

Remote Hearings

The Victorian Racing Tribunal (Tribunal) will conduct hearings remotely until further notice.

This document outlines the remote hearing process and how the changes will affect you.

The Registrar will notify parties regarding how you will attend and explain what you need to do to prepare.

The technology used will depend on the requirements of a case, such as its length, complexity, and the number of parties.

Self-represented parties

This section applies if you do not have somebody representing you at the hearing of your case or appeal. If, at any stage, you intend to be represented, you must notify the Registrar of the name and contact details of your representative.

The Registrar will send a hearing notice via email advising the date and time of your telephone hearing. As stipulated in the hearing notice, you will be required to advise the Registrar with your preferred telephone number for contact on the day of your hearing.

It is important that you are setup in a quiet area where there is adequate phone reception and there are no distractions for the duration of your hearing.

Like physical hearings, telephone hearings have rules and hearing etiquette to follow:

- Turn off or eliminate background noise and distractions. Use headphones if possible.
- All VRT hearings, including telephone hearings, are recorded by the Registrar.
- It is important you email any documents or evidence you want to rely on in your hearing to the Registrar and all other parties well before your hearing.
- Mute your phone or microphone if not speaking to avoid feedback or noise.
- To avoid disruption, parties and/or their legal representatives should not be in the same room if they intend to use separate devices to join their telephone hearing as this can create feedback and/or sound distortion.

Please note, there may be times when a VRT member may arrange for you to speak with the other parties before (and sometimes during) your telephone hearing.

If you fail to attend your hearing remotely, the Tribunal may make a decision in your absence.

Represented parties

This section applies if you are a lawyer, steward or advocate representing a party at the hearing of a case or an appeal.

Represented parties will have the option of a telephone hearing or a hearing by way of written submissions.

The telephone hearing process for represented parties is as stated above in the 'Self-represented parties' section.

Requests for hearings by written submission will be considered where there is agreement to that process by all parties. The process is as follows:

- **where a hearing date has been set**, the stewards for the relevant racing code must contact the Registrar no less than one week prior to the hearing date with the request.
- **where no hearing date has been set**, the stewards for the relevant racing code should contact the Registrar to advise of the request for the hearing to be held by written submission.
- in both cases the Registrar will email all parties seeking confirmation of agreement to the request.
- the Chairperson will consider the request for a hearing by written submissions.
- the Registrar will notify the parties of the Chairperson's decision and the dates by which submissions must be filed.

Written submissions to assist the conduct of remotely held hearings

This section should be read by all parties to a hearing.

While written submissions are **not compulsory**, this Tribunal may require such submissions to be made before the hearing.

Submissions can range from brief verbal statements to detailed written submissions supported by expert evidence. Each person must make a decision on the nature and extent of their own submissions.

A written submission assists you to organise the case which you wish to present to the Tribunal. Reading from your written submission is simple, stress free, and effective. A person making a submission will not ordinarily be cross examined by other parties, although we may ask questions of you.

Written submissions are also helpful to the Tribunal, particularly when we may be making and writing a decision after the hearing.

Written submissions should be emailed to VRT@ecodev.vic.gov.au within the timeframe outlined in your notice of hearing.

Limited in-person hearings

In some circumstances, we may allow in person hearings.

If your preference is for your hearing to be conducted in person, please advise the Registrar as soon as possible. A directions hearing may be required via telephone to confirm that it is necessary for your hearing to be conducted in person.

If your hearing is to be conducted in person, the Registrar will advise you and the other parties of the date, time and location.

Please contact the Registrar, Mark Howard, on 0436 524 583 or the Assistant Registrar, Kathleen Scully on 0427 371 858, if you have any questions.