

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF POWER TOOLS

issued by the

Association of Equine Dental Practitioners (Aust) Inc.

on 26 July, 2007

According to member reports and advice from the public there have been a significant number instances where veterinarians and equine dental technicians have engaged in machine filing of horses's teeth which has resulted in:

- Excessive removal of tooth material resulting in the inability of horses to masticate. Spilling wads of feed, excessive salivation and weight loss are some of the symptoms.
- Extensive bleeding from gingival tissue injury during and after the use of power tools.
- Development of neurofibromas as a result of overheating of teeth during filing.
- Fracture by rotary power tools (e.g. Powerfloat and Dremel tools) due to impact against teeth or wedging rotary burrs into proximal spaces.

Procedures

The AEDPA supports the statement by Mr Peter Borgdorff to the Department of Primary Industries Victoria, which recommends:

(start quote)

- a. Filing of the molars must not smoothen or level the arcades so as to cause improper mastication of long fibres or grain. (whole grain and long fibres in droppings)
- b. Filing of the incisors (to achieve better molar occlusion) is not permitted unless 1. incisor tooth length in one arcade is uneven or 2. extended due to 'parrot mouth' or 'sow mouth'.
- c. Feed impaction, gum disease, abnormal dental wear and dental related oral conditions are to be reported to the owner. The service provider must also explain the implications for the horse's well-being.
- d. Treatment must not exceed an acceptable level of pain.
- e. That no rotary power equipment be used unless continuously water cooled.
- f. That no power equipment be used which risks lacerating soft oral tissue.
- g. That no teeth be cut by cutting forceps as this risks fractures.
- h. Under the Law the only persons allowed to prescribe sedatives, tranquillizers, anaesthetics and analgesics are registered veterinary

surgeons.

- i. That no extensive treatment, other than routine treatment such as filing and wolf tooth removal, be rendered unless the owner is fully informed of the extent of proposed treatment, its benefits and its associated risks.
- j. That equipment is presented in a sanitized condition prior to treatment.
(end quote)

Licensed Operators

The Association of Equine Dental Practitioners (Aust) has instituted a process which provides for a governing body, the Equine Dental Practitioners Board, for which we are currently calling candidates. Those being invited include equine dentists, veterinarians, RSPCA delegates, Australian Veterinary Dental Society members and senior judicial officers. The seven member Board will govern the process of initial examination and the annual licensing of equine dental practitioners. It will also oversee annual member evaluations to ensure adherence to the Code of Practice as established by our Association. It will also have a range of sanctions available to it. Suitably experienced or qualified equine dentists and veterinarians may apply for examination and licensing. Licensed members will never be able to perform surgical procedures or administer drugs unless they are registered veterinary practitioners. Licensed members may only operate within clearly defined pain threshold guidelines.

The operation of the Board will ensure treatment integrity within a framework of collaboration with other professionals such as veterinarians who do not wish to become licensed but focus on other equine care instead. It will also channel educational processes and research grants.