19 June 2025

**DECISION**

**HARNESS RACING VICTORIA**

**and**

**GEORGE SCHEMBRI**

**and**

**TAYLAH SCHEMBRI**

**Dates of hearings:** 14 April 2025, 15 April 2025 and 18 June 2025

**Date of decision:** 15 April 2025

**Date of penalties:** 18 June 2025

**Panel:** Judge John Bowman (Chairperson), Mr Des Gleeson and Dr Andrew Gould.

**Appearances:** Ms Amy Wood, instructed by Mr Andrew Cusumano, appeared on behalf of the Stewards.

Mr George Schembri represented himself.

Mr George Schembri represented Ms Taylah Schembri.

Mr Daniel Caruana appeared as a witness.

Mr George Schembri appeared as a witness.

Ms Taylah Schembri appeared as a witness.

**Charges and particulars:**

**GEORGE SCHEMBRI**

**Charge No. 1.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. You knew that in order to renew your driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period, you were required to undertake a medical examination and then submit to HRV a current “Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination” form (**Medical Examination Form**) completed by the relevant medical practitioner;
3. On 22 August 2022, and without undertaking the required medical examination, you caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit to HRV the Medical Examination Form that was previously submitted for the renewal of your driver’s licence for the 2021/2022 licensing period;
4. Prior to causing or allowing Taylah Schembri to submit the previous year’s Medical Examination Form to HRV, you caused or allowed her to remove the declaration date and examination date on that form, both being 6 August 2021;
5. By causing or allowing Taylah Schembri to remove the dates on the previous year’s Medical Examination Form and submit it to HRV for the renewal of your driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Charge No. 2.**

AHRR 187 (2) reads as follows:

*A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false or misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 30 September 2022, you were interviewed by HRV Investigative Stewards in relation to their investigation regarding the ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form submitted to HRV on 22 August 2022 by you or on your behalf for the 2022/2023 licensing period (**the Interview**);
3. During the Interview, you gave evidence to the following effect:
4. That you attended the Kilmore Medical Centre for your medical form but could not remember the date and time that you attended;
5. That you could not remember who made the appointment for you;
6. That the doctor that you saw was a lady with a foreign name that you can’t pronounce;
7. That you gave the form to the doctor and she filled it out;
8. That the reason why the medical form was undated was probably because you signed it without putting the date down; or that it didn’t scan properly; and
9. That the printer and computer had been playing up and that maybe last year’s form was sent by mistake;
10. The evidence that you provided during the Interview (as noted in particular 3) was knowingly false and/or misleading, given that:
11. You did not attend the Kilmore Medical Centre on or about 22 August 2022 for the purpose of completing a current ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form to renew your driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period; and
12. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit the previous year’s ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ to HRV after causing or allowing her to remove the dates on that form.

**Charge No. 3.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 3 October 2022, you were issued with a written direction by HRV Investigative Stewards to provide evidence confirming your attendance at the Kilmore Medical Centre for a medical examination directly prior to 22 August 2022 (which formalised the verbal direction given to you by HRV Investigative Stewards on 30 September 2022);
3. On 11 October 2022, you were issued with a Medical Certificate by Dr Suresh C. Jain of the Kilmore Medical Centre certifying that:

*Mr George Schembri has a medical condition and will be unfit for work from 11/10/2022 to 12/10/2022 inclusive.*

(**the Medical Certificate**)

1. You caused or allowed the Medical Certificate issued by Dr Suresh C. Jain to be falsified by Taylah Schembri, which she did by removing the heading ‘Medical Certificate’ and the text (as noted in particular 3 above) and replacing it with the following:

*Mr George Schembri attended the Kilmore Medical Centre on the 22/08/2022*.

(**the Falsified Medical Certificate**)

1. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards on 14 October 2022;
2. In causing or allowing Taylah Schembri to falsify the Medical Certificate and submit the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Charge No. 4.**

AHRR 187 (2) reads as follows:

*A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false or misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 23 November 2022, you were interviewed by HRV Investigative Stewards in relation to their investigation into the ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form submitted to HRV on 22 August 2022 on your behalf for the 2022/2023 licensing period and further documentation provided by you in response to the directions issued to you on 30 September 2022 and 3 October 2022 (**the Interview**);
3. During the Interview, you gave evidence to the following effect:
4. That the doctor looked up records on his computer and confirmed that you had attended at the Kilmore Medical Centre on 22 August 2022 for your medical examination and gave you a letter confirming that you were there on 22 August 2022;
5. That after your doctor’s appointment on 22 August 2022, you left the completed medical form on the table for your wife or daughter to scan and send to HRV;
6. That you assumed that it was the printer that caused the removal of the date on the medical form; and
7. That you believed that your daughter sent the wrong medical form to HRV;
8. The evidence that you provided during the Interview (as noted in particular 3) was knowingly false and/or misleading, given that:
9. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to falsify the Medical Certificate issued by Dr Suresh C. Jain on 11 October 2022 prior to causing or allowing her to submit it to the Investigative Stewards;
10. You did not attend to the Kilmore Medical Centre on 22 August 2022 for the purpose of completing a current ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form to renew your driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period; and
11. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit the previous year’s ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ to HRV after causing or allowing her to remove the dates on that form.

**Charge No. 5.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 23 November 2022, you were issued with a direction by HRV Investigative Stewards to provide the following information:
3. Evidence of your attendance at the Kilmore Medical Centre, including the date and time of appointment;
4. Confirmation of the name of the General Practitioner who conducted the examination;
5. Confirmation of the purpose of the appointment; and
6. Copy of the medical examination form completed by the assessing doctor if kept on file at the clinic; or confirmation from the assessing general practitioner that the document is not stored at the clinic;
7. On 12 December 2022, you were issued with a Medical Certificate by Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar of the Kilmore Medical Centre certifying that:

*Mr George Schembri has a medical condition and will be unfit for work from 12/12/2022 to 13/12/2022 inclusive.*

(**the Medical Certificate**)

1. You caused or allowed the Medical Certificate issued by Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar to be falsified by Taylah Schembri, which she did by:
2. removing the heading ‘Medical Certificate’ and the text (as noted in particular 3 above) and replacing it with the following:

*To Whom It May Concern,*

*I Dr. Mazhar have been asked by my patient George Schembri, to clarify that on the 12th of December 2022. That he attended the Kilmore Medical Centre, on the 22nd August 2022. According to my notes in my files Mr. Schembri presented me with a Drivers Medical Examination from Harness Racing Victoria. That I completed but was not keep on file it was given back to Mr. Schembri. The time he saw me was at 5pm on the 22nd August 2022*; and

1. removing the original signature of Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar and then forging Dr Mazhar’s signature;

(**the Falsified Medical Certificate**)

1. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards on 13 December 2022;
2. In causing or allowing Taylah Schembri to falsify the Medical Certificate and submit the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Charge No. 6.**

AHRR 187 (2) reads as follows:

*A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false or misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. At all relevant times, you were a licensed trainer and driver with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 9 March 2023, you were interviewed by HRV Investigative Stewards in relation to their investigation into the ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form submitted to HRV on 22 August 2022 on your behalf for the 2022/2023 licensing period and further documentation provided by you in response to the directions issued to you on 30 September 2022, 3 October 2022 and 23 November 2022 (**the Interview**);
3. During the interview, you gave evidence to the following effect:
4. That you or the doctor may have gotten the dates mixed up on the medical certificate that you provided to HRV dated 11 October 2022, and that the reason why the medical certificate said 5:00pm was because the doctor may have taken your word for it and that you made a mistake;
5. That your daughter sent the wrong medical form to HRV;
6. That the grammar errors in the medical certificate submitted to Stewards on your behalf dated 12 December 2022 were due to the doctor being in a rush and not being interested;
7. That you can’t explain the difference in font between the medical certificates provided to Stewards by the Kilmore Medical Centre dated 11 October 2022 and 12 December 2022 and the medical certificates submitted to Stewards on your behalf dated 11 October 2022 and 12 December 2022;
8. That you can’t explain why the medical certificates submitted to Stewards on your behalf dated 11 October 2022 and 12 December 2022 do not appear on your patient record at the Kilmore Medical Centre;
9. That you can’t explain why the title ‘Medical Certificate’ is whited out on the medical certificate submitted to Stewards on your behalf dated 12 December 2022;
10. That you can’t explain why the Kilmore Medical Centre reported that you did not attend the clinic on 22 August 2022;
11. That you did attend the Kilmore Medical Centre on 22 August 2022;
12. That the medical certificates submitted to Stewards on behalf of you were not forged by you or by anyone else; and
13. That you can’t explain why Dr Mazhar’s signature is different on the medical certificate submitted to Stewards on your behalf dated 12 December 2022 and the medical certificate provided to Stewards by the Kilmore Medical Centre dated 12 December 2022;
14. The evidence that you provided (as noted in particular 3), was knowingly false and/or misleading, given that:
15. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to falsify the Medical Certificates issued by Dr Suresh C. Jain on 11 October 2022 and Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar on 12 December 2022 prior to causing or allowing her to submit them to Investigative Stewards;
16. You did not attend to the Kilmore Medical Centre on 22 August 2022 for the purpose of completing a current ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form to renew your driver’s licence for the 2022-2023 licensing period; and
17. You caused or allowed Taylah Schembri to submit the previous year’s ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ to HRV after causing or allowing her to remove the dates on that form.

**TAYLAH SCHEMBRI**

**Charge No. 1.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed stablehand with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. You knew that in order for George Schembri to renew his driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period, he was required to undertake a medical examination and then submit to HRV a current “Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination” form (**Medical Examination Form**) completed by the relevant medical practitioner;
3. On 22 August 2022, and knowing that George Schembri had not undertaken the required medical examination, you submitted to HRV the Medical Examination Form that was previously submitted for the renewal of his driver’s licence for the 2021/2022 licensing period;
4. Prior to submitting the previous year’s Medical Examination Form to HRV on behalf of George Schembri, you removed the declaration date and examination date on that form, both being 6 August 2021;
5. By removing the dates on the previous year’s Medical Examination Form and submitting it to HRV on behalf of George Schembri for the renewal of his driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Charge No. 2.**

AHRR 187 (2) reads as follows:

*A person shall not refuse to answer questions or to produce a horse, document, substance or piece of equipment, or give false or misleading evidence or information at an inquiry or investigation.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed stablehand with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 30 September 2022, you were interviewed by HRV Investigative Stewards in relation to their investigation regarding the ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form for George Schembri, that you submitted to HRV on 22 August 2022 for the 2022/2023 licensing period (**the Interview**);
3. During the Interview, you gave evidence to the following effect:
	1. That George Schembri brought the medical form home from the doctors and handed the certificate to you and your mother;
	2. That you and your mother put it in the scanner and scanned it on the computer, and then you emailed it to the HRV Licensing Department;
	3. That you were of the understanding that the medical certificate you emailed was for the 2022/2023 licensing period;
	4. That you did not have any involvement in removing the date from the medical form submitted to HRV; and
	5. That George Schembri’s doctor’s appointment that he attended was on the same day as the dated betting declaration (19 August 2022);
4. The evidence that you provided during the Interview (as noted in particular 3) was knowingly false and/or misleading, given that:
	1. George Schembri did not attend the Kilmore Medical Centre on 19 August 2022 for the purpose of completing a current ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form to renew his driver’s licence for the 2022/2023 licensing period; and
	2. You submitted to HRV the previous year’s ‘Compulsory Driver’s Medical Examination’ form on behalf of George Schembri after removing the dates on that form.

**Charge No. 3.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed stablehand with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 3 October 2022, George Schembri, was issued with a written direction by HRV Investigative Stewards to provide evidence confirming his attendance at the Kilmore Medical Centre for a medical examination directly prior to 22 August 2022 (which formalised the verbal direction given to him by HRV Investigative Stewards on 30 September 2022);
3. On 11 October 2022, George Schembri was issued with a Medical Certificate by Dr Suresh C. Jain of the Kilmore Medical Centre certifying that:

*Mr George Schembri has a medical condition and will be unfit for work from 11/10/2022 to 12/10/2022 inclusive.*

(**the Medical Certificate**)

1. You falsified the Medical Certificate issued by Dr Suresh C. Jain by removing the heading ‘Medical Certificate’ and the text (as noted in particular 3 above) and replacing it with the following:

*Mr George Schembri attended the Kilmore Medical Centre on the 22/08/2022*.

(**the Falsified Medical Certificate**)

1. You submitted the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards on 14 October 2022;
2. In falsifying the Medical Certificate and submitting the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Charge No. 4.**

AHRR 241 reads as follows:

*A person shall not in connection with any part of the harness racing industry do anything which is fraudulent or corrupt.*

**The particulars of the charge being:**

1. You were, at all relevant times, a licensed stablehand with HRV and a person bound by the Australian Harness Racing Rules;
2. On 23 November 2022, George Schembri was issued with a direction by HRV Investigative Stewards to provide the following information:
	1. Evidence of his attendance at the Kilmore Medical Centre, including the date and time of appointment;
	2. Confirmation of the name of the General Practitioner who conducted the examination;
	3. Confirmation of the purpose of the appointment; and
	4. Copy of the medical examination form completed by the assessing doctor if kept on file at the clinic; or confirmation from the assessing general practitioner that the document is not stored at the clinic;
3. On 12 December 2022, George Schembri was issued with a Medical Certificate by Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar of the Kilmore Medical Centre certifying that:

*Mr George Schembri has a medical condition and will be unfit for work from 12/12/2022 to 13/12/2022 inclusive.*

(**the Medical Certificate**)

1. You falsified the Medical Certificate issued by Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar by:
	1. removing the heading ‘Medical Certificate’ and the text (as noted in particular 3 above) and replacing it with the following:

*To Whom It May Concern,*

*I Dr. Mazhar have been asked by my patient George Schembri, to clarify that on the 12th of December 2022. That he attended the Kilmore Medical Centre, on the 22nd August 2022. According to my notes in my files Mr. Schembri presented me with a Drivers Medical Examination from Harness Racing Victoria. That I completed but was not keep on file it was given back to Mr. Schembri. The time he saw me was at 5pm on the 22nd August 2022*; and

* 1. removing the original signature of Dr Mahjabeen Mazhar and then forging Dr Mazhar’s signature;

(**the Falsified Medical Certificate**)

1. You submitted the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards on 13 December 2022;
2. In falsifying the Medical Certificate and submitting the Falsified Medical Certificate to the Investigative Stewards, you engaged in conduct that was fraudulent.

**Pleas:** Mr George Schembri

Guilty to Charges 2, 4 and 6.

Not Guilty to 1, 3 and 5.

 Ms Taylah Schembri

 Guilty to all Charges

**DECISION**

Mr George Schembri, you are pleading Not Guilty to three of six Charges made against you by HRV Stewards. You are pleading guilty to the other three Charges. Your daughter, Mr Taylah Schembri, is pleaded guilty to four related Charges.

The three Charges to which you are pleading Not Guilty could be summarised as follows:

**Charge 1**

A breach of AHRR 241 – doing something related to harness racing which was fraudulent or corrupt. The alleged facts are in essence that, in relation to your licence renewal for the year 2021/22, you caused or allowed your daughter to submit your licence for the previous harness racing year with the relevant dates on the form deleted. This was done on 22 August 2022.

**Charge 3**

Also a breach of AHRR 241, as above. The alleged facts are that you caused or allowed your daughter to alter and falsify a relevant date on a medical certificate from Kilmore Medical Centre, which certificate related to you. This certificate was submitted to Stewards on 14 October 2022.

**Charge 5**

Also a breach of AHRR 241, as above. The alleged facts are that you caused or allowed your daughter to alter a Medical Certificate submitted to Stewards on 12 December 2022.

The standard of proof required in cases such as this is well-known *Briginshaw* test – that is, a level of comfortable satisfaction.

Your defence to all Charges is that your daughter effectively did these things of her own initiative and without your knowledge, consent or instructions.

We now turn to the Charges in sequence.

**Charge 1**

This Charge involves the Medical Examination Form for the year 2022-2023, this form being undated. The form is one that is completed by a medical practitioner. What is alleged is that the form forwarded to HRV was in fact the form for the previous year with the relevant dates removed.

The form was submitted by your daughter, who is pleading guilty to all Charges, including the removal of the dates from that form.

You are denying that you told her to remove the dates. In all the circumstances, we cannot be comfortably satisfied that this Charge has been proven. Your daughter does considerable paperwork for you. She took this short cut of removing dates. We are not comfortably satisfied that it has been established that this was at your direction or with your knowledge.

**Charge 3**

Turning to Charge 3, we are comfortably satisfied that this Charge has been proven. This Charge involves the wilful and direct fabrication of a medical certificate in order to comply with a Directions letter of 3 October 2022 and pursuant to a Directions Order made by the Stewards to you on 30 September 2022. We are comfortably satisfied that you played a major role in the production of the falsified medical certificate of 11 October 2022.

You had been required by the Stewards to provide a relevant certificate. We cannot accept that the falsified certificate of 11 October could have been so falsified without any input by you. You are essentially illiterate. We accept that your daughter did the actual printed falsification. However, falsifying of the material required and received input from you. On the balance of evidence, there is no foreseeable way that the production and context of the falsified medical certificate could have occurred without your input.

**Charge 5**

We now turn to Charge 5. We are comfortably satisfied that this Charge has been proven. This relates to the falsifying of another medical certificate, this being dated 12 December 2022. As in Charge 3, it involves Kilmore Medical Centre and an alteration to a certificate. The original certificate was for unfitness for work on the 12 and 13 of December 2022. It was in the form of a brief report headed “To whom it may concern”, it was in response to a direction of the Stewards on 23 November 2022. We are comfortably satisfied that this was a fraudulent certificate. It has been confirmed by the Kilmore Medical Centre that this report or certificate, which is dated 12 December 2022, and the certificates of 11 October 2022 are completely bogus certificates. We are comfortably satisfied that you had input into each. We do not accept that your daughter, of her own volition and without any input from you, produced two bogus certificates and forwarded them to the Stewards.

Thus, we find you guilty of Charges 3 and 5. As earlier stated Charge 1 is dismissed. We shall hear the parties on the question of penalty.

**PENALTY**

**MR GEORGE SCHEMBRI**

Mr George Schembri, you have been found guilty of two breaches of AHRR 241. You were found not guilty of a third breach. You have pleaded not guilty to the remaining two Charges. These Charges could be summarised as falsifying medical material.

You have pleaded guilty to three other Charges, these each being pursuant to AHRR 187(2). In summary, each of those Charges involves false or misleading statements when being questioned by Stewards.

All charges are serious, but the offences involved on the charges of falsifying medical material, Charges 3 and 5, are greater than those involved in Charges 2, 4 and 6. Charges 3 and 5 involve a wilful and deliberate falsification of important medical documents bearing upon your registration and involvement as an industry participant.

You have previously been found guilty of what could be described as a parcel of 14 charges involving breaches of AHRR 241. We refer to the decision of this Tribunal of 16 December 2019. Those offences could be summarised as being forgery of signatures on Compulsory Driver's Medical Examination forms, these relating to the state of your health. The gravity of your behaviour and the importance of accurate medical information was emphasised in that decision. The penalty which you received was disqualification for a total of 15 months. Given your not guilty plea, there was no discount for mitigation of penalty. The Tribunal emphasised that the offences were so serious that disqualification was the only appropriate penalty. We note that such findings referred to repeat offending over approximately eight seasons, the 14 charges effectively incorporated into the one charge and conviction.

We will now deal with guilt in relation to two similar breaches of the same Rules, namely Charges 3 and 5. You are currently registered as a trainer and driver, although you effectively drive only your own horses. You, your wife and your daughter reside at a property of some 9 to 10 acres, where you pay rent, some $650 per week. In addition to the income, you have a part-time job and have had that for many years. You also get some income from looking after horses for other trainers. The size of your property and the addition of a small training track assist in this regard. Your income from actual training or driving of family-owned horses would not appear to be great.

As stated, your daughter, who is pleading guilty to what could be described as similar offences, the forging of parts of your medical certificates, also lives on the property. She has suffered and continues to suffer from health problems from time to time. You are very limited as far as literacy is concerned and she has assisted you in relation to the falsification of medical certification. Indeed, she provided at least some, if not all of the handwritten content. Recently, her mental health has not been good.

It is difficult to assess the family's current financial situation, but it would not seem to be great. However, matters to do with the harness racing industry have been your prominent interest and contributed to your income over many years, if not decades.

The gravity of these offences is at least very significant. Falsifying medical material carries the risk of potential damage and major personal injury. We refer again to our observations in the decision of 16 December 2019. It also carries with it the risk of damage to the integrity of harness racing and the appearance of same.

You appear not to have learned any lesson from the decision of 16 December 2019 and the penalty imposed therein, namely disqualification for 15 months. You have gone ahead and repeated the same behaviour. We are aware of the family situation and the impact of a recent traffic accident upon you. We are aware of the very significant role which harness racing has played in your life and of your daughter's problems. However, another and greater period of disqualification must be imposed.

In relation to Charges 3 and 5, you are disqualified for a period of three years. We will nominate Charge 3 as being the principal charge, the penalty on Charge 5 being concurrent with that.

In relation to Charges 2, 4 and 6, on each you are disqualified for a period of 12 months, concurrent with the penalty on Charge 3.

Thus, the end result is that you are disqualified for a period of 3 years.

**MS TAYLAH SCHEMBRI**

Ms Taylah Schembri, you have pleaded guilty to four charges, three of which involve a breach of AHRR 241 – fraudulent or corrupt conduct. One involves a breach of AHRR 187(2), false and misleading statements. The fraudulent or corrupt conduct essentially relates to the actual forging of parts of the medical certificates. The false and misleading statement relates to false evidence given by you to Stewards.

In case it is not sufficiently clear, Charges 1, 3 and 4 concern your actual handwritten forging of parts of medical certificates. Charge 2 concerns the false information that you gave to the Stewards.

You were also charged and convicted in relation to the matters already referred to earlier and were the subject of the decision of 16 December 2019. You were disqualified for a period of nine months. Although on this occasion you pleaded guilty, it appears that you learned little from the previous penalty and again engaged in virtually the same conduct. Your health, particularly your mental health, currently is not good. You have always been very involved in harness racing and you are a licensed person. I understand that you are very engaged in the work at the family property and derive a lot of pleasure from it. Given your health, we have some sympathy for your situation and also bear in mind your pleas of guilty in the present case.

However, in our opinion, a period of disqualification is warranted. Behaviour such as the wilful forging of important medical material cannot be tolerated, adding significantly as it has the potential to do, to the risk of injury, in addition to damage to the industry's integrity.

The penalties which we impose are as follows:

On Charge 1, which we shall identify as the head charge, you are disqualified for a period of 18 months. On Charge 2, the false information, you are disqualified for a period of 15 months, concurrent with the penalty on Charge 1. On Charges 3 and 4, on each you are disqualified for a period of 18 months, concurrent with the penalty on Charge 1. Thus, the end result is that you are disqualified for a period of 18 months.

Mark Howard

Registrar, Victorian Racing Tribunal