

media release

RACING BOARD SAYS FLOG IT TIL IT WINS

The RSPCA is outraged that Australian jockeys now have a mandate to whip their horses unrestrictedly in the end stages of a race.

RSPCA Australia CEO Heather Neil said today's back peddle was clearly all about money and it makes the RSPCA question whether the ARB and the industry as a whole actually care about the welfare of horses.

"The ARB tried to be progressive by reducing whip use. They last week reached a compromise with jockeys. Now they've given in to owners, breeders and trainers who are only concerned about their hip pockets.

"Today the ARB has voted to increase animal cruelty. Their decision essentially means that a jockey can whip a horse on every stride in the last 100m, without penalty.

"But this is not about whips anymore – it's about the industry refusing to put the welfare of horses first.

"They couldn't even give the new whip rules six months, not even to show the community that they recognise they need to change and at least reduce their reliance on whips.

"Breeders, owners and trainers have exposed their true colours – horses are just a vehicle to make money. This is not a sport.

"Their 'flog it to win it' attitude is archaic and says nothing about the industry's understanding of horse behaviour.

"Today's decision is bitterly disappointing and a step backwards for horses."