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Mr. Ed Martin
President
Association of Racing Commissioners, International
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Ed:

Based upon the testimony of Dr. Tobin at the RCI Model Rules meeting in Tampa, the RMTC Scientific Advisory Committee believes that it is important to clarify some of the points that were raised regarding the proposed threshold for gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA).

First and foremost, Dr. Tobin testified that there is no published paper outlining the methodology that was used by the RMTC laboratories which makes it impossible for RCI's Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) to compare the RMTC data to that referenced in Dr. Maylin's ICRAV paper on GABA. As noted in the document that was provided to RCI prior to the meeting, there is a published paper on GABA from Dr. Heather Knych which outlines the methodology used to determine the GABA concentrations in the RMTC's work.

Additionally, the issue was raised that the raw data we used to calculate our threshold was not provided to RCI. We provided a histogram of the data, information regarding the mean and standard deviation for the raw data as well as information regarding the values obtained when the data was log transformed. We modelled that data format to that provided in Dr. Maylin's ICRAV paper. We'd like to point out that there is no raw data available to the racing commissions in Dr. Maylin's paper. The RMTC's submission when combined with Dr. Knych's original peer-reviewed research – which was referenced for RCI in RMTC's documentation – actually provides sufficient information upon which the RCI SAG can make a determination.

Moreover, the ICRAV publication is not readily accessible as are most peer-reviewed on-line research journals. Because of this, it will not be available to general racing commissions. In contrast, Dr. Knych's paper is available on-line and can be obtained for free by any veterinarian with an AAEP membership or for a small reprint fee. Additionally, the RMTC has made their submissions on both GABA and cobalt available to any racing commission that has requested such information.

The RMTC Scientific Advisory Committee stands behind its recommendation of 110 parts per billion (ppb or ng/mL) of GABA in plasma or serum. Please feel free to contact us if you have any additional questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Scott Hay, DVM
RMTC SAC co-chair

Scott Stanley, PhD
RMTC SAC co-chair

Dionne Benson, DVM
RMTC Executive Director

cc: RMTC Executive Committee