

News From Australia.

Sadly, the years 2019 and 2020 have proven to be disastrous for Arabian Racing in Australia. In 2019 bushfires roared through our country and put a stop to everything and, unfortunately, 2020 has seen COVID-19 do the same thing.

Only by implementing some of the most stringent controls ever seen in this country has Thoroughbred Racing been able to continue although, not to the same extent that we are accustomed to.

Temperature testing, contact tracing, barrier distancing, no public, limited media etc has now become part of horse racing in some Australian States and there are no signs that this will change in the near future. Most State borders are closed to other States and this includes to horses. For instance, Thoroughbred horses from Victoria are not permitted to enter the State of New South Wales.

The Australian border is closed, and, except for an exceptional reason, no one is permitted to leave the country. Although wearing a mask is optional in parts of Australia, all Victorians are required by law to wear a mask when outside their home and, in the city of Melbourne, a curfew has been imposed from 8pm at night so no one is permitted to leave their homes until 6am the next day except for work. Permits are required to travel from your home to your workplace, however, where possible, everyone is required to work from home. Also, in Victoria the schools are shut, and all shops are closed except for supermarkets, pharmacies, medical facilities and petrol stations.

Although not all Australian States are under the same restrictions as Victoria, they all have police and military patrolling State border crossings, enforcing social distancing, mask wearing where required etc, supervising compulsory quarantine of anyone with a positive Covid test and those who have been tested and who are waiting for a result.

So where does this leave Arabian Racing? Well, at this time we are not permitted to race but we are quietly confident that we will be allowed to resume racing in early 2021. It is expected that we will be required to submit a "Covid Workplace Plan" to the racing authorities for their approval.

Thankfully Australia is coming into spring and summer so hopefully, with the strict government controls, the summer heat and the promise of a vaccination we will be all systems go.

NARA and the Arabian Racing Industry in Australia are, with great confidence, looking forward to an exciting 2021 season of exciting racing in Australia