

Horse Registration & Breeding Authorisation: Protecting the Integrity of the Sport

Effective for new licences and nominations from 1 September 2026

Reining Australia is strengthening how a horse's identity, parentage and breeding authority are processed before it receives an RA Horse Competition Licence or competes in the Gold Buckle Futurity or Aged Events. The purpose is to **protect the integrity of the sport by ensuring that horses receiving official RA recognition are accurately identified and that any claimed pedigree or breeding is supported by reliable evidence**. At the same time, the framework preserves a practical pathway for station-bred and other genuinely unregistered horses whose pedigree is unknown. The gap is most significant where imported (frozen) semen from internationally owned stallions is used.

Here's what it means in plain English.

Why this protects the integrity of the sport

Right now, if your horse is registered with AQHA (or another recognised breed registry), nothing changes for you. Your registration papers already do the job.

But if your horse isn't registered, the current system mainly asks for proof of who owns the horse, how old it is, and what it looks like (photos). Where a particular sire, dam or breeding is being claimed, it does not currently require RA to separately ask: is that parentage supported, and **was the stallion service or semen that produced this horse authorised by the stallion's owner?**

That gap affects more than an individual breeding transaction. A single authorised straw of semen or breeding service can, in some cases, be used to produce more progeny than the stallion owner agreed to. If those progeny enter official records or competition without the appropriate authority, legitimate breeders can be disadvantaged, stallion owners can lose income and control over their breeding rights, and confidence in RA's horse records and eligibility systems can be undermined. It can also damage Australia's relationship with international breeding programs and limit future access to elite genetics and our ability to compete on a world stage.

So this change isn't about creating red tape for the sake of it. **It is about protecting the integrity of the sport: accurate horse records, fair and consistent eligibility decisions, respect for legitimate breeding rights, protection for breeders who follow the rules, and confidence in Australian reining at home and internationally.**

What actually changes

To protect the integrity of RA records and competition, **each new RA Horse Competition Licence application will follow one of three clear and inclusive pathways:**

- **1. Recognised breed-registered horse:** an AQHA registration certificate or a registration certificate from another recognised breed association or registry; OR
- **2. Unregistered horse with a claimed pedigree:** appropriate identity evidence plus reliable evidence supporting the claimed sire and/or dam. This may include Genetic Parentage Verification (PV), breeder or station records, and - where relevant - written evidence that the stallion service or semen used to produce the horse was authorised; OR

- **3. Unregistered horse with no claimed or verifiable pedigree:** identity, ownership and age/provenance evidence only. This can include photographs, brands, microchip details where available, veterinary identification, sale or ownership records, breeder or station declarations, and available foaling or age records. The horse's pedigree will simply be recorded as unknown or unverified.

If an unregistered horse has a claimed pedigree and was bred using imported semen, we'll need to be satisfied that the breeding was authorised by the international stallion owner, breeding-rights holder or their authorised agent before we can issue a licence or clear the horse for the Gold Buckle Futurity or other RA aged events.

Photos, vet reports, proof of ownership and date of birth still matter because they confirm which horse this is. **For a horse with a claimed pedigree, parentage and breeding authority are separate questions that may also need to be verified.** For a genuinely unknown-pedigree horse, RA does not require an owner to invent or prove a pedigree that is not being claimed. Together, these checks protect the integrity of RA's records while keeping the sport open to station-bred and other legitimate unregistered horses.

What doesn't change

- **Gold Buckle nomination stays open to any horse, regardless of breed or registration status.** You can still nominate.
- **Existing licences and existing Gold Buckle nominations aren't cancelled** just because this evidence wasn't required when you first applied.
- If a horse has a claimed pedigree but a formal breeder or service certificate isn't available, the Board or nominated registrar can consider other credible evidence from the stallion owner, breeding-rights holder, breeder, station or their authorised agent. A horse with genuinely unknown breeding can instead use the identity and provenance pathway.

What you need to do

- **If your horse is registered with AQHA or another recognised registry:** nothing changes, your existing paperwork covers it.
- **If your horse is unregistered and you are claiming a known pedigree:** provide the usual identity evidence plus reliable evidence supporting that pedigree. Where a known stallion breeding is claimed, provide breeding authorisation where relevant.
- **If your horse is unregistered and its breeding is genuinely unknown or unverified:** provide identity, ownership and age/provenance evidence. No stallion breeding certificate is required where no sire, dam or authorised breeding is being claimed. The pedigree will be recorded as unknown or unverified.

If your horse is unregistered, has a claimed pedigree and was bred from imported semen: provide the stallion's details and evidence the breeding was authorised by the international stallion owner before your licence or Gold Buckle entry can be confirmed.

This applies to new Horse Competition Licences and new Gold Buckle nominations from 1 September 2026 onwards.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does this affect my current Horse Competition Licence?

No. Existing licences stay valid for normal competition. The Board may only ask for additional breeding evidence if your horse's eligibility for a breeding-specific or aged-event program depends on it.

I've already nominated my horse for the Gold Buckle Futurity, is my nomination cancelled?

No. Existing nominations aren't invalidated just because this wasn't required when you nominated. However, if your horse is unregistered, has a claimed pedigree and was produced using imported semen, you'll need to provide the required breeding-authorisation evidence before entry is accepted for competition from 1 September 2026 onward.

My horse is registered with AQHA, do I need to do anything extra?

No. A current AQHA certificate, or a certificate from another recognised breed registry, is all the breeding evidence we need. The additional evidence pathways are for horses that are not registered with a recognised registry.

What counts as "breeding authorisation" if my horse isn't registered?

If you are claiming a known stallion breeding, breeding authorisation can include a stallion breeder's certificate, service certificate, or other written confirmation from the stallion owner, breeding-rights holder or their authorised agent stating that the breeding which produced your horse was authorised. If the horse's breeding is genuinely unknown and no pedigree is being claimed, this requirement does not apply.

Why are you focusing on imported semen?

The integrity of the sport depends on any claimed breeding being supportable, regardless of where the semen originated. Imported/frozen semen is a particular focus because a single authorised service can potentially be stored, divided or used in ways that produce more progeny than the stallion owner agreed to. A genuinely unknown-pedigree horse is dealt with through the separate identity and provenance pathway.

What if I can't get a formal certificate from the stallion owner?

Talk to us. If a known breeding is being claimed, the Board or nominated registrar can consider other credible evidence from the stallion owner, breeding-rights holder, breeder, station or their authorised agent where a standard certificate isn't available. If the horse's breeding is genuinely unknown, use the identity and provenance pathway instead.

Does every horse now need a known pedigree?

No. The proposed rules do not require every horse to have a pedigree. If no sire or dam is being claimed, you do not need to prove one. The horse can use the identity and provenance pathway and its pedigree can be recorded as unknown or unverified.

How can a station-bred or unknown-pedigree horse be verified?

RA can use practical evidence such as front, back, left and right photographs, brands, microchip details where available, veterinary identification, proof of ownership or purchase, breeder or station declarations, and available age, foaling or station records. The aim is to establish the horse's identity and provenance. If the pedigree is genuinely unknown, it will simply be recorded as unknown or unverified.

Will my horse's photo requirements change?

If your horse is unregistered, yes. The online form will be updated to require front, back, left and right photos (matching what the Rule Book already asks for), rather than the current two photos.

Does a vet report or proof of ownership count as breeding authorisation?

Not by themselves where a known pedigree or breeding is being claimed. Vet reports and ownership records confirm identity: who the horse is, who owns it and, where available, how old it is. They do not prove a claimed sire or that a particular breeding was authorised. However, for a genuinely unknown-pedigree horse, those identity and provenance records form part of the accepted pathway and no breeding authorisation is required.

What happens if breeding documents turn out to be false or altered?

Providing false, altered or misleading breeding documentation undermines confidence in RA's horse records and the integrity of the sport. It can result in refusal, suspension or cancellation of the licence or program eligibility, and may be referred under RA's disciplinary rules.

When does this start?

The new requirements apply to Horse Competition Licence applications and Gold Buckle nominations received on or after 1 September 2026.

I compete as a Green Reiner / Beginner on a borrowed or leased horse, does this affect me?

This isn't about who's riding, it's about the horse. Where a Horse Competition Licence is required, an unregistered horse can qualify through the appropriate pathway. A horse with a claimed pedigree must support that claim and provide breeding-authorisation evidence where relevant. A station-bred or other horse with genuinely unknown breeding can instead qualify through identity, ownership and age/provenance evidence, with its pedigree recorded as unknown or unverified.

Where can I find the updated Rule Book wording and forms?

We'll publish updated guidance and forms on the website ahead of the effective date, along with a short explainer of the three accepted pathways: recognised breed registration; unregistered with claimed pedigree; and unregistered with no claimed or verifiable pedigree. The guidance will explain how each pathway supports accurate records, fair eligibility decisions and the integrity of the sport.