

Equine Anti-Doping Report

For The Six Months Ending 30 December 2023

Issue 6 - February 2024

Executive Summary

The Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board (IHRB) veterinary team took 2,975 samples from horses in the second half of 2023, bringing the total number for the year up to 5,866. A further 17 non-equine samples were taken in connection with investigations, including from feed or medicinal products, and sent for analysis by LGC Laboratories.

Of the 5,866 samples taken from horses, of which 1,501 were taken during Out of Competition Testing, six (0.1%) were confirmed as an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) and either have been or shortly will be brought before a Referrals Committee

of the IHRB. Each of the six AAF's involved medications or supplements prohibited on a Raceday, with no Prohibited At All Times substances reported by the laboratory during the year. The level of Out of Competition Testing remains in the region of 25% of all samples taken by the IHRB throughout the year.

Once again, our stable inspection program last year included veterinary examinations and Out of Competition Testing carried out in collaboration with the British Horseracing Authority, France Galop, Racing Victoria and the Breeders' Cup. In total, 161 premises were inspected across 18 different counties. Of these, 18 inspections (11%) resulted in potential rule breaches unrelated to an AAF, and were referred to the Disciplinary Department of the IHRB.

International Activity

The IHRB's work was represented internationally at a number of high profile events in 2023. Paul Murtagh, IHRB Head of Raceday Operations, presented to the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) International Stewarding Committee in Melbourne on the evolution of the IHRB's equine anti-doping programme and Dr Lynn Hillyer, IHRB Chief Veterinary Officer, gave a similar presentation to the 23rd International Conference of Racing Analysts and Veterinarians (ICRAV) in Hong Kong in September. The ICRAV is a biannual conference at which the latest advances and thinking on veterinary regulation and anti-doping are shared by regulatory veterinarians, laboratories and other subject matter experts. It is convened by two global organisations,

the International Group of Specialist Regulatory Veterinarians, IGSRV, of which the IHRB's Dr Hillyer is current Chair, and the Association of Racing Chemists, AORC.

The theme of the 23rd ICRAV was 'Sustaining the Integrity of Racing' with the week-long conference covering major topics such as gene doping, the legal aspects of adverse analytical finding cases, hair analysis, biomarkers and emerging threats. The IHRB Deputy Head of Veterinary Operations, Dr Graham Adams, presented on the work of the Authorised Officer team, talking delegates through how the IHRB operates and outlining the partnership with DAFM which is unique in global racing regulation.

IHRB Statement of Strategy

Welfare is one of our key strategic pillars, as set out in the IHRB's recently published Statement of Strategy, and we are looking forward to following through on key actions in our equine anti-doping programme in particular continuing to implement where possible the recommendations made by Dr Suann in his independent review and to continue to refine our overall approach to equine welfare and medication control.

The IHRB will also continue to exercise a leadership role in global horseracing and benchmark ourselves

Additions to the Team

We welcome Dr Lesley Ferguson to our team as Deputy Head of Veterinary Policy and Emer Bermingham as Veterinary Regulatory Administrator.

A native of County Armagh, Dr Ferguson graduated from UCD in 2000 has spent most of her career working with Thoroughbred racehorses in the UK and Australia. Dr Ferguson joins the IHRB with experience of the regulatory environment having spent seven years working as an official veterinarian for Racing New South Wales and running an

LGC to continue Equine Forensic Analytical Services for IHRB

Following a full public procurement process, the IFHA certified laboratory, LGC Laboratories in Newmarket, will continue to provide Equine Forensic Analytical Services for the IHRB.

LGC carry out analysis of over 50,000 equine and canine samples per year and are renowned globally as specialists in the analysis of biological doping threats, anabolic steroid chemistry, hair analysis and gene doping.

The contract, which came into effect on 1 January 2024, will operate until 31 December 2027.



Dr Lynn Hillyer speaking at the 23rd ICRAV Conference in Hong Kong last September

against best international practice which includes our work in the veterinary department as was highlighted by our presence at events such as the IFHA International Stewarding Committee and the ICRAV International Conference.

ambulatory veterinary clinic before returning to Ireland to lecture in CAFRE college Enniskillen and work in equine clinical practice.

Emer is an experienced administrator who has worked for Showjumping Ireland for the last two years, administering the Board, Management and Finance. She has a degree in Politics and Sociology and Masters in European Studies from UCD, and has also previously worked in marketing, PR, social media and journalism.



IHRB Operational Activity

The following is a sample of the raceday and out-of-competition activity carried out in 2023.

Equine Anti-Doping

2023	RACEDAY				POINT TO POINT	OUT OF COMPETITION			TOTAL SAMPLES	AAFs
	URINE	BLOOD	HAIR	PRE-RACE	BLOOD	URINE	BLOOD	HAIR		
January	144	33	1	0	54	0	58	58	348	1
February	126	40	18	25	90	1	150	150	600	1
March	172	28	11	86	98	0	46	46	487	1
April	219	55	1	55	124	0	26	26	506	2
May	241	48	25	42	72	0	23	97	548	0
June	229	48	0	60	0	0	9	56	402	0
July	253	51	30	45	0	0	36	36	451	0
August	263	60	2	74	0	0	25	25	449	0
September	268	64	26	46	0	0	25	25	454	0
October	211	50	10	89	60	0	51	45	516	0
November	195	45	4	26	66	0	50	50	436	0
December	187	47	2	8	38	0	245	142	669	1
JUL - DEC	1,377	317	74	288	164	0	432	323	2,975	1
2023 TOTAL	2,508	569	130	556	602	1	744	756	5,866	6

Raceday

JULY TO DECEMBER

RACES	BLOOD	URINE	HAIR	PRE RACE TESTING	TOTAL	ADVERSE ANALYTICAL FINDINGS
1,592	317	1,377	74	288	2,056	1
2023 TOTAL						
2,877	569	2,508	130	556	3,763	4

Point-to-Point

JULY TO DECEMBER

RACES	BLOOD	URINE	HAIR	TOTAL	ADVERSE ANALYTICAL FINDINGS
163	164	0	0	164	0
2023 TOTAL					
598	602	0	0	602	2



Chairman of Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Jackie Cahill TD and Minister of State at Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine, Martin Heydon TD with members of the IHRB team in the stable yard at Punchestown along with Punchestown CEO, Conor O'Neill

Out-of-Competition/Inspections

JULY TO DECEMBER

PREMISES VISITS	BLOOD	URINE	HAIR	TOTAL	ADVERSE ANALYTICAL FINDINGS
69	432	0	323	755	0
2023 TOTAL					
161	744	1	756	1,501	0

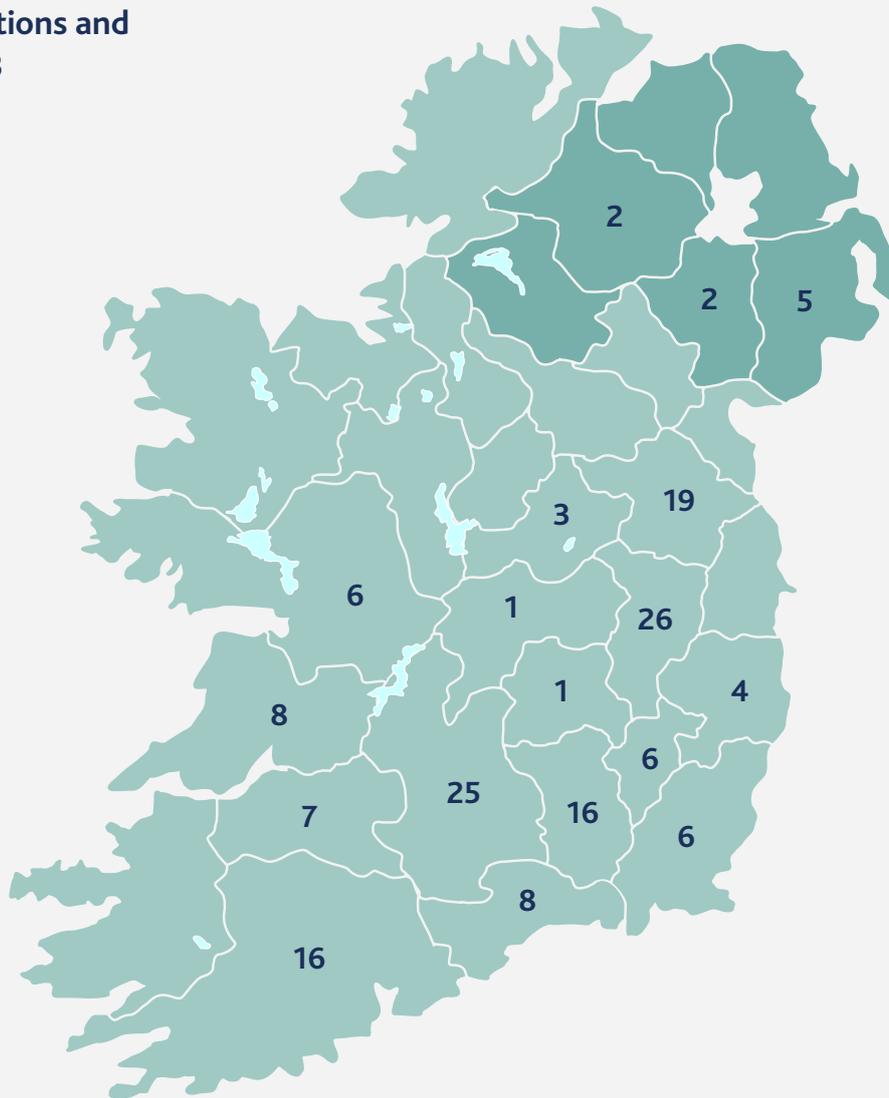
Monthly breakdown of Out-Of-Competition tests

	URINE	BLOOD	HAIR	TOTAL
July	0	36	36	72
August	0	25	25	50
September	0	25	25	50
October	0	51	45	96
November	0	50	50	100
December	0	245	142	387
JUL-DEC	0	432	323	755
2023 TOTAL	1	744	756	1,501

Monthly breakdown of all Raceday and Point To Point samples

	RACEDAY		POINT TO POINT		RACE URINE	RACE BLOOD	RACE HAIR	PRE RACE TESTING	POINT TO POINT	TOTAL
	FIXTURES	RUNNERS	FIXTURES	RUNNERS						
July	38	3,334	0	0	253	51	30	45	0	379
August	42	3,640	0	0	263	60	2	74	0	399
September	43	3,396	0	0	268	64	26	46	0	404
October	34	3,005	10	429	211	50	10	89	60	420
November	30	2,717	10	517	195	45	4	26	66	336
December	27	2,358	6	362	187	47	2	8	38	282
JUL-DEC	214	18,450	26	1,308	1,377	317	74	288	164	2,220
2023 TOTAL	388	33,542	95	4,999	2,508	569	130	556	602	4,365

Map of Inspections and OOCT in 2023



Dr Lynn Hillyer
IHRB Chief Veterinary Officer/
Head of Anti-Doping

“ In this latest IHRB Equine Anti-Doping report, I think it is important to reiterate something I said in our first report of this kind in 2021, that as a vet who has spent over two decades working with Thoroughbreds, our equine anti-doping programme is key to our stated relentless focus on the safety and well-being of participants, including horses. Neither we at the IHRB, nor our international racing regulatory colleagues, can or

will accept the use of drugs to affect performance or take short cuts to rest and recuperation. We have evidenced this over the last three years in our Equine Anti-Doping Programme and are committed to taking it further. I would also like to reacknowledge the work of my team and others in the IHRB who are behind every statistic - their commitment to the horses and people involved cannot be overstated or appreciated enough.

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