985 (SA), Animal Welfare Regulations 2012, Part 4 Rodeos, and the Rodeo Permit process.

- A Rodeo Permit is required and the application must be lodged at least 28 days before the event.
- Only horses and cattle may be used.
- The permit application identifies the designated permit holder, rodeo judge, veterinary surgeon and stock contractor.
- Sufficient, visible and safe fencing, suitable arena and surface, appropriate animal transport and a copy of the Regulations at the event are required.
- The designated veterinary surgeon must attend rodeo events involving animals.
- The designated judge must inspect animals, arena/surface and fencing before the rodeo.
- Apply statutory animal eligibility, weight, age, fitness, equipment and event requirements.

20.5 Western Australia

Primary framework: Animal Welfare Act 2002 (WA), Animal Welfare (General) Regulations 2003 and the adopted Code of Practice for the Conduct of Rodeos in Western Australia.

- Use the WA Code as the rodeo-specific welfare benchmark.
- Document personnel responsibility, livestock care, stock selection, arena suitability, handling and equipment controls.
- Maintain transport, incident, treatment and follow-up records.

- Verify any current changes to the Act, Regulations, code adoption and local approvals.

20.6 Tasmania

Primary framework: Animal Welfare Act 1993 (Tas), including sections 11A and 11B, and Animal Welfare (General) Regulations (No. 2) 2023 prescribing the NCCAW Standards for the Care and Treatment of Rodeo Livestock.

- A veterinary surgeon must be in attendance at all rodeo events involving an animal.
- The veterinarian examines fitness before competition, treats sick or injured animals and may direct withdrawal or euthanasia.
- The prescribed rodeo code/standards must be followed.
- Do not commence animal events without the required veterinary attendance.

20.7 Northern Territory

Primary framework: Animal Protection Act 2018 (NT), Animal Protection Regulations 2022 and the adopted Standards for the Care and Treatment of Rodeo Livestock. Relevant amendments commenced on 3 November 2025.

- Apply minimum care obligations for food, water, living conditions, treatment, handling and restraint.
- Use the adopted rodeo livestock standards as the rodeo-specific benchmark.
- Apply current electrical device restrictions and excluded-device conditions.
- Confirm local venue, council, biosecurity and event requirements.

20.8 Australian Capital Territory

Primary framework: Animal Welfare Act 1992 (ACT), current republication effective 6 December 2025. Section 18 prohibits conducting or taking part in a rodeo.

- APRA must not approve or promote rodeo activity in the ACT.
- APRA officials and members must not accept rodeo appointments in the ACT.
- Any proposal must be escalated for current written legal advice before any commitment.

20.9 National transport and traceability context

Where animals are transported, the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Land Transport of Livestock and the adopting state or territory law must be considered. PIC, NLIS, movement documentation, biosecurity and destination requirements must be verified for each event and movement.

Appendix A - Event-Day Mandatory Welfare Rules

DISPLAY AND COMMUNICATE - Print or display this page at competitor check-in, the secretary's office, chutes and stock areas. Use it to communicate event-specific welfare requirements where appropriate. It is a quick reference only; the full Code, law, permit or licence conditions and official directions apply.

Rule	Required action
Stop and Call	Stop immediately for injury, distress, entrapment, collapse, abnormal gait, unsafe equipment or risk of self-harm.
Fitness	Only fit, suitable and eligible cattle and horses may be used. Doubt means hold and assess.
Use limit	Timed-event stock: maximum three runs/day under Rule Book 33.12, or stricter state code. Bucking animals: maximum three uses/day under this Code. Apply Rule 33.5 event-allocation restrictions.
Chutes	Release immediately where caught, at risk or where a legal/permit trigger is met.
Handling	No unreasonable force, striking, poking, dragging, pulling a roped animal backwards off its feet or prolonged pursuit.
Equipment	Only inspected, correctly fitted and compliant equipment. Remove defects before use.
Electric Prod	Never on horses (Rule 35.24). Cattle only where lawful and under Rules 35.6/35.23: minimal use, hip/shoulder only, authorised Contractor control, max 6900 V and 33 cm; no hotshots over/above chutes (Rule 33.21).
After the run	Remove promptly, observe and report abnormal recovery before re-use.
Yards	Separate cattle and horses; isolate aggressive or injured animals; provide proper feed, water and shelter.
Arena	Safe surface and fencing; no unrelated animals, non-emergency vehicles, fireworks or flares while prohibited.
Alcohol / drugs	No impaired participation or animal handling.
Report	Report every injury, near miss, equipment failure, welfare concern and veterinary instruction. Apply Rule Book and jurisdiction-specific escalation requirements.
Veterinarian	
Animal Welfare Coordinator	
Emergency stop phrase	
Radio channel / backup	
APRA Compliance Contact	

Appendix B - Annual Code Acknowledgement

This acknowledgement is completed after the annual animal welfare refresher and before the person acts in a role for which APRA requires annual currency.

Full name	
APRA membership / accreditation number	
Organisation / contractor	
Role(s)	
State(s)/Territory of intended activity	
Training module/version	
Completion date	
Expiry/review date	

Declaration

- ❑ I have read and understood the APRA Animal Welfare Code and the state/territory requirements relevant to my role.
- ❑ I understand that the stricter law, code, permit, veterinary direction or APRA condition must be followed.
- ❑ I will report animal welfare concerns immediately and comply with welfare stops, withdrawals and veterinary directions.
- ❑ I understand that non-compliance may result in removal, investigation, disciplinary action, suspension or regulator referral.
- ❑ I will maintain the annual acknowledgement or training currency required for my role, comply with event-specific welfare information and official directions provided to me, and advise APRA if my competency, accreditation or circumstances change.

Participant signature: _____

APRA trainer/reviewer: _____

Date: _____

Restrictions/conditions: _____

Appendix C - Incident Classification and Escalation

Classification	Examples	Minimum escalation
Level 1 - Observation	No injury; minor concern corrected immediately.	Record in monitoring log; assign local follow-up; trend if repeated.
Level 2 - Welfare incident	Withdrawal, minor injury, equipment failure, unsafe handling or treatment required.	Stop/hold; veterinarian or competent assessment; incident report; APRA notification under event procedure.
Level 3 - Serious incident	Death, euthanasia, suspected fracture, collapse, significant injury, suspected cruelty, regulator attendance or major public concern.	Emergency response; veterinarian; preserve evidence; immediate permit-holder and APRA notification; regulator/insurer/police as required; formal investigation.
Level 4 - Systemic or repeated breach	Repeated failures, falsified records, ignored veterinary direction, accreditation concern or multiple related incidents.	Interim controls; APRA compliance case; accreditation/disciplinary review; Board reporting; regulator referral where applicable.

Minimum incident record

- event, date, time and exact location;
- animal identification and description;
- people involved and witnesses;
- factual sequence and immediate controls;
- veterinary examination, diagnosis and instructions;
- treatment, transport, euthanasia and outcome;
- photos, video, equipment and records preserved;
- notifications and reference numbers;
- root cause, corrective action, owner and due date;
- report signatures and close-out decision.

Appendix D - Minimum Event File and Retention Index

Index	Document / evidence	File reference / status
1	Official application/notice and submission evidence	
2	Issued permit/licence, APRA sanction and all conditions	
3	Event-specific Animal Welfare Plan and role register	
4	Veterinary appointment, capability, replacement and attendance records	
5	Stock contractor/supplier declarations and stock lists	
6	Venue plan, readiness inspection and defect close-out	
7	Equipment inspection and non-conformance records	
8	Animal pre-use inspection, daily use and withdrawal registers	
9	Annual training/acknowledgement currency, annual competitor acknowledgements and required operational briefing declarations	
10	Welfare monitoring logs	
11	Incident, injury, treatment, transport, death and euthanasia reports	
12	Photos, video, witness statements and regulator correspondence	
13	PIC, NLIS, transport and movement evidence	
14	Veterinary post-event report and statutory submission evidence	

APRA policy minimum retention: seven years, and longer while any investigation, claim, prosecution, legal hold, insurance matter or accreditation action remains open. Apply any longer legal or permit requirement.

Appendix E - Official Source Register and Change Control

External legal/government source baseline checked 17 July 2026. APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules cross-reference checked against RB-01 Revision 01 dated 23 September 2026. APRA must verify amendments to both external sources and the controlled Rule Book before each event approval and annual Code review.

Jurisdiction	Official source	URL
Victoria	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019, Version 004 (effective 10 Dec 2025)	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/prevention-cruelty-animals-regulations-2019/004
Victoria	Agriculture Victoria - Legal requirements for rodeo operators	https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/horses/rodeos-in-victoria/legal-requirements-for-rodeo-operators
Victoria	Agriculture Victoria - Information for participants	https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/horses/rodeos-in-victoria/rodeos-in-Victoria-information-for-participants
Victoria	Agriculture Victoria - NLIS requirements for shows, events and rodeos	https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/national-livestock-identification-system/nlis-requirements-for-livestock-businesses/nlis-requirements-for-shows-events-rodeos
Victoria	Government Gazette No. S 654 - APRA Approved Rodeo Organisation	https://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2023/GG2023S654.pdf
Queensland	Rodeo code of practice - mandatory code	https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/animal/health/welfare/codes/rodeo
New South Wales	NSW Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals Used in Rodeo Events	https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1564267/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-animals-used-in-rodeo-events.pdf
New South Wales	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2025	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/sl-2025-0018
South Australia	Animals in sport - Rodeo Permits	https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits/animals-in-sport-rodeo-permits
South Australia	Animal Welfare Regulations 2012 - current	https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_legislation-documents/lz/c/r/animal-welfare-regulations-2012/current/2012.187.auth.pdf
Western Australia	Animal welfare legislation and adopted codes	https://www.dpird.wa.gov.au/businesses/animal-welfare-businesses/animal-welfare-legislation/
Western Australia	Code of Practice for the Conduct of Rodeos in Western Australia	https://www.dpird.wa.gov.au/siteassets/documents/agriculture/livestock/rodeos---code-of-practice-for-the-conduct-of-rodeos.pdf

Tasmania	Animal Welfare Act 1993 - current	https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1993-063
Tasmania	Animal Welfare (General) Regulations (No. 2) 2023 - current	https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/sr-2023-052
Northern Territory	Animal Protection Act 2018 - current	https://legislation.nt.gov.au/api/sitecore/Act/PDF?id=12398+
Northern Territory	Animal Protection Regulations 2022 - current	https://legislation.nt.gov.au/api/sitecore/SubordinateLegislation/PDF?id=6084
Australian Capital Territory	Animal Welfare Act 1992 - current	https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/DownloadFile/a/1992-45/current/PDF/1992-45.PDF
APRA - internal	APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026, RB-01 Revision 01, revision date 23 September 2026; approved by APRA Membership & Board 2026 AGM	Controlled APRA source

Change-control check

Current legislation and regulations checked	❑ Yes ❑ No Date: _____
Current government operator/participant guidance checked	❑ Yes ❑ No
APRA Victorian ARO approval/renewal confirmed	❑ Yes ❑ No Expiry: _____
Latest official application and Animal Welfare Plan obtained	❑ Yes ❑ No
State-specific training and event forms updated	❑ Yes ❑ No
Board/authorised approval completed	❑ Yes ❑ No

Reviewed by: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Legal and operational notice

This Code is an APRA operational and governance standard. It is not legal advice and does not guarantee that an approval will be issued or that every event circumstance is compliant. Current legislation, mandatory codes, official forms, issued permits/licences, special conditions, veterinary directions and lawful instructions of inspectors take precedence.

Appendix F - APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules Cross-Reference

Current internal baseline: APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026, document RB-01 Revision 01, revision date 23 September 2026. This table is an operational cross-reference, not a substitute for reading the full current Rule Book. If the Rule Book is amended, APRA must review the affected Code provisions before relying on this table.

Rule references in this appendix were checked against RB-01 Revision 01 dated 23 September 2026. APRA should re-check the full Rule Book after every amendment rather than relying on this cross-reference alone.

Code topic	Current Rule Book reference	Alignment / control
Member welfare duty and discipline	1.23-1.26; 13.1; 15.6	Welfare paramount; humane care and legal compliance; no avoidable harm; authorised welfare directions; disciplinary action and mistreating stock as a major offence.
Rule changes and event conditions	18.1-18.2; 23.2-23.3	Material competition-rule changes must follow APRA governance/publication requirements; approved events and promoters must comply with APRA directions and authorised conditions.
Animal fitness / suitability	30.13; 35.5	Unsuitable stock may be removed before the event; pre-draw inspection excludes sore, lame, sick, injured or defective-eyesight animals.
Stock contractor controls	33.5; 33.8; 33.12; 33.21; 33.22	Event cross-use restrictions; mistreatment referral; timed-event stock max three runs/day or state code; no hotshots over/above chutes; 10-day minimum draw exclusion for rough stock withdrawn due injury/sickness.
General humane treatment	35.1-35.25	Core APRA humane-treatment rules for equipment, handling, injury response, chutes, fireworks, mistreatment, tail twisting, electric prodders and roping-horse conduct.
Transport / injured animal removal	35.7; 35.17	Conveyance for injured animals; APRA extended-confinement control subject to stricter transport law.
Electric prodders / hotshots	35.6; 35.23-35.24; 33.21	Minimal hip/shoulder use; authorised Contractor control; max 6900 V and 33 cm; banned on horses; prohibited over/above chutes; stricter state law applies.
Rough stock	35.1; 35.8; 35.18; 36.13, 36.19, 36.21, 36.23, 36.31, 36.38, 36.40; 39.14, 39.16, 39.22.4, 39.22.8-9; 40.4-40.7	Quick-release flank/equipment controls, rowels, chute/prodding controls, ill-treatment disqualifications and release/suitability requirements.

Rope & Tie	35.3; 46.10; 46.12; 46.15.1, 46.15.7, 46.15.9	Neck-rope/drag prevention; approved roping device; post-jerk-down device check; >1 m drag after time and ill-treatment controls.
Steer Roping	47.9-47.10; 47.11.6	Hard jerk-down disqualification/fee; 200-250 kg stock range; ill-treatment disqualification.
Steer Wrestling	35.4; 48.8; 48.17.6	No fingers in eyes/lips/nose or unnecessary rough handling; state-aligned stock weights; ill-treatment disqualification.
Team Roping	49.9-49.11; 49.22	Rough handling controls; state-aligned stock weights and horn length; horn wraps; disqualification for unduly jerking steer off its feet.
Breakaway Roping	51.3; section 35	Legal catch controls plus the general humane-treatment rules in section 35.
Barrel racing / horse use	50.14; section 35	Horse restricted to one run per round; general humane-treatment rules continue to apply.
Annual competitors / Day Members	1.13-1.14; 5.1-5.4	Annual membership periods are set by current Rule Book; Day Membership applies only to the nominated event and the Day Member is bound by the Constitution and By-Laws as applicable.

Document Control and Approval

Document code	CODE-01
Version	1.2
Effective date	29 September 2026
Document owner	APRA Board
Applies to	All APRA sanctioned events and all persons whose conduct may affect animals
Review cycle	At least annually and whenever legislation, codes, permits or APRA rules change
Source baseline	Official legislation and government guidance checked to 17 July 2026
APRA Rule Book baseline	APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026, RB-01 Revision 01, revision date 23 September 2026
Related documents	APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026 (RB-01 Rev 01); Judges Accreditation materials; State/Territory Compliance Modules; Victorian Minimum Compliance Pack; event-specific Animal Welfare Plan; incident and disciplinary procedures
Record classification	Controlled governance document

Approval

The Code becomes binding as an APRA internal standard when approved by the APRA Board. Any amendments that materially change animal welfare obligations must be approved through APRA governance and communicated to affected members, contractors and event personnel.

APRA Chair: _____

APRA Deputy Chair: _____

APRA Business Operations Manager: _____

Approval Date: _____

Version History

Version	Date	Change	Approved by
1.0	17 July 2026	Initial consolidated National Code incorporating the APRA National framework, State and Territory requirements, judges' welfare responsibilities and the Victorian compliance controls.	APRA Board
1.1	5 August 2026	Replaced the general per-event competitor animal welfare briefing/sign-on requirement with a mandatory annual competitor Animal Welfare Acknowledgement. Retained event-day operational briefings for designated animal-facing personnel and preserved any stricter legal, permit, licence or veterinary requirement. Updated competitor duties and records accordingly.	APRA Board
1.2	23 September 2026	Reviewed and consolidated the September 2026 tracked-change markup; removed insert-only duplication; aligned the Code to APRA By-Laws & Competition Rules 2026 (RB-01 Rev 01, 23 September 2026); updated animal welfare Rule Book cross-references, Day Member acknowledgement treatment, stock use/allocation, handling/electric-prodder controls, event-specific rules and governance safeguards. Legal source baseline remains 17 July 2026 pending the next external legal-source review.	APRA Board

IMPORTANT VICTORIAN CONTROL - APRA was approved as a Victorian Approved Rodeo Organisation by Victoria Government Gazette No. S 654 on 6 December 2023 for three years unless earlier revoked. APRA must confirm and retain evidence of renewal before 6 December 2026. The Code is designed to support APRA's requirement to maintain animal-welfare rules and demonstrate active enforcement.