

Lowering the race Benchmark at the release of weights

Lowering the race Benchmark at the release of weights – AR103 requires a minimum topweight of 59kg when weights are released. The Racing NSW handicappers may lower the Benchmark Level of each race at the time weights are declared to meet the 59kg minimum topweight as required under the rule.

When might the race Benchmark be lowered? – If the highest Benchmark horse nominated is under the Benchmark for the race.

Example - a Benchmark 70 race attracts nominations in which the top Benchmark horse is a Benchmark 68. In a Benchmark 70 race, this horse would normally be allotted 58kg. However, in this instance the Benchmark 68 horse, as the highest Benchmark runner, is allotted 59kg in accordance with the minimum topweight requirement under the rule and the race is adjusted downwards to become a Benchmark 68 Handicap.

MINIMUM TOPWEIGHT AT ACCEPTANCES

A minimum topweight at acceptances of 58.0kg is applicable to all Handicap races. Weights shall be raised at acceptance time to meet this requirement. Horses weighted at or below the minimum will be spread according to their true weight. (Black type, 2YO and Maiden races excluded).

In order to help trainers and others interpret the Benchmark system across all sectors, Racing NSW has published guidelines explaining the weighting of non-benchmark races, especially Open and Quality handicaps, general reasoning as to why horses of any grade are more likely to rise quickly or drop quickly in weight, and the scale difference in races against the average for the grade.

The handicappers scale differences are carried in the race headings when weights are declared.

For example, if a win restricted metropolitan race is not as strong as the race of true scale and needs to be scaled up to reach the minimum topweight of 59kg at the declaration of weights as required by the Australian Rule Of Racing AR103, the race heading will say **NMW Hcp (Scaled +1kg)**. This will help trainers and others to gauge the strength of the race and to understand why their horse will carry 1kg more than expected.