

Guide to Nominators

It is in the best interests of racing that handicappers have the discretion to take into account all the considerations and deliberations that are necessary to frame weights in our highest standard races.

The Benchmark Values are as a **guide only**, and are an indication of what weight a horse may be allotted in a particular race. The eventual spread of weights is determined by the field strength, and is at the discretion of the Racing NSW Handicapping Panel.

The Racing NSW Handicapping Panel at all times may exercise discretion when framing weights for our highest standard races without compromising the principles of handicapping.

This especially applies in feature handicap races, where the Handicapper may have the scope to be flexible, taking into consideration **the objective of attempting to attract the best possible field**.

Benchmark Programming and Handicapping Benchmark Values will still provide the foundation for these races and offer a **guide to nominators**.

In NSW we handicap from the top weight downwards to the required minimum, as does Victoria, Queensland and almost every other major jurisdiction throughout Australia, throughout the world. The credentials of the top weighted horse ultimately determine the spread of the weight scale in a race. In some circumstances horses who are rated on the minimum will be racing out of their class and will seemingly be disadvantaged by the scale of weights. However, these horses are eligible and have an opportunity to nominate and compete in lower rated races. Horses weighted above the minimum are eligible only for that class of race or have proven to be competitive at that level.

Handicapping like life is not black and white.

Remember there are no right or wrong answers in Handicapping. Hindsight is a wonderful tool. Handicapping is about personal and professional judgements.

So if the Racing NSW Handicapping Panel decides to frame a set of weights for a particular race with **the objective of attempting to attract the best possible field, with the best nominated horse accepting for the race and competing, then the purpose of this widely practiced handicapping principle has been accomplished**.