

## Proper Barrier Maintenance

It is a requirement of Racing Queensland's Licensed Venue Standards (LVS) that thoroughbred starting barriers receive regular maintenance. RQ recommends the annual servicing of barriers be conducted by the manufacturer, or in line with manufacturer's guidelines.

Improperly maintained barriers increase the risk of injury for horse and rider and can result in false or hampered starts, or the loss or abandonment of meetings.

At a minimum, regular maintenance should include, but not be limited to:

- **Alignment of Gates** - Close all front and rear gates to ensure when closed the gates are straight and align without any gaps. Damaged gates should be repaired and adjusted to ensure alignment.
- **Opening Functionality** - Test all gates (via starter button and manual start) to ensure gates open in unison and do not rebound, hitting horse and/or rider. Hinges and all mechanisms should be greased/lubricated. There should be no loose hinges or play in the hinge movement. Check there is no damage or excessive play in operating rods and latches. Check the handle mechanisms on each of the rear gates work freely and will enable manual release.
- **Wear of Springs and Suction Cups** - The condition of springs and suction cups should be checked and replaced if worn or perished. Do not leave gates engaged/closed, as this can stretch the springs, reducing their effective life. If gates do not open in unison, check spring tension and that hinges are not over-tightened. If gates rebound on opening, replace suction cups.
- **Check Electrical Systems** - The main batteries must be kept charged and regularly replaced. The batteries in handheld remotes must also be replaced regularly. Circuit breakers and fuses should be inspected and all electrical leads and connections checked for damage or wear. All junction boxes and enclosed electrical circuits should have covers in place to avoid exposure to the elements. Check the Starter's Signal (Red Light) and False Start systems are operational.
- **Tyres** - Check for wear, cracks and deterioration of tyres. Ensure tyres are inflated to the correct pressure and there are no leaks. Check wheel nuts are secure.
- **Steering and Hydraulics** - Check all hydraulic hoses and connections and replace if signs of wear and deterioration is detected. Check rams and top-up hydraulic fluid levels. Grease all tow points, tie rod ends, hubs and bearings.
- **Padding** – Check the barriers have a full compliment of padding on all gates, dividers, uprights and overhead bars. Any ripped or torn padding should be repaired or replaced.

- **Structural Integrity** – Check all frame bolts and tighten if necessary. Check the integrity of welds and for the presence of structural rust/corrosion. Conduct regular corrosion control and treatment of affected metal.

**Barriers should open in unison.**



**Below image is from video footage midway through the opening sequence. Note that not all gates are opening in unison.**



**Old, persished suction cups should be replaced. (Note: applying grease is NOT an appropriate resolution for perished suction cups, replace regularly).**



**Damaged gates should be straightened and adjusted to ensure they fully close, the following are examples of gates that are not correctly aligned.**







**Ripped and torn padding must be repaired:**



**Regular Corrosion Control will greatly extend the life of barriers:**

