

New Weight Scale from August 1

RVL has announced changes to the weights scale to be used in Victoria from August 1. The changes were adopted by the RVL Board on June 4 and were supported by the Victorian Branch of the ATA, the VJA, TROA and the Metropolitan Clubs.

Minimum Topweight at Declaration of Weights

The topweight at declaration of weights in Victoria from 1 August, 2009 must not be less than:

Caulfield and Melbourne Cups	57kg	(no change)
All other Group 1 Races	58kg	(currently 57kg)
All Group 2 and 3 Races	58kg	(no change)
All 2yo Races	58kg	(no change)
Listed races	59kg	(currently 58kg)
All non black type races (except 2yo's)	59kg	(currently 58kg)

The minimum top weight of 58kg had been in place since the mid 1990's when the minimum weight in standard metropolitan races was 51kg and in non-metropolitan races 52kg. While the minimum weight has since been increased to 53kg there had not been any amendment to the minimum topweight. The new minimum topweight of 59kg will provide a greater spread in weights and further enhance the competitiveness of handicap racing in Victoria.

During the same period the WFA scale in Australia has twice been reviewed with weights at all distances increasing by at least 1kg. As an example when Shaftesbury Avenue won the 1991 VRC Newmarket with 58kg, WFA for 1200m in March was 57kg, i.e. Shaftesbury Avenue won the race with 1kg more than WFA. WFA for an older horse over 1200m in March under the Australian WFA scale is now 58.5kg, i.e. a horse weighted on 58kg in the VRC Newmarket is carrying 0.5kg less than WFA.

The minimum topweight in Group Races has been set at 58kg to ensure the best possible fields in terms of quality are attracted to Group races run under Handicap conditions.

The minimum topweight of 58kg has not been varied for 2yo races where there can be a lack of exposed form and in many cases unraced colts and geldings are often required to carry top weight.

Minimum Weight in Group One Races

The minimum weight in Group 1 Handicap races in Victoria from 1 August, 2009 must not be less than:

Caulfield Cup	4up	50kg	3yo's	49kg	No change
Melbourne Cup	4up	50kg	3yo's	49kg	No change
Newmarket Hcp	4up	52kg	3yo's	50kg	Increased by 1kg
All other Group 1 Hcps		52kg			Increased by 1kg

The increase in the minimum weight in Group One races in Victoria is designed to provide a more realistic limit in races where the Handicaps are generally declared only four days prior to the race being run. This will provide a larger pool of available riders for owners and trainers to select from when making riding engagements and also address the situation whereby riders attempt to quickly reduce their usual riding weight required throughout the year to get down to an unrealistic limit weight.

There has not been any change to the minimum weight for the Caulfield and Melbourne Cups where weights are declared between seven and nine weeks prior to the race being run.

For further information related to the amended weight scale in Victoria please contact the RVL Handicapping Panel directly on 03 9258 4671 or e-mail g.carpenter@racingvictoria.net.au.