

PBR ANIMAL WELFARE

Throughout its 28-year history, Professional Bull Riders (PBR) worldwide has acknowledged that there are two great athletes in each 8-second ride – the rider and the bull. PBR is fully committed to ensuring the health, safety, welfare and respect of the animal athletes in the sport.

With animal welfare a top priority at all times, PBR operates under a zero tolerance policy for any mistreatment of an animal associated with the PBR.

PBR bulls, who are genetically bred to buck, receive the very best care and treatment throughout their lives – which extends four to five times longer than bulls not fortunate enough to be involved in the sport.

PBR ANIMAL SAFETY AND WELFARE MEASURES

PBR has proactively initiated and implemented a number of measures designed to foster and support the welfare of our animal athletes.

1. A redesign of the traditional rodeo bucking chutes to improve animal and rider safety in the chute. PBR's design and subsequent implementation drastically reduced the most common form of animal injury – leg injuries.
2. A redesign of the traditional rodeo holding yards and lead up alleys. This further mitigated the risk of bull injuries.

PBR Australia works closely with fully accredited Stock Contractors in relation to bull transportation to and from events. At all times, stock contractors operate well within the Federal Government's Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines – Land Transport of Livestock.

PBR Australia Guidelines include but are not limited to -

- i. Bulls travel in trucks/trailers with air bag suspension; shavings (or like material) and or rubber matting for greater bull comfort and to reduce the risk of injury during transportation.
- ii. Bulls travel no longer than 10 hours and then are given a break to rehydrate, eat and rest.
- iii. Bulls are housed at local Council cattle facilities or private properties with proper yard size and space per bull in each local market that an event is held, and then transported to and from the event venue on the day of competition.
- iv. There are on average 55 bulls at a one-day event and 75 bulls on average at a two-day event. A bull only bucks one time per competition or no more than two times at a two-day event competition.

PBR Australia consults with the Victorian State Government – Animal Welfare Legislation Consultative Committee to proactively address animal welfare reforms.



PBR Australia engages and consults with leading, experienced large animal veterinarians to ensure PBRA Animal Welfare practices are maintained at all times in addition to being periodically reviewed. A large animal veterinarian is on site at all events to inspect bulls prior to and at the completion of the event.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Officers are also welcome at PBRA events to inspect bulls and observe PBRA animal handling practices.

CARE OF THE PBR ANIMAL ATHLETE

The value of bulls to the stock contractors who own and breed them as well as to PBR, ensures that every effort and safeguard is in place to protect the bulls from any mistreatment or situation that would adversely affect their quality of life, ability to compete or their future as breeding bulls.

Like humans, PBR Bucking bulls come in an array of shapes, sizes and colours; and just like humans have their own individual personalities and talents. A Stock Contractor spends a great deal of time with each one of his/her bulls, many of which the stock contractor has bred and raised from birth; these extraordinary bovine athletes are considered members of the family.

Bulls receive 5-8 kilograms of a mixed grain blend per day. Blends will vary depending on the bull's needs and the individual stock contractor. Animal nutritionists are engaged by some stock contractors to determine bulls' specific dietary requirements.

Bulls will also receive up to 10 kilograms per day of good quality hay whilst traveling to and from an event. At home, bulls graze in large pasture improved paddocks.

Regular worming supplementary vitamins and, hoof and horn trims are also a part of a bull's health program. Ancillary treatments to help a bull keep in top shape and feeling great include -

- i. PEMF Therapy - Pulsed Electromagnetic Field Therapy that assists in circulation and muscle repair.
- ii. Equissage - Massage treatment.



BUCKING BULLS Q&A

Unfortunately, there is significant misinformation regarding the handling and treatment of the animal athletes competing in professional bull riding. Following are frequently asked questions and the facts regarding the welfare of PBR bulls and the equipment used.

Q: Can any bull compete in a PBR event?

A: That's like asking if any human can compete in the Olympics. Yes...if they're genetically blessed and have the right training. It's the same with bulls - not every bull can compete in PBR. Bulls fortunate to make it to the PBR are the highest calibre bucking bulls in the business, developed through sophisticated breeding programs that have been fine-tuning the genetics over many years to produce a great bucking bull. Just as thoroughbred racehorses are carefully bred to run fast, PBR bucking bulls are genetically disposed to jump, kick and spin with power and grace.

Q: What makes a bull buck?

A: The success of bucking bull breeding programs around the world has proven that genetics are the most prevalent factor in determining a bull's ability and desire to buck. The American Bucking Bull is now recognized as a breed of cattle; the American Bucking Bull Incorporated (ABBI) database has DNA registered animals across the world, including Australia, with the number increasing annually.

No one can *make* a bull buck. Contrary to the misinformation circulated, it has nothing to do with a rope pulling on the bull's testicles, which are not touched in any way. In fact, if this were the case a bull simply would not buck; further, bulls are not provoked or agitated in any way to make them buck; basically, if a bull does not want to buck, he will not.

Q: What is a flank strap? Does it harm a bull?

A: A flank strap is a soft cotton rope that is positioned around the bull's flank, in front of their hips encouraging the bull to kick; it does not in any way hurt him. The bull will kick out his hind legs at the height of his bucking action in an effort to dislodge the flank strap (think of a kitten with a ribbon loosely tied around its paw, trying to shoo it away). The flank strap never comes into contact with the bull's testicles.

Q: What is a bull rope?

A: The bull rope is what the rider hangs onto throughout the ride. It is wrapped around the chest of the bull directly behind the animal's front legs. At the bottom of the rope hangs a smooth metal bell designed to give the rope some weight, so it will fall off as soon as the rider dismounts or bucks off.

Q: Why do bull riders wear spurs?

A: The spurs help a rider maintain his balance by giving him added grip with his feet. The spurs, which are inspected prior to each event, have dull, loosely locked PBR approved rowels (the wheel-like part of the spur that comes into contact with the bull). The rowels do not scratch or cut a bull's hide, which is seven times thicker than human skin.



Q: What does the average bull weigh?

A: The average PBR bucking bull weighs in at 700 – 900 kilograms but can weigh as much as 1000 – 1200 kilograms.

Q: What is the average PBR bull worth?

A: The monetary value of a bucking bull depends greatly upon his proven performance in the arena. However, most PBR bulls are worth a minimum of \$5,000 with many priced in the tens of thousands of dollars. Bulls are ranked just like the riders: When a bull consistently receives high bull scores, his ranking increases. The higher the ranking in areas of bull scores, buck off times and average qualified rider scores, the higher the price tag.

Q: What is the lifespan of a bucking bull?

A: Bucking bulls live well into their teens, which is considered geriatric for any breed of bull. Though a bucking bull may often be in his prime at 5-6 years of age; many bulls continue to compete well past the age of 10.

Q: Are any Animal Welfare checks undertaken at PBR events?

A: A number of Animal Welfare checks are in place at PBR events. In addition to a mandatory Veterinarian on site, checks include the following –

- i. A Livestock Supervisor is on site when bulls first arrive at the venue. The Livestock Supervisor's role includes assisting and inspecting all bulls as they are unloaded and ensuring bulls are settled into their allocated pens prior to the event.
- ii. The Judges inspect each bull individually prior to the event to ensure that they are tipped and are in healthy, sound condition.
- iii. The judges inspect competition equipment (rider and stock contractors) that comes into contact with the bull – bull ropes, spurs and flanks.
- iv. PBR maintains contact with stock contractors in regard to bull transport schedules which includes ensuring all bulls arrive home safely post event.

Q: How many kilometres do bulls travel on the PBR circuit?

A: The PBR has an extensive network of accredited stock contractors located in all parts of Australia. Therefore, no matter what city or town the PBR visits, the best bulls are supplied for the event. The bulls will often arrive the night prior to an event to ensure that the bulls are well rested, fed and hydrated before competing.

Q: Is there a Veterinarian on site at PBR events?

A: Yes, a Veterinarian must be on site at all times throughout the competition. The Veterinarian inspects all bulls prior to competition. Throughout the event, he/she is located closely to the bucking chutes and has a clear view of the bucking chutes and front of the arena. At the completion of the event, the veterinarian then inspects all bulls.

