



# Queensland Racing Review Recommendation Report

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## Foreword

Dear Premier, Minister and colleagues,

It is with pleasure that, along with the Queensland Racing Review Steering Committee, we are able to present the Final Report.

I acknowledge the support and values of the Crisafulli Government in its handling of the Review, in particular Queensland Premier, The Honourable Mr David Crisafulli, and the Minister for Sport, Racing, Olympics and Paralympics, The Honourable Mr Tim Mander.

Upon assuming the role of Review Chair, I was instructed the role would operate independently and that was the case throughout the entire period. Where resources were required, they were provided based on a sound and logical business case in a timely and effective manner.

I must also acknowledge the assistance provided by Director-General, Department of Sport, Racing, Olympics and Paralympics, Mr Andrew Hopper and his team, whom ensured access and support was provided alongside the Director General for Primary Industries, Mr Graeme Bolton and his team.

This extended to Racing Queensland and Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, whom throughout their organisations were available to provide requested information and meetings where required for an effective Review process.

The Review in itself was framed on two overarching principles of “Governance and Integrity”. This steered the Review Team, to act at the highest professional standards and ensured as we collated Recommendations, that they were both clear and accurate representations.

Adding to the Review were the “Five Pillars” of Racing which I devised a number of years ago being ... Welfare, Social, Financial, Wagering and Ownership.

These “Pillars” ensured we were able to have meaningful and transparent conversations with stakeholders and industry participants, through the over 1200 written Submissions and the many in person meetings across Queensland and beyond.

The Review, was able to work thoughtfully due to this “on-the-ground” approach whereby we travelled the State to meet with as many people as possible. This ensured we heard directly from the broadest cross section of the community and created a high level of engagement and multiple touch points.

In total we visited 73 race tracks, whilst as Chair and with my Code Leads, we held in excess of 300 face to face meetings with a broad variety of interested parties across Queensland and Australia.

These meetings collected many diverse views and ideas from those that work in the industry, to those whom simply enjoy the industry, to those whom have opposing views. Ensuring the best possible Review Recommendations, it was our belief, a cross-section participation of the community was required.

To all those people we met, at Racetracks, at Association Meetings, Offices and sometimes even in homes, your engagement and honest approach was defining for this Review. The lack of self-interest, as discussions always stayed on an “Industry First” trajectory, is a credit to all involved in Queensland Racing.

The Recommendations in this Review Report, have taken a range of information and analysis to ensure they are well researched, sustainable for the future of racing and those that work in it, provide clear and funded paths for welfare for horses and greyhounds and just as importantly, for all the people whom care for them today and into the future.

The Recommendations are carefully crafted via researched benchmarking and mesh together to create a cohesive approach to the opportunities of the future.

There are always challenges, however with a collegiate approach as proven in the engagement to this Review, the Queensland industry has a direction towards growth and sustainability.

Finally, to the Review Team, Kym Daly (Thoroughbred Lead), Lyn Keep (Greyhound Lead) and Scott Neaves (Harness Lead) and the BDO Support team led by Dave Edwards and Bob Andersen, your dedication and “can do”

approach ensured we stayed on track, met and heard from as many people as able across the State and industry, whilst working in a harmonious and thought provoking environment.

It's a credit to this team brought together by the Crisafulli Government, to engage with their individual Codes and then come together and deliver the Recommendations which included the future of how Racing is administered.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead this important and required Queensland Racing Review to drive the future of racing across all three codes.

Best wishes

Matthew McGrath

Chair

Queensland Racing Review

## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning / Description
<b>Country Racing</b>	A level of racing below Metropolitan and Provincial classifications. In Thoroughbred racing, this can also include non-TAB events. Includes all clubs that race less than 9 times. Formally classified as Tier 4
<b>Non-TAB Meeting</b>	A race meeting for which the TAB does not, or is not expected to, offer wagering services.
<b>Provincial Racing</b>	A tier of racing or race meetings below Metropolitan level, typically held in large regional centres, as defined by Racing Queensland. Formally classified as Tier 2.
<b>Rural Racing</b>	All Clubs that race once a year. Formally classified as Tier 5
<b>Regional Racing</b>	All non-Metropolitan Clubs that race more than 10 times per year. Formally classified as Tier 3
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>AML</b>	Anti-Money Laundering
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AICD</b>	Australian Institute of Company Directors
<b>BBL</b>	Big Bash League
<b>BHA</b>	British Horseracing Authority
<b>CPA</b>	Chartered Practising Accountant
<b>COS</b>	Commissioner of Stewards
<b>CRICOS</b>	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Student
<b>CTF</b>	Counter-Terrorism Financing
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>EBITDA</b>	Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization
<b>EGM</b>	Extraordinary General Meeting
<b>Race Field Fees</b>	Fees charged by Racing Queensland for the use of official race field information in wagering activities.
<b>FTE</b>	Full-Time Equivalent
<b>GCTC</b>	Gold Coast Turf Club
<b>GAP</b>	Greyhound Adoption Program
<b>GBGB</b>	Greyhound Board of Great Britain
<b>GRP</b>	Greyhound Retirement Programme
<b>GWIC</b>	Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission
<b>HKJC</b>	Hong Kong Jockey Club
<b>HKJCC</b>	Hong Kong Jockey Club College
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>JRF</b>	Jockey Retirement Fund
<b>Prize money</b>	Monetary awards distributed to owners, trainers, jockeys, or drivers when their animal wins or places in a race.
<b>NGRC</b>	National Greyhound Racing Club
<b>OTT</b>	Off the Track
<b>POCT</b>	Point of Consumption Tax
<b>QGOLD</b>	Queensland Greyhound racing breeding scheme

<b>QBRED</b>	Queensland harness racing breeding scheme
<b>QRIC</b>	Queensland Racing Integrity Commission
<b>QTIS</b>	Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme
<b>RAP</b>	Racing Appeals Panel
<b>RIF</b>	Racing Infrastructure Fund
<b>RNSW</b>	Racing New South Wales
<b>RQ</b>	Racing Queensland
<b>RQB</b>	Racing Queensland Board
<b>RTTC</b>	Racing Talent Training Centre
<b>Code</b>	Refers to the type of racing: Thoroughbred, Harness, or Greyhound.
<b>RTO</b>	Registered Training Organisation
<b>RoR</b>	Retraining of Racehorses
<b>RDAQ</b>	Riding for the Disabled Association Queensland
<b>RGRC</b>	Rockhampton Greyhound Racing Club
<b>RJC</b>	Rockhampton Jockey Club
<b>SEQ</b>	Southeast Queensland
<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>Metropolitan Racing</b>	The highest tier of racing or race meetings, as designated by Racing Queensland. Formally classified as Tier 1.
<b>Group 1, 2 and 3</b>	Tiers used to classify races based on quality and prize money, with Group 1 representing the highest standard.
<b>TAB</b>	Totalisator Agency Board
<b>Trotting or Trot</b>	Used to describe the particular style of harness racing in reference to the horses' gait
<b>WSP</b>	Wagering Service Provider

## 1 Executive Summary

The recommendations of the Queensland Racing Review 2025 were developed through close consultation with a range of National and State-based stakeholders. The Recommendations were developed in line with the critical themes and the pillars of racing identified in the Review’s scope:

- Key Principles: Governance and Integrity
- Pillar 1: Welfare
- Pillar 2: Social
- Pillar 3: Financial
- Pillar 4: Wagering
- Pillar 5: Ownership.

**Table 1: Summary of Review Pillars/Themes**

Pillars/ Themes	Problem Statements	Identified Benefits
<p><b>Key Principles: Governance and Integrity</b></p>	<p><b>Governance Capability:</b> The governance arrangements of local clubs, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and Racing Queensland don’t adequately define responsibilities or set adequate rules around board composition and skills, resulting in weak representation and ineffective governance that reduces organisational effectiveness, limits positive change, and undermines public confidence in the industry.</p> <p><b>Oversight of Integrity Standards:</b> Integrity standards and frameworks are inconsistently applied due to the increased bureaucracy, contributing to lapses in accountability and reduced industry confidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved Organisational Effectiveness Through Clearly Defined Responsibilities and Board Compositions</li> <li>• Strengthening Integrity Safeguards and Coordination</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pillar 1: Welfare</b></p>	<p><b>Welfare Governance:</b> Ineffective regulatory oversight and inconsistent enforcement of animal welfare standards increase the risk of injury, neglect and poor post-racing outcomes for active and retired racehorses.</p> <p><b>Greyhound Welfare:</b> Industry practises which are contrary to greyhound welfare not only harm racing and retired racing dogs but also threaten the industry’s social licence to operate.</p> <p><b>Public Engagement with Welfare Efforts:</b> Welfare transparency and communication systems that remain underdeveloped, limit public confidence in the industry’s animal care credentials in an era of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened Welfare Governance and Animal Care</li> <li>• Improved Greyhound Welfare and Public Confidence</li> <li>• Enhanced Industry Engagement and Transparency</li> </ul>

	<p>increasing public engagement and concern.</p>	
<p><b>Pillar 2: Social</b></p>	<p><b>Regional Racing Representation:</b> The complexities of the regional racing context are not fully understood by the industry more broadly, undermining long-term investment and planning and resulting in a failure to optimise social and economic benefits to regional communities.</p> <p><b>Labour Force Development:</b> Many roles in the racing industry are not viewed as attractive careers, resulting in a substantial labour force shortage.</p> <p><b>Industry Engagement:</b> Existing systems for raising public awareness of racing activities are outdated, failing to engage a broad cross-section of potential race-day attendees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger Regional Participation and Economic Development</li> <li>• Sustainable Workforce and Volunteer Capacity</li> <li>• Engaging future generations of racegoers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pillar 3: Financial</b></p>	<p><b>Regional Infrastructure:</b> Regional clubs experience difficulties accessing funding for infrastructure upgrades to meet minimum standards, negatively impacting their ability to operate.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure Funding Vehicles:</b> Funding mechanisms to facilitate infrastructure investment do not have sufficiently clear funding guidelines and management systems, resulting in funding decisions which fail to maximise the benefits to industry.</p> <p><b>Operational and Financial Transparency:</b> Weak financial oversight and inconsistent reporting practises reduce accountability and increase the risk of financial mismanagement.</p> <p><b>Asset Utilisation:</b> Underutilised racing assets limit the realisation of economic and social value for communities from use of the racing infrastructure for purposes other than race days.</p> <p><b>Racecourse Ownership:</b> The racing industry lacks a coordinated approach to racecourse ownership, leasing arrangements and asset classification, limiting its ability to plan, invest and manage infrastructure for long-term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved Access to Regional Infrastructure Funding</li> <li>• Stronger and More Transparent Infrastructure Funding Mechanisms</li> <li>• Improved Operational and Financial Transparency</li> <li>• More Strategic and Efficient Asset Utilisation</li> <li>• Improved Racecourse Ownership and Planning</li> </ul>

	sustainability and community benefit.	
<b>Pillar 4: Wagering</b>	<p><b>Structural Weaknesses in Queensland’s Wagering Ecosystem:</b> Queensland’s wagering systems are no longer fit-for-purpose, reducing the industry’s ability to compete for turnover in an increasingly digital, data-driven and consumer-focused environment.</p> <p><b>Fiscal Pressures Weakening Wagering Revenue Base:</b> Queensland’s Tax Policy has made its wagering product commercially uncompetitive, driving sharper turnover declines and undermining industry revenue sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modernising Queensland’s Wagering Systems</li> <li>• Stabilising and Growing Industry Revenue</li> </ul>
<b>Pillar 5: Ownership</b>	<p><b>Operational Costs:</b> Rising operational costs, combined with limited support and an inequitable distribution of prize money among the field, are making racehorse ownership increasingly financially unsustainable.</p> <p><b>Racing Operations Impacting Ownership Experience:</b> The ownership experience, particularly in regional Queensland, is negatively affected by substandard race clubs’ hospitality and VIP offerings for owners and prize money distribution, negatively affecting the attraction of horse and greyhound ownership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved Financial Sustainability for Owners</li> <li>• Broader and More Equitable Ownership Participation</li> </ul>

The problems and opportunities relating to each of the key principles and pillars are detailed in Chapters 2 – 7. The recommendations which follow aim to address these problems and opportunities to ensure the long-term sustainability of the racing industry in Queensland.

The recommendations of the Queensland Racing Review 2025 have been outlined in the following order:

- General Racing Industry Recommendations
- Recommendations for Thoroughbred Racing
- Recommendations for Harness Racing
- Recommendations for Greyhound Racing.

A more detailed account of the recommendations, with relevant justification and explanation, has been provided in Appendix A – D. The SEQ Investment Plan is provided in Appendix E. A complete list of recommendations and how they are interrelated has been provided in Appendix F.

Within each category, recommendations are grouped around common themes that emerged during the Review. Some focus on governance and integrity settings, others on wagering, taxation and revenue streams, while many deal with infrastructure, club management and workforce capability. Welfare, traceability and community engagement reforms also feature prominently. This approach ensures that recommendations are not seen as isolated actions, but as a coordinated approach that align to key principles and respond directly to the challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose

The Queensland Racing Review 2025 ('the Review') is the most comprehensive review of Queensland's racing industry in the State's history and considers the needs of all three racing codes (Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhound), as well as the commercial and integrity functions administered by Racing Queensland (RQ) and Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC). This report presents the Queensland Racing Review's Final Recommendations ("the Report") to position the industry for long-term success. It reflects extensive consultation with industry participants, strategic stakeholders and the broader public.

Previous reviews have focused narrowly on specific issues such as integrity, animal welfare or governance. However, the Review has comprehensively examined all aspects of racing in Queensland to identify and recommend the steps necessary to:

- Ensure the financial sustainability and long-term viability of all racing codes
- Strengthen the integrity of Queensland's racing industry
- Work to deliver modern and fit for purpose racing infrastructure in every part of the State
- Safeguard the ongoing viability and success of country racing
- Foster a collaborative relationship among stakeholders to ensure a commitment to the care and welfare of racing animals is a priority.

### 2.2 Background

The Queensland Government commissioned the Review as a part of its commitment to strengthening the racing industry, ensuring the long-term viability of all racing codes in venues throughout the State, while maintaining high animal welfare standards.

The Review's key focus areas, as per the terms of reference, are as follows:

- Making sure all racing codes are financially sustainable
- Improving integrity and animal welfare standards
- Upgrading infrastructure to meet current and future needs
- Supporting the success of country racing events
- Encouraging better collaboration across the industry.

#### 2.2.1 Review Team

Matthew McGrath was selected as the Independent Committee Chair of the Queensland Racing Review. Mr McGrath is an experienced businessman, former Chairman of the Australian Turf Club and a current board member of the Cronulla Sharks.

Mr McGrath was supported by a code lead for each racing code, individuals with significant experience in and knowledge of their respective code. Together the Lead Review and Code Leads constituted the Queensland Racing Review Steering Committee. The Steering Committee's main objective was to provide expert advice and guidance on those matters covered by the Review relating to the three codes of racing.

The Steering Committee's membership is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2: Steering Committee Membership**

Member	Role
Matthew McGrath	Review Lead

Member	Role
Kym Daly	Thoroughbred Code Lead
Lynette Keep	Greyhound Code Lead
Scott Neaves	Harness Code Lead

The Independent Committee Chair and the Steering Committee were supported by the Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games (“the Department”) and the Department of Primary Industries.

## 2.2.2 Queensland Racing Review Terms of Reference

The Review’s Terms of Reference were released in April 2025 and defined the scope, focus and guiding principles of the Review, identifying six strategic focus areas:

1. Legislative and Governance Arrangements
2. Financial Sustainability
3. Integrity
4. Infrastructure
5. Country Racing
6. Animal Welfare.<sup>1</sup>

In considering each of these focus areas, the Review:

- Conducted a thorough assessment of the current operations within Queensland
- Identified systemic challenges or inefficiencies that are hindering the efficient functioning of the industry
- Provided actionable, pragmatic recommendations, including strategies to optimise investment and deliver a sustainable, world-class industry with long-term success across each focus area.

The Terms of Reference recognised that sustainability in the racing industry refers to matters beyond just economic factors. Instead, it encompasses the industry’s integral role in Queensland’s social fabric, particularly in rural and regional areas, as well as the need to prioritise the commitment to the care and welfare of racing animals.

## 2.2.3 Previous Industry Reforms and Reviews

The Review’s holistic evaluation of Queensland’s racing industry varies from previous reviews which considered specific issues facing the industry. A brief timeline of the notable industry events and reviews which have occurred since the formation of RQ in 2010 is provided in Table 3.

**Table 3: Previous Reforms and Inquiries Relevant to Queensland’s Racing Industry**

Year	Event	Description
2010	Racing Industry Amalgamation	The Queensland Government passed the <i>Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2010</i> to amalgamate the administrative bodies of Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhound racing into a single entity, Racing Queensland Limited. This reform aimed to streamline governance and unlock capital investment for the industry.
2015	MacSporran Report	The Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in Queensland was established with the mandate to investigate the prevalence of live baiting and assess the effectiveness of RQ and the

<sup>1</sup> Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games, *Queensland Racing Review 2025 Terms of Reference*, [https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/2038973/queensland-racing-review-2025-terms-of-reference.pdf](https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/2038973/queensland-racing-review-2025-terms-of-reference.pdf).

		<p>former Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board (QACRIB) in regulating animal welfare and integrity.</p> <p>The Commission was led by Alan MacSporran QC, who delivered his report in June 2015.</p>
<b>2019/20</b>	Martin Inquiry into Retired Racehorses	<p>The Martin Inquiry (2019–2020) was a major investigation commissioned by the Queensland Government to examine the welfare of horses after their racing careers ended. Chaired by Terry Martin SC, the Martin Inquiry’s mandate included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examining how Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses were managed before and after retirement</li> <li>• Assessing compliance with animal welfare standards</li> <li>• Recommending improvements to end-of-life care and whole-of-life traceability.</li> </ul>

## 2.2.4 Industry Governance

As the control body for thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing, RQ is responsible for the commercial operation and viability of the industry. The QRIC is responsible for regulating the integrity of the racing industry and the welfare of racing animals.

The Department for Sport, Racing, Olympic and Paralympic Games is responsible for overseeing legislation enabling the operation and governance of the racing industry via the *Racing Act 2002* and the *Racing Regulation 2023* (‘the Racing Legislation’).<sup>2</sup> The Department of Primary Industries is responsible for oversight of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* and the *Racing Integrity Regulation 2016* (‘the Racing Integrity Legislation’).<sup>3</sup>

The Racing Legislation establishes RQ, and the Racing Integrity Legislation establishes the Commission and the RAP.

## 2.3 Queensland Racing Review Methodology

### 2.3.1 Stakeholder Engagement

The Review’s engagement process aligns with the Terms of Reference and the Minister’s letter of appointment.<sup>4</sup> Stakeholder engagement sought to achieve three core objectives:

1. Capturing a diverse range of views across regions and codes
2. Validating the lived experiences of participants and reflecting operational realities
3. Generating sector-wide buy-in for reform through early and consistent engagement.

The process for stakeholder consultation was:

- **Public submission process:** The Department developed and published a discussion paper, ‘On Track: Ensuring a sustainable and vibrant future for Queensland’s racing sector’, which detailed key industry metrics and the scope of the Review and invited industry and the public more broadly to make submissions to the review. The launch of this paper coincided with the opening of the Review for public comment.
- **Targeted stakeholder meetings:** Targeted stakeholder meetings were conducted by the Racing Review Chair and Code Leads between March and July 2025, in two tranches:
  - Initial meetings without a fixed agenda, largely led by the stakeholder and covering topics of interest to them

<sup>2</sup> *Racing Act 2002* (QLD), *Racing Regulation 2023* (QLD).

<sup>3</sup> *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (QLD), *Racing Integrity Regulation 2016* (QLD).

<sup>4</sup> See generally Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games, *Queensland Racing Review 2025 Terms of Reference*, [https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/2038973/queensland-racing-review-2025-terms-of-reference.pdf](https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/2038973/queensland-racing-review-2025-terms-of-reference.pdf); Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games, *On Track: Ensuring a sustainable and vibrant future for Queensland’s racing sector (Minister’s Foreword)*, [https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/2001978/25969-on-track-discussion-paper-dsropq-v9-web.pdf](https://www.sport.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2001978/25969-on-track-discussion-paper-dsropq-v9-web.pdf).

- A follow up round of meetings as the review recommendations were beginning to take shape to provide feedback around review findings.

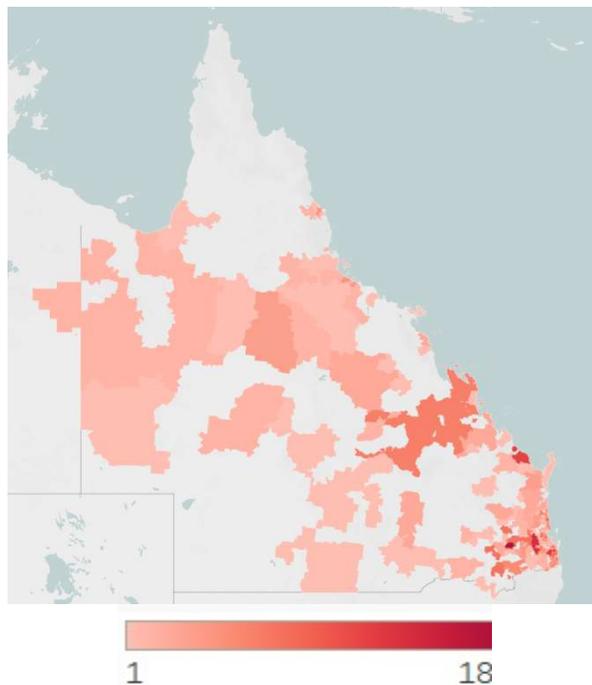
### 2.3.1.1 Public submissions

The public discussion paper was released in March 2025, inviting contributions from stakeholders on any issue relevant to the racing industry.

To guide and structure responses, the paper included a series of “Questions to Consider,” which aligned with the Review’s overarching pillars and themes. The public consultation period ran from March to April 2025, with stakeholders invited to provide feedback through two principal channels:

1. **Survey Responses:** A structured survey designed around the “Questions to Consider” enabled the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. This helped to identify patterns of concern and areas of consensus across the industry
2. **Email Submissions:** An opportunity for stakeholders to make more detailed and thematic contributions through written submissions. While submissions were open-ended, they were encouraged to be framed against the Review’s key focus areas.

**Figure 1: Survey Response Postcode Data**

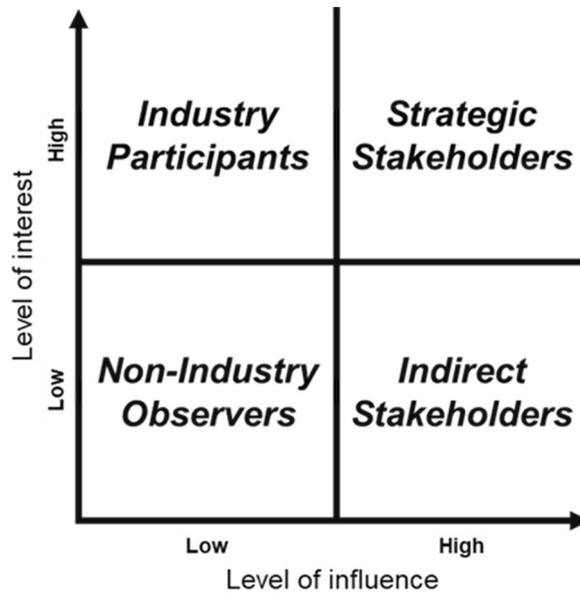


Following overwhelming interest in the Review, over 1,200 survey responses and submissions were received over a five-week period between March and April 2025. Demonstrated in Figure 1, respondents were dispersed geographically. This ensured that the views of stakeholders with an interest in country racing and metropolitan racing were both considered as a part of the Review.

### 2.3.1.2 Targeted Stakeholder Engagement

The Review evaluated the interest and influence of stakeholders using an interest/influence scoring matrix to ensure that feedback was appropriately interpreted (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Interest/Influence Stakeholder Scoring Matrix**



Stakeholders were classified into groups based on this evaluation and engaged accordingly (Table 4).

**Table 4: Stakeholder Groups and Engagement Approach**

Stakeholder Group	Description	Engagement
<b>Strategic Stakeholders</b>	Strategic Stakeholders were highly interested in Queensland’s racing industry and held significant influence over racing operations, funding and/or future developments. This included RQ, QRIC, peak industry bodies and principal clubs. This stakeholder group provided in-depth feedback on all five of the racing pillars and demonstrated a clear understanding of the contribution of each pillar towards a sustainable racing industry in Queensland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 in-person engagements</li> <li>• Group engagements at racing clubs</li> </ul>
<b>Indirect Stakeholders</b>	Indirect Stakeholders demonstrated low levels of interest in the industry but maintained substantial influence. Engagement with indirect stakeholders aimed to take them “on the journey” to promote a positive response to review findings. Indirect stakeholders included the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Treasury, Office of Racing and other regulatory bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 in-person engagements</li> <li>• Governance forums</li> </ul>
<b>Industry Participants</b>	Industry Participants were highly interested in the industry but had limited influence. This stakeholder group formed the majority of discussion paper respondents and provided valuable feedback on the industry’s operations from an on-the-ground perspective (trainers, jockeys, breeders, owners, syndicators, club managers and volunteers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 in-person engagements</li> <li>• Group engagements at racing clubs</li> <li>• Thank-you letter</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Industry Participants</b>	Non-industry Participants had lower levels of interest and influence in the industry. This stakeholder group provided a valuable indication of the general public’s perception of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank-you letter</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Description	Engagement
	industry and were essential to understanding the State of the industry’s “licence to operate”.	

**2.3.1.3 In Person Engagement**

In addition to online submissions and survey responses, the Review undertook a comprehensive program of face-to-face engagement, with a strong emphasis on visiting local race clubs across Queensland. In total, the Review and Code Leads visited 73 race clubs spanning the Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhound codes.

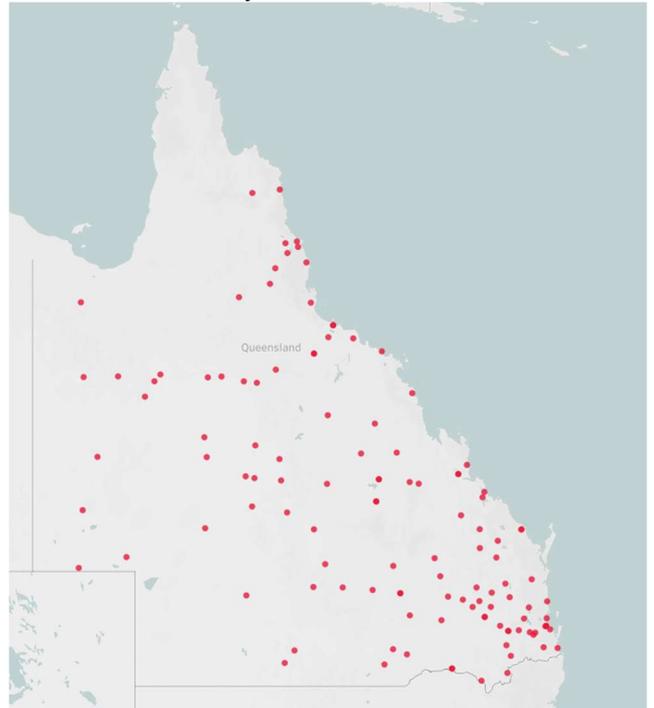
These visits were geographically diverse, ensuring representation across the full range of Queensland’s racing footprint:

- South East Queensland: 19 visits to clubs, including major venues in Brisbane, Ipswich, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Redcliffe.
- Darling Downs and South West: 18 visits to clubs, including Toowoomba, Roma, Dalby, Chinchilla, Surat and Talwood.
- Central Queensland: 14 visits to clubs, including Rockhampton, Gladstone, Thangool, Calliope and Barcaldine.
- North Queensland: 12 visits to clubs, including Townsville, Mackay, Bowen, Burdekin and Innisfail.
- Western Queensland and Gulf: 10 visits to clubs, covering remote communities such as Mount Isa, Julia Creek, Blackall, Aramac, McKinlay and Ilfracombe.

The Review also engaged with a number of relevant associations, such as:

- Australian Trainers' Association.
- Queensland Jockeys' Association.
- Racing Queensland Country Racing Panel.
- Breeders Owners Trainers Reinspersons' Association.
- Thoroughbred Breeders Queensland Association.
- Queensland Off-The-Track Program.

Through its consultation process, the Review engaged with more than 300 club officials, participants and volunteers, gaining direct insights into the lived realities of those sustaining, delivering and operating the industry at the grassroots level. Being present in the regions also helped build trust that the Review was genuine in its interest in the problems and opportunities faced by racing communities in rural and remote Queensland. This ensured the perspectives of rural and remote communities were properly reflected in the Review’s findings.



**Figure 3: Clubs visited by the Review**

**2.3.2 Queensland Racing Review Evaluation Framework**

Guided by the Terms of Reference, the Steering Committee developed the Queensland Racing Review Evaluation Framework as an actionable methodology to analyse stakeholder feedback, consider interjurisdictional benchmarks, develop recommendations and deliver the Review. The Review’s analysis was guided by the “five pillars” of racing:

1. Welfare
2. Social

3. Financial
4. Wagering
5. Ownership.

Prize Money and Racing Infrastructure were identified as central themes to the Racing Evaluation Framework and were considered across all five pillars. The Review was also guided by the overarching principles of Governance and Integrity.

### **2.3.2.1 Overarching Principles and Themes**

Beyond the five pillars, the Review was guided by the overarching principles of Governance and Integrity and considered the key themes of Prize Money and Infrastructure.

#### Governance and Integrity

The Review was underpinned by the principle of ensuring strong governance and integrity within Queensland's racing industry. Analysis of governance practises spanned from the local club level to the split of functions and responsibilities between RQ and QRIC.

The Review evaluated the integrity functions of Queensland's racing industry, including the strength of the integrity frameworks and the adequacy of existing arrangements to detect, deter and punish misconduct.

#### Prize Money

The distribution and quantum of prize money was analysed for its impact on participant behaviour, return on investment and balance between regional and metropolitan racing. The Review considered how prize money could be used to incentivise participation, support lower-tier racing and enhance the industry's attraction of new entrants.

#### Infrastructure

The Review considered the utilisation, maintenance and historical and planned investment into racing infrastructure. The Review considered opportunities to identify and remedy the duplication of facilities, underinvestment in regional training centres, underutilisation of assets (including key assets), improve effectiveness of investment, invest in key assets and gaps in spectator and safety infrastructure.

### **2.3.2.2 "Five pillars" of racing**

#### Welfare

The welfare pillar considers the policies and governance arrangements for the protection of current or former racing animals, focusing on the effectiveness of these policies to effect positive change. The Review examined the welfare of racing animals across all three codes, including QRIC's regulatory responsibilities, the effectiveness of incident reporting systems and rehoming and post-racing life outcomes. The Review also considered the transparency of welfare practises and broader public sentiment. While many current practises reflect genuine commitment to animal care, the Review identified opportunities for improvement, particularly in data collection, communication and public engagement, to ensure the industry continues to meet evolving community expectations.

#### Social

This social pillar considers the social value generated by the racing industry, particularly its contributions to local identity, community engagement and regional development. Racing is one of the few industries that maintains a presence in towns of all sizes across Queensland, offering employment, volunteer opportunities and social connection. The Review explored the mechanisms through which social capital is fostered, including volunteerism, regional decision-making and equitable access to facilities and funding. It also identified areas where governance structures could better reflect and respond to community priorities.

#### Financial

The financial pillar considers the viability and efficiency of the industry's current financial position. The Review assessed the flow of revenue from wagering, sponsorship and government support and analysed how these revenues are distributed across clubs, codes and participants. It identified key cost pressures such as compliance, insurance and legal overheads. It also examined the financial sustainability of infrastructure maintenance and renewal. The analysis also considered the governance of industry funds and the transparency of financial decision-making.

### Wagering

The wagering pillar considers the regulatory and market conditions for the wagering industry in racing. Wagering continues to serve as the primary commercial driver of Queensland's racing industry. Its role in funding race meetings, sustaining prize money and supporting infrastructure investment makes it an essential pillar of the industry's business model. However, the wagering environment is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by changing consumer behaviour, regulatory reform and intensified digital competition, both domestic and offshore.

The Review assessed the competitiveness and commercial positioning of Queensland's wagering offering across all three codes.

### Ownership

The ownership pillar considers the ownership of racing animals as the primary driver of participation in racing and a key determinant of investment across the sector. The Review analysed the barriers and enablers to ownership, with specific focus on cost structures, access to information and syndication models. Demographic and geographic trends were also reviewed, highlighting the need to support new and younger owners, especially in regional areas. The Review explored the influence of prize money distribution, registration and licensing processes and the role of digital tools in creating a more accessible and transparent ownership experience.

## 2.4 The Report

The Report is structured to align with the "five pillars" of Queensland's racing industry and the key themes. Informed by detailed analysis of stakeholder feedback and desktop research of other jurisdictions, the Report provides a detailed analysis of the problems and opportunities associated with each pillar; and the benefits of addressing these problems and opportunities. Actionable, pragmatic recommendations are provided to secure the benefits associated with addressing each identified problem or with exploiting each identified opportunity.

The Report contains the following chapters:

- Governance and Integrity
- Welfare Pillar
- Social Pillar
- Financial Pillar
- Wagering Pillar
- Ownership Pillar.

The Report also presents case studies as examples of best practice in other jurisdictions domestically and internationally within Racing. Case studies are also used to highlight initiatives adopted in other sports where similar issues were faced. They serve as exemplars of what may be able to be achieved in Queensland's racing industry and what the racing industry in Queensland may wish to aspire to.

### 3 Governance and Integrity

The effective operation of Queensland's racing industry relies on strong governance and robust integrity systems. These foundational values ensure fair competition, while promoting public confidence and the industry's long-term sustainability. The Review Evaluation Framework considers Governance and Integrity as an overarching theme for the Review, with application across the five pillars. The Governance and Integrity theme assesses whether current systems and processes provide sufficient confidence to industry, government and the public that racing is conducted responsibly and that resources, particularly public funds, are managed efficiently.

Through extensive engagement and analysis, the Review identified two core challenges, affecting the Governance and Integrity settings of the Queensland racing industry. These are addressed in detail throughout this chapter and form the basis for the accompanying recommendations. The challenges are as follows:

**Governance Capability:** The governance arrangements of local clubs, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and Racing Queensland don't adequately define responsibilities or set adequate rules around board composition and skills, resulting in weak representation and ineffective governance that reduces organisational effectiveness, limits positive change, and undermines public confidence in the industry.

**Oversight of Integrity Standards:** Integrity standards and frameworks are inconsistently applied due to the increased bureaucracy, contributing to lapses in accountability and reduced industry confidence.

This chapter outlines these challenges in greater detail and presents opportunities to strengthen the governance and integrity framework of the Queensland racing industry. The proposed reforms aim to promote greater transparency, accountability and responsiveness, ensuring that the industry's operations align with both public expectations and the evolving needs of its participants.

#### 3.1 Aspects of Governance and Integrity

##### 3.1.1 Governance

***“The governance arrangements of local clubs, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and Racing Queensland don't adequately define responsibilities or set adequate rules around board composition and skills, resulting in weak representation and ineffective governance that reduces organisational effectiveness, limits positive change, and undermines public confidence in the industry.”***

The governance responsibilities of administrative bodies at all levels of the racing industry are not well defined, resulting in duplication, a lack of accountability and missed opportunities to deliver coordinated positive experiences for industry participants. The resulting organisational ineffectiveness impacts all levels of racing, undermining welfare protections and public confidence in the industry.

The Review identified the separation of RQ and the QRIC as an issue of critical concern for stakeholders. Government originally intended the separation of commercial (RQ) and integrity (QRIC) functions to strengthen the enforcement of integrity and welfare standards. However, the Review found that it has instead contributed to greater bureaucracy, an erosion of accountability where the entities fail to have or adhere to clearly defined scopes of operation; and an inefficient use of funding, thus having a detrimental effect on industry growth. Stakeholders cited examples of where the separation had led to duplicated processes, misaligned priorities and inefficiencies that undermined the industry's ability to implement reform in a timely and coordinated manner.

There was no clear consensus among stakeholders on a preferred alternative structure to the separation of RQ and QRIC. A portion of stakeholders emphasised the importance of maintaining the independence of stewards from the commercial functions of RQ. However, others advocated for a more unified model that retained regulatory objectivity while streamlining operational functions of the two bodies. Proposals included co-locating shared services, consolidating administrative support, or introducing joint leadership structures to reduce siloing. While there was no consensus on how to restructure the governance of RQ and QRIC, the Review found broad agreement on the need for reforms that strengthen industry-wide collaboration and cohesion while maintaining steadfast integrity and animal welfare safeguards.



### Case Study: HKJC

The HKJC provides a compelling example of how an integrated governance model can successfully manage both the commercial and regulatory dimensions of a complex racing environment. By consolidating functions within a single, unified structure, the HKJC avoids the fragmentation, duplication, and coordination challenges that often arise in split-function arrangements.

All strategic and operational responsibilities are coordinated through the Club's 12-member Board of Stewards, who also serve as Trustees of the Club's Charities Trust. This structure reinforces both internal alignment and external accountability, supporting decisions that balance commercial performance, regulatory oversight, and community benefit.

The integrated model allows the Club to respond efficiently to challenges, align operations with strategic objectives, and uphold strong integrity standards across all areas of racing and wagering. It also promotes consistency in leadership and decision-making, with the executive team led by a single Chief Executive Officer operating under clear board direction.

While Hong Kong's context differs from Queensland's, the HKJC illustrates how a unified approach can enhance cohesion, simplify governance arrangements and ensure that racing operations, regulation and broader community responsibilities work in a cohesive manner.

The Review found that the RQ Board membership requirements may negatively affect RQ's ability to efficiently deliver positive outcomes for the industry. The current seven-member board structure doesn't properly account for the perspectives of large sections of the industry, including regional racing and former governance personnel such as former Stewards. Without a representative from these industry segments, RQ is unable to effectively reflect their needs in central decision-making bodies. Rural stakeholders were concerned about centralised decision-making processes and whether these provided good outcomes for their communities. Whilst this is a common concern of rural Queenslanders in general, not just in the racing industry, the Review is satisfied that the lack of rural representation at the board level has at the least exacerbated this trend.

Stakeholders commonly expressed concern about the capacity of race club board members and management to effectively carry out administrative and governance functions. This concern was commonly expressed by rural stakeholders, who noted the lack of a structured and merit-based process for appointing directors.

Stakeholders informed the Review that declining participation in the racing industry, combined with the volunteer-based structure of many regional and rural clubs, has led to the long-term tenure of board members in several locations. The Review identified extreme cases where directors had served for more than 25 years, with some chairing the same board for over a decade. Stakeholders described this entrenched leadership as fostering resistance to reform, groupthink and inward-looking cultures. There were exceptions to this where Clubs had prospered and grown as identified in the Case Study on the GCTC, however the Review was cognisant of entrenched leadership. The absence of mandatory training or accreditation exacerbates these risks.

While other sectors, such as community sport, provide structured education programs and governance resources for club officials, the Review found that no equivalent supports exist within Queensland racing. This gap is particularly problematic given the serious financial, legal and compliance responsibilities that board members must manage.

Issues across the central statutory bodies for racing in Queensland, as well as individual race clubs, represent a disjointed, inefficient system of governance. These issues limit the industry's capacity to deliver coordinated, transparent and effective leadership.

#### Alignment with Governance and Integrity Principles

Implementing effective governance structures across all levels of administrative functions in Queensland's racing industry aligns with the Review's overarching commitment to promoting robust governance and clear accountability structures. Strengthening coordination between RQ and QRIC, improving capability governance functions among racing clubs and ensuring oversight structures reflect the diversity and complexity of the industry are critical steps toward a more effective and responsive system.

### 3.1.2 Integrity Safeguards

***“Integrity standards and frameworks are inconsistently applied due to the increased bureaucracy, contributing to lapses in accountability and reduced industry confidence.”***

The inconsistent application of integrity standards and frameworks contributes to lapses in accountability of the industry’s governance bodies and participants, undermining industry confidence. The inconsistent application of integrity standards and frameworks is typically caused by unclear standard procedures. The enforcement of integrity standards and frameworks must demonstrate a commitment to fairness and accountability across all three codes.

Stakeholders raised concerns about the inaccessibility of reasons for a steward decision, the absence of formal clarification or review processes and the inconsistent application of penalties.

Stakeholders indicated to the Review that current swabbing procedures fall well below international best practice, particularly when compared to jurisdictions such as Hong Kong and New South Wales, with swabbing rates for Thoroughbred racing being particularly problematic. The lack of consistent, comprehensive swabbing, combined with delays in hearing swab-related cases and failures to enforce disqualifications, has significantly undermined confidence in the integrity systems. The Review found many industry participants supported the introduction of a statewide, full scale highly resourced swabbing system to ensure fairness and transparency.

The Review found that stakeholders held generally positive views of the RAP, which commenced operations in March 2023. The RAP was described as timely, efficient and effective in handling appeals from stewards. However, stakeholders noted that the RAP’s limited jurisdiction over licensing matters had undermined its overall efficiency, resulting in slower, more legalistic and costly review processes.



#### **Case Study: History of the Racing Appeals Panel**

The Queensland RAP was established to improve the independence, transparency and timeliness of appeal processes in the State’s racing industry. Prior to its introduction, internal reviews were conducted within Racing Queensland or QRIC, with further appeals progressing to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT). This system was widely criticised as slow, costly and overly legalistic, particularly for participants with limited resources.

The creation of the RAP responded to longstanding stakeholder concerns about fairness and procedural clarity. The independent statutory panel was designed to sit between initial QRIC determinations and external legal review, offering a quicker, more accessible mechanism for resolving disputes.

Stakeholders have generally welcomed the RAP’s introduction, describing the new process as more efficient and consistent than the previous fragmented model. However, the Panel’s jurisdiction does not extend to all licensing matters, which has led to some appeals still defaulting to QCAT, reintroducing the issues the RAP was meant to alleviate.

The RAP’s early operation has demonstrated the value of a dedicated, independent review body. Its implementation provides a foundation for further reform particularly around jurisdictional scope and procedural consistency across codes and illustrates how targeted institutional changes can enhance integrity outcomes across the racing sector.

Perceived and actual conflicts of interest are inadequately managed through existing integrity arrangements. Though disclosed in annual reports, the prevalence of related party transactions (a transaction between two parties who hold a pre-existing connection prior to the transaction) among race clubs may be viewed as an indicator of ineffective systems or inadequate commitment to manage conflicts of interest. Related party transactions should only be entered into where the transaction serves the interests of the association and does not personally enrich the related party, or where there are no obvious alternative options to the related party transaction. However, the Review uncovered evidence of instances of board-related party transactions in contexts where this was clearly not the case. Even if no misconduct has taken place, such transactions create the perception of bias and unfairness.

Stakeholders raised concerns regarding the travel practises of some race club directors, including instances where travel was funded either by the club itself or by external sponsors. The Review found that several stakeholders questioned the relevance and benefit of certain trips, particularly where the purpose of travel was unclear or lacked

direct value to the club. It was emphasised that all travel undertaken by directors, executives, or other club representatives must serve a legitimate, demonstrable benefit to the club.

The enforcement of trackside integrity standards is negatively impacted by resourcing constraints, particularly in stewarding and compliance roles. The concentrated geographic distribution of experienced stewards, coupled with limited travel budgets and outdated infrastructure, presents substantial hurdles to enforcing integrity standards in remote and regional areas. This is compounded by the limited uptake of digital technologies for oversight, monitoring and data management; notwithstanding this, the use of modern digital technologies offers opportunity to address the “tyranny of distance” and improve the quality of oversight at outlying centres.

#### Alignment with Governance and Integrity Principles

Ensuring the broad enforcement of integrity safeguards is critical to maintaining confidence in Queensland’s racing industry. In alignment with the Review’s overarching commitment to strong governance and integrity, improved coordination, transparency and resourcing of integrity enforcement systems represent a significant advancement towards addressing the concerns that have been raised by stakeholders and building confidence that Queensland races are fair and ethical.

## 3.2 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

### 3.2.1 Improved Organisational Effectiveness Through Clearly Defined Responsibilities and Board Compositions

Clearly defining administrative and governance functions and reshaping boards to be better trained, more capable and more representative, at all levels of Queensland’s racing industry, will strengthen organisational effectiveness. A governance system with well-defined roles and responsibilities will reduce duplication, improve accountability and support more consistent outcomes for industry participants. It will also assist in ensuring that board and committee appointments across racing clubs, RQ and QRIC are appropriately aligned with the skills and responsibilities required for effective oversight and decision-making.

A RQ Board with wagering, stewarding and regional racing expertise leverages the experiences of other jurisdictions that have demonstrated the benefits of inclusive and structured governance systems. Racing Victoria’s larger board membership allows for better representation of code-specific interests while providing access to specialist skills in finance, law and regulation, improving the quality of decision making and outcomes for the racing industry over time. These benefits are evident in multiple jurisdictions where minimum governance standards and mandatory director training have improved board performance and strengthened risk oversight.

In addition to benefits accruing to the industry, reforms of this nature also have the potential to deliver tangible and specific benefits across all three codes:

- Thoroughbred racing: incentivising opportunities for board members to upskill and improving transparency provisions supports more informed investment decisions and more effective stakeholder engagement
- Harness racing: improved club governance, particularly in regional areas, will help to stabilise participation, reduce governance risks and increase eligibility for public funding

- Greyhound racing: stronger reporting and auditing standards will bolster public confidence, especially in a context of heightened community scrutiny.



### Case Study: Mandatory Governance Accreditation

The growing adoption of mandatory governance accreditation across Australia's sport and public sectors demonstrates the value of upskilling boards to meet contemporary expectations of accountability and performance. National bodies such as Cricket Australia and Netball Australia now require directors to complete structured training through recognised providers like the AICD.

This shift responds to heightened scrutiny around board decision-making, conflict-of-interest management and financial oversight in organisations that manage substantial public funds and community assets, as well as the gradually increasing stringency of legislation associated with governance. Formal accreditation ensures directors understand both the detail and significance of their fiduciary duties, improves strategic literacy and promotes consistent governance practises across diverse boards and jurisdictions.

These lessons are directly applicable to Queensland's racing industry. Race club directors are often appointed informally, with limited training or induction and often have only a basic understanding of their responsibilities and the consequences of failing to meet required standards. Stakeholders identified this as a material risk, particularly for clubs managing significant infrastructure, wagering revenues and public funds.

Introducing mandatory governance accreditation, beginning with Chairs, would lift baseline capability, reduce exposure to mismanagement and support stronger strategic planning. Structured governance training would also align racing with reforms already adopted across the health, sport and not-for-profit sectors. As expectations grow around board accountability, governance professionalism will be critical to ensuring clubs meet community standards, uphold integrity and contribute to the industry's future.

At a system level, building governance capability will reduce fragmentation, encourage more coordinated planning and embed a culture of accountability. It will also strengthen leadership pipelines, support succession planning and reinforce public trust in the sector's long-term sustainability.

### 3.2.2 Strengthening Integrity Safeguards and Coordination

Implementing stronger safeguards and procedures will support the consistent application of integrity standards across all three racing codes. These reforms will address existing concerns about fragmented responsibilities, unclear regulatory roles and improved decision making. The demonstration of the industry's commitment to fairness and accountability will strengthen public confidence.

Clear and documented stewarding processes would provide participants with improved access to reasons for decisions, reducing confusion and enabling transparent outcomes, as well as creating a simple mechanism for reviewing and comparing decisions to establish precedent and consistency. Establishing formal pathways for clarification or internal review would strengthen transparency and reduce the perception of unequal treatment, particularly among grassroots and regional stakeholders.

Other jurisdictions provide useful models of how to promote the consistent application of integrity standards and frameworks. New South Wales and Victoria have introduced digital reporting tools and standardised appeals tribunals that offer more consistent, accessible processes. RNSW also features various integrity and performance indicators in its annual report to demonstrate effectiveness. These systems give participants greater clarity and reduce the risk of perceived bias or arbitrary decision-making, while also improving public assurance in regulatory outcomes.



### **Case Study: Swabbing and Integrity Transparency in New South Wales**

Racing NSW provides a leading example of how integrity systems can be reinforced through large-scale swabbing programs and public transparency. Its annual reporting framework demonstrates how a clear commitment to integrity can be embedded in operational practice, with swabbing treated as a strategic tool to detect breaches, deter misconduct and build public confidence.

The Racing NSW Annual Report provides detailed data on the volume of equine and human swabs conducted each year, disaggregated by region and racing tier. In 2022–23, more than 28,000 equine samples and 328 human samples were collected through a combination of race-day, out-of-competition and targeted enforcement testing. The report outlines not only the number of adverse findings, but also the associated substances and follow-up actions taken.

This level of reporting aligns with Racing NSW's broader integrity framework, which includes use of the Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory, formal 'A' and 'B' sample protocols and publicly available disciplinary processes. Tools such as detection dogs, random stable inspections and documented testing timeframes reinforce procedural fairness while ensuring participants are aware of the standards expected.

The lessons are directly applicable to Queensland. Stakeholders have consistently raised concerns about inconsistent swabbing practises, delays in resolution of positive cases and the absence of public data on enforcement outcomes. These gaps create uncertainty for participants and undermine confidence in the system's fairness and rigour.

Adopting a similar model to Racing NSW, through significantly increased swabbing volume, codified protocols and transparent reporting, would address integrity concerns while aligning Queensland with national best practice. Clear communication of results through annual reports would further enhance trust in the system and demonstrate accountability to participants, government and the public.

Expanding the jurisdiction and role of the RAP would deliver more efficient and cost-effective appeal mechanisms by resolving licensing matters within the same independent framework. This would reduce reliance on slower and more expensive external legal processes, increasing procedural efficiency.

Improving resourcing and regional coverage for stewarding and compliance roles would enable more consistent on-track enforcement across all locations. Supporting this with modern data management systems would enhance oversight capabilities, reduce administrative burden and enable faster identification of compliance issues.

## 4 Welfare Pillar

The Welfare Pillar considers the policies, practises and governance arrangements underpinning the protection of racing animals during and after their competitive careers. The pillar evaluates the effectiveness of welfare oversight mechanisms, the quality of regulatory enforcement and accountability for industry-wide animal welfare practises. Welfare is a critical pillar of the industry, not only during an animal's competitive career but especially in retirement. The Review heard that, on average, only 25% of a racing animal's life is spent competing, with the remaining 75% occurring after retirement from the track. While many current programs and participants demonstrate a genuine commitment to animal care, the Review found evidence of inconsistent governance practises, fragmented data systems and isolated instances of poor practice. This contributes to the erosion of public confidence and reputational risk to the industry.

Stakeholder feedback across both the equine and greyhound codes highlighted areas for improvement in the oversight of animal welfare. Stakeholders raised issues such as the limitations of current traceability systems, instances of sub-optimal retirement outcomes and inconsistent kennel and paddock management standards. Some industry practises were also viewed as outdated or misaligned with evolving community expectations. While most stakeholders were willing to acknowledge that a majority of industry participants are committed to high standards of care, public concerns relating to animal welfare reflect an existential challenge that the industry must address if it wishes to retain its "licence to operate".

The Review identified three specific challenges relevant to the Welfare Pillar that will be outlined subsequently and which the recommendations seek to address:

**Welfare Governance:** Ineffective regulatory oversight and inconsistent enforcement of animal welfare standards increase the risk of injury, neglect and poor post-racing outcomes for active and retired racehorses.

**Greyhound Welfare:** Industry practises which are contrary to greyhound welfare not only harm racing and retired racing dogs but also threaten the industry's social licence to operate.

**Public Engagement with Welfare Efforts:** Welfare transparency and communication systems remain underdeveloped, limiting public confidence in the industry's animal care credentials in an era of increasing public engagement and concern.

### 4.1 Limitations Affecting Industry Reach and Impact

#### 4.1.1 Welfare Governance

***"Ineffective regulatory oversight and inconsistent enforcement of animal welfare standards increase the risk of injury, neglect and poor post-racing outcomes for active and retired racehorses."***

The Review identified the opportunity to improve the coordination of welfare systems to promote consistent decision-making. Stakeholders expressed concern that fragmented governance systems and inconsistent enforcement have limited the industry's ability to deliver consistently high welfare outcomes. This feedback highlighted shortcomings in the ability for existing systems to consistently identify and respond to instances poor of practice.

The Review identified significant challenges in the effective rehoming of retired racehorses, many of which undermine public confidence in the integrity and social responsibility of the racing industry. Stakeholders suggested that there are several factors which contribute to the current poor rehoming outcomes, including inadequate early education that leaves horses without basic handling skills, such as tying, floating, or socialisation. Behavioural issues, injuries and long-term soundness concerns further limit the suitability of many horses for second careers. These shortcomings in retirement planning not only limit animal welfare outcomes but also damage the industry's credibility and trust with the broader community.

Stakeholders raised concerns about death reporting, rehoming compliance and retirement notifications, with several highlighting unclear processes and inconsistent follow-through as significant issues. A number of industry participants called for the standardisation of training and accreditation for industry participants to clarify responsibilities and improve welfare outcomes. They highlighted the lack of clearly defined formal training requirements, particularly for trainers, as a key gap that increases the risk of welfare issues.



### Case Study: Barrier Attendant Accreditation

The Victoria Racing Club introduced a comprehensive accreditation program for barrier attendants, significantly reducing gate-related injuries to both horses and jockeys. Prior to the program's implementation, inconsistent handling techniques and varying levels of attendant experience had contributed to frequent injuries and race-day disruptions. Recognising the need for standardisation, Victoria Racing Club developed a structured training curriculum covering best practises in horse handling, emergency response procedures and gate operation protocols.

Participants in the accreditation program receive initial comprehensive training followed by annual refresher courses, ensuring consistent application of best practises and adherence to safety standards. Since its inception, the program has demonstrated significant operational improvements, including a marked decrease in injury rates, reduced race delays and enhanced overall race-day efficiency. Feedback from industry participants, including jockeys, trainers and veterinary staff, underscores the program's effectiveness and positive impact on horse welfare and race-day safety.

Stakeholders also expressed general concern about QRIC's engagement approach. Concerns included miscommunication and/or an absence of communication of regulatory investigations and rule changes, limited consultation with grassroots participants and inconsistencies in the application of penalties between large and small-scale operators. Stakeholders also raised a culture that could be overly bureaucratic and not aligned to operational realities. Tensions between commercial goals and welfare responsibilities were cited as contributing factors to concerns about the effectiveness and impartiality of QRIC's oversight. While these concerns were not universal, they highlight the need for QRIC and RQ to strengthen collaboration with participants to improve transparency, responsiveness and clarity around regulatory expectations.

The visibility of horses after their competitive careers cease has been the subject of numerous previous reports and recommendations.<sup>5</sup> The Review noted feedback that, despite these previous investigations, there was still no nationally consistent cradle-to-grave traceability framework, making it difficult to track long-term outcomes across a horse's lifecycle.<sup>6</sup>

Regional stakeholders noted a misalignment between the substantial breeding activity and the availability of suitable post-racing rehoming options. In areas where rehoming providers are limited, this misalignment causes strain for local networks and increases the risk of poor welfare outcomes. Inconsistencies in the application of retirement protocols and limited enforcement capacity at the grassroots level were also identified as challenges.

Queensland's current tracking systems were described as overly reliant on owner self-reporting, with few compliance or audit mechanisms. Consequently, data on retirement, death and ownership, particularly for broodmares and foals, is inconsistent and inaccurate. This affects the completeness and reliability of records and limits the industry's ability to monitor welfare outcomes beyond the racing career.<sup>7</sup>

### Alignment with Welfare Pillar

Ensuring comprehensive welfare oversight and whole-of-life traceability for racehorses aligns directly with the Welfare Pillar. Strengthening governance, accreditation and enforcement frameworks is essential to safeguarding equine welfare, improving transparency and maintaining community confidence in the industry's ethical standards.

<sup>5</sup> See Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, *Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired racehorses in Queensland ('the Martin Inquiry')*, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> See Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, *Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired racehorses in Queensland ('the Martin Inquiry')*, 2020, Recommendation 2.1.1.

<sup>7</sup> See National Horse Traceability Work Group, Final Report, [https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/905260/NHTWG-Report-to-AMM\\_FA\\_online-2023.pdf](https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/905260/NHTWG-Report-to-AMM_FA_online-2023.pdf).

#### 4.1.2 Greyhound Welfare

***“Industry practises which are contrary to greyhound welfare not only harm racing and retired racing dogs but also threaten the industry’s social licence to operate.”***

The Review found the greyhound industry to be subject to particularly high levels of public scrutiny and reputational pressure in relation to animal welfare. The Review identified ongoing welfare challenges, including the need to modernise certain operational practises to reflect contemporary expectations, greater regulatory consistency and improved industry transparency.

The Review, guided by a range of stakeholder submissions identified race-day regulation as a key area of reform. Stakeholders supported stronger enforcement of hydration protocols, clearer guidance on race frequency and mandatory stand-down periods and improved monitoring of environmental conditions, particularly for regional tracks where high temperatures and extended travel times can increase risk. Many also advocated for swabbing reform, noting that increasing the number and transparency of tests would act as both a deterrent and a confidence-building measure for the public and participants alike.

Despite recent reforms and investment in safer infrastructure, stakeholders reported systemic issues that continue to negatively impact greyhound welfare. These include inadequate injury prevention measures, lack of structured socialisation prior to rehoming and a fragmented approach to post-race care.<sup>8</sup> Stakeholders identified tracks at Ipswich (which finished racing on April 5th, 2025; due to the opening of the Q Track), Bundaberg and Townsville as disproportionately contributing to adverse incidents due to outdated design and infrastructure. The shape and surface of the track are highlighted as significant determiners of track safety, with sand tracks being described as safer than grass tracks in many instances. On May 13 2025, it was announced the Bundaberg grass track would be converted to sand, leaving just one grass track racing in Queensland (at Capalaba). Moreover, the kennelling conditions also impact greyhound welfare, with many of Queensland’s older tracks having kennelling, which is smaller in size without appropriate acoustic insulation, while also relying on natural ventilation systems, contributing to higher levels of stress and anxiety in the dogs.

The Review found that Queensland’s regulatory framework lacks robust protections across several key stages of a greyhound’s life. The enforcement of race frequency, hydration protocols and mandatory stand down periods remains inconsistent. Stakeholders also indicated the reduced number of rural greyhound tracks has increased travel times, contributing to stress and potentially dehydration and overheating.

Enforcement shortcomings are further exacerbated by limitations in data systems and an overreliance on self-reporting by owners and trainers. Stakeholders emphasised the need for a structured, whole-of-life welfare framework to ensure consistent oversight from birth through to retirement. Current arrangements, characterised by fragmented rehoming pathways, inconsistent post-racing tracking and weak enforcement of retirement reporting, have eroded trust in the system’s ability to safeguard animal welfare beyond the track. Industry Participants also expressed concern in relation to operational blind spots, including low swabbing rates, poor regulation of unnamed dogs and the inability to easily access data on injuries and euthanasia, all of which reduce transparency and limit accountability. These blind spots were also noted to exist in the absence of a publicly accessible list of disqualified persons, which allows potential bad actors to continue to operate in the industry.

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<sup>8</sup> See an example of recent reforms at Queensland Racing, *Change to the Greyhound Rules of Racing*, 2024, <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/news/2024/08-august/changes-to-the-greyhound-rules-of-racing>.



### Case Study: GWIC Disqualified Persons

In New South Wales, concerns about misconduct and regulatory loopholes prompted the introduction of strict disqualification provisions and an “Excluded Persons” framework under the Greyhound Racing Rules.

Previously, disqualified individuals could continue influencing greyhound racing informally through breeding, proxy ownership, or off-track training, undermining the intent of disciplinary actions and public trust.

To address this, the GWIC implemented Rule 99 and Local Rule 99, which comprehensively restrict disqualified persons. They are barred from accessing racetracks, kennels, or training premises, owning or nominating greyhounds, participating in breeding, holding official roles and being a club member.

Disqualified persons must transfer any greyhounds they own or train, but transfers require GWIC approval to prevent misuse. Exemptions are only granted in exceptional cases and registration cannot be reinstated but must be re-applied for from the beginning and fully assessed once disqualification ends.

These measures protect the integrity of the sport and animal welfare, ensuring disqualified individuals are genuinely removed from the industry. The NSW model provides a strong precedent for Queensland to adopt similarly robust enforcement mechanisms.

Stakeholders consistently raised concerns about QRIC’s regulatory performance, citing specific evidence of inconsistent enforcement, limited transparency and poor responsiveness. Many industry participants pointed to repeated misalignment between penalties and guidelines. With the 2023 Penalty Guidelines, which were introduced following a national review led by Greyhounds Australasia and adopted across all jurisdictions.<sup>9</sup>

These guidelines were designed to ensure uniformity in sanctioning breaches, particularly those involving animal welfare.

#### Alignment with Welfare Pillar

The Greyhound Racing Industry faces a high level of community expectations due to its past failings and reported concerns. Without substantial and visible reform, the code risks losing its social licence to operate. Aligning race-day practises, kennel oversight and retirement planning with best-practice welfare models is essential to the code’s future.

#### 4.1.3 Public Engagement with Welfare Efforts

***“Welfare transparency and communication systems remain underdeveloped, limiting public confidence in the industry’s animal care credentials in an era of increasing public engagement and concern.”***

Insufficient transparency and underdeveloped communication practises limit the Queensland racing industry’s ability to demonstrate its much-improved animal welfare credentials and engage meaningfully with the public. These shortcomings reduce community trust and hinder efforts to build legitimacy for current practises focussed on providing care of racing animals, both during and after their careers.

The Review found that, despite progress in some areas of internal welfare monitoring (such as Greyhound Breeding, Race Injury and Retirement Quarterly Reports<sup>10</sup>), the industry lacks a coordinated strategy to share animal welfare information with the public. There is currently no centralised, publicly accessible system for tracking post-racing outcomes across any of the three codes. Key data, such as rates of rehoming, euthanasia, injury and long-term welfare outcomes, remains fragmented, inconsistently reported, or entirely inaccessible to the broader community. This information vacuum provides a clear opportunity for critics of the industry to shape the public

<sup>9</sup> See Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, QRIC Greyhound Racing Penalty Guidelines, 2023, [https://qric.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Greyhound\\_Penalty\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://qric.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Greyhound_Penalty_Guidelines.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> See for example, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, Greyhound breeding, race injury and retirement report Q1 July 2024 – September 2024, 2024, <https://qric.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Greyhound-Breeding-Injury-and-Retirement-Report-Q1-2024-25.pdf>.

narrative about these issues, undermining the efforts of the industry to self-regulate and reform and its broader legitimacy.

These structural limitations are reflected in the limited visibility of aftercare programs. Despite the existence of initiatives such as Off the Track and therapeutic rehoming programs for veterans and people with disabilities, these programs operate in isolation rather than as part of a coordinated, whole-of-life care model. Without integration into a broader framework and consistent public reporting, their reach and impact remain unclear, reducing awareness among industry participants and limiting public recognition of the industry's welfare efforts.

In the greyhound code, public visibility into welfare safeguards is especially limited. Stakeholders noted the absence of digital tools such as greyhound "passports," lifetime tracking systems, or online welfare dashboards. As a result, members of the public, media and advocacy groups have minimal ability to independently verify welfare outcomes. This lack of visibility contributes to ongoing scepticism about the industry's animal care standards, particularly in relation to unnamed or unregistered dogs.



### **Case Study: Digital Tracking and Welfare Transparency in NSW and Victoria**

In both New South Wales and Victoria, concerns about inadequate post-racing oversight and declining public trust prompted the introduction of digital systems to improve lifetime traceability and transparency for greyhounds.

Historically, greyhound tracking relied on manual, self-reported data from owners and trainers, with limited enforcement or public visibility. This lack of transparency made it difficult to monitor rehoming outcomes, ensure welfare compliance, or address growing public concern.

In response, regulators introduced digital tracking tools. In New South Wales, the GWIC developed eTrac, enabling real-time monitoring of greyhounds from birth to retirement. The system requires periodic check-ins, supports mobile updates and includes a public search function to improve transparency.

Similarly, Greyhound Racing Victoria implemented lifecycle tracking through its FastTrack platform. The system captures data across each greyhound's life, including breeding, racing, injury and rehoming and is supported by the MyFastTrack mobile app. GRV also publishes public welfare data to reinforce community trust.

These reforms have proven effective. Regulators now have greater oversight of greyhound movements and post-racing outcomes, while the public can access key welfare information. Both systems demonstrate how digital tools can strengthen welfare governance and serve as a compelling precedent for Queensland to consider in modernising its own traceability framework.

The industry's external communication strategy was also viewed as reactive and inconsistent. Stakeholders reported that media responses often lack clarity or timeliness, while opportunities to proactively highlight positive welfare outcomes are frequently missed. Specifically, there is no structured mechanism to communicate rehoming success stories or demonstrate improvements to injury prevention and post-care support. Inadequate engagement leaves the industry vulnerable to reputational harm and diminishes the value of existing welfare efforts.

Without a sustained commitment to transparency and proactive public communication, welfare achievements will remain undervalued and public confidence will continue to erode. Rebuilding trust requires not only effective regulation and reform, but the visible demonstration of those efforts to the broader community.

#### **Alignment with the Welfare Pillar**

Improved industry engagement and public visibility are central to the objectives of the Welfare Pillar. Ensuring that animal care standards are not only upheld but also communicated effectively enhances accountability, promotes informed public discourse and strengthens the social legitimacy of the racing industry.

## 4.2 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

### 4.2.1 Strengthened Welfare Governance and Animal Care

Improved governance arrangements will create the structural foundation needed to improve animal welfare standards across the racing industry. Strengthening regulatory coordination will allow for clearer operational responsibilities, resulting in more efficient enforcement and faster responses to welfare concerns. With reduced duplication and ambiguity between RQ and QRIC, regulators can apply standards more consistently, improving fairness and ensuring that welfare breaches are addressed promptly and predictably.

Strengthening lifecycle tracking through mandatory, independently verified reporting of retirement, death and ownership transfers will significantly improve transparency and enable regulators to maintain oversight of animals beyond their racing careers. These measures will support earlier identification of welfare risks and allow for more informed, data-driven policy decisions. Complementing these reforms with formal accreditation requirements for key welfare roles, such as barrier attendants, transporters and rehoming providers, will further professionalise the industry, standardise care practises and ensure that all individuals involved in animal handling meet consistent competency and welfare standards.



#### Case Study: British Horseracing Authority Whole of Life Tracking

In Great Britain, rising public expectations and increased scrutiny of equine welfare led to the development of a whole-of-life traceability system by the British Horseracing Authority (BHA), embedded within its broader “A Life Well Lived” welfare strategy.

Previously, Thoroughbred tracking was fragmented, with post-racing outcomes often opaque and reliant on inconsistent reporting from owners. This lack of transparency limited the industry’s ability to address concerns about aftercare, rehoming and end-of-life practises.

In response, the BHA, in collaboration with the independent Horse Welfare Board, introduced mandatory lifetime traceability measures. All racehorses must be registered within 30 days of birth and tracked through a centralized Thoroughbred database. Data covers breeding, training, ownership changes, veterinary care, retirement and death. Complementary reforms include enhanced aftercare funding and partnerships with rehoming organisations such as RoR.

These reforms have improved accountability and data integrity across the sport. The industry can now monitor outcomes for active and retired horses, while the public and policymakers are assured of stronger safeguards across the horse’s entire lifecycle. The British model provides a clear precedent for whole-of-life tracking as a foundation for ethical sport and responsible animal welfare management.

Stronger governance and enforcement frameworks will also help rebuild public trust, which stakeholders identified as having been affected following recent negative publicity. By aligning with national and international best practises, Queensland can position itself as a leader in animal welfare and demonstrate a clear, transparent commitment to continuous improvement. This reputational strength will support the industry’s long-term social sustainability and foster greater public and stakeholder confidence in its operations.

### 4.2.2 Improved Greyhound Welfare and Public Confidence

Addressing welfare challenges in the greyhound code presents a clear opportunity to deliver immediate and measurable improvements in animal wellbeing and to rebuild public confidence in the industry’s commitment to ethical standards. Stakeholders indicated that targeted reforms, such as modernised kennel facilities, improved welfare protocols and enhanced post-racing oversight, would not only reduce injury rates but also demonstrate RQ investment in welfare innovation. Strengthening welfare systems would also improve engagement with rehoming partners, support industry reputation and secure long-term community support for the code.

To reduce preventable injury, illness and euthanasia, the industry must implement best-practice welfare standards across key areas such as kennel management, transport regulation, must treat welfare not as a regulatory box-

ticking exercise, racing schedules and grading reforms. Stakeholders repeatedly called for enforceable rules on hydration access, particularly in response to incidents involving prolonged kennelling in high temperatures. Despite New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria introducing a policy allowing all greyhounds access to water both prior to and post racing, Queensland's current rule, introduced in January 2023, allows only for post-race water and no pre-race access, on the grounds of maintaining racing integrity.<sup>11</sup> By updating Queensland's approach to align with the current standards of other Australian states and territories, the industry can meet both welfare priorities and community expectations.

The Review found that Queensland has a clear opportunity to align its greyhound racing practises with recognised international welfare standards, such as those adopted in Great Britain. Stakeholders consistently pointed to the six-dog race format implemented in the UK as a proven model that delivers measurable improvements in animal welfare. By reducing the number of starters per race, jurisdictions like Great Britain have significantly lowered the incidence of on-track injuries and enhanced post-racing outcomes.



### Case Study: Six Dog Racing in Great Britain

In the early decades of Greyhound Racing in Great Britain, races with seven or eight dogs were common. However, crowding, particularly around bends, was found to increase the frequency and severity of collisions, leading to higher injury rates.\*

In response to these risks, the industry undertook a reform process driven by both promoters and regulators. Research and trackside observations identified that reducing the number of starters improved spacing, reduced interference and created safer race conditions. As a result, six-dog races became the standard by the early 1930s, supported by formal rule changes introduced by the NGRC, the sport's governing body at the time.

This change proved effective. The number of race-day injuries declined, while the consistency and fairness of outcomes improved.

Today, the GBGB, the successor to the NGRC, mandates a maximum of six starters in all official greyhound races within its jurisdiction. No licenced track in Britain permits eight-dog races and the reform is widely recognised as a welfare-enhancing measure.

This reform provides a clear precedent for evidence-based regulatory change in greyhound racing, demonstrating that structural adjustments can improve animal safety while preserving the integrity and competitiveness of the sport.

\*Please note that the lure in Great Britain travels around an outside running rail instead of the inside rail as occurs in Australia.

Stakeholders also strongly supported the adoption of digital tools, such as a greyhound digital passport or real-time tracking platform, to improve transparency and accountability. They identified the absence of consistent reporting on unnamed dogs, injury data and retirement outcomes as a major contributor to declining public confidence. By introducing a centralised, digital whole-of-life tracking system, the industry can improve regulatory compliance, enable targeted welfare interventions and publicly demonstrate its commitment to animal care. These tools would also support better rehoming outcomes and ensure that welfare monitoring continues beyond the track.

To reposition itself as an ethically accountable sport, greyhound racing must go beyond operational fixes and ensure that animal welfare is at the heart of its governance. The industry must treat welfare as a core governance responsibility rather than a compliance exercise. By enforcing clear standards, publishing transparent data (including same day stewards reports), welcoming independent oversight and continuously improving its systems, greyhound racing can demonstrate that it is upholding the highest ethical standards. This commitment will help protect the wellbeing of the animal participants, rebuild trust, improve public legitimacy and support the long-term viability of the code.

<sup>11</sup> See, NSW Government, NSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice, 2020, Part 2.8, <https://www.gwic.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-05/NSW%20Greyhound%20Welfare%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>.

### 4.2.3 Enhanced Industry Engagement and Transparency

Developing robust welfare communication systems and public engagement platforms strengthens the industry's connection with the broader community. Stakeholders informed the Review that transparent, centralised data systems provide visible evidence of the industry's commitment to animal welfare. By publishing welfare data in a clear, accessible and regularly updated format, the industry can shift from reactive responses to proactive trust-building. This visibility not only reassures the public, animal welfare advocates and participants, but also enables all stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and contribute to a culture of continuous welfare advancement.

The industry can further shape public confidence by communicating welfare success stories through proactive media strategies. Highlighting examples such as rehoming achievements, therapy partnerships and safety improvements builds a positive narrative and reinforces credibility. QRIC and RQ must commit to regular, open reporting to demonstrate accountability and responsiveness. These actions are particularly important in regional areas, where stakeholders reported inconsistent engagement. Establishing structured communication channels, such as quarterly forums involving QRIC, RQ, trainers, jockeys, veterinarians, owners and club officials, will ensure policy decisions reflect on-the-ground realities and regional priorities.



#### Case Study: Independent GAP

In Queensland, the potential of retired greyhounds as therapy animals remains largely untapped. The story of Connor Bryant and his adopted greyhound Loki highlights the transformative impact of tailored rehoming for people with disability.

After being diagnosed with a debilitating neurological condition, former athlete Connor Bryant sought a therapy dog to support his physical and emotional needs. His initial experience with the GAP was negative, a mismatched placement led to disappointment, which he attributed to a focus on rehoming volume over suitability.

Connor then connected with independent re-homer Joanne Wooler, who collaborated with his therapy trainer to identify Loki, a calm, emotionally intuitive greyhound. The match proved life changing. Loki now provides daily support, easing Connor's pain, offering protection in public and improving his mental wellbeing.

Connor describes Loki as more than a pet, he's a lifeline. Their bond demonstrates the power of thoughtful, personalised rehoming, particularly when trainers are involved in assessing temperament and fit.

This case underscores the opportunity for Queensland to expand therapeutic rehoming pathways, especially for people with disability or mental health conditions. Prioritising welfare outcomes over volume metrics can create lasting, life-enhancing partnerships.

Improving transparency and communication also strengthens internal collaboration between RQ and QRIC and deepens trust with external stakeholders. When the industry clearly communicates decision-making processes, defines consultation pathways and invites meaningful input, it aligns commercial and integrity objectives more effectively. These measures reduce confusion, support shared accountability and build a more unified industry voice. Ultimately, greater visibility and engagement will help uphold public trust, protect the industry's social licence and secure the long-term viability of Queensland's racing industry.

## 5 Social Pillar

The Social Pillar evaluates the Queensland racing industry's contribution to community identity, and its importance to the cohesion and economic vitality of communities throughout Queensland. 120 clubs operate 113 racetracks across the State, with more than 82 race meetings serving as the largest or second-largest community event in the town throughout the year.<sup>12</sup> Racing provides a unique platform for community participation, local pride and economic activity.

Despite its social value, the Review identified a set of issues, both long-standing and emerging, limiting the industry's ability to meet current-day expectations. These problems and opportunities span regional racing representation, workforce development and the visibility of the industry in public discussion. Addressing these concerns is vital to securing the industry's social licence and long-term future.

There are three specific challenges relevant to the Social Pillar that will be outlined subsequently and which the recommendations provided finally seek to address:

- **Regional Racing Representation:** The complexities of the regional racing context are not fully understood by the industry more broadly, undermining long-term investment and planning and resulting in a failure to optimise social and economic benefits to regional communities.
- **Labour Force Development:** Many roles in the racing industry are not viewed as attractive careers, resulting in a substantial labour force shortage.
- **Industry Engagement:** Existing systems for raising public awareness of racing activities are outdated, failing to engage a broad cross-section of potential race-day attendees.

### 5.1 General Social Licence to Operate

The concept of a social licence to operate refers to the level of acceptance and approval granted to an industry by the broader community. In Queensland, the racing industry continues to enjoy cultural relevance, particularly in regional areas. However, the Review found that this social licence is increasingly conditional, subject to evolving public expectations around transparency, animal welfare and social responsibility.

Community sentiment has shifted markedly in recent years. Industries that rely on public support and taxpayer funding, especially those involving animals, are under growing scrutiny. Racing is no exception. The Review acknowledges that public tolerance for practises perceived to fall short of expectations is diminishing, at a time when those same expectations are increasing. Reputational harm, whether justified or not, can erode industry standing quickly and decisively.

A number of stakeholders emphasised concerns regarding animal welfare, including the treatment of retired racehorses, injury prevention and management and the management of unregulated breeding. Others raised issues around participant welfare, including mental health, safety and working conditions, particularly for lower-paid or volunteer roles. There was also a call for greater transparency and accountability in decision-making, funding allocations and regulatory enforcement. Due to the unique role that the racing industry plays across many communities, maintaining its social licence to operate is an essential component of the industry's future success.

### 5.2 Limitations Affecting Industry Reach and Impact

#### 5.2.1 Regional Racing Representation

***“The complexities of the regional racing context are not fully understood by the industry more broadly, undermining long-term investment and planning and resulting in a failure to optimise social and economic benefits to regional communities.”***

The Review identified several constraints limiting the effectiveness of current planning and governance arrangements for regional racing in Queensland. Governance and funding arrangements in the racing industry are largely centralised, leading to decision-making processes that do not consistently consider the specific needs and priorities of regional communities. These arrangements have contributed to a metro-centric planning culture, where

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<sup>12</sup> Racing Queensland, Size and Scope of the Queensland Racing Industry, 2025, <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/getmedia/90949594-2a09-4f3d-b5c0-3979b3371371/FY24-RQ-Size-Scope-Report-Final.pdf>.

regional voices are perceived by certain stakeholders to be underrepresented in decisions that materially affect their operations and long-term sustainability.

A legacy of centralisation has produced several unintended consequences. Rigid compliance requirements, non-streamlined access to infrastructure investment and limited funding pathways have placed an increasing administrative and operational burden on regional clubs. These barriers have a material impact on local agency, particularly in communities where race clubs act as essential social infrastructure and hubs of regional identity.

A broad range of regional stakeholders described RQ's current model as overly Brisbane-focused, noting that planning frameworks, infrastructure decisions and funding allocations often overlook the scale, function and social value of regional racing. This sentiment was consistent across submissions and direct engagement, with concerns raised about the lack of tailored policy responses to regional workforce shortages, the ageing condition of club infrastructure and the inadequate level of prize money required to sustain local participation.



### Case Study: Economic impact of racing activities in Darling Downs–Maranoa and Toowoomba Region

The Darling Downs–Maranoa region, including Toowoomba, is one of Queensland's strongest racing regions, contributing \$182.9 million in value-added economic activity in FY2023–24. The industry supports 1,173 FTE jobs and engages nearly 6,000 participants, with thoroughbred racing accounting for over 90% of output.

The region is Queensland's leading centre for breeding and training, home to 176 registered thoroughbred breeders and nearly half the state's stallions. Infrastructure investment has supported upgrades at both metropolitan and country clubs, stimulating local construction and improving race-day capacity. Annual wagering turnover is conservatively estimated at \$100–\$150 million, driving prize money and reinvestment.

Socially, racing plays a foundational role in regional life. Events like the Weetwood Handicap and Roma Picnic Races are key community gatherings, with 81,000 attendees to thoroughbred race meetings recorded in 2022–23. Clubs also serve as educational and career entry points, with programs for youth, apprentices and equine students.

The racing industry in this region delivers a compelling combination of economic output, employment and social value. Strategic coordination of race scheduling, infrastructure funding and local engagement will be essential to maximise long-term regional benefits.

Stakeholders also drew attention to structural workforce gaps, particularly in roles critical to safe and sustainable operations, such as jockeys, track riders and stewards and expressed concern about the compounding effect of rising operational costs. Without targeted intervention, stakeholders predicted that smaller clubs will face increasing difficulty attracting and retaining participants, leading to the continued decline of local owners and trainers within the industry.

#### Alignment with Social Pillar

Racing is one of the few industries with a presence in communities of all sizes, fostering long-standing local traditions, community connection and regionally based employment. Strengthening regional decision-making aligns with the social pillar by ensuring that racing remains responsive to local needs and representative of its community base.

#### 5.2.2 Workforce and Volunteer Sustainability

***“Many roles in the racing industry are not viewed as attractive careers, resulting in a substantial labour force shortage”***

The Review identified that the sustainability of Queensland's racing workforce, both paid and volunteer, is under significant and growing pressure. The Review, via stakeholder feedback, determined that the racing industry lacks formalised, state-wide vocational pathways. As a result, young people interested in a career in the racing industry may be unable to access training or an opportunity to commence that career, while concerned parents and

caregivers may actively steer young people into alternative formal training programs which are perceived to offer greater employment opportunity, security and transferable skills. This has the effect of limiting the supply of qualified personnel essential to the safe conduct of race meetings. These include trackwork riders, stewards, farriers, clerks of the course and stable hands.

The Review found that the absence of a coordinated workforce strategy, linking roles, career progression and fair remuneration, has contributed to poor attraction and high turnover across the racing industry. These issues are most prominent in regional areas, where shortages of licenced personnel have already led to cancelled meetings, reduced field sizes and increased operational risks.

Stakeholders also expressed concern due to the decline in volunteer rates across clubs, both metro and regional. Whilst this is a broader societal trend experienced in many different areas, the impact on racing is particularly notable given that many clubs remain heavily reliant on an ageing volunteer base, without succession planning, training, or recognition frameworks in place. Clubs reported growing difficulty in attracting new volunteers, particularly younger people, increasing pressure on a small number of long-serving individuals.

Stakeholders across all codes highlighted low wages, demanding work hours and limited career pathways as key barriers to recruitment and retention. Without targeted reform, workforce and volunteer shortfalls pose a direct threat to the safe and sustainable delivery of racing in Queensland.

#### Alignment with Social Pillar

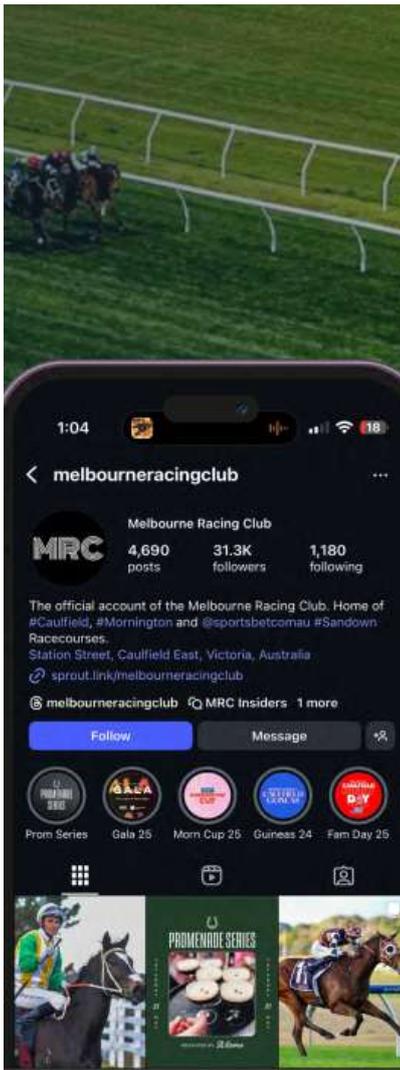
The ability of the racing industry to deliver social value is intrinsically linked to a sustainable, engaged and supported workforce. The Social Pillar emphasises participation, inclusion and continuity. Strengthening workforce and volunteer resilience directly contributes to these goals, allowing clubs to remain reliable pillars of regional and community life.

### 5.2.3 Industry Engagement

***“Existing systems for raising public awareness of racing activities are outdated, failing to engage a broad cross-section of potential race-day attendees.”***

The Review found that the methods of communicating and promoting race days currently implemented by race clubs have failed to adapt to contemporary media consumption habits. The effects of this on race day attendance and engagement were found to be particularly prevalent among younger cohorts residing in metropolitan areas. Existing systems have not effectively promoted public awareness of the racing industry's activities, social programs and contributions. Stakeholder feedback identified the need to reimagine both the industry's social media strategy and race day experience to attract members of the public who have disengaged with the racing industry.

Stakeholder feedback suggested that racing clubs were ill-equipped to maintain speed with the rapidly evolving social media marketing trends, reflecting the ageing demographic which occupy many of the board and management positions within the clubs. In response, the Review involved an audit of a number of racing club social media accounts with the results aligning with stakeholder feedback that the industry's social media marketing was largely ineffective at engaging a broad cross-section of potential race-day attendees, including younger demographics. Considerations of social media engagement spans from promotion to the technology's integration with the race-day experience.



### Case Study: RQ Digital Engagement Audit (commissioned by the Review)

An audit of organic social media across Brisbane Racing Club (BRC), Herbert River Jockey Club (HRJC) and Ipswich Turf Club (ITC) (1 Feb–30 Apr 2025) assessed alignment with business goals and the visibility of Racing.

The audit found that the performance varied widely across the three types of clubs. BRC delivered strong Instagram engagement (6.2%) but relied on race-heavy content that limited broader reach. ITC maintained consistency (0.47% engagement) but lacked brand identity and storytelling depth. HRJC showed the sharpest decline, with views falling to 41K (–73.6%), reach to 16K (–37.9%) and interactions to 531 (–70.9%), contributed to by a lack of clear narrative in postings.

The audit highlights a clear cultural shift: younger audiences are more selective, drawn to lifestyle-led experiences and attentive to welfare. Content that showcases events, hospitality, community and people will broaden relevance and future-proof reach. Benchmarking reinforces this:

- BRC outperforming Melbourne Racing Club on engagement but lags on lifestyle-first storytelling
- HRJC trails Griffith Jockey Club's branding and format
- ITC tops Newcastle on Instagram but falls short on visual energy and content mix

Statewide gaps were consistent, race-centric feeds, weak branding, poor calls-to-action and underuse of platform-native formats. The playbook is equally clear: diversify content pillars, elevate creative standards and deploy formats like Reels with stronger “call to actions”. This approach addresses audience shifts, embeds welfare visibility and positions RQ to lead a modern, audience-led model across clubs.

Adopting these changes will strengthen sponsor visibility, expand audience reach and extend brand relevance beyond race-day, enabling RQ to set a national benchmark for club storytelling and rural racing visibility.

Stakeholder feedback also suggested that racing clubs were failing to host race day events which were attractive to a broad cross-section of potential race day attendees. It was suggested that the integration of technology, digital display boards and more secondary activities (fireworks, amusements) to create a family environment at race days would be attractive to members of the public currently disengaged from the industry. Moreover, an increase in night-time races was considered as a means of potentially boosting track attendance, reflecting the scheduling shift which has taken place across other sports (e.g. Rugby League, T20 Big Bash).

Stakeholders across all codes highlighted the need to engage a broader cross-section of the public. The ageing demographic of the race day attendees and participants was acknowledged as a substantial risk to the industry's long-term sustainability.



### Case Study: Resurgence of Australian domestic cricket through the T20 Big Bash

The transformation of Australia's domestic Twenty20 cricket competition, the Big Bash League (BBL), illustrates the impact of strategic changes in format, presentation and scheduling to enhance a sport's public appeal. Initially launched in 2011, the BBL repositioned cricket as family-friendly entertainment, extending beyond traditional audiences by integrating music, fireworks, player access and fan zones into the stadium experience.

Crucially, the league introduced night-time scheduling to align with the availability of families and younger demographics during school holidays, maximising prime-time broadcast exposure and live attendance. This approach significantly increased average attendance, television ratings and social media engagement across diverse age groups and geographies.

The BBL's success demonstrates how adapting event presentation and scheduling to align with lifestyle patterns can reinvigorate traditional sports and broaden their public appeal. While cricket and racing differ in format, the underlying lesson of delivering accessible, entertainment-driven experiences that fit modern routines remains relevant to the future positioning of racing in Queensland.

#### Alignment with Social Pillar

The social value generated by the racing industry is reliant upon its ability to engage with a broad cross-section of the public. Where the industry fails to retain its relevance to large portions of the public, its potency as a means of generating community identity, regional cohesion and positive economic outcomes is substantially limited.

## 5.3 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

### 5.3.1 Stronger Regional Participation and Economic Development

Enhancing regional representation within racing governance allows decisions to reflect local economic, cultural and seasonal dynamics. Several regional stakeholders suggested that formalising local input into race scheduling, infrastructure investment and promotional strategies would improve alignment with regional priorities and strengthen the role of race meetings as a tool for local development.

The Review considered Queensland's regional participation model against other jurisdictions and found that in New South Wales, regionally integrated governance structures have enabled coordination of race programming with tourism campaigns and cultural festivals.<sup>13</sup> These efforts have led to improved community engagement, increased attendance and stronger regional economic returns. Stakeholders argued that Queensland requires similar structures, including digital advisory tools and regionally based consultation pathways.

Targeted regional reform presents a clear opportunity to strengthen all three racing codes. For Thoroughbred racing, viability would be improved through more responsive programming, strategic infrastructure investment and a streamlined compliance burden tailored to regional contexts. Harness racing would benefit from renewed grassroots momentum, with reduced participant attrition supported by upgraded facilities and regionally focused development pathways. In the greyhound code, repositioning regional tracks in line with community expectations would help enhance public value and maintain social acceptance. More broadly, empowering regions through inclusive governance would promote greater equity, build local ownership and foster stronger trust across the entire racing industry.

### 5.3.2 Sustainable Workforce and Volunteer Capacity

Workforce and volunteer sustainability underpins the sector's long-term viability and capacity to deliver safe, ethical and engaging race meetings. A coordinated, system-wide approach, built in partnership with training providers and licensing bodies, would foster clearer career pathways, reduce recruitment barriers, provide confidence to parents

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Racing NSW Country an incorporated body with the responsibility for ensuring the viability of racing, training, owning and breeding of thoroughbred racehorses in country areas of New South Wales. Also see the Australian Turf Club Partnership with Destination NSW to promote marquee racing events such as The Everest and the Sydney Autumn Carnival.

that their children were pursuing a secure and rewarding career and support the next generation of participants into the industry.

Stakeholders noted the importance of structured development frameworks, including accredited training, paid apprenticeships and subsidised pathways into key roles. Comparisons with leading jurisdictions such as Hong Kong demonstrate how professionalisation, clear standards and recognition programs can stabilise and elevate workforce quality.



### Case Study: Workforce development at the HKJC

The HKJC has implemented a comprehensive suite of initiatives and training programs aimed at upskilling its workforce, promoting professionalisation, establishing clear standards and enhancing recognition mechanisms. These efforts are designed to stabilise and elevate workforce quality across various departments.

**HKJCC:** The Hong Kong Jockey Club College (HKJCC), established in 2010, serves as the central hub for employee development within HKJC. It offers a comprehensive range of accredited and non-accredited programs aimed at enhancing the skills and professional growth of its workforce.

HKJCC offers over 200 people development programs annually, amounting to approximately 900 training sessions.

**Hong Kong Jockey Club's RTTC:** The Hong Kong Jockey Club's RTTC is a premier institution dedicated to cultivating skilled professionals for the horse racing industry. It encompasses two primary schools: the Apprentice Jockeys' School, focusing on riding talents and the Racing Talent School, which provides training for various other positions in the racing sector.

Community-based initiatives, such as therapeutic equine programs, youth engagement and regional internships, could broaden participation and renew the volunteer base. Embedding support systems for volunteers, including onboarding, training, digital tools and recognition schemes, would improve retention and strengthen governance outcomes.

### 5.3.3 Engaging future generations of race-goers

The industry's long-term sustainability is reliant on engaging with a broad cross-section of the public. Increasing attendance and engagement with the industry among younger demographics will increase the positive social and economic effects of race days in both regional and metropolitan areas. Further, strengthening positive engagement with the racing industry enhances community support and confidence in RQ's activities and objectives.

Engaging younger demographics, whose entertainment needs and demands vary from that of the ageing demographic which make up the majority of industry participants, necessitates a changed approach to event promotion and race-day offerings. Night-time racing, activating the infield with family-friendly entertainment and integrating technology with race day entertainment were highlighted as changes which could achieve broader appeal, when complemented with improved social media marketing.

Reimagining the racing industry to present as a popular social occasion for young people, especially in the regions, has the potential to have broader positive impacts for generational issues of loneliness and depression and will both share the joys of the sport and sustain the sport's popularity for years to come.

## 6 Financial Pillar

The Financial Pillar considers the funding structures, financial governance and investment practises that underpin the financial sustainability of Queensland's racing industry. It evaluates how revenue is distributed across the three racing codes, the transparency and efficiency of infrastructure investment and the financial oversight of race clubs and governing bodies. The pillar also considers whether the industry's financial systems are structured to support long-term growth, equitable participation and responsible use of public funds.

Stakeholders across all three codes expressed concern about the equity, transparency and efficiency of the racing industry's current financial systems. Participants highlighted the limited access to infrastructure funding for regional clubs and limited transparency and application to Revenue for one-off payments that are not operational in regards to grants and subsidies. There were also concerns raised about inconsistent financial reporting by race clubs, limited financial oversight of race clubs and shortcomings in strategic investment in long-term asset planning. Stakeholders emphasised these concerns within the context of an industry that too often operates in short-term political cycles, undermining its long-term financial sustainability. Establishing the balance with the other key financial driver being Race Field Fees and benchmarking with other jurisdictions, the aim is to establish a financially viable and competitive model that promotes industry growth.

The Review identified five key challenges that relate to the Financial Pillar, which are examined in the following sections:

- **Regional Infrastructure:** Regional clubs experience difficulties accessing funding for infrastructure upgrades to meet minimum standards, negatively impacting their ability to operate.
- **Infrastructure Funding Vehicles:** Funding mechanisms to facilitate infrastructure investment do not have sufficiently clear funding guidelines and management systems, resulting in funding decisions which fail to maximise the benefits to industry.
- **Operational and Financial Transparency:** Weak financial oversight and inconsistent reporting practises reduce accountability and increase the risk of financial mismanagement.
- **Asset Utilisation:** Underutilised racing assets limit the realisation of economic and social value for communities from use of the racing infrastructure for purposes other than race days.
- **Racecourse Ownership:** The racing industry lacks a coordinated approach to racecourse ownership, leasing arrangements and asset classification, limiting its ability to plan, invest and manage infrastructure for long-term sustainability and community benefit.

### 6.1 Wagering and POCT Revenue Dependence

The financial sustainability of RQ is heavily reliant on revenue derived from wagering activity, including proceeds from the POCT. 80% of the revenue collected through the POCT is returned to RQ to support industry funding. RQ is heavily reliant on this revenue to support its racing operations, industry payments and infrastructure investment across all three codes.

#### The POCT

The POCT, also referred to as the wagering or betting tax, is a 20% tax on the net wagering revenue generated from bets placed by Queensland residents with wagering operators. This tax applies when the bettor is located in Queensland at the time of placing the bet, hence the "point of consumption".

RQ's capacity to fund prize money, maintain facilities and support participation statewide is directly impacted by changes to wagering turnover and its effect on RQ's revenue from the POCT. Consequently, the structure and performance of the wagering market, along with the regulatory settings that govern it, are central to the financial health of the industry.

Stakeholders noted that while POCT has provided a more stable and substantial revenue stream compared to previous models, Queensland's current tax rate and policy settings may affect competitiveness relative to other jurisdictions. The cost of doing business for Wagering Service Providers and their willingness to invest in Queensland racing product can influence the overall size of the funding pool available to RQ.

The broader implications of POCT design, wagering market dynamics and product attractiveness are addressed in detail in the Wagering section of this report. However, it is important to acknowledge here that RQ's ongoing financial viability is closely linked to wagering performance and policy design. Ensuring this revenue source

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remains stable, competitive and well-aligned with industry objectives will be critical to supporting the long-term sustainability of Queensland’s racing sector.

## 6.2 Limitations Affecting Industry Reach and Impact

### 6.2.1 Regional Infrastructure

***“Regional clubs experience difficulties accessing funding for infrastructure upgrades to meet minimum standards, negatively impacting their ability to operate.”***

Regional race clubs face several barriers to accessing funding for the infrastructure upgrades required to meet prescribed minimum standards. These standards are designed to ensure safety, consistency and quality of race day experiences across the state. However, many clubs reported that the cost of compliance exceeds their available resources, particularly where upgrades involve prescribed lighting systems, fencing, or other capital-intensive works. For clubs operating with limited revenue or declining sponsorship, meeting these requirements is often financially unfeasible. Where such infrastructure is funded by government, it contributes to tensions with metropolitan clubs who view the funding of state-of-the-art facilities at regional clubs (who may be hosting only a small number of meetings per year) as diminishing funds available to deliver the infrastructure they require to host 30+ race meetings per annum.

Stakeholders described how these challenges are compounded by funding arrangements that heavily favour metropolitan venues. Regional and country clubs are left to compete for a narrow pool of capital support, with no transparent or structured mechanism to guide the allocation of resources across the state. Clubs located in larger regional centres such as Cairns and Toowoomba also reported difficulty accessing funding for complex or high-cost projects, despite playing a significant role in their local economies



#### Case Study: Tiered Infrastructure Standards in NSW

Racing NSW has implemented a tiered infrastructure standards model to reflect the different roles, needs and capacities of metropolitan, provincial and country clubs. Rather than applying uniform minimum standards across all venues, Racing NSW defines infrastructure expectations based on club classification, ensuring that safety and functionality are maintained without imposing unachievable requirements on smaller clubs.

Under this approach, country clubs are expected to meet core safety and operational benchmarks but are not held to the same capital-intensive requirements as metropolitan venues. For example, lighting, fencing and broadcast facilities may be scaled according to race day frequency, expected patronage, or strategic importance. This allows clubs with limited revenue to remain compliant and operational while gradually improving their infrastructure over time.

Stakeholders in Queensland consistently referenced this model as a practical and effective way to balance safety, sustainability and regional inclusion. Adopting a similar approach in Queensland would support more equitable infrastructure outcomes and reduce the risk of regional clubs falling into a cycle of underinvestment and non-compliance.

The minimum standards for facilities and infrastructure directly affects a club’s capacity to operate, particularly where burdensome standards prevent race meetings from proceeding at regional clubs. Though RQ’s Licenced Venue Standards apply a tiered system of minimum standard which place different minimum standard requirements on clubs depending on the number of annual race meets and turnover, the minimum standards required to be met by smaller clubs were similar in many instances to the minimum standards expected to be met by larger clubs. Stakeholders reported that under the Licenced Venue Standards, Regional clubs (9+ Meets) are often expected to meet the same requirements as Tier 1 clubs (60+ Meets and >\$300 M net assessable turnover of wagering), despite significant differences in scale, resources and race day activity. The Review found that there was a misalignment between the tiered minimum standards and the scale of race club operations. This was reported to be placing substantial financial pressure on regional clubs.

Clubs that fall short of compliance requirements risk losing scheduled race meetings, reducing revenue, participation and broader community engagement. In many cases, clubs rely almost entirely on government grants to fund essential works and lack the capacity to co-fund or manage infrastructure projects independently. This dependence creates a cycle of deferred maintenance and ad hoc repairs, driven by reactive funding rather than proactive planning.

Without improved access to infrastructure funding and more appropriate design standards for clubs with constrained budgets, the gap between metropolitan and regional venues will continue to widen. This undermines the financial resilience of country racing and weakens the goal of delivering a geographically balanced and accessible racing network across Queensland.

#### Alignment with Financial Pillar

The Financial Pillar prioritises equitable funding access, strategic capital investment and the sustainable operation of racing venues across Queensland. Regional infrastructure limitations, exacerbated by the application of uniform minimum standards that do not account for club size or capacity, limit RQ's capacity to support the resilience of regional racing and meet the needs of metropolitan clubs.

### 6.2.2 Infrastructure funding vehicles

***“Funding mechanisms to facilitate infrastructure investment do not have sufficiently clear funding guidelines and management systems, resulting in funding decisions which fail to maximise the benefits to industry.”***

An inconsistent, decentralised racing infrastructure funding and grant system, without clear guidelines and evaluation criteria, was found to no longer be fit-for-purpose for the racing industry as a whole. Stakeholders reported that funding allocations administered by RQ were not sufficiently transparent, had unclear or inaccessible eligibility criteria and were not administered in line with structured prioritisation processes. Furthermore, clubs were also found to be accessing grants and funding from other areas of Government without RQ's visibility, undermining attempts by RQ to equitably administer funding in accordance with a club's funding needs. Those clubs who had the capability to identify and successfully apply for government-wide grants were found, in a number of instances, to have significant cash holdings and strong profitability. However, RQ is required to have full visibility and understand club financial management best practise to appropriately administer funds – possibly through benchmarking performance through a Balanced Scorecard approach.

The Review found that the funds and grants administered by RQ were not guided by a centralised infrastructure investment strategy or future fund mechanism, constraining long-term planning activities. RQ's 2026 Strategic Plan has the stated objective to “deliver a long-term plan to provide new and enhanced amenities for our clubs” and the delivery of a 5-year Infrastructure Plan for the three codes of racing was a stated objective. These goals are strongly supported by the Review as a clear Infrastructure Plan will provide an actionable framework to guide future infrastructure investment, both in terms of what the priority investment initiatives are and what is the most rational delivery schedule. In the absence of the 5-year Infrastructure Plan, stakeholders, particularly in country areas,

indicated that they had limited confidence that RQ’s funding decisions adequately reflected their needs, priorities, or supported the industry’s sustainability outside of Southeast Queensland.



### Case Study: Asset Constraints at Albion Park

Albion Park, formerly Queensland’s principal venue for both harness and greyhound racing, illustrates the challenges that arise in the absence of a coordinated asset utilisation and renewal strategy. Despite its central role in hosting major race meetings, the facility has long suffered from infrastructure limitations, including ageing grandstand and inadequate public amenities. These limitations were a key factor in the decision to relocate greyhound racing to the newly constructed The Q.

Stakeholders have consistently highlighted that Albion Park does not meet the expectations of a modern, high-performing metropolitan racing venue. The site’s configuration and limited reinvestment over time have restricted its ability to host large-scale events, engage new audiences, or deliver broader commercial outcomes. Its high land value and constrained physical layout have also limited opportunities to diversify revenue or co-locate community facilities.

Proposals to relocate racing activities from Albion Park have circulated for more than a decade, but a definitive long-term infrastructure plan has yet to be implemented. As a result, RQ continues to allocate operational and racing resources to a site with declining utility, with the opportunity cost that strategic reinvestment elsewhere is unable to be pursued.

The experience at Albion Park demonstrates how underutilised or inflexible assets can become barriers to industry development. Without a clear asset strategy and reinvestment pathway, even key metropolitan venues risk falling behind, limiting their contribution to racing’s commercial, operational and community objectives.

Funding from other areas of Government without the visibility of RQ was found to undermine RQ’s ability to equitably administer funding in accordance with the club’s funding needs. The Review found that race clubs were accessing substantial funding from Government grant programs outside of those administered by RQ. A desktop review of Queensland’s grants systems found that race clubs were able to access funding from a minimum of eleven grant programs external to the funding provided by RQ. Without visibility of race club funding sources, RQ is unable to effectively tailor its investment pipeline to promote equitable race club funding and to maximise the benefit realised from the provision of funding.

Existing mechanisms to fund racing infrastructure negatively impacts the industry’s capacity to maintain safe, functional venues and restricts its ability to respond to changing demand.

#### Alignment with Financial Pillar

Weaknesses in current infrastructure funding mechanisms undermine the Financial Pillar’s objectives of structured, strategic and accountable capital investment. A lack of transparent eligibility criteria, consistent assessment processes and robust project oversight has led to fragmented decision-making, reducing efficiency and creating inequitable access to capital across codes and regions. The Review discovered there were numerous clubs who were not aware of any or all of the grants available or felt ill equipped to apply for a grant as they didn’t have the necessary skills to make the application.

#### 6.2.3 Operational and Financial Transparency

***“Weak financial oversight and inconsistent reporting practises reduce accountability and increase the risk of financial mismanagement”.***

The racing industry in Queensland lacks a consistent and rigorous approach to operational oversight and financial governance. Inadequate controls, limited visibility and inconsistent reporting standards across clubs, RQ and QRIC has undermined confidence in the sector’s reporting and created an environment where misconduct or mismanagement may go undetected.

The Review identified serious concerns regarding the absence of standardised financial reporting among race clubs. Stakeholders cited examples of poor record-keeping, questionable procurement practises and mismanagement of funds. Current arrangements for Board travel and remuneration also lacked defined parameters, contributing to unclear expenditure oversight and perceptions of poor governance. Clubs reported minimal guidance on financial accountability and regulators have been perceived as being reluctant to intervene or uncertain where responsibility lay, even when credible concerns were raised.

The Review also found that the treatment of government grants was inconsistent across clubs, with some recording grants as operating revenue rather than capital income. The Review believes that this practice is most likely related to unclear reporting guidelines and the level of experience, capability and professionalism in clubs' financial functions. Notwithstanding the causes or origins, this practice artificially inflated the financial position of certain clubs and obscured the true cost of operations. The lack of standardised reporting presents difficulties when attempting to assess the financial health and sustainability of the racing industry as a whole.

#### Alignment with Financial Pillar

The identified gaps in financial oversight, inconsistent reporting standards and operational inefficiencies undermine commitments to transparency, accountability and sound governance. These issues increase the risk of mismanagement and reduce stakeholder trust in the industry's financial stewardship.

#### 6.2.4 Asset utilisation

***“Underutilised racing assets limit the realisation of economic and social value for communities from use of the racing infrastructure for purposes other than race days.”***

The Review identified that Queensland's racing industry lacks a coordinated approach to optimising the utilisation of its racing assets to maximise the realisation of long-term social and economic benefits. Without frameworks to incentivise a proactive approach for clubs 'sweating' their assets, many clubs defer operational changes or retain earnings rather than using their infrastructure to generate sustained value.

Stakeholders noted that racing assets are often underutilised outside race days, with limited incentives to repurpose venues for community use, training programs, or commercial partnerships. In some cases, assets acquired or developed through public funding or major grants are only used a handful of times per year and are left dormant for the remainder, reducing the economic return on investment for the Government and its utility for the public.

The absence of an overarching asset utilisation strategy has also contributed to inconsistent standards of upkeep and renewal. Clubs operate independently, often without shared tools or guidance on lifecycle planning, capital depreciation, or joint ventures. Smaller regional clubs reported lacking the capacity to reinvest in or adapt their assets to meet changing operational needs. Some stakeholders noted that regional clubs had, on an ad hoc basis, attempted to utilise underused infield areas, with beneficial outcomes in some cases. However, the Review found these efforts were isolated, with many racecourses continuing to maintain large infield spaces that are not utilised for commercial or community benefit and effectively sit idle year-round. The maintenance of such large spaces without a view of realising financial or social value is a missed opportunity to generate revenue and improve the industry's financial position and local engagement. The industry faces uncertainty about its long-term viability without a consistent view among Government, RQ and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development (who administers crown land in Queensland) about opportunities for land to be transferred to the racing industry to maintain and utilise for the racing industry and community use.



### Case Study: Infrastructure Constraints in Regional Greyhound Venues

The greyhound racing venues in Townsville, Rockhampton and Bundaberg demonstrate how tenure insecurity and shared-use arrangements limit code growth and compromise welfare standards.

The Townsville Greyhound Racing Club operates on a short-term lease at the Townsville Showgrounds. Though the Greyhound Racing Club has operated at the Townsville Showgrounds since 1936, the tenure risk introduced by the short-term leasing arrangement has restricted investment at the site, limiting infrastructure upgrades. This arrangement can also place racing operations in conflict with non-racing events. In Rockhampton and Bundaberg, greyhound racing is conducted inside a thoroughbred track. The Rockhampton greyhound track is on land owned by the Rockhampton Jockey Club and the Bundaberg greyhound track is on land owned by the local council.

Unless robust operational systems are put in place, shared use facilities can reduce scheduling flexibility, limit investment and be a barrier to long-term planning.

Each site operates under legacy arrangements that no longer meet the expectations of a modern racing industry. Without purpose-built facilities and secure tenure, these venues remain constrained in their ability to meet commercial and community objectives. Their experience highlights the need for targeted infrastructure reform and code-specific investment in regional Queensland.

Without incentivising optimal use of racing assets, the industry is limited in its ability to maximise the social and economic value of its infrastructure footprint. Without clearer expectations and support for strategic asset use, many clubs will continue to underutilise their assets and opportunities to broaden racing's community contribution will be lost.

#### Alignment with Financial Pillar

Underutilisation of industry-owned assets limits the return on existing investment and reduces the economic and social value delivered by racing infrastructure. The Financial Pillar prioritises the efficient use of capital and the strategic leveraging of assets for long-term benefit.

#### 6.2.5 Racecourse ownership

**The racing industry lacks a coordinated approach to racecourse ownership, leasing arrangements and asset classification, limiting its ability to plan, invest and manage infrastructure for long-term sustainability and community benefit.**

The Review identified that Queensland's racing industry lacks a consistent and transparent approach to racecourse ownership, leasing arrangements and asset classification. The fragmented ownership landscape has created uncertainty around who is responsible for maintaining, investing in, or redeveloping racing infrastructure.

Ownership structures vary widely across the state, with some racecourses held by individual clubs, others leased from local governments or the state and some operating under informal, outdated or 'handshake' agreements. Stakeholders reported that these inconsistent arrangements make it difficult to determine who is empowered to make key decisions, or who is best placed to represent the interest of a race club in complicated negotiations around facility upgrades, access and land use.

Without a comprehensive land audit or classification system, RQ and Government lack visibility over the condition and strategic value of race club sites. This limits RQ's ability to prioritise infrastructure renewal, rationalise underused venues, or identify opportunities for shared or alternative use.

Race clubs have been unable to access clear guidance on the implications of the club's ownership or leasing arrangements on their activities or the opportunities for long-term investment and planning. Without clear advice, clubs are limited in their ability to redevelop surplus land or co-locate racing with community infrastructure.

## Alignment with Financial Pillar

Without a thorough and coordinated system to identify the restrictions and opportunities for the development of race clubs' land, the industry has been limited in its ability to plan for future growth, optimise the utilisation of land holdings and efficiently deliver infrastructure upgrades.

### 6.3 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

#### 6.3.1 Improved Access to Regional Infrastructure Funding

Expanding access to infrastructure funding will enable regional clubs to maintain safe, functional venues and deliver consistent race meetings. A fairer and more predictable funding model would reduce reliance on crisis-driven grants and support long-term planning.

Currently, many clubs operate in a cycle of deferred maintenance and emergency repairs, relying heavily on crisis-driven grants with little capacity for long-term planning. Stakeholders highlighted the need for a fairer and more predictable model, one that combines targeted capital investment with ongoing maintenance allocations to support stable operations and reduce safety risks.

Importantly, aligning infrastructure investment with community benefit was a recurring theme. Stakeholders proposed stronger partnerships between race clubs, local governments and training organisations to develop shared-use facilities that support both racing and broader community outcomes, such as accessible amenities, multipurpose spaces and training or education venues.

Improving regional access to infrastructure funding will help ensure that all parts of the racing industry, regardless of geography, can operate safely, attract participation and contribute meaningfully to their local communities.

#### 6.3.2 Stronger and More Transparent Infrastructure Funding Mechanisms

Establishing clear and accountable infrastructure funding systems will strengthen industry confidence, improve investment outcomes and ensure capital is directed to projects that deliver long-term value. Transparent and strategic decision-making frameworks will allow RQ to prioritise safety, functionality and future growth across all codes and regions.

The Review identified a clear need for an independent expert body to review, oversee and approve the allocation of significant grants and infrastructure funding in accordance with a publicly available framework. The RIF is currently administered by RQ and the Queensland Government Office of Racing. An independent expert body to administer the RIF, with a clearly defined purpose to direct funding to benefit the industry's long-term sustainability, would buoy industry confidence that funds are being equitably distributed and support positive public sentiment towards the industry's integrity and governance.

Stakeholders emphasised that aligning the goals of the RIF with the development of a statewide Country Infrastructure Plan would ensure funding is directed to projects of genuine strategic and operational need. While funds are currently administered through the Country Club Asset Funding initiative, the Review found that this program appears to operate without a clearly articulated strategy or publicly available assessment criteria. Independent oversight would promote greater confidence that infrastructure proposals are assessed fairly, transparently and on their merits.

Facilitating improved visibility of race club funding from Government grants and funding initiatives external to RQ will promote a more equitable funding system which will be better informed to maximise the benefit able to be realised through the provision of funds administered by RQ. Amendments to reporting standards which provides guidance on how external grant funding is to be treated will provide clarity to race clubs, while also allowing RQ to tailor its infrastructure funding pipeline to equitably administer funds in accordance with funding needs.

A strategic, needs-based approach to infrastructure delivery will enhance accountability, reduce inefficiencies and ensure the long-term resilience of Queensland's racing infrastructure network.

### 6.3.3 Improved Operational and Financial Transparency

A professional, transparent and accountable governance framework is essential to building confidence in the racing industry's stewardship of funds. Enhancing operational and financial transparency will reduce the risk of mismanagement, support more responsible decision-making and demonstrate that both public and industry contributions are being used effectively.

Stakeholders called for the introduction of consistent reporting standards across race clubs, including standardised profit and loss statements, balance sheets and the separation of grants received from operating revenue. These tools would improve financial visibility across the sector and enable the early identification of signs of financial stress, governance concerns, or non-compliance. Early detection allows for targeted intervention, avoiding larger failures that could damage reputations or undermine club viability.

Improved transparency was also seen as critical to reinforcing racing's social licence. As significant funding is drawn from wagering taxes and government support, the public and industry participants must have confidence that these funds are being managed with integrity and oversight. Clear and accessible reporting would improve accountability and ensure that performance can be objectively assessed.

By establishing robust financial controls and governance expectations, the industry can foster a more credible, equitable and sustainable operating environment, one that rewards good stewardship and underpins long-term success across all levels of Queensland racing.

### 6.3.4 More Strategic and Efficient Asset Utilisation

Maximising the strategic use of racing assets is essential to strengthening the industry's long-term financial sustainability and delivering broader community benefit. With clearer expectations around reinvestment, utilisation and redevelopment, clubs will be better positioned to adapt their facilities to meet both operational and local needs.

Stakeholders expressed strong support for more flexible, multi-purpose infrastructure models that unlock new revenue streams and enable more efficient use of existing land and buildings. Clubs proposed a variety of approaches, including reinvesting retained earnings into capital works, pursuing joint ventures and co-locating compatible services such as hospitality venues, training facilities, or educational programs. These models not only generate financial returns but also extend the social utility of racing venues beyond race days.



#### Case Study: Reinvestment at GCTC

The GCTC provides a leading example of strategic asset utilisation through long-term reinvestment and redevelopment. Since 2012, GCTC has through a combination of sources including Racing Queensland, the RIF and its own funding has invested more than \$160 million in its facilities, including a \$70 million project to upgrade the track, install a new tunnel and lighting and develop a dedicated events and entertainment precinct.

This investment has improved racing quality and operational capability while also expanding the club's commercial footprint. Enhanced facilities have attracted stronger corporate sponsorship, increased attendance and generated new income streams from non-racing events.

Stakeholders noted that GCTC's success was underpinned by clear strategic planning and alignment with broader community and commercial objectives. This clear strategic planning is underpinned by GCTC's freehold tenure which provides the club with long term security over their investments.

The GCTC example demonstrates the benefits of long-term planning, disciplined reinvestment and a multi-purpose vision for racing infrastructure, an approach that can be replicated by other clubs with the right governance and ownership settings.

By reducing duplication and opening up facilities for wider use, clubs can strengthen ties with their communities and improve year-round utilisation of underused assets, particularly infield areas. Over time, this approach also reduces dependency on public grants by supporting self-sustaining investment in maintenance and upgrades.

Embedding asset optimisation within broader local development planning will allow racing venues to evolve as multi-functional community hubs, reinforcing their relevance, resilience and economic contribution to the regions they serve.

### 6.3.5 Improved Racecourse Ownership and Planning

Clarifying racecourse ownership and leasing arrangements will enable more coordinated planning, unlock redevelopment opportunities and reduce inefficiencies in infrastructure delivery. A consistent framework will provide greater certainty over how land is used and invested in.

Stakeholders identified the current fragmentation of ownership as a barrier to planning. Without clear tenure or asset classification, clubs struggle to undertake long-term investment planning, negotiate shared use or respond to redevelopment opportunities. The problem is amplified in high-value urban areas, where racing venues could be adapted to deliver broader benefits to a large local population. By improving ownership structures and planning tools, the industry is better informed to be able to 'sweat' its assets, respond more flexibly to change and ensure racing infrastructure supports future growth and the prosperity of the local community.



#### **Case Study: Productive Land Use at Gayndah Racecourse**

Gayndah Racecourse, one of Queensland's oldest regional venues, demonstrates the value of flexible asset utilisation. To make better use of its underutilised infield, the club began cultivating crops, generating modest revenue and reducing maintenance costs between race meetings.

The initiative was made possible by the club's ability to access and manage its land without complex leasing or regulatory barriers. It allowed the venue to remain operationally ready for race days while engaging local producers and contributing to the regional economy. Stakeholders viewed this as a low-cost, community-aligned strategy that strengthened the club's financial sustainability.

Gayndah's approach illustrates the potential for racecourses, particularly in regional areas, to diversify land use when they have certainty over tenure and clear planning support. It reinforces the case for more consistent ownership frameworks that enable clubs to make long-term decisions about how land is used, shared or redeveloped.

By enabling greater autonomy over assets, the industry can unlock practical and innovative solutions that support both financial resilience and broader community benefit.

Improved clarity on racecourse ownership would also support better infrastructure forecasting. A consistent classification system would allow the assessment of venues based on safety, utilisation and future potential, informing objective funding decisions and rationalisation of investments where needed

## 7 Wagering Pillar

The Wagering Pillar considers the regulatory and market settings that underpin wagering activity in Queensland's racing industry. Wagering remains the industry's primary commercial driver, funding prize money, race programming and infrastructure investment across all three codes. Given this reliance, the competitiveness and efficiency of Queensland's wagering systems are critical to the industry's long-term sustainability.

The Review found that Queensland's wagering arrangements, particularly its tote structures, programming practises and operator engagement, are increasingly misaligned with the demands of a modern, digital-first market. Stakeholders reported that current market environment discourages innovation, limits investment and fails to support effective collaboration with wagering operators. While wagering markets have softened nationally, the sharp decline in Queensland turnover was viewed as disproportionately severe, reflecting deeper structural issues that require urgent reform.

The Review identified two key challenges under the Wagering Pillar, which are examined in the following sections:

- **Structural Weaknesses in Queensland's Wagering Ecosystem:** Queensland's wagering systems are no longer fit-for-purpose, reducing the industry's ability to compete for turnover in an increasingly digital, data-driven and consumer-focused environment.
- **Fiscal Pressures Weakening Wagering Revenue Base:** Queensland's Tax Policy has made its wagering product commercially uncompetitive, driving sharper turnover declines and undermining industry revenue sustainability.

### 7.1 Limitations Affecting Industry Reach and Impact

#### 7.1.1 Structural Weaknesses in Queensland's Wagering Ecosystem

***“Queensland's wagering systems are no longer fit-for-purpose, reducing the industry's ability to compete for turnover in an increasingly digital, data-driven and consumer-focused environment.”***

Queensland's wagering systems have not maintained pace with contemporary wagering behaviours, resulting in a misalignment between the wagering products able to be offered by WSPs and the expectations of the modern-day wagering customer. WSPs have reduced their activities in the Queensland market as other jurisdictions are viewed as having wagering systems in place which are more commercially attractive. Queensland's current wagering systems are limiting the industry's potential for growth, contributing to the State's substantial fall-off in wagering turnover.

Queensland experiences chronically low liquidity in its tote pools. The Review found that more than 60 per cent of win pools on Queensland races fall below \$500. Low liquidity results in large fluctuations in dividend prices, with even a small wager being able to disproportionately affect the final payout. This undermines the confidence in the tote's integrity and discourages professional punters from engaging in the market. Low liquidity also undermines the attraction of exotic bets, such as trifectas, first fours and quadrellas. These products rely on deeper pools to offer meaningful payouts. In a low-liquidity setting, exotic bet payouts are either unappealingly small or highly volatile, reducing engagement with these higher-margin products. Low liquidity tote pools can create a negative feedback loop where low participation leads to poor odds, which discourages further wagering activity and negatively affects the industry's long-term viability. The long-term decline of parimutuel wagering, which is contracting at an annual rate of approximately 6 per cent,<sup>14</sup> may provide evidence of this negative feedback loop nationally. Diminishing tote viability reduces market diversity and leaves the industry overly reliant on fixed-odds betting, where margin and turnover may be more sensitive to regulatory or competitive shifts.

The absence of a national tote continues to undermine parimutuel wagering in Australia. Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria continue to operate separate tote pools, foregoing the benefits which could be realised through a national tote. While South Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania pay into the Queensland tote pool, liquidity could be substantially improved through a merger with New South Wales and Victoria.

Queensland's harness, greyhound and lower tier thoroughbred race meets face challenges attracting viewership and visibility. Stakeholders reported that many of Queensland's races are only broadcast on digital streaming

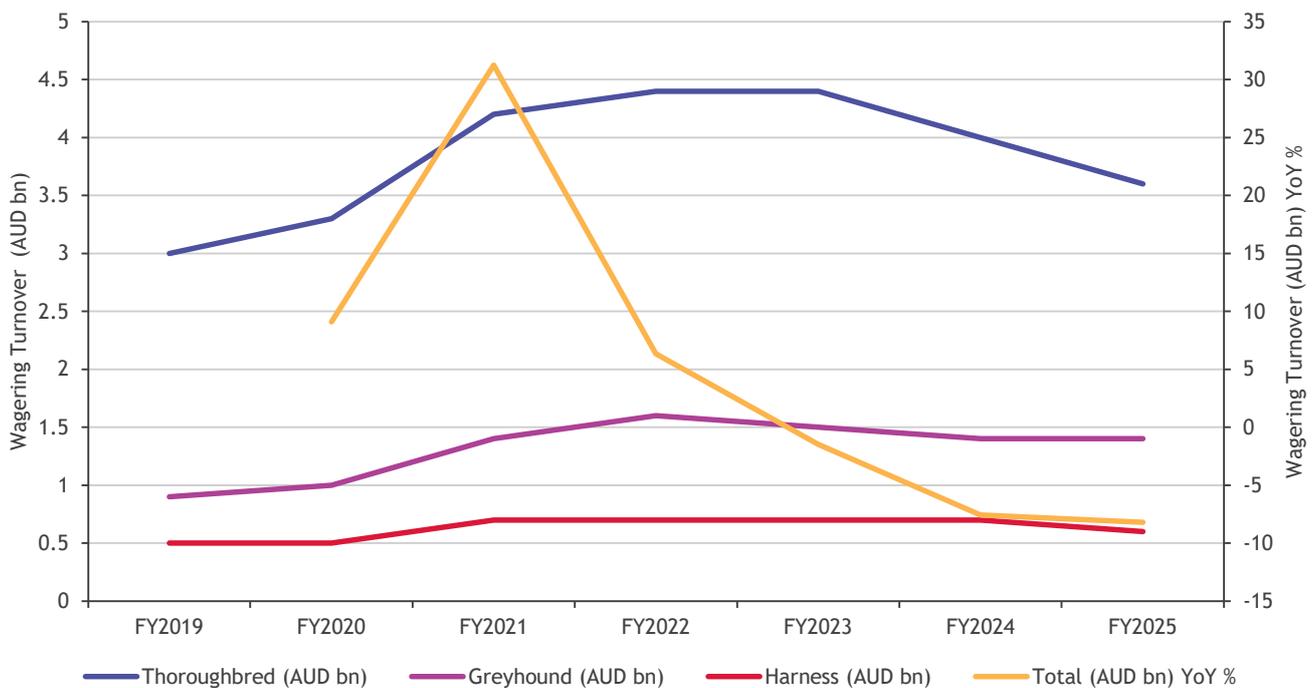
<sup>14</sup> Bren O'Brien, The Straight, *Run the Numbers – The not-so slow death of the Australian tote*, 2024, <https://thestraight.com.au/run-the-numbers-the-not-so-slow-death-of-the-australian-tote/>.

platforms or Sky Racing 2, which is not shown in many venues, reducing visibility and betting activity. Queensland has taken initial steps to improve regional race visibility through the promotion of live streaming and pilot initiatives, but stakeholders noted that broader integration with mainstream platforms and consistent national promotion is still lacking.

Queensland’s race programming was described by stakeholders as aligning poorly with the expectations of the modern punter. Stakeholders expressed concern about the number of races which have reduced field sizes and the scheduling of races outside of peak wagering windows, the periods where betting activity is at its highest. Presenting a product which does not meet expected standards in terms of field size at a time which is not aligned with betting activity is highly likely to be contributing to Queensland’s downturn in wagering turnover.

Stakeholders provided feedback that Queensland’s product fee structure disincentivises WSPs from marketing Queensland’s races. Described as the fee to access Queensland race information, the product fee is calculated and paid monthly by WSPs, primarily based on a flat percentage fee of turnover or profit (with few performance-based incentives). WSPs provided submissions to the effect that the flat percentage product fee disincentivised them from marketing Queensland races. It was argued that the WSPs are able to realise greater benefit from marketing races in jurisdictions which apply a tiered product fee structure, where they are able to qualify for lower rates through increased betting volume. By disincentivising WSPs from marketing Queensland’s racing product, Queensland’s current product fee structure is driving bettors to alternative markets and is contributing to Queensland’s declining wagering turnover.

**Figure 4: Queensland Wagering Turnover via Code**



Source: Racing Queensland Annual Report 2024/25 – ‘Wagering turnover on QLD product by code’ chart (FY16–FY25)

Queensland’s wagering systems are in many instances misaligned with a commercially viable environment for WSPs. Without targeted reform, Queensland’s wagering systems may contribute to challenges in maintaining the industry’s market relevance and long-term sustainability.



### Case Study: Dynamic Product Fee Structures in New South Wales

Racing New South Wales has adopted a dynamic product fee model that enables more strategic engagement with wagering operators and promotes investment in New South Wales racing products. Rather than applying a single, flat fee across all race types and operators, Racing NSW uses a tiered approach that varies according to product type, operator scale and commercial value.

Under this model, different fee rates apply depending on whether a bet is placed on a win, place, exotic, or multi-leg bet and whether it is offered by a corporate bookmaker, tote operator, or on-course bookmaker. This enables Racing NSW to maximise value on high-return products while maintaining competitive fee settings that encourage innovation and participation. It also allows for temporary promotional discounts or targeted incentive arrangements to stimulate turnover in underperforming segments.

Stakeholders in Queensland consistently cited this model as a more commercially responsive framework that better aligns with the needs of modern wagering markets. They noted that the current fixed-fee approach lacks the flexibility to incentivise operator marketing, app integration, or broadcast upgrades. Adopting a tiered or more dynamic structure, modelled on NSW’s example, would enable Queensland to compete for operator investment and improve the visibility and attraction of its racing product.

#### Alignment with Wagering Pillar

Improving the structure and performance of Queensland’s wagering systems is fundamental to securing the industry’s commercial future. The Wagering Pillar recognises that wagering is the primary revenue source underpinning prize money, infrastructure investment and operational sustainability. A modernised wagering environment, aligned with punter behaviour and operator strategies, will improve Queensland’s competitiveness, support innovation and drive longer-term funding certainty across all three racing codes.

#### 7.1.2 Fiscal Pressures Weakening Wagering Revenue Base

***“Queensland’s Tax Policy has made its wagering product commercially uncompetitive, driving sharper turnover declines than other states and undermining industry revenue sustainability.”***

Queensland’s taxation regime has contributed to making the State’s wagering product commercially uncompetitive. The taxation system places a greater burden on WSPs than any other Australian State. Consequently, WSPs have reduced their marketing expenditure and the availability of special offers in Queensland, accelerating the State’s declining wagering turnover relative to other jurisdictions.

The decline in Queensland’s wagering turnover has been more severe than the national average, with RQ reporting a 9.3 per cent year-on-year decline.<sup>15</sup> While part of this reflects national economic trends and post-COVID corrections, stakeholders highlighted Queensland’s tax settings as having intensified this downturn.

<sup>15</sup> Racing Queensland, Racing Queensland Annual Report 2024/2025, <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/getmedia/cc08941e-74b1-4a25-b44f-3c798cd3a112/20250917-RQ-2024-25-Annual-Report-Final.pdf>.

The increase in Queensland’s POCT was raised with the Review as being out-of-step with all other Australian States, undermining the attraction of Queensland’s wagering markets for WSPs. In June 2022, the Queensland Government raised the POCT from 15 per cent of net wagering revenue to 20 per cent of gross wagering revenue and expanded it to include bonus bets. With all other states retaining a 15 per cent POCT, this places the Queensland market as an outlier and disincentivises WSPs from engaging in this market. WSPs have reduced their activity in the Queensland market accordingly, with particular emphasis on reducing the availability of bonus bets.



### Case Study: POCT Model in Queensland

Queensland introduced a reformed POCT model in 2022, increasing the tax rate from 15 to 20 per cent and expanding the base to include bonus bets. Unlike other jurisdictions, 80 per cent of POCT revenue is legislatively hypothecated to Racing Queensland, providing funding certainty and enabling a \$31 million prize money uplift in FY2022–23.

Stakeholders broadly supported the guaranteed reinvestment mechanism, noting it resolved past uncertainty caused by discretionary funding. However, several wagering operators raised concerns about the commercial impact of the higher tax rate. They reported reduced promotional activity, fewer Queensland-specific campaigns and lower appetite to trial new products in the State. Some submissions indicated the changes had made Queensland a less attractive market relative to lower-tax jurisdictions.

While RQ benefits from steady funding, operators argued that the POCT uplift shifted tax risk solely onto them, without offering corresponding commercial incentives or input into performance levers. Stakeholders noted that ensuring POCT settings remain responsive and balanced will be critical to sustaining long-term turnover and maintaining Queensland’s wagering competitiveness.

RQ’s revenue is heavily reliant on wagering turnover and will be substantially impacted by the withdrawal of WSPs from the Queensland betting market caused by an uncompetitive tax regime. 80 per cent of POCT revenue is provided to RQ to fund prize money, infrastructure investment and industry development. Though the increase in the POCT from 15 per cent to 20 per cent has lifted the revenue available to RQ in the short term, the accelerated decrease in betting turnover which has resulted from the POCT increase will have a negative impact on RQ’s long-term revenue. RQ’s heavy reliance on revenue from wagering activities may become increasingly unsustainable without a more competitive and responsive taxation regime encouraging WSPs to reengage with the Queensland market.

### Alignment with Wagering Pillar

Addressing fiscal policies which are contributing to declining turnover is essential to protecting the future of Queensland’s racing industry. The Wagering Pillar emphasises the need to adapt to rapidly evolving market conditions and to secure consistent reinvestment from wagering activity. Stabilising revenue flows through commercial alignment and effective funding mechanisms will strengthen financial sustainability.

## 7.2 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

### 7.2.1 Modernising Queensland’s Wagering Systems

Reforming Queensland’s wagering system to align with contemporary wagering behaviours will facilitate greater involvement from WSPs in the Queensland market. Greater involvement in the Queensland market from WSPs will leverage private sector capabilities to effectively promote wagering products and innovative offerings to drive industry growth.

By promoting the reform of a national tote, Queensland is positioning itself to address the issues associated with its current chronically shallow tote pools. Where liquidity is injected into tote pools accessed by Queensland bettors through a national tote, dividends would be expected to stabilise, and professional punters would be encouraged to return to the market. Moreover, the availability and dividend stability of exotic bets would improve, increasing engagement with these higher-margin products. While Queensland’s parimutuel wagering markets could be

described as being in the midst of a negative feedback loop, where low participation leads to poor odds, which discourages further wagering activity, a national tote could act as the required circuit breaker to return parimutuel wagering markets to a positive footing. Further engagement in the World Pool series could also address the issue of declining tote liquidity, with Queensland racing able to access the substantial tote liquidity provided through the global market.

Digital engagement emerged as a critical opportunity to modernise Queensland's wagering ecosystem. Stakeholders encouraged RQ to prioritise improvements in mobile user experience, explore opportunities to integrate artificial intelligence to improve the customer experience and expand and promote the use of immersive formats such as live streaming, micro markets and gamified interfaces. These innovations were viewed as essential to attracting younger audiences, improving retention and increasing total wagering activity. The Review noted that partnerships with national and international digital platforms may be necessary to effectively deliver an immersive digital experience.

Increasing the visibility of Queensland's harness, greyhound and Tier 2, 3 and 4 thoroughbred races, (typically regional or provincial events), was highlighted as being essential to unlocking greater wagering participation. Stakeholders called for enhanced scheduling on Sky 1, more consistent live streaming and stronger promotion of regional events.



### Case Study: Regional Race Visibility and Broadcast Strategy in New South Wales

Racing NSW has adopted a multi-platform broadcast and digital engagement strategy to increase the visibility of regional and lower-tier race meetings. This approach includes partnerships with Sky Racing and free-to-air broadcasters, enhanced use of social media and development of digital tools to improve the punter experience across all levels of racing.

Stakeholders attributed growth in wagering participation to these broadcast reforms, particularly the consistent scheduling of regional races on Sky 1 and the free-to-air broadcast of key meetings. These efforts were supported by Racing NSW's investment in racecourse infrastructure, which improved the broadcast readiness of venues and enhanced the quality of coverage across the State.

Digital engagement tools such as Punter's Intel were also credited with increasing visibility and providing punters with data-rich previews, sectional times and post-race insights. These tools helped support the discoverability of regional meetings and positioned them more competitively in a crowded wagering market.

The Review noted that Racing NSW's strategic integration of infrastructure, broadcast and digital reform created a virtuous cycle of improved visibility and wagering growth. Stakeholders emphasised that coordinated visibility initiatives, underpinned by consistent scheduling and broadcast quality, were essential to strengthening the commercial viability of regional racing.

Several submissions highlighted the importance of aligning race timing, field sizes and feature events with peak wagering windows. An expansion of intrastate series, themed race days and night racing were also identified as opportunities to increase bettor engagement and reduce scheduling clashes. Presenting a product which meets bettor expectations about field size at a time which minimises scheduling clashes while aligning heightened betting activity is expected to be contributing substantially to reversing or slowing Queensland's downturn in wagering turnover.

Restructuring Queensland's product fee model to incentivise commercial activity from WSPs in the Queensland market will attract bettors from alternative markets and contribute to reversing Queensland's declining wagering turnover. A tiered product fee model will incentivise WSPs to promote the Queensland racing industry as a means of accessing lower product fee rates, aligning the industry's interest in increasing wagering turnover with the WSPs' commercial interest to increase profit margins.

Bringing Queensland's wagering systems into alignment with a commercially viable environment for WSPs will increase the number of bettors engaging with Queensland racing, therefore supporting the industry to maintain market relevance and its long-term sustainability.

### 7.2.2 Stabilising and Growing Industry Revenue

The Review heard that reducing Queensland's POCT from 20 per cent to 15 per cent would contribute to creating a more commercially friendly environment for WSPs, bringing Queensland into alignment with the POCT rates imposed by all other Australian States. Stakeholders highlighted that by reducing the cost for WSPs to do business in Queensland, the State would be stimulating industry investment and restoring confidence in the long-term sustainability of Queensland's racing sector. Aligning Queensland's POCT rate with other jurisdictions would remove a key cost differential currently discouraging operator activity and would empower RQ to compete for promotional support, product prioritisation and platform visibility.

Stakeholders indicated that a 15 per cent POCT rate would materially improve commercial incentives for WSPs to invest in Queensland-specific offerings. This includes bonus bet campaigns, race sponsorship funding, enhanced broadcast coverage and the integrations of Queensland racing to feature more prominently on digital platforms and customer acquisition strategies. A more favourable tax environment would reduce the incentive for punters to switch to offshore or interstate markets, supporting turnover growth and expanding Queensland's domestic market share. This would help reverse recent declines in betting activity and re-establish Queensland racing as a viable commercial priority for operators.

A more competitive tax setting would improve downstream industry outcomes. Higher turnover and greater operator engagement would support increases in prize money, improve returns to participants and provide RQ with a more stable platform for infrastructure investment and strategic programming. These reforms would ensure that Queensland's wagering ecosystem is financially viable, nationally competitive and attractive to future investment.

## 8 Ownership Pillar

The Ownership Pillar evaluates the conditions that influence the viability, sustainability and appeal of racing animal ownership in Queensland. Ownership is a critical foundation of the racing industry, directly underpinning field sizes, trainer viability and long-term participation. Across all three codes, owners contribute significant financial and personal resources to the industry, yet many described their experience as increasingly burdensome and unsustainable, introducing a risk that owners will exit the industry.

The Review identified a range of issues that are reducing the attraction and accessibility of ownership. These include rising operational costs, limited support structures and inconsistent engagement from clubs and governing bodies. Owners which predominantly race at regional tracks are impacted by rising operational costs, compared to owners which predominantly race at metropolitan tracks. Without targeted reform, the ownership base will continue to shrink, threatening participation rates, race scheduling and broader community involvement.

There are two specific challenges relevant to the Ownership Pillar that are outlined in the sections that follow and which the recommendations in this report seek to address:

- **Operational Costs:** Rising operational costs, combined with limited support and an inequitable distribution of prize money among the field, are making racehorse ownership increasingly financially unsustainable.
- **Racing Operations Impacting Ownership Experience:** The ownership experience, particularly in regional Queensland, is negatively affected by substandard race clubs' hospitality and VIP offerings for owners and prize money distribution, negatively affecting the attraction of horse and greyhound ownership.

### 8.1 Limitations Affecting Industry Reach and Impact

#### 8.1.1 Ownership Operational Costs

***“Rising operational costs, combined with limited support and an inequitable distribution of prize money among the field, are making racehorse ownership increasingly financially unsustainable.”***

The Review found that the costs associated with owning a racing animal have increased considerably, placing financial pressure on new and existing owners across all codes. Stakeholders reported that expenses such as feed, veterinary treatment, staffing and transport have risen sharply, making it more difficult to maintain viable ownership arrangements, particularly in the absence of syndication or pooled resources.

Training fees were frequently cited as a key contributor to growing financial pressure. Owners described difficulty accessing affordable, high-quality training services, especially outside metropolitan centres, where limited availability of trainers and support staff further increased costs. Participants also reported that support services such as farriers, equine dentists and track riders had become more expensive and less accessible in recent years, particularly in regional and remote areas. These costs have also risen due to increased welfare and biosecurity compliance requirements imposed on trainers. The Review heard that while measures such as stable upgrades and transport compliance have enhanced animal welfare outcomes, they have also contributed to higher trainer fees. Trainer fees were reported to have increased due to Workcover insurance costs being passed on.

Stakeholders raised concerns about the growing cost burden associated with post-racing responsibilities, including retirement planning, rehoming and long-term welfare oversight. Owners described increased expectations to meet animal welfare standards after racing ends, often without corresponding support mechanisms or funding. The Review heard that many owners were unaware of available rehoming programs or found them difficult to access due to limited places, complex processes, or eligibility criteria. The cumulative impact of these pressures has made it difficult for many owners to justify remaining in the industry, particularly where the likelihood of financial return is low.

Participants also pointed to the widening gap between the cost of participation and the opportunity to earn sufficient returns through prize money. This imbalance is particularly pronounced in non-metropolitan thoroughbred settings and across the greyhound and harness codes, where lower prize pools and limited racing opportunities reduce the chance of covering basic costs. In many cases, owners maintain their involvement out of personal passion rather than financial return, though the Review found that increasing number are re-evaluating their long-term commitment to the industry.

Stakeholders consistently endorsed the Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme (QTIS) as a positive mechanism to improve ownership returns, particularly during the early stages of a horse's career. However, concerns were raised about recent reductions in overall prizemoney and the lack of reinvestment in rural racing.

Industry participants warned that these cutbacks risk undermining the long-term sustainability of the scheme and could contribute to declining participation and wagering revenue, particularly outside metropolitan areas.

In the harness code, stakeholders acknowledged that the QBRED scheme provides strong early-stage bonuses. However, they noted that the incentives beyond the second win offer limited financial value, reducing motivation for continued participation. Complex eligibility conditions, such as restrictions on the third win bonus, were also criticised for creating confusion and diminishing the transparency of the program.

Similarly, the QGOLD scheme in greyhound racing was welcomed as a supportive initiative but was described as offering only modest financial incentives. Stakeholders argued that the current payment levels are unlikely to significantly influence long-term owner or trainer engagement, particularly when compared to standard prizemoney and rising participation costs.

The Review found that current support settings are not sufficiently aligned with the practical needs and expectations of owners. As financial pressures continue to mount, these shortcomings are contributing to declining owner numbers, reduced field sizes and growing reliance on a shrinking pool of participants to sustain racing programs. Without targeted reform, this trend will undermine the long-term stability of the ownership base and constrain the industry's capacity to attract and retain new entrants.

#### Alignment with Ownership Pillar

Reducing the financial burden of ownership is essential to preserving a diverse and sustainable participant base across all codes. Addressing cost pressures supports the core objectives of the Ownership Pillar by making ownership more viable, particularly for new, small-scale and regionally based participants. A more financially balanced model would promote continued investment, reduce barriers to entry and help stabilise field sizes and industry growth.

It is vital that Bonus Schemes are benchmarked against interstate schemes to ensure they are fit for current and future purpose, reflect the changing landscape of racing, while ensuring that the financial returns to owners contribute to creating long term incentives to reinvest in the industry. This gives breeders confidence to sell stock, knowing sustainable schemes will support the lifetime of their animals

#### 8.1.2 Regional Ownership Experience

***"The ownership experience, particularly in regional Queensland, is negatively affected by limited race opportunities, ageing facilities and inconsistent engagement with owners by clubs and administrators."***

The Review found that regional ownership experiences differ markedly from those in metropolitan centres, particularly in relation to access to prize money, race programming and race day engagement. Stakeholders noted that current prize money distribution disproportionately favours high-profile metropolitan meetings, limiting the financial return available to regional owners across all codes and discouraging broader participation.

Participants in rural and regional areas consistently raised concerns about the viability of ownership in the face of low prize pools and limited access to higher-tier events. Unlike jurisdictions such as New South Wales, which operate dedicated high-value maiden series to stimulate rural participation, Queensland lacks a comparable program specifically designed to elevate the status and reward of country racing. As a result, regional owners are reliant on their trainers and horses travelling long distances to access meaningful prize money. This dependency on travel introduces additional costs and complexity which stakeholders identified as a barrier to sustained participation.



### Case Study: NSW Super Maidens – Boosting Participation through Targeted Prize Money

Racing NSW's Super Maidens initiative demonstrates how targeted prize money can support grassroots participation and improve financial sustainability for smaller stables. Launched in 2022, the program focuses on maiden races, which is limited to horses that have never won a race. The program offered increased purses, up to \$50,000, for maiden races at country and provincial tracks, significantly above standard levels.

The scheme aimed to reward emerging horses and connections outside the metropolitan system, where earning opportunities are typically more limited. By lifting prize money for maiden winners, Racing NSW encouraged participation at regional venues and reduced pressure to race exclusively in the city.

Stakeholders reported stronger field sizes, higher-quality programs and improved financial outcomes for regional trainers and owners. The increased activity also supported local economies through greater demand for racing services and on-course employment.

The Super Maidens model shows how modest, well-placed prize increases can strengthen participation and improve the balance between regional and metropolitan events without compromising elite competition. It highlights the benefit of aligning prize money with broader industry goals, including the development of new talent and the sustainability of regional racing.

While regional owners contribute significantly to the industry's training and racing activity, they receive limited recognition or support in return. Data from the Review highlighted that more than 80 per cent of Queensland's training activity expenditure occurs outside Brisbane.<sup>16</sup> However, regional owners reported limited access to competitive returns and ongoing challenges securing affordable, high-quality services. This disconnect between contribution and reward has created frustration and reinforced perceptions of inequity across the state.

Though the issues facing owners are more pronounced in the regions, metropolitan owners experience similar challenges. The increasing fixed costs of racing are often passed on from the trainers to owners and while these can be offset by the greater racing opportunities in SEQ they still place a strain on metropolitan owners. Moreover, a more substantial racing calendar in SEQ presents its own set of problems associated with scheduling and programming. While the Greyhound and Harness Racing industries have a widespread acceptance of night racing, Thoroughbred night racing is inconsistent, creating uncertainty which impacts the industry as a whole, as well as owners.

Stakeholders also identified inconsistency in owner engagement practises across regional venues. While some clubs actively fostered inclusive and professional experiences, others provided limited communication, recognition, or hospitality for owners. Participants described a lack of dedicated owner spaces, inadequate engagement before and after race day and a general sense that clubs prioritised members or social events over fostering long-term owner participation.

These disparities are not exclusive to the thoroughbred code. Greyhound and harness owners in regional areas described similar challenges, including limited access to high-stakes events, inconsistent scheduling and few incentives to remain engaged over time. This has created a sense among participants that regional ownership is undervalued, despite its importance to sustaining racing across Queensland's broader footprint.

The Review found that this metrocentric model weakens the inclusivity and sustainability of the industry. Without greater equity in race programming, financial return and owner engagement, regional participation is likely to continue declining, reducing field sizes, limiting economic impact and diminishing racing's visibility in large parts of the state.

#### Alignment with Ownership Pillar

Improving the ownership experience in regional areas is critical to ensuring that all participants, regardless of geography, have equitable opportunities to engage in and benefit from the racing industry. Aligning prize money

<sup>16</sup> Racing Queensland, *Size and Scope of the Queensland Racing Industry*, 2025, <https://www.racingqueensland.com.au/getmedia/90949594-2a09-4f3d-b5c0-3979b3371371/FY24-RQ-Size-Scope-Report-Final.pdf>.

structures, programming decisions and owner engagement with regional contributions supports the Ownership Pillar's aim of fostering inclusive participation, strengthening the racing footprint across Queensland and safeguarding the long-term viability of clubs and codes.

## 8.2 Benefits of Addressing These Problems

### 8.2.1 Improved Financial Sustainability for Owners

Enhancing the design and delivery of ownership incentives will significantly improve the financial sustainability of participation across all codes. Participants consistently indicated that better-aligned reward structures would reduce financial pressure and encourage continued investment, particularly for small-scale owners and those based outside metropolitan areas. Reforming bonus and incentive programs to support owners earlier in the racing lifecycle and reward consistent participation will create stronger returns and increase retention. Stakeholders also highlighted the value of initiatives that support owner contributions to post-racing animal welfare, noting that clear expectations and financial offsets in this area would promote responsible ownership and enhance the industry's social licence.



#### **Case Study: NSW Country and Provincial Championships – Regional Ownership Pathways through Race Programming**

In New South Wales, Racing NSW has implemented high-profile race series designed to promote ownership and participation in regional areas. The Country and Provincial Championships provide structured, aspirational programming that enhances the value proposition for owners outside metropolitan centres.

Launched in 2015, the Country Championships feature eight \$150,000 regional qualifiers for country-trained horses, with top finishers progressing to a \$500,000 final at Royal Randwick. The Provincial Championships follow a similar format for provincial trainers, culminating in a \$1 million final. These events have become major engagement points for owners, trainers and communities, boosting local economies and raising the profile of regional racing.

Stakeholders report that the Championships have stimulated ownership interest in regional stables, provided clear targets for syndicators and breeders and attracted consistent media attention. The series has improved field sizes, increased regional prizemoney distribution and linked racing with tourism and community events.

This case demonstrates how targeted programming, underpinned by prize money and narrative structure, can create a more equitable and engaging ownership experience. By embedding prestige into regional participation and offering clear metropolitan pathways, Racing NSW has strengthened grassroots involvement and long-term ownership outside the city.

NSW has also added to their weekly Saturday schedule the “Highway Races” that provide for regional and rural trained horses to participate at metro courses. Weekly prizemoney pools of \$120,000 have created an incentive for regional and rural trainers to send their horses for these races, creating full fields of up to 20 horses.

QLD created a similar “Battle of the Bush Series”, but this only involves 16 races each with a prizemoney pool of \$12,500, ending in a final raced in Brisbane for \$200,000. Many participants voiced their support for the series but expressed concern about the loopholes in participation. Notwithstanding, the overwhelming sentiment was that the benefit from the Battle of the Bush Series could be amplified with increased prizemoney and a feature race at a metro hub. Similar benefits could also be replicated in the Greyhound and Harness Racing codes, with proposed Intrastate Series found in the Review Recommendations. Interesting and sustainable concepts that can possibly attract local or national sponsorships will create Series that hold public attention and return financial results to owners.

Strengthening the link between ownership support programs and regional racing pathways would improve field sizes and promote an even distribution of racing animals across the state. Participants described how well-targeted

incentives could improve the sale and retention of animals suited to lower-tier racing, particularly in country and non-TAB venues. These measures would help extend the competitive careers of animals, improve access to race opportunities in rural areas and allow owners to recover investment through sustained participation rather than early retirement or dispersal. For the greyhound and harness codes, bonus structures that reward early career starts and sustained participation would increase economic viability for new and emerging owners and reduce financial barriers to entry. Additionally, these incentives would encourage long-term owners to campaign animals across their full racing careers, supporting retention and reducing attrition from the industry.

A more consistent and transparent approach to ownership incentives would also strengthen public trust and owner confidence. Aligning scheme design across codes and simplifying eligibility conditions would ensure that participants understand the value of their investment and how to maximise their return on that investment.

### 8.2.2 Broader and More Equitable Ownership Participation

Strategic reform of race programming and prize money allocation would allow ownership participation to grow across a broader cross-section of locations and racing tiers. The Review found strong support for more inclusive prize money structures that better reflect the geographic spread of racing activity and economic contribution. By ensuring that returns are not concentrated among a small number of metropolitan participants, the industry can promote more equitable reward and expand the range of viable entry points into ownership.

Stakeholders supported more structured programming to create clear participation pathways and increase the visibility of ownership opportunities. Initiatives such as expanded intrastate race series, regional feature events and race day recalibrations were identified as key enablers of improved engagement. In particular, more consistent programming between metropolitan and regional venues, including at Regional and Country levels, would enable owners to plan with confidence, pursue viable racing schedules and reduce the financial impact of having to transport their horses long distances.

Participants also described the value of enhancing the ownership experience through improvements in race day engagement, communication and recognition. Clearer branding of events, owner-focused promotional initiatives and targeted strategies to attract and retain younger and more diverse owners were seen as critical to growing the participant base. Aligning these improvements with programming reforms and a more inclusive incentive design would help reposition ownership as an accessible and rewarding pathway, regardless of location or racing code.

Finally, benchmarking race programming and handicapping structures against national standards would support competitive balance and foster more consistent opportunities for owners. Stakeholders identified this as particularly important for the harness code, where variations in local rating approaches can affect confidence and participation decisions. By building fairer and more transparent programming frameworks, the industry can strengthen ownership participation and promote long-term engagement across all three codes.

# Appendix A – General Racing Industry Recommendations

## 1 Adoption of the ‘Hybrid’ Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity

### Recommendations

- a. Adopt a Hybrid Model that:
  - consolidates all non-core functions of QRIC into RQ
  - retains stewarding and integrity under an independent Commissioner of Stewards
  - eliminates duplicated corporate functions across QRIC and RQ.

### Rationale

Queensland’s current dual-entity governance model, with QRIC responsible for integrity and RQ for commercial and operational functions, has resulted in significant duplication of corporate services, blurred accountabilities and cost inefficiencies. In FY24, the two organisations serviced 276 and 137 staff respectively. By contrast, the three racing bodies in NSW, GRNSW, HRNSW and RNSW, collectively supported a larger jurisdiction with more meetings and clubs. NSW also distributed significantly more than Queensland, despite operating at a substantially lower labour-to-revenue ratio (5.5% vs 9.4%). Every organisation must work within its means, and both Racing Queensland (RQ) and Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) must work inside a budget that allows commercial and integrity functions to be delivered in a manner that provides value for money. The operational efficiency and cost base of the agencies will be able to be benchmarked to the performance, cost and structures of other Principal Racing Authorities.

The proposed Hybrid model balances integrity independence with administrative consolidation. Core integrity functions, namely stewarding, wagering surveillance, swabbing and scientific testing, will remain within a refined QRIC, led by a dedicated Commissioner of Stewards (COS). The COS will report directly to the Minister to safeguard statutory independence but also maintain a functional relationship with the RQ Board to ensure visibility, operational alignment and strategic integration. The COS will attend RQ Board meetings and provide regular briefings on integrity and compliance matters.

To prevent overlap and preserve independence, welfare roles will be codified as follows: QRIC retains exclusive on-course, raceday welfare enforcement (stewarding, veterinary authority, swabbing and track-safety compliance), while RQ holds accountability for post-racing welfare, rehoming and aftercare (including GAP).

All other functions within QRIC, such as Legal, Procurement, Media, GAP, ICT, Finance and People & Safety, will be transitioned to RQ, removing duplicated and over-resourced corporate functions, aligning staff with operational delivery and improving responsiveness to industry needs. This integration creates a more agile workforce that is closer to licensees, clubs and stakeholders, while preserving the core values of the MacSparran model. The hybrid configuration mirrors elements of the British Horseracing Authority, which embeds integrity within the broader structure but ensures stewards and surveillance staff operate under clear regulatory independence. It also avoids the siloed inefficiencies seen in fully split (dual) models or the governance risks of an entirely consolidated (singular) structure.

This approach provides a practical, transitional step that maintains statutory integrity oversight while delivering improved cost efficiency, better coordination and stronger accountability across Queensland’s racing system.

## 2 RQ CEO Appointment and Remuneration Benchmarking

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ appoints a CEO with authority over all non-stewarding functions across all three codes.
- b. The CEO reports directly to the RQB and maintains a dotted-line coordination link with the Commissioner of Stewards.
- c. The CEO position is benchmarked for role description against CEOs of major Principal Racing Authorities in Australia and international jurisdictions.

### Rationale:

The CEO role under the “Hybrid” model will oversee all aspects of Queensland Racing except QRIC’s Stewarding functions. This position demands top-tier leadership and management capabilities due to the scale of operations and revenue. The ideal candidate must be committed long-term, actively involved in strategic agreements, team development and driving industry growth. To attract a suitably qualified, capable, motivated and engaged candidate, a remuneration package comparable to other national and international racing authority CEOs should be made available and offered.

## 3 Reform the RQ Board

### Recommendations

- a. Reform the RQ Board to include up to 9 members with code and governance expertise appointed by the Minister after an interview conducted by an independent panel.
- b. Triennial terms where 3x Director roles will be up for reappointment each year for up to three-year terms
- c. Minister to appoint Chair of the RQ Board, with Vice Chair to be appointed by a vote of the RQ Board
- d. RQ Board Directors will be allowed to own racehorses and racing greyhounds, however this must be declared at the application phase and be updated for every purchase or disposal of share
- e. RQ Board should at a minimum have:
  - a thoroughbred expert
  - a harness expert
  - a greyhound expert
  - an integrity expert
  - a rural advocate who resides in a non-metropolitan area
  - 4 other directors with a mix of expertise required to provide governance to Racing Queensland.
- f. Proposed board remuneration:
  - Chair: \$70,000 p.a
  - Vice Chair: \$50,000 p.a
  - Directors: \$40,000 p.a.

### Rationale:

As the peak governance body for all three racing codes in Queensland, the RQ Board must possess a broad mix of strategic, regulatory and operational expertise. A nine-person board with structured renewal promotes continuity, succession planning and accountability. Including code-specific and integrity representatives ensures subject matter expertise informs board decisions, while the Rural Advocate ensures geographic and regional equity in policy formulation. Code-specific experts appointed to the RQ Board must demonstrate deep expertise in their code’s animal-welfare requirements, ensuring the Board consistently captures code-specific and nuanced welfare

considerations in its decisions. This change seeks to address concerns expressed to the Review about current governance arrangements and their ability to deliver good outcomes across the full breadth of issues within the RQ remit.

Term limits (Nine years successive maximum, with a three year cooling off period before ability to reapply) reduces the risk of entrenchment and development of vested interests while preserving the option to retain valuable experience. Allowing ownership of animals subject to declared interests reflects standard practice in other states and balances expertise with conflict management. The remuneration structure is modest but sufficient to attract qualified Directors and reflects governance costs across similar statutory and quasi-commercial boards.

## 4 Appointment of a Rural Advocate Director to the RQ Board

### Recommendations:

- a. Ensure at least one Director on the RQ Board resides in a Regional or Country rural location.
- b. Accept candidate nominations from the Queensland Country Racing Association, while allowing broader applications.

### Rationale:

Queensland's vast geography and decentralised population place unique pressures on regional and rural racing operations. Issues such as workforce availability, transport, volunteer reliance and infrastructure maintenance are magnified outside metropolitan areas. Ensuring a dedicated Rural Advocate sits on the RQB embeds a voice that understands these challenges first-hand. It also reinforces the legitimacy of decision-making in the eyes of rural stakeholders, especially given country racing accounts for a large portion of Queensland's total meetings and delivers critical community outcomes. Regional representation on central boards is an established principle across other Queensland statutory bodies, including Health and Education.

## 5 Elevate Wagering Integrity Role to General Manager within QRIC

### Recommendations:

- a. Appoint a dedicated Wagering General Manager within QRIC to lead wagering strategy, innovation and partner engagement across all three codes.

### Rationale:

Wagering is the financial backbone of the Queensland racing industry, however the oversight function within QRIC lacks the dedicated seniority, structure and authority seen in other jurisdictions.

This role, currently embedded within the QRIC organisational structure, will be elevated to a General Manager position under the "Hybrid" model, supported by a dedicated team. In an industry heavily dependent on wagering for financial sustainability, formalising and recognising the importance of this function is crucial. The role will be responsible for monitoring real-time wagering activity and related functions, ensuring strategic oversight and responsiveness.

## 6 Clarification and Allocation of Functions

### Recommendations:

- a. Undertake a detailed review of the statutory and practical powers currently exercised by RQ and QRIC.
- b. Reallocate responsibilities to promote clarity of roles and accountability across the various RQ and QRIC.

## Rationale:

There remains widespread confusion across clubs and participants regarding the respective roles of RQ and QRIC, particularly in areas of operational oversight, compliance enforcement, event-day protocols and communication. This lack of clarity fuels inefficiency, delays and stakeholder frustration.

Racing NSW has developed a well-understood organisational plan separating its rulemaking, enforcement, funding and operational tasks. Queensland can adapt this model, ensuring integrity, welfare, commercial and regulatory roles are unambiguously allocated. This should form part of the broader implementation of the Hybrid governance model and support clubs to engage with appropriate decisions makers based on the nature of their specific concerns.

## 7 Board Accreditation Requirements

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ Board members must have AICD or equivalent accreditation.
- b. All RQ, Association and Race Club Directors must attain an approved governance accreditation (AICD or equivalent, e.g. Chartered Accountant). A short Governance Course at RQ's expense will be provided to assist in early compliance.
- c. Each Club Board must have at least one accredited director from 2025. This requirement will be expanded to two accredited Directors from 2026.
- d. Accreditation costs to be split 50/50 between RQ and Clubs during initial phase; Clubs fund future replacements.
- e. Chair of a Regional, Provincial or Metropolitan Club Board is recommended to hold accreditation as a condition of role.
- f. Volunteer clubs must have a minimum of one accredited director.

### Rationale:

Directors across Queensland's 117 race clubs manage significant public-facing operations, oversee staff and volunteers and are responsible for occupational safety, financial management and legal compliance. Yet many are elected or appointed without formal training in governance, creating risks in decision-making, fiduciary compliance and regulatory engagement.

Mandatory accreditation aligns racing governance with best practice in other sectors, including sport, health and public infrastructure. Organisations such as Netball Australia and Cricket Australia have already mandated AICD-style certification for Directors. This shift will uplift governance standards, reduce risk and enhance public confidence in the racing industry's oversight structures. It also ensures Clubs operate with consistent financial and legal literacy, irrespective of size or location.

## 8 RQ Board Remuneration Commuted to Travel in Year 1

### Recommendations:

- a. In the first year of being appointed to the RQ Board, 50% of a Director's remuneration will be converted to intrastate travel to ensure that Directors are seen and are among the industry.
- b. The Vice Chair of the RQ Board would receive an additional \$10,000 for interstate travel, while the Chair would receive an additional \$30,000 for interstate travel and to attend the Asian Racing Conference.

### Rationale:

The expansion and reform of the RQ Boards demands that new Directors build early and deep relationships with the breadth of the industry across regions, clubs and codes. Commuting Year 1 remuneration into a travel budget

creates a shared expectation of engagement, visibility and accountability, particularly in rural and remote areas. It incentivises Directors to be seen at tracks and in community meetings, helping to rebuild trust and embed the new Board's commitment to a collaborative culture. Additional allowances for the Chair and Vice Chair reflect their elevated obligations, including participation in the Asian Racing Conference. This approach ensures governance costs are reinvested directly into stakeholder engagement at a formative time for the restructured Board.

## 9 Rebalancing Racing Australia Voting Power

### Recommendations:

- a. Racing Queensland and the Queensland government to advocate for an adjustment to Racing Australia's voting structure to increase Queensland's vote from 18% to 25%, reflecting its national standing across key industry KPIs. (To achieve this NSW and Victoria's allocations would need to be lowered to 32.5% respectively).
- b. Racing Queensland to advocate for a reduction to the vote percentage required to pass resolutions, from 65% to 50%.

### Rationale:

The current RA voting structure (including the requirement for a 65% vote to pass resolutions) provides NSW and Victoria with a combined veto over any proposal. Queensland consistently ranks third across KPIs and leads nationally in trainer numbers and race club footprint yet holds just 18% voting power. This represents an unbalanced national governance model which has limited national progress on issues such as welfare reform, pattern harmonisation and digital innovation. Recalibrating voting rights based on proportional contribution is an important step to restore fairness and encourage national cooperation.

Lowering the threshold for passing resolutions at Racing Australia from 65% to 50% preserves the need for broad agreement between the states, whilst simultaneously making it easier for smaller states to influence voting outcomes and making deadlock less likely to occur.

## 10 Whistle Blower Policy

### Recommendations:

- a. Engage a reputable body (e.g. the AICD) to develop a clear Whistleblower Policy for both RQ and QRIC. The policy is to support both anonymous and contactable reporting of misconduct, welfare breaches, or integrity risks. If suitable and permissible, the Racing Victoria policy could be adopted or adapted.
- b. Make the policy publicly and readily available, i.e. accessible via internet search and linked on official websites.
- c. Mandate formal training, developed by the same body that developed the policy, for the RQ Board, Senior Leadership Team and QRIC Commissioner of Stewards, on the handling of whistleblower complaints.
- d. Assign reporting oversight to designated officers (Head of Legal, HR, Company Secretary).
- e. Review Racing Victoria's policy for adaptation with permission, reducing costs.

### Rationale:

A formal Whistleblower Policy is a cornerstone of modern governance and risk management. Its absence, or inability to be easily accessed, undermines trust in regulatory bodies and inhibits reporting of serious concerns. Enabling anonymous disclosures protects vulnerable individuals and ensures early warning signs are surfaced. Assigning trained officers to manage these disclosures and upskilling leadership ensures due process and legal compliance. Public accessibility and clarity of the portal are critical to the policy's effectiveness.

Racing Victoria's publicly available model demonstrates good practice that could be readily adopted or adapted to the Queensland context.

## 11 Public Availability of Race Club Annual General Meetings (AGM) and Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM) Minutes

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a dedicated public transparency portal, for publication of minutes, on the Racing Queensland website.
- b. Require race club minutes from AGMs and EGMs to be made publicly available, via this portal, within 30 days of sign-off.

### Rationale:

Transparent club governance is an essential part in maintaining integrity and public confidence in the industry. At present, many club decisions, including financial resolutions and board appointments, are not disclosed in a timely or publicly accessible manner. Publishing signed AGM and EGM minutes within 30 days aligns with best-practice public sector governance and mirrors requirements already in place for incorporated associations, local governments and not-for-profits. It also enables RQ and QRIC to more effectively monitor compliance, dispute resolution and emerging governance risks. Clear expectations and public access will deter misconduct, increase member engagement and promote cultural reform across club leadership.

## 12 Club Travel Governance and Spend Caps

### Recommendations:

- a. Standardise race club-related travel reimbursements and approvals to ensure cost-efficiency and fairness.
- b. All travel undertaken by Clubs to have a cap limit of 2% on previous year Operational EBITDA less any Grants, Donations or one-off payments. If the cap is breached without RQ approval, RQ will effectively charge any travel spend above 2% charged back to the club through commensurately reduced disbursements.
- c. All travel undertaken with a sponsor that is paid by sponsor or a related entity, must be advised to RQ if its value is beyond \$1,000 in any given calendar year.
- d. Sponsor travel must be approved by quorum resolution, with minutes forward to RQ.

### Rationale:

Travel by Club Directors and executives must serve a legitimate commercial or operational purpose and be proportionate to the club's financial capacity. Instances of travel funded through member revenue or commercial sponsors have raised questions of governance, conflict-of-interest and value for money. The introduction of a 2% cap tied to prior year operating EBITDA is a straightforward metric that ensures clubs operate within sustainable limits.

Sponsor-funded travel has the potential to create perceived or actual conflict of interest, particularly where sponsorship decisions could be influenced by travel or hospitality benefits. The recommendations are designed to mitigate the potential influence of sponsored travel and to provide transparency. Further to that, these reforms bring racing clubs in line with other regulated bodies and reflect conflict-of-interest controls applied in the public sector and major sports codes.

## 13 Annual Financial Reporting Template for Clubs (Grants & Donations)

### Recommendations:

- a. Require all race clubs to submit an annual financial report using a standardised template approved by RQ.
- b. This report must display all grants and donations received during the financial year, shown below EBITDA (to provide a true assessment of operational performance).
- c. This report to be signed by a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA), Chair and CEO or Secretary.
- d. Clubs without a CEO or professional secretary must obtain two Board signatories.

### Rationale:

RQ must have clear visibility of club financial health to ensure industry sustainability, capital investment planning and compliance with licensing requirements. Many clubs receive substantial public grants, yet these are often presented as operational revenue, overstating club profitability and obscuring long-term viability. Requiring all grants and one-off donations to be shown below EBITDA brings Queensland into line with standard accounting practises and ensures year-on-year comparisons are meaningful.

Mandatory sign-off by a CPA or CA and relevant officeholders ensures accountability and professional oversight. This also supports RQ and Government in ensuring grants are applied as intended, with minimal risk of misuse or misstatement. The template will enhance data consistency, reduce audit risk and support funding prioritisation and allocation across infrastructure, welfare and prize money.

## 14 Mid-Year Financial Reporting Template for Clubs

### Recommendations:

- a. Require all race clubs to submit a mid-year financial report using a condensed version of the approved annual reporting template.
- b. Reports must be signed by the Club Chair and CEO/Secretary.
- c. Clubs racing more than 20 times annually must also obtain sign-off from a Chartered Accountant.
- d. Grants and donations must be disclosed under the same below-EBITDA framework as in annual reports.
- e. Racing Queensland reserves the right to request monthly reporting where risks are identified.

### Rationale:

Mid-year financial reporting is essential to maintaining oversight of club solvency and cash flow across the racing calendar. Queensland's diverse club landscape includes many small and medium clubs that operate on tight margins and limited capacity for long-term forecasting. A simplified, standardised mid-year report ensures consistent financial visibility across all clubs, allowing RQ to detect early signs of risk, underperformance, or governance failure.

Clubs with frequent racing activity (20+ meetings/year) carry larger revenue and expenditure risks and must therefore meet a higher standard of financial accountability through professional accountant review. Consistent treatment of grants and one-off revenue is also critical to support transparent, like-for-like comparisons [see Recommendation 13]. This reporting system reflects norms in comparable sectors such as health, education and community sport. It also gives RQ a scalable mechanism to escalate oversight in cases where serious financial concerns or disputes emerge.

## 15 Anti-Money Laundering (AML) / Counter-Terrorism Financing (CTF) Compliance Across Racing-Controlled Entities

### Recommendations:

- a. QRIC to identify which entities controlled by RQ may be considered "Reporting Entities" under AUSTRAC's AML and CTF legislation.
- b. Undertake legal review of all designated services under AUSTRAC guidelines, including off-track commercial activity.
- c. Mandate AML/CTF training delivered by an approved provider for relevant RQ personnel and Board members.

### Rationale:

The AML/CTF obligations under Commonwealth legislation apply to a broad range of industries, including gambling and betting. RQ and its controlled entities may operate "designated services" under the law (e.g. wagering facilitation, cash transactions, hospitality services), placing them within AUSTRAC's regulatory jurisdiction. If not properly identified and addressed, this represents a material compliance risk.

A proactive audit of potentially reportable entities and transactions will ensure Queensland racing remains compliant with national legislation and maintains its operating licence conditions.

## 16 Related Party Transactions

### Recommendation

- a. Prohibit related party transactions for metropolitan and regional clubs unless prior approval is received from Racing Queensland.
- b. For remote clubs, establish clear guidelines on what related party transactions are permissible, including spending caps and reporting thresholds.
- c. Require disclosure of all related party contracts above \$10,000 in annual reports.

### Rationale:

Related party transactions, where club Directors or associates receive financial benefit from the club, are a persistent governance concern. While sometimes necessary in remote contexts with limited-service availability, such arrangements in metropolitan or regional clubs risk real or perceived impropriety, particularly where six-figure payments have been made without competitive procurement and/or where alternative arrangements were readily available.

Mandatory disclosure of all material related party transactions ensures transparency to members and oversight bodies. This policy aligns with Australian Accounting Standards (AASB 124) and governance guidelines enforced by state sport and community grant programs.

## 17 Overheads Allocation Review

### Recommendations:

- a. Audit the overheads currently applied to each race club across codes and tiers.
- b. Develop a transparent overhead allocation model aligned with true cost-to-serve and benchmarked against club characteristics.

## Rationale:

The current blanket overhead model lacks transparency and fails to account for material variation in club size, location and operational requirements. A forensic audit will clarify actual cost inputs and reveal inefficiencies. Benchmarking club overheads against workload and race-day metrics supports better resource allocation and more equitable funding and assists the funder to achieve value for money outcomes on their investment. Integrating the data-set with the Hub and Spoke framework will enhance the outcomes of the Hub and Spoke program.

## 18 Racecourse Ownership and Land Audit

### Recommendations:

- a. Conduct a full audit and bank valuation of all land and facilities used by racing across Queensland, including those owned or leased by Race Clubs, PRAs and associated entities.
- b. Assess Crown and Government-leased land (being land leased by the Government to Racing Clubs) in non-metropolitan regions for strategic acquisition or lease renegotiation to provide security of tenure for racing operations.

### Rationale:

The absence of a consolidated register of racing land holdings that considers the characteristics and value of the assets impairs long-term planning and weakens the ability to leverage assets in a way that creates the maximum value and benefit to their owners. Some Clubs are tenants on Crown land with uncertain tenure, while others own valuable assets that are underutilised. A state-wide audit, including bank-grade valuations and lease reviews, will establish asset quality and can be used to guide investment decisions. It will also inform discussions about which parcels should be retained, redeveloped, or divested. In cases of insecure leasing or other arrangements, options to transfer ownership or introduce better structured long-term agreements should be considered to safeguard racing's future at the community level.

## 19 Tiered Minimum Standards for Race Clubs

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ and QRIC to ensure existing Minimum Standards are publicly available, consistently enforced and reviewed against the other jurisdictions approaches to reduce duplication, clarify responsibilities and strengthen welfare outcomes.
- b. Responsibility for pre-race day compliance checks against Minimum Standards to rest with RQ, freeing QRIC to focus on stewarding and integrity functions.
- c. QRIC Stewards to retain final authority on race day to determine whether a meeting proceeds, with decisions informed by both integrity and welfare compliance.

### Rationale:

While Queensland already has Minimum Standards for race clubs, stakeholders advised that these are not widely published, understood, or enforced, leading to inconsistency and weak accountability. By comparison, other jurisdictions apply a clear, tiered system linked to club size and frequency of racing. A transparent, enforced framework in Queensland will ensure clubs are held to consistent financial, operational and welfare standards, including track safety, animal facilities and participant welfare. Clear allocation of responsibility between RQ (pre-race enforcement) and QRIC (race-day integrity oversight) will remove duplication, improve governance and embed welfare considerations as a non-negotiable element of club compliance.

## 20 Hub & Spoke Race Clubs

### Recommendations:

- a. Develop a Balanced Scorecard to accredit Hub Clubs based on financial KPIs and governance standards.
- b. Define funding and reporting obligations between Hub and Spoke Clubs.
- c. Trial a uniform trading model in Year 1, with potential to expand to bespoke arrangements (e.g. profit share) thereafter. The opportunity to make this an opt-in program should be explored during the trial period.

### Rationale:

Queensland's geographic scale and highly variable club activity necessitates more efficient coordination. A "Hub and Spoke" model consolidates administrative effort, strengthens governance and enables targeted investment. By developing a framework based on measurable performance standards to accredit Hubs, RQ can ensure funding is matched to organisational maturity and that Hubs are appropriately rewarded for their effort to support the smaller clubs with which they are associated. The model reduces reporting burden on small clubs while strengthening their strategic voice through partnered Hubs. By implementing a trial, RQ is able to capture key lessons learnt and understand if the program would work on a broader level.

## 21 Asset Recycling Marketplace

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a RQ-managed digital asset marketplace for clubs to list surplus or second-hand racing infrastructure.
- b. Enable buyers to post asset requests with indicative pricing to match with vendor listings.
- c. Apply a 5% RQ handling fee payable by the Vendor on successful transactions.

### Rationale:

Race clubs manage numerous assets that eventually require upgrading or become obsolete. An official marketplace for recycling these assets offers an environmentally sustainable solution for items still in good working order to be disposed of by Metropolitan and Provincial clubs and acquired by Regional, Country and Rural clubs, which are required to meet less arduous minimum standards. In addition, this creates financial benefits for both selling and buying clubs. Beyond financial benefits for both sellers and buyers, the scheme can also enhance welfare outcomes by extending the availability of safe and compliant infrastructure, such as horse stalls, barriers, swabbing boxes, or kennelling facilities, to smaller clubs.

## 22 Establish a Race Club Fund Amalgam

### Recommendations:

- a. Create a centralised voluntary Race Club Fund, under racing licence agreements.
- b. Require each club to contribute 80% of its cash holdings to the collective fund.
- c. Allow access to invested funds for infrastructure projects approved by the Independent RIF, capped at 2% per project and 10% annually.

### Rationale:

Queensland race clubs held approximately \$53 million in banked cash in FY24, with combined annual profits of \$39 million, indicating strong sector liquidity despite uneven infrastructure and operational capacity across individual

clubs. By pooling these holdings into a centralised Race Club Fund, clubs can collectively unlock higher interest returns, reduce duplication in financial management and ensure sector-wide capital is strategically deployed for long-term industry benefit.

## 23 Establishment of a Future Fund

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a Racing Future Fund to capture long-term investments and revenues, distinct from immediate infrastructure needs funded by the RIF.
- b. Include contributions from WSPs, sponsors and asset realisation opportunities (identified in Recommendation 18).
- c. Assign responsibility for management of the Fund to the Independent RIF, who would allocate resources according to a sequenced framework of racing priorities across codes and regions.

### Rationale:

Queensland Racing lacks a formal mechanism for separating long-term investment capital from immediate operational spend. As land asset audits are completed (Recommendation 18), clarity will emerge on potential value capture through divestment, leasing or rezoning and development. Further to that, investments from WSPs and long-term sponsors should not be absorbed into short-term budgets and should instead be preserved for transformational, value-adding projects. The Future Fund creates financial discipline and intergenerational equity and enables the Independent RIF to prioritise projects sequentially in a considered manner that promotes effective management of a project pipeline. This model reflects successful precedents such as the Victorian Racing Infrastructure Fund (VRIF) and WA Racing Future Fund.

## 24 Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund

### Recommendations:

- a. Create an independent three-member panel reporting to the Minister to oversee and approve infrastructure projects above \$50,000.
- b. RIF to review and publish a monthly ledger of approved and rejected proposals.
- c. Clubs may submit pro forma business cases and access balances in real time.
- d. RIF to review, but not administer, club grant applications.

### Rationale:

Queensland's RIF requires more transparent and arms-length governance to address historic concerns around politicisation, allocations and a lack of equitable outcomes across regions. An independent, three-member RIF Board ensures infrastructure decisions are driven by evidence-based proposals and prioritised industry need. The three-member RIF Board will include a member with expertise in the following three areas:

- Racing operations
- Infrastructure investment
- Investment fund management.

By separating infrastructure investment approvals from operational management (RQ) and regulation (QRIC), this model mirrors probity protocols used in state infrastructure agencies, hospital and school boards. Requiring all projects over \$50,000 to pass through the RIF also creates an internal check on club expenditure and enhances consistency in value-for-money assessments.

Real-time balance visibility and standardised business case templates will professionalise club proposals and reduce application burden. Monthly Ministerial reporting ensures accountability without overreach. The RIF panel remuneration will be determined by Government.

## 25 Corrections Racetrack Maintenance Work Experience Program

### Recommendations:

- a. Trial a six-month labour-sharing program between Corrective Services and volunteer Race Clubs.
- b. Identify manual maintenance tasks (e.g. mowing, race day setup) suited for inmate work placement.
- c. Use the trial to evaluate benefits accrued by race clubs, Corrective Services and offenders.

### Rationale:

Regional and smaller race clubs often struggle to meet labour demands for race-day preparation and grounds maintenance. The Work Camp model trialled at Innisfail Jockey Club has demonstrated mutual benefits for clubs and participants. It provides meaningful work experience for prisoners, reduces costs for clubs and supports offender reintegration via structured community engagement. A formalised six-month trial, co-designed with Corrective Services, allows RQ to assess scalability and alignment with broader social policy objectives.

## 26 Expansion of Virtual Signage at Racecourses

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ to support all TAB clubs to enter into a financial arrangement with Sky Channel to have the Club's sponsors shown during their races by way of virtual signage.
- b. Negotiate bulk pricing arrangement with Sky to reduce per-meeting costs for larger clubs.
- c. Engage Tourism Queensland or equivalent agency as a statewide promotional sponsor.

### Rationale:

Virtual signage represents a low-cost, high-impact way to boost club revenues and raise Queensland racing's national profile. Currently, usage is sporadic and underutilised. By mandating Sky-enabled signage and securing bulk discounts, RQ can drive uptake and create statewide economies of scale. Partnering with Tourism Queensland enables destination marketing while reducing clubs' direct cost burden. This initiative strengthens racing's commercial proposition and aligns with broader tourism objectives.

## 27 Infield Activation and Shared Use

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ Infrastructure Team to assess opportunities to activate racecourse infields for revenue or community use (e.g. cropping or other agriculture, sport or other recreational activities such as cricket/golf, or infrastructure such as solar or water).
- b. Through the "SEQ 15 Point Plan" (Recommendation 59), assess the feasibility of incorporating dual-purpose Harness tracks within Thoroughbred tracks to maximise spatial efficiency, utilisation and value of racetracks.

### Rationale:

Racecourse infields are significant and unfortunately often underutilised assets. Examples like Warra (farming lease) and Gordonvale (golf) show the potential for clubs to better utilise their asset and achieve passive income, reducing funding dependence on RQ and government, whilst also more fully integrating their asset and club into the community and creating additional benefits for that community.

Under the SEQ 15-Point Plan, infield co-location of Harness tracks will unlock economies of scale, shared services and precinct consolidation.

## 28 Social Media Strategy and “Daily Press” Model

### Recommendations:

- a. Review findings from the “Daily Press” social media audit and assess scalability across Clubs.
- b. Roll out packaged social media support, initially to Clubs that race 1–5 times per year and eventually to all race clubs and codes.
- c. Seek sponsorship partners to underwrite costs of ongoing digital engagement and content creation when support is expanded.

### Rationale:

Social media is now the dominant form of customer engagement, yet many Clubs, especially smaller ones, lack the skills or resources to leverage it effectively. The Daily Press audit has benchmarked three contrasting race clubs and proposes scalable, cost-effective solutions. Supporting small Clubs with outsourced content improves brand consistency, provides access to higher quality and more engaging content and allows local volunteers to focus on race delivery.

A coordinated strategy across RQ will increase digital reach, attract younger audiences and unlock commercial partnerships.

By having sponsored content, costs to clubs are minimised, whilst cross-promotion of brands and products via digital channels deepens the partnerships between racing clubs and commercial entities.

## 29 Monthly Wagering & Betting Tax Payment Schedule

### Recommendations:

- a. Change the POCT and wagering tax distribution from quarterly to monthly payments.
- b. Permit RQ to invoice Treasury monthly, with payments made immediately upon receipt.
- c. Introduce automated accrual systems to improve planning accuracy and reduce cash flow volatility.

### Rationale:

RQ currently receives POCT and wagering tax revenue on a quarterly basis, creating significant fluctuations in cash flow. Large early-quarter balances are followed by drawdown periods, affecting operational liquidity, grant scheduling and infrastructure disbursements. This payment profile is outdated and inconsistent with modern Treasury practice, where high-volume recurrent transfers are increasingly made monthly or fortnightly.

Transitioning to monthly payments will smooth revenue cycles, support improved planning and allow RQ to meet its financial obligations in a more predictable manner. Treasury systems are already equipped to process monthly invoicing and transfers, making implementation low-cost and high impact.

## 30 Transparency in Appeals Panel Performance

### Recommendations:

- a. Amend the Racing Integrity Act 2016 to confer first-instance jurisdiction on the RAP for all racing appeals and reviews.
- b. Relocate RAP offices and hearing rooms from DPI premises to an independent site to strengthen perceived and actual independence.
- c. Make the RAP directly and solely accountable to the Racing Minister.
- d. Publish annual RAP performance data (case volumes, decision timelines, outcomes) in the RQ and QRIC Annual Reports.

## Rationale:

Appeals should be determined at first instance by subject-matter experts, in a forum that is independent, timely, accessible and cost-effective. Relocation from DPI premises and direct ministerial accountability strengthens independence in fact and perception, consistent with the principle that justice must not only be done but also be seen to be done. First-instance jurisdiction reduces fragmentation and delay, improving confidence in integrity settings. Annual reporting and inter-jurisdictional benchmarking drive continuous improvement and accountability.

## 31 Adoption of Excluded Persons and Locations Protocol to Strengthen Animal Welfare Protections

### Recommendations:

- a. Implement a state-wide “Excluded List” regime across all Queensland codes, modelled on the protocols of other Australian jurisdictions.
- b. Include persons banned by other jurisdictions in the Queensland list, using national and international data-sharing arrangements.
- c. Publish the Queensland exclusion list through a dedicated Racing Queensland portal.

### Rationale:

The implementation of an “Excluded Persons and Locations” policy strengthens welfare systems and provides a consistent, enforceable framework across all three codes. Other jurisdictions around Australia may provide a proven framework and has been successful in improving compliance and stakeholder confidence.

Queensland currently lacks a consolidated exclusion regime, creating enforcement gaps and reputational risk. Adoption of the other benchmark jurisdiction’s system, via consent or licensing agreement, will allow Queensland to inherit tested rules, decision procedures and publication protocols, whilst including persons banned in other jurisdictions ensures that bad actors from other jurisdictions are not able to relocate to Queensland. Public availability of the list ensures club awareness, empowers stewards to act on-site and supports interstate integrity coordination. It also aligns Queensland with international standards such as the British Horseracing Authority’s Disqualification Register and the Hong Kong Jockey Club’s Prohibited Persons List.

## 32 Conduct a Jurisdictional Analysis of Wagering Integrity Systems

### Recommendations:

- a. Investigate the integrity systems applied in other Australian jurisdictions and determine if elements can be applied in Queensland to uplift integrity functions for Queensland Racing.

### Rationale:

Other Australian jurisdictions, including Racing NSW, have taken the significant step of developing their own wagering integrity platform, citing the limitations of Racing Australia’s current outsourced model. The system allows for more responsive, tailored surveillance and integrates directly with local operators and race-day systems. Queensland should urgently assess the technical and operational benefits of this bespoke model to determine if it offers superior integrity outcomes.

## 33 Swab Blitz

### Recommendations:

- a. A random weekly race will be drawn by the Commissioner of Stewards across each Queensland Code where all runners will be subject to a pre-race or post-race test, with an emphasis on hair samples.

## Rationale:

Integrity must not only be enforced, but it must also be seen to be enforced. A structured but unpredictable swabbing and highly visible initiative across all three codes will heighten participant vigilance and provide a significant deterrence. Randomisation removes opportunities for circumvention. Although modest in scale, a weekly blitz adds significant credibility to the broader integrity system and complements other swabbing uplift reforms recommended by this review (see Recommendations 34).

The cost is minor relative to the benefits accrued such as increased industry and public trust, of key importance given increased concerns about drug use and stewarding consistency expressed during the review's stakeholder consultations.

## 34 Cross-Code Swabbing Reform

### Recommendations

- a. Mandate a minimum of three post-race swabs per race across all codes (Thoroughbred, Harness, Greyhound), covering:
  - Winner
  - Two randomly selected runners
- b. Ensure Stewards are supplied with sufficient swabs to operationalise this standard, scaled to meeting size, including:
  - Thoroughbred and Harness: minimum 30 swabs for a standard 10-race meeting.
  - Greyhound: minimum 36 swabs for a standard 12-race meeting.
- c. Expand current QRIC Sample Collection Offices (SCO) to include accredited Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary nurses, along with accredited 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Year Veterinary students to allow the capability to increase the number of pre-race and post-race samples to be taken for analysis (urine, blood, hair) by the Racing Science centres (RSC) across the three codes.
- d. Increase the capacity of RSC to process the number of swabs from current maximum of 24,5000 (12% of total runners across 3 codes) to 60,000 FY2026 (30% of runners across 3 codes) to 80,000 FY2027 (40% of total runners across 3 codes)
- e. To achieve these targets, create Regional RSG screening hubs in Rockhampton, Roma and Townsville to provide greater testing capabilities in the Regions across the 2 codes
- f. Increase frequency of hair testing as part of regular swabbing reforms

### Rationale

Swabbing is a critical integrity and animal welfare safeguard across all three racing codes. Current Queensland swabbing levels are materially below best-practice benchmarks:

- **Thoroughbred:** In FY23, Queensland swabbed only 11.4% of starters, compared to the industry benchmark rate of over 50% of starters.
- **Greyhound:** Only 13.3% of starters were swabbed in FY23, equating to approximately 8% of starters in practice. This falls well short of national benchmarks. Based on 99,092 greyhound starters in FY23, increasing to three swabs per race would lift coverage closer to 30%.
- **Harness:** Swabs are typically limited to winners and occasional randoms, producing low overall coverage.

Providing three swabs per race will significantly expand coverage and align Queensland with national standards. Including the last-placed runner adds complexity for potential offenders, while random swabbing creates a non-predictive enforcement approach that enhances deterrence.

By scaling swab allocations to meeting size (e.g., 30 swabs for 10-race Thoroughbred or Harness meetings; 36 swabs for 12-race Greyhound meetings), Queensland racing would move materially closer to industry benchmarks and substantially improve transparency, integrity and animal welfare protections.

Expanding the pool of qualified personnel authorised to conduct swabbing, alongside increasing the number of testing centres, will materially lift the capacity of the testing regime. In addition, incorporating hair testing more frequently into the regular swabbing program will improve turnaround times for results and further strengthen overall testing capacity.

## 35 National Post Racing Welfare System (NPRW)

### Recommendations:

- a. Convene national leaders from each racing code to define requirements for a unified NPRW system that provides for lifetime traceability and welfare for all three codes.
- b. Establish a multi-stakeholder approach comprising welfare experts, technologists and government agencies to co-design the platform.
- c. Ensure system design accommodates separate code protocols but uses shared standards for efficiency and scalability.

### Rationale:

Traceability and post-racing welfare remain critical to racing's social licence. The absence of a consistent national system has led to duplication, data fragmentation and accountability gaps. A NPRW system will improve end-to-end lifecycle tracking, reduce costs via common architecture and allow customisation at code level. Queensland is well-placed to lead the development due to its existing three-code structure and partnerships.

## 36 Traceability Framework and Digital Passport Rollout

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ is to establish a framework of best practice for traceability, with the Greyhound Digital Passport serving as the first initiative.
- b. The other two codes should follow sequentially to apply learnings from the initial rollout.
- c. RQ and QRIC are to engage with relevant racing bodies to create a National Code of Practice.

### Rationale:

Traceability is essential to maintaining public confidence in the racing industry and safeguard animal welfare from birth through to post-racing life.

Queensland's Greyhound Digital Passport initiative offers a viable template which can be extended to the Thoroughbred and Harness codes. Sequencing the implementation allows lessons to be captured and systems to be refined before wider application. Aligning this with the National Post-Racing Welfare (Recommendation 35) framework provides for interoperability, supports a national standard and reduces double-handling.

## 37 National Benchmarking and Expansion of the Queensland OTT Program

### Recommendation:

- a. Benchmark the Queensland Off-The-Track (QOTT) Program against leading post-racing welfare programs in other jurisdictions, including Racing NSW's "Team Thoroughbred," Victoria's Off The Track program and international models such as the Retired Racehorse Project (USA).
- b. Advocate for the development of a nationally consistent Off-The-Track framework in partnership with other Principal Racing Authorities (PRAs) and relevant Commonwealth stakeholders.
- c. Position the Queensland OTT Program as a national exemplar for coordinated aftercare, lifelong traceability and second-career transition pathways.

## Rationale:

The QOTT Program plays a vital role in supporting the ethical and sustainable retirement of racing animals. By facilitating smooth transitions into second careers and promoting awareness of breed versatility, the program enhances industry credibility and supports animal welfare. However, a fragmented national approach limits data sharing, rehoming coordination and lifetime traceability of racehorses. Benchmarking against mature programs in NSW, Victoria and international jurisdictions will reveal opportunities for improvement of the Queensland program and synergies with the interstate programs that can produce significant welfare benefits.

Queensland is well-placed to lead discussions on a unified national model, with QOTT's structure already addressing key lifecycle touchpoints. Establishing a coordinated national approach would improve public confidence, enable cross-border aftercare options and embed welfare as a core element of Australia's racing culture.

## 38 Save A Horse Australia (SAHA) visit

### Recommendation:

SAHA and other rescue groups, should transition into a Racing Queensland-aligned charitable foundation, supported by a breeding levy, national retirement framework and education programs to ensure long-term sustainability and stronger welfare outcomes.

- a. National Retirement Strategy – Establish a coordinated national framework for racehorse retirement with shared funding, oversight and standards.
- b. Education & Retraining Programs – Expand the “Learn to Ride a Thoroughbred” courses to also cover Standardbred horses (allowing eligibility to be expanded to all ex-racehorses), delivered in partnership with accredited re-trainers and incorporating horse husbandry and Off-The-Track (OTT) retraining modules.
- c. Incentivised Ownership Support – Starter packs for Off-The-Track (OTT) horses provided only after six months of ownership to ensure commitment.
- d. Community Engagement – Introduce gold-coin donations at major race meetings to build public awareness and support for rescue programs.
- e. Uniform Ban Enforcement – Advocate for a national register to prevent banned participants moving across jurisdictions to adopt retired racehorses (thoroughbred & standardbred).
- f. Charitable Foundation Model – Transition SAHA; and similar rescue charities to a charitable foundation with Racing Queensland oversight, mirroring proposed reforms in greyhound adoption.

### Rationale:

Save A Horse Australia (SAHA) is a horse rescue and sanctuary that operates as a registered charity. The organisation runs with around 10 full-time staff (including an accountant) and 10 rotational staff to cover seven-day operations. Governance is provided by a committee led by President Laura Cheshire, supported by a vice-president, treasurer and secretary.

Currently located at Beaudesert on a leased property SAHA is looking to purchase a nearby property, turn-key ready with the proceeds of a \$530,000 bequest. With another \$100,000 to move, set-up and establish their own permanent property SAHA can secure a 30-year loan from the bank to purchase the property for \$2million. RQ cannot donate a 'loan' from rescue grants. Their own property could then investigate joint ventures, with pony clubs; therapy groups and under a charitable foundation be self sufficient.

## 39 Greyhound Welfare in Corrections and Community Support Programs

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a \$100 per month GRP voucher per greyhound to support lifelong care and rehoming initiatives. This is full funded via changes to upfront starter payments
- b. Formalise Corrective Services partnerships where inmates train and care for greyhounds.
- c. Subsidise training programs delivered by GAP and accredited third parties for participants in the rehabilitation program.
- d. Seek co-contribution from Queensland Police and Corrective Services to support not-for-profit (NFP) rehoming partners.

### Rationale:

Greyhound-specific rehoming programs present an opportunity to address animal welfare, rehabilitation and social inclusion concurrently. Queensland's existing NFP network (e.g., GAP, Friends of the Hound) requires reliable funding to scale up post-racing placements. Building partnerships with the Department of Police and Corrective Services to embed greyhound care in prisons or community service programs has precedent in jurisdictions such as the US and NSW; mental health, disability, educational, aged care and other institutional settings also represent partnership opportunities. Programs of this nature produce multiple benefits for both human and animal participants, for example provision of emotional regulation and support and development of animal handling skills for the humans and rehoming and traceability outcomes for the animals.

A \$100/month voucher is an appropriate lifetime support amount, with subsidised training ensuring animal welfare standards are maintained.

## 40 Reduction of Point-of-Consumption Tax (POCT) Rate from 20% to 15%

### Recommendation

- a. POCT to reduce from current 20% to be in line with other jurisdictions at 15%.
- b. RQ will be paid 73.5% of POCT [effective 11% of consumption] and Government 26.5% [effective 4% of consumption].
- c. RQ will also seek to negotiate contractual commercial outcomes with key industry stakeholders.

### Rationale:

Queensland's current POCT rate of 20% is the highest of any Australia state and has been identified by multiple WSPs as a key deterrent to investment, product innovation and promotional spend in the state. All other Australian states have a 15% POCT (NT: 10%; ACT: 25%). Major WSPs advised the Review that they had actively diverted marketing and product resources away from Queensland in FY24 due to the punitive tax burden.

Wagering revenue remains the primary source of funding for Queensland Racing, with the state's rate set at 20%, the highest of any Australian state. RQ receives 80% of the POCT revenue, but major WSPs have expressed concerns that the cost of operating in Queensland is disproportionately high. The three leading WSPs have independently submitted consistent feedback to the Review, highlighting the financial strain without any indication of collusion.

In response, the Review has engaged with Treasury, relevant departments and industry experts to assess the issue thoroughly and consider mechanisms to reduce the impact of the POCT and stimulate wagering activity across the Queensland racing industry, without reducing the funding received by either RQ or the consolidated revenue of government. The proposed split of POCT partially addresses this issue by increasing the allocation of POCT to consolidated revenue, providing a "no-change" modelled outcome for the state's consolidated revenue. An additional Recommendation (42) is made to provide additional revenue to RQ to offset reduced allocation of POCT.

## 41 Removal of \$300,000 POCT Threshold

### Recommendations:

- a. Remove the \$300,000 POCT threshold
- b. Penalty of \$300k per instance for any bookmaker not abiding by their Licence Agreement.

### Rationale:

The current \$300,000 POCT exemption was intended to shield small, on-course bookmakers from tax liabilities disproportionate to their turnover. However, it has inadvertently enabled fragmentation and avoidance, with some operators registering multiple affiliated entities to remain under the threshold. This loophole distorts the competitive landscape and undermines the integrity of Queensland's wagering tax system and should be closed.

Removing the threshold, supported by major WSPs and a number of traditional bookmakers, would simplify the tax framework and is expected to generate additional annual revenue for RQ. However, there will be an exception to the revised POCT for small, independently operated on-course bookmakers with a gross turnover of less than \$300,000 per annum. Enforcing strong penalties for structural avoidance aligns with modern regulatory expectations and ensures the industry operates on a level playing field.

## 42 Race Field Fees Aligned with National Average

### Recommendations

- a. Increase Race Field Fees (currently blended 2.25%) to 3.1%.

### Rationale:

Queensland's current Race Field Fees are the lowest in Australia (2.25%), compared to 2.6–3.5% in jurisdictions such as NSW and Victoria, where fees are scaled according to product tier and race day status. This is because of a deliberate policy decision to reduce Race Field Fees, introduced as concession to operators when the POCT was increased to 20%. However, this tax/fee structure has failed to maintain competitiveness, as many WSPs have decreased Queensland marketing exposure, bonus offerings and product investment.

By realigning to the national average, Queensland can recapture market activity and signal product parity. Industry research suggests that even modest increases in fees, if tied to strong programming and wagering partnerships, can yield material wagering volume uplifts.

## 43 Support the Implementation of a National Tote

### Recommendations:

- b. Endorse the creation of a National Tote and sign an in-principle agreement to participate:
  - Racing Queensland must formally endorse the creation of a National Tote and sign an in-principle agreement to participate.
  - RQ to engage with Tabcorp as the lead entity, alongside the other two TAB operators and major WSPs, to establish a single national pool across Win, Place and Exotic bets.
  - RQ Chair and CEO to work collaboratively with interstate Principal Racing Authorities (PRAs) to set consistent rules and foster a collegiate culture underpinning the Tote's success.
- b. Integrate Greyhound racing into the Tote framework through daily national pooling:
  - RQ to actively integrate Greyhound racing into the National Tote framework, with daily meetings used to generate consistent liquidity across jurisdictions.
  - National pooling to be promoted as a way to strengthen exotic markets in Greyhound wagering, which currently suffer from fragmented liquidity and volatility.

- Greyhound racing is to be the first code to be integrated into the national tote.
- c. Prioritise Thoroughbred meetings in the early adoption of the National Tote:
  - RQ to ensure thoroughbred meetings are prioritised in the early adoption of the National Tote to establish scale and demonstrate liquidity benefits.
  - RQ to collaborate with Tabcorp and PRAs on harmonising exotic product offerings (e.g. Trifecta, First Four) to simplify customer choice and deepen pools.
- d. Commit Harness racing to participation in the National Tote to increase pool sizes:
  - RQ to commit Harness racing to National Tote participation, recognising the thin state-based pools currently undermine punter confidence.
  - Larger national Harness pools to be leveraged in marketing to rebuild wagering trust and highlight improved pricing efficiency.

## Rationale:

The decline in pari-mutuel wagering following COVID has underscored the need for innovative reform to reinvigorate betting interest and strengthen liquidity. The National Tote, long discussed but never implemented, represents a transformative opportunity to consolidate fragmented state-based pools into a single national pool per race type.

- **Thoroughbred Racing:** A unified national pool will simplify offerings, deepen liquidity across Win, Place and Exotic products and provide the scale to compete with fixed-odds alternatives.
- **Harness Racing:** Harness wagering pools are typically shallow, discouraging punters and weakening confidence. National pooling would materially increase pool sizes, producing stronger pricing efficiency and more stable returns.
- **Greyhound Racing:** Greyhounds stage daily meetings, yet fragmented pools limit customer engagement and value. A National Tote would significantly enhance liquidity and consistency, particularly in Exotic markets, stimulating both wagering and race viewing.

Consultation with PRAs and WSPs has shown broad support for advancing the National Tote. Queensland should take a leadership role in building consensus and embedding collaboration across jurisdictions. With fixed-odds wagering increasingly dominant, tote reform is a rare opportunity to rejuvenate pari-mutuel wagering, which remains a vital integrity-linked channel.

For Queensland, early and code-wide participation secures enhanced customer engagement, deeper liquidity and greater market trust, positioning the state as a central driver of tote reform nationally.

## 44 Strategic Engagement with the World Pool, JRA and HKJC

### Recommendations:

- a. Pursue integration into the World Pool to increase international wagering turnover and returns to Queensland racing.
- b. RQ, with Clubs that operate Group One races, to set a KPI of how many races will be involved in the World Pool.
- c. RQ Chair and CEO to coordinate and involve Clubs in negotiations with the HKJC.

### Rationale:

The Hong Kong Jockey Club's World Pool initiative has delivered global liquidity and exposure for jurisdictions able to secure participation. Queensland's inclusion in several Group One races has already yielded increased international wagering and media attention. To maximise benefits, RQ must pursue a coordinated and strategic approach to World Pool engagement, setting KPIs and managing negotiations centrally to avoid duplication or ad hoc club-level discussions.

Parallel engagement with the JRA offers another path for international uplift, particularly through attracting Japanese-trained horses to Queensland's Carnival periods. This would boost field depth, international betting

turnover and television reach. International collaboration must be deliberate, structured and aligned to commercial return. This approach mirrors successful outbound wagering growth strategies used by Racing Victoria.

## 45 Support for Rural Pubs, Clubs and "In-Play" Technology

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a funding mechanism to maintain the \$0 TAB fee for pubs and clubs, especially in regional and rural areas.
- b. Pilot a six-month "In-Play" wagering technology trial in Queensland for the Harness code.
- c. Racing Queensland to collaborate with QHA and government to promote uptake of Sky Racing in hospitality venues.

### Rationale:

Pubs and clubs remain vital community hubs in rural Queensland, often serving as informal race-day venues. The removal of TAB fees has reinvigorated interest in racing broadcast; however financial sustainability remains a risk and maintaining free access ensures widespread coverage and supports code exposure. Currently, NSW Racing is conducting a trial of "In-Play" Technology which would inform the process forward for Queensland.

"In-Play" terminals represent an innovative opportunity to grow wagering, particularly for smaller codes like Harness which benefit more significantly from increased and more significant audience engagement. The trial will help determine technological and commercial feasibility and the required regulatory framework.

## 46 PTSD Equine Therapy Program for Veterans and Police

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a metropolitan-adjacent therapy program using retired thoroughbreds to assist police and veterans with PTSD.
- b. Locate the program within the Doomben infield, as a constituent component of the proposed Equine Centre (see Recommendation 59).
- c. Seek philanthropic, government and breeder sponsorship to support staffing and operations
- d. Identify existing programs and examine aligning for cost saving and intellectual benefits (e.g. triumph over trauma).

### Rationale:

Equine-assisted therapy has proven effective in PTSD treatment programs for veterans and first responders, offering calming physical and emotional benefits. NSW's Heartland Horse Farm is a leading example, integrating retired racehorses into a community-focused recovery model. By adapting this concept within the Doomben infield, the program becomes accessible to a metropolitan catchment while supporting post-racing welfare outcomes. The initiative complements broader horse rehoming efforts and provides a dignified secondary career for thoroughbreds. Engagement from Queensland Breeders Association and philanthropic organisations seeks to reduce any financial impacts on government, notwithstanding that some government support from relevant agencies may be useful to fully develop the program and provide social impact.

## 47 Riding for the Disabled

### Recommendations:

- a. Create a dedicated space at the proposed Brisbane Equine Centre (Recommendation 59) to host Riding for the Disabled Association Queensland (RDAQ) programs.
- b. Consider if the RDAQ program could work in conjunction with the Equine Therapy Program.

## Rationale:

Riding for the Disabled programs provide therapeutic and recreational benefits to people with disabilities. With multiple RDAQ sites operating within 45 minutes of Doomben, there is an opportunity to establish a centrally located metropolitan facility. Co-location with veteran and police equine therapy programs may create synergies and collaborations across the therapeutic program whilst also providing additional secondary career pathway for retired racehorses and increasing the utilisation and community benefit of the acquired RQ asset. The initiative aligns with RQ’s community and welfare pillars.

## 48 Volunteers Reward & Recognition Program

### Recommendations:

- a. Provide 50 race clubs with 100 One-Day Membership Passes for use across the Queensland racing industry. These passes are intended for up to 20 volunteers (or their approved partners) to attend any Queensland race meeting, excluding designated carnival days, up to five times per year.
- b. Expand the program to other sporting and non-sporting organisations that rely on Volunteers across Queensland.
- c. Expand the program interstate to other racing jurisdictions under the same conditions above to provide even greater value to volunteers across Australia.

## Rationale:

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting Queensland’s racing industry, generously contributing their time and resources across clubs statewide. While they often seek no recognition, Queensland has an opportunity to develop an innovative mechanism to acknowledge their efforts in a meaningful way, especially in country and rural clubs where volunteer involvement is more significant and critical than at larger, staffed venues.

The proposed “Volunteer Reward & Recognition Scheme,” trialled initially in Regional and Country Thoroughbred clubs and expanding across all codes, could help attract younger participants to volunteering. For the initial 50 clubs, it is estimated that this initiative will result in an additional 5000 visitors, with an expected \$200 spend per visit, resulting in possibly over \$1m per annum in new revenue.

## 49 “You Are Not Alone” Mental Health Weekend

### Recommendations:

- a. Launch the annual “You Are Not Alone” Mental Health Weekend across all races taking place in Queensland between Friday and Sunday on a chosen weekend.
- b. During the “You Are Not Alone” Mental Health Weekend, RQ will donate the following sums each time number ‘2’ saddlecloth places:

Place	RQ Donation
1	\$300
2	\$200
3	\$100

- c. Stakeholders and WSPs will be encouraged to match the dollar amount donated by RQ
- d. The funds may be used to engage a third-party program who is to be made available to industry participants.

## Rationale:

Mental health is a growing challenge across racing, impacting trainers, riders, owners and volunteers. A symbolic, industry-wide event generates funds, raises awareness and reduces stigma. Using the Number 2 saddlecloth unifies messaging and provides a clear narrative. Matched funding from WSPs expands impact and a dedicated Officer ensures funds are invested in direct support. A state-wide weekend reinforces that mental health is a shared priority, not an isolated concern.

## 50 Industry Academy and Skills Pathway Program

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a RQ-led education program, funded by government and aligned with school based, TAFE and Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) standards to provide accredited, industry-relevant qualifications.
- b. Assign KPIs to all Hub Clubs (see Recommendation 20) for industry training participation, measured via investment, graduate outcomes and industry value.

### Rationale:

A coordinated training and accreditation system is vital to the long-term sustainability of the racing workforce. While multiple education providers (e.g. GCTC, UQ) already offer programs, these remain fragmented and inconsistently linked to industry needs. RQ partnering with TAFE to design and deliver this credible professional training will ensure that programs are of good quality and are aligned to industry needs, particularly as those needs may change over time. In addition, the public will be able to have confidence in the credibility of training and the capability of graduates, encouraging individuals to engage in the training programs to develop their own skills and career pathways. Similarly, partnership with CRICOS creates international recruitment pathways.

Mandating Hub Club participation ensures that the benefits of the program are accrued across broad geographies and in the long-term increases the industry's capacity. A KPI regime embeds accountability, mirroring the successful approach taken by Racing NSW, Silverdale Academy and Industry School Campuses.

## 51 Stewards Workforce and Capability Reform

### Recommendations:

- a. Undertake a benchmarking exercise comparing steward salary, conditions and employment mix (full-time vs casual) against Victoria and NSW.
- b. Establish a revised steward remuneration and FTE structure aligned with a future-focused QRIC model.
- c. Support development of an independent steward qualification through a Brisbane based university.

### Rationale:

Stewards are the cornerstone of racing integrity, yet Queensland remains overly reliant on casual engagement, creating inconsistencies and succession risks. Benchmarking against peer jurisdictions will ensure competitiveness and clarify the true cost of maintaining professional officiation across codes. Transitioning to a predominantly full-time workforce enhances regulatory consistency and resilience. A formal qualification pathway will support recruitment, standardisation, professionalism, long-term skills development and promote stewarding as a meaningful career.

## 52 Regional Skilled Migration Pathway for Jockeys and Farriers

### Recommendations:

- a. Develop a comprehensive workforce needs map identifying jockey, farrier and trackwork rider shortages across Queensland, with activity plans for migrant placements.

- b. Racing Queensland to consider a Scheme of placing successful applicants under the “Regional Skills Needs” program, which will allow international jockeys, farriers and trackwork riders to be employed by RQ as Apprentices and placed into roles with Regional Hub Clubs (see Recommendation 20). These apprentices will live and work in the regional centres associated with the Hub Clubs. (Note – by having program participants commence as Apprentices they will be subject to the rules around the “Apprentice Deed” - see Recommendation 53).
- c. Racing Queensland to engage a migration agent to map a path for eligible candidates to develop migration applications and address all conditions of entry and work eligibility for international candidates seeking to accept in-demand roles and settle in rural areas.
- d. Package accommodation and community support options to improve regional settlement success.
- e. Assign RQ HR leadership to coordinate with DFAT and Clubs on candidate sourcing and onboarding.

### Rationale:

Severe shortages of jockeys, farriers and trackwork riders, particularly in regional areas, is compromising race-day continuity and animal care standards. The situation can be improved by understanding the needs of international candidates and developing a responsive approach to identifying and recruiting international candidates to fill in-demand roles. Given the problem is most acute in regional areas, migration solutions would logically be tied to regional placements, where migration can be highly successful when individuals receive support to find suitable accommodation and integrate with the local community. By aligning this initiative with Academy pathways, RQ can offer new entrants both immediate industry work and long-term career trajectories. Central HR leadership will ensure consistency and compliance with national migration frameworks.

## 53 Apprentice Deed and Child Safety Compliance

### Recommendations:

- a. Formalise the Apprentice Deed requiring apprentices to be assigned to a Master Trainer for the duration of their apprenticeship, with secondment only under approved arrangements.
- b. Mandate Blue Card registration for all Trainers and adults working with minors in the racing industry.
- c. Fund immediate Blue Card checks for Trainers through RQ to facilitate licensing compliance.

### Rationale:

Apprentices are a critical talent pipeline for the industry and deserve strong protections. The Apprentice Deed ensures formal recognition of training relationships and establishes accountability structures.

A mandatory Blue Card requirement for all trainers and relevant adults aligns the industry with Queensland’s Working with Children legislative framework and mitigates risk to individual apprentices and the reputation of both control bodies and the industry more broadly. RQ funding the relevant checks in the first instance is a sound transitional arrangement to ensure there is no disruption to Apprentice placements as a result of the reform.

## 54 Barrier attendant accreditation

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ to oversee the development, delivery and governance of a formal Barrier Accreditation Certificate, aligned with existing industry training standards, for both Thoroughbred and Harness Racing.
- b. Implement a \$0 annual renewal fee to encourage ongoing compliance without creating a financial barrier to participation.

### Rationale:

Currently, there is no formal accreditation for Barrier Attendants, despite their critical role in ensuring the safety and welfare of horses, jockeys, drivers and colleagues at the barriers. Introducing an accreditation framework will

provide clear expectations and consistency, improve safety outcomes and professionalise the role, whilst also supporting the career development pathways of barrier attendants.

Providing the accreditation at no cost, via RQ, ensures that cost does not become a hurdle to uptake of the accreditation.

## 55 Remote Stewarding and Technology Deployment Steward

### Recommendations:

- a. Trial a 12-month 'Stewards Bunker' program using remote officiation from metropolitan location for efficiency and mentorship, commencing with televised Regional meetings.
- b. Harness Racing to be incorporated in the trial at the same time as Provincial Thoroughbred Tracks.
- c. If the trial is deemed successful, full implementation would occur across all tracks with the "Stewards Bunker" to be based in Brisbane at the new "Brisbane Equine Centre". (NB - Given reduced vision Country tracks would require the Stewards on site unless the track was able to demonstrate that the technology could be successfully operated at their track in racing conditions).

### Rationale:

Queensland's regional spread makes deployment of stewards via traditional, on-track methods, logistically difficult and cost-intensive. Technological advances allow for secure, high-fidelity remote officiation, reducing travel burden while maintaining integrity standards. Piloting this model with lower-grade meetings will test reliability before wider adoption. Strong evidentiary protocols will be required to preserve due process and steward authority.

The use of remote technology for stewarding aligns with national and international trends toward using digital methods to maintain integrity oversight.

## 56 Annual Feature Race Calendar

### Recommendations:

- a. RQ to publish a rolling 12-month Calendar for all Regional–Rural Clubs with key feature race days clearly displayed.
- b. Include links to tourism information, accommodation and regional highlights for each featured Club event.
- c. Expand this approach to Metropolitan and Provincial Clubs, providing consistent statewide visibility of all feature days.

### Rationale:

A rolling 12-month calendar allows better alignment with tourism, sponsorship and industry travel planning. Patrons can plan holiday visits, owners can coordinate with Trainers and Clubs gain clarity to organise feature events. By institutionalising annual scheduling, RQ reduces ad-hoc engagement and scheduling inconsistencies.

Displaying accommodation and destination links for rural meetings makes it easier for tourists to plan visits to regional communities.

This is a foundational reform that empowers Clubs and boosts marketing lead times.

## 57 WorkCover Insurance and Levy Distribution Reform

### Recommendations:

- a. Apply CPI indexation to the \$1.5 million WorkCover benchmark to address "premium creep" associated with wage inflation.

- b. Introduce a \$50 per starter levy for Trainers not covered by WorkCover, excluding Black Type races.
- c. Recycle the existing 1% Insurance Levy on Prize Money by returning \$30 per starter to Trainers on a quarterly basis.
- d. Establish an RQ Insurance Support Team comprising a metropolitan and regional officer reporting to the existing RQ Insurance Lead.

## Rationale:

Insurance obligations in the racing industry continue to grow, reflecting broader market trends in workers compensation premiums. Unlike NSW, which operates a self-insured user-pays scheme, Queensland retains a regulated model that pools risk. WorkCover Queensland changes its premium calculation method from a simplified to experience-based rating once a business wage bill is above \$1.5 million. Given this number is unindexed, inflation in wages means that each year additional racing businesses are crossing this threshold and are exposed to additional costs. On the basis of the alternative calculation method; indexing the cross-over point with CPI goes some way to addressing this issue and allowing racing businesses of smaller size to stay on the simplified method of premium calculation.

Introducing a \$50 per starter levy for non-covered Trainers is a fair mechanism to ensure shared responsibility, while exempting Black Type races maintains competitiveness.

Redirecting the 1% Prize Money Levy, currently raising around \$2 million annually, towards direct financial support for trainers via a \$30 per starter payment will ease the financial burden on trainers, with the remaining funds supporting a dedicated RQ team focused on insurance navigation, education and engaging injured industry participants to support their return-to-work journey. Moreover, it reported that oftentimes the large stables are covered by WorkCover while smaller stables are not and there is the general sentiment among the racing industry that WorkCover premiums paid by larger stables 'subsidise' those stables which are not covered by WorkCover. The proposed approach improves equity, administration and industry welfare outcomes.

## 58 Artificial Intelligence Strategy for Racing

### Recommendations

- a. Engage a qualified Artificial Intelligence (AI) expert to review current RQ operations across all codes.
- b. Identify immediate and future use cases for AI across:
  - Harness (handicapping)
  - Greyhounds (preferential draws and grading)
  - Thoroughbreds (benchmarking and performance tracking)
  - All codes (stewarding, surveillance, veterinary/welfare report analysis)
- c. Develop a phased implementation roadmap for applications of artificial intelligence, data analytics and process automation to enhance delivery of key functions (e.g. integrity and transparency).

### Rationale:

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping operational delivery and decision-making across all sectors. Racing must proactively explore AI's applications to avoid falling behind peer jurisdictions. There are numerous potential applications within the racing industry, including the following immediate opportunities:

- In Harness and Greyhounds, AI can reduce bias and increase consistency in handicapping and draw allocations.
- In Thoroughbreds, AI benchmarking enables more accurate ratings and form analysis.
- Across all codes, AI offers transformative integrity potential: analysing large datasets (e.g., vet records, stable returns) for early welfare red flags and assisting Stewards in decision-support and surveillance.

A deliberate, expert-led review to develop a roadmap of future initiatives has the potential to enhance and future-proof RQ's regulatory and operational capabilities.

## 59 Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan

### Recommendations:

- a. Fully implement the integrated "SEQ 15 Point Plan" (See Appendix Item E) as the strategic foundation for SEQ racing infrastructure.
- b. Rapidly establish collaborative discussions to this end, between Government, BRC, RQ and Albion Park, as priority stakeholders.

### Rationale:

The SEQ Plan represents the most ambitious infrastructure renewal in Queensland racing history. It addresses assets that are aged, underutilised and no longer fit for purpose and undercapitalised precincts. By co-locating QRIC and RQ at a world-class Equine Centre and revitalising Doomben and Eagle Farm, the Plan transforms SEQ into a racing hub of national and international significance and reduces the costs of maintaining duplicated infrastructure at multiple sites, simultaneously creating significant community benefits.

# Appendix B – Thoroughbred Recommendations

## 60 Country Cups & Town Plates Enhancement

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce minimum prize money thresholds: \$30,000 for Country Cups (distance) and \$20,000 for Town Plates (sprint).
- b. Encourage two-day carnivals where possible (e.g. Mt Garnet) and allow one-day formats as an alternative.
- c. Align at least one of these races with the 'Battle of the Bush' series to reduce funding burden through consolidation.

### Rationale:

Standardising prize money for Cups and Town Plates across Country and Rural Clubs will uplift regional race quality, improve attendance and incentivise broader participation from jockeys, trainers and owners. Queensland's tiered prize structure currently results in inconsistencies, where some Clubs lack the capacity to elevate feature races, weakening the attractiveness of their carnival. Victoria's Country Cups Series provides a useful benchmark, having successfully aligned marketing, prize money and horse pathways to stimulate engagement with race carnivals across the state's regions. Aligning feature races with the "Battle of the Bush" series will reduce duplication and generate cumulative benefit from increased wagering and tourism uplift.

## 61 Battle of the Bush Series Expansion

### Recommendations:

- a. Expand Battle of the Bush to 70 races across 35 weekends during Autumn, Winter and Spring (two distances: 1200m & 1600m).
- b. Increase prize money to \$25,000 per heat, \$50,000 for quarterly Regional Hub finals and \$100,000 for each of the two Annual Finals.
- c. Introduce a \$10,000 bonus to both the Hub Club and Home Track of the Final winners.
- d. Host a Gala Night with Minister-presented Country Racing Awards alongside the Finals.

### Rationale:

The current Battle of the Bush format, 16 heats culminating in a single \$200,000 Final, has proven successful in concept but remains underpowered in terms of reach, investment and level of industry engagement, suggesting that an opportunity exists to expand the format.

Under the revised format, heats increase from 16 to 70, offering \$25,000 prize pools for each and providing meaningful uplift for Regional/Country Clubs. By including both 1200m and 1600m distances, the series caters to more horses and training styles, improving diversity in participation. Domicile requirements and prize-money caps preserve the spirit of grassroots eligibility while maintaining competitive integrity.

Quarterly Regional Hub Finals with \$50,000 prize pool per race provide mid-year prestige and distribute economic benefit beyond SEQ. Grand Finals at metro venues (awarded via competitive bid) offer aspirational targets for country participants and exposure to regional horses on premium racing stages.

The total cost of the upgraded series is \$2.39 million. However, this is offset by removing 70 standard \$10,000 races (\$700,000), the existing \$200,000 Final and savings from reduced heat uplifts (\$40,000), leaving a net additional investment of \$1.45 million. With Regional, Hub and Metropolitan Clubs contributing \$450,000

collectively, the remaining funding required is approximately \$1 million. This is considered a justifiable industry investment due to the projected increase in wagering, field sizes and rural economic benefits, which are anticipated to produce a value for money outcome.

Critically, the proposed Gala Night and Country Racing Awards, hosted in conjunction with the Grand Final, will help to create and reinforce the event's cultural value, increase sponsor interest and celebrate excellence in country in a high-profile format.

The expanded model introduces strategic structure, meaningful prize increases and regional ownership of the series.

## 62 Implementation of 'Super Maidens' Race Series

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a Super Maidens program in Queensland. The series will involve designated maiden races weekly with increased prizemoney:
  - Wednesday: +\$12,000
  - Thursday: +\$8,000
  - Tuesday: +\$6,000
  - Friday: +\$5,000
  - Monday: +\$4,000
  - Saturday & Sunday Non-TAB Maidens (2 venues each): +\$3,000

This represents a total annual cost: \$2,448,000.

- b. Secure naming rights sponsorship from a WSP or industry partner to brand the series and offset or preferably cover this cost.

### Rationale:

Super Maidens will offer enhanced prizemoney for eligible horses that have not yet won a race, creating a more lucrative and strategic first-win opportunity within Queensland. The introduction of the series will retain trainers and horses in Queensland (especially those developed in regional or lower-tier circuits), reduce cross-border leakage, stimulate field sizes and enhance the quality of weekday and Non-TAB meetings. It provides a competitive and financially rewarding alternative to the NSW model yet is financially sustainable with a lower cost structure.

## 63 Benchmarking Thoroughbred Ratings

### Recommendations:

- a. Conduct a national benchmarking review comparing Queensland's system with other states.
- b. Focus on ensuring regional fairness, particularly for isolated or lower population areas.
- c. Align race scheduling with box audits and benchmarking sensitivity to optimise field sizes and competition.

### Rationale:

Queensland's Benchmarking system must be tailored to reflect the realities of rural and regional horse populations. A one-size-fits-all approach often results in unsuitable ratings, smaller fields and avoidable scratching. New South Wales and Victoria have implemented localised handicapping mechanisms to manage thin populations and maintain racing viability. Queensland must adopt similar flexibility to ensure its Benchmarking system reflects local conditions while supporting integrity and competitiveness.

## 64 Recalibration of Thoroughbred Race Meetings

### Recommendations:

- a. A voluntary offer to each club racing less than 20 times per year to remove 1-2 meetings per year and reapply the prizemoney to create feature race days (see example provided in Rationale, below) for racing year 2026.
- b. Move each recalibrated race meeting in 2026 Trial to a Sunday, Monday or Friday
- c. Engage a reputable social media organisation to work with Trial Clubs in creating valuable content that promotes all the Club's events.

### Rationale:

There are 39 Queensland Thoroughbred Clubs racing less than four times annually, with RQ applying an average overhead cost of \$47,000 per meeting. By reducing the number of lower-tier race days and reallocating prizemoney to create enhanced feature race days, clubs can deliver greater impact and value.

For example, cancelling a \$50,000 race day and reallocating 80% of the prizemoney to a different race day, offering \$90,000 in stakes, while directing the remaining \$10,000 equally to local engagement and social media initiatives, can deliver a stronger race day experience at a lower overall cost.

With targeted marketing, the financial and economic impact of the day is likely to exceed two smaller events, whilst additionally providing competitive returns for participants and reducing strain on volunteer workforces. Further to that, reducing the number of meetings reduces RQ's operational costs associated with supporting race days. If applied to 50 meetings annually, this model could save RQ approximately \$2.35 million.

## 65 Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme Reform

### Recommendations:

- a. Recalibrate QTISx (see Recommendation 66 to reallocate funds to the Jockey Retirement Fund (JRF)).
- b. Reapply the QTIS registration fee to help fund QTIS LIFE (see Recommendation 68).
- c. Establish and administer both JRF and QTIS LIFE under revised QTIS governance.

### Rationale:

The QTIS scheme has traditionally served as Queensland's flagship breeding incentive, but recent structures such as QTISx have underperformed, with only 48% of its FY24 budget utilised. By reallocating QTISx funds to welfare-linked programs like the JRF, RQ can better address long-term needs of participants and owners. QTIS LIFE, which rewards non-TAB starters, supports grassroots participation and encourages horses to race longer, particularly in Regional Club jurisdictions. These reforms are designed to rebalance the QTIS budget across social, ownership, welfare and financial outcomes and to provide additional value from the investment.

## 66 QTISx Cancellation

### Recommendations:

- a. Cancel the QTISx program.
- b. Reallocate the full \$1 million annual budget to fund the Jockey Retirement Fund (see Recommendation 75).

### Rationale:

QTISx was intended as a prestige overlay to reward Black Type winners, yet only 48% of its budget was utilised in FY24, making it a significantly underutilised and potentially poorly designed scheme. Its structure disproportionately

rewards owners already benefiting from high prizemoney events and does little to drive new breeding, ownership or racing behaviour. Redirecting these funds to JRF will achieve broader equity and stronger regional returns, without impacting the quality of competition at the elite level.

## 67 QTIS Initial Payment

### Recommendation:

- a. Reinstate the \$1,000 QTIS nomination fee for participation in the 2-year-old and 3-year-old program.
- b. Direct this payment to support QTIS LIFE (see Recommendation 68).

### Rationale:

The initial waiver of the QTIS nomination fee, following COVID, effectively increased participation in the relevant programs, however reinstating a modest nomination fee aligns QTIS with other national schemes (e.g. VOBIS and BOBS) and provides a consistent funding stream for QTIS LIFE. Given the quantum of the fee its reintroduction is not anticipated to deter breeders or owners from participating in the programs.

## 68 QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce QTIS LIFE: a program to provide \$100 starter bonuses at Non-TAB meetings for all thoroughbred horses throughout their racing careers. QTIS horses aged up to 12 will receive \$200 starter bonus.
- b. Introduce an administration fee for horses enrolled in the program: \$300 per annum or \$1,000 lifetime fee (payable by August 1st each year).
- c. Fund QTIS LIFE using:
  - \$1.5m from QTIS nomination fees (see Recommendation 67)
  - \$2.3m from cancelling the QTIS Fillies & Mares BonusThis equates to a total initial budget of \$4.0 million
- d. Expand to Regional racing once the model is established.

### Rationale:

QTIS LIFE shifts bonus incentives from early-career to whole-of-career racing, increasing field sizes at rural meetings and improving the financial sustainability of ownership. By providing guaranteed starter payments at Non-TAB venues, the scheme incentivises continued racing of sound horses, supports trainers based in country areas and increases trade value for horses transitioning into regional ownership. With an annual potential reach of 8,949 horses and a scalable funding model, QTIS LIFE represents a rebalanced investment in the longevity, fairness and productivity of the Queensland racing ecosystem.

## 69 Hendra and Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme

### Recommendation:

- a. Make Hendra vaccination a mandatory requirement for eligibility in the QTIS scheme.

## Rationale:

As QTIS is a funded incentive scheme, eligibility can be tied to critical welfare and safety protocols. The Hendra virus poses a lethal risk to horses and humans and jurisdictions have increasingly adopted a prevention-first posture. Making Hendra vaccination a QTIS entry requirement will incentivise uptake without imposing blanket mandates, creating a “nudge” towards safety outcomes in the form of a financial incentive, representing a positive advance for RQ’s safety and welfare agendas.

## 70 Tier Renaming and Scheduling Framework

### Recommendations:

- a. Adopt a new five-tier structure:
  - Metropolitan (BRC, GCTC - grass)
  - Provincial (SCTC, ITC)
  - Regional (10+ meetings/year + consideration of Club’s location)
  - Country (2–9 meetings/year + consideration of Club’s location)
  - Rural (1 meeting/year + consideration of Club’s location)
- b. Trial the framework in 2026–2027, with Clubs like BRC and GCTC leading scheduling coordination.
- c. Subject to review in 2027, permit SCTC and ITC to host Metropolitan-standard meetings on key days from 2028.

### Rationale:

The current Tier system lacks clarity for stakeholders and confuses programming decisions, sponsorship categorisation and funding eligibility. Replacing numerical tiers with intuitive geographic and frequency-based categories provides immediate transparency to industry participants. The new model also enables phased migration of Clubs (e.g., SCTC and ITC) to Metropolitan classification if race-day standards are met. Clear definitions assist with calendar planning, race standardisation and performance monitoring across all Clubs.

## 71 Brisbane Racing Club John Power Stand Redevelopment

### Recommendations:

- a. Deliver the redevelopment of the John Power Stand at Eagle Farm via the “SEQ 15 Point Plan” (see Recommendation 59), with a cost-neutral structure to the Brisbane Racing Club.

### Rationale:

The John Power Stand is currently inadequate for a premier metropolitan venue and has emerged as a safety concern. Stakeholder feedback emphasised the deteriorating condition of key public areas, affecting both race-day attendance and sponsor appeal. Its refurbishment is critical to elevating customer experience, increasing non-race day commercial use, ensuring Eagle Farm meets modern Group 1 racecourse expectations and maintaining the safety of racegoers and industry participants at race days. The “SEQ 15 Point Plan” offers a mechanism to co-fund and co-design the redevelopment in partnership with government and BRC, without imposing a direct financial burden on the Club and Industry.

## 72 Restoration of Toowoomba Night Racing

### Recommendation:

- a. Deliver repairs to the Toowoomba night racing lights via the SEQ 15 Point Plan (see Recommendation 59), to enable resumption of Saturday night programming.

## Rationale:

Night racing at Toowoomba has historically attracted strong local engagement, serving as a Saturday evening alternative following major metropolitan races. The failure of lighting infrastructure in early 2025 disrupted wagering patterns and removed a valued social outlet for regional patrons. Restoring night racing will reintroduce a profitable programming asset for RQ, particularly during warmer months when day racing temperatures are unsuitable. The investment aligns with the broader SEQ strategy to synchronise lighting infrastructure across multiple codes and clubs.

## 73 Coordinated approach to Night Racing

### Recommendations:

- a. Race Clubs with operational lighting infrastructure (SCTC, GCTC, Toowoomba and Doomben) (pending Recommendation 52) must collaborate to produce an annual, coordinated SEQ Night Racing Schedule.
- b. Meetings should be allocated across Wednesday to Saturday evenings, aligned with national and international racing times to maximise wagering turnover.
- c. Races should conclude by 9:00pm to accommodate safe working conditions and participant welfare.
- d. Night race scheduling should be informed by regional Box Audits to optimise field sizes and reduce float distances.

### Rationale:

Significant investments in racecourse lighting infrastructure have created the opportunity for a coordinated, year-round SEQ Night Racing product, an attractive offering with potential to increase wagering turnover and race attendance and may appeal to demographics not serviced by the current racing calendar. In contrast, uncoordinated scheduling risks inefficient asset use, participant fatigue and sub-optimal levels of wagering. By formalising a collaborative programming process across clubs and aligning programming with wagering peak windows, the industry can amplify audience reach, increase turnover and achieve these outcomes without any reductions in animal or participant welfare. Summer months provide a natural opportunity to showcase twilight and night racing, offering a more temperate customer experience.

## 74 Starlink for Rural Clubs

### Recommendations:

- a. Enable Clubs to secure a sponsor to cover Starlink connectivity for their premium race day.
- b. Where no sponsor is available, RQ and the Club will split the cost 50/50 in 2026, transitioning to full Club responsibility by 2027 as a licensing condition.

### Rationale:

Telecommunications and internet connectivity at rural racecourses are often unreliable due to tower limitations and regional blackspots. Lack of connectivity disrupts operations (e.g., ATM functionality, steward communication, on-course betting) and diminishes customer experience. Starlink offers a reliable solution but represents a cost burden for small Clubs. A phased cost model, initially subsidised, then self-funded, ensures continuity of service while incentivising Clubs to seek local or WSP sponsorship. This will improve betting turnover and on-course functionality without overburdening Clubs in the short term.

## 75 Jockey Retirement Fund (JRF)

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish the Jockey Retirement Fund to provide long-term savings for jockeys riding at Non-TAB meetings, funded by the reallocation of the QTISx programme (see Recommendation 66). This fund is to be managed by the Independent RIF (Recommendation 24), with targeted interest returns to be reinvested to provide the fund and individual accounts with compound benefits.
- b. Contribute \$100 per Non-TAB ride into individual JRF accounts, to be accessed by jockeys once they retire from riding.
- c. Make post-40 payouts automatic, with optional concurrent ride payments to incentivise longer rural careers.
- d. Provide early access to funds for reasons of medical retirement, maternity/paternity leave and partial access for Apprentices post-Deed.

### Rationale:

The JRF is established to incentivise participation in Non-TAB meetings and offer rural-based jockeys a significant long-term financial incentive, encouraging relocation to regional areas and improving the supply of jockeys for rural races. In addition, the fund acts as a quasi-superannuation scheme, but delivers earlier benefits to reflect the physical demands and career lifespan of jockeys. The fund offers financial security for apprentices and active riders alike and helps to establish riding as a viable career option.

## 76 Trainer Attraction Strategy

### Recommendations:

- a. Identify stable availability and trainer profiles to support permanent satellite stables in SEQ.
- b. Develop a subsidy or incentive model to attract interstate trainers to regional hubs like Cairns, Townsville, or Rockhampton.

### Rationale:

Queensland offers a compelling cost proposition for trainers compared to Sydney or Melbourne, but infrastructure and workforce limitations deter long-term relocation. Attracting interstate trainers with quality horses improves race depth, elevates competition and strengthens Queensland's standing on the national calendar. Strategic subsidies in underutilised regional hubs could offset set-up costs and broaden geographic spread. As stable capacity tightens in SEQ, activating North Queensland as a viable secondary base supports both diversity and regional and industry development.

# Appendix C – Harness Recommendations

## 77 Harness Board Member RQ

### Recommendations:

- a. Appoint a Director with significant Harness experience to the new nine-person RQ Board through a structured panel-led interview process.

### Rationale:

The newly formed nine-member RQ Board will include a Director with substantial experience in the Harness industry, selected through a formal interview process. While this Director will carry the same responsibilities as other Board members, they will also contribute valuable industry-specific insight to support strategic decision-making on issues specific to the harness industry. The panel-based appointment process is intended to maintain the integrity of the governing body, while simultaneously delivering targeted expertise of value to the board. Comparable models in other jurisdictions (e.g. Harness Racing Victoria's board composition) reinforce the importance of code-specific insight at Board level.

## 78 Harness CEO at RQ

### Recommendations:

- a. Establish a new 'Harness Racing CEO' role within the RQ structure, reporting to the EGM Racing Operations.
- b. Role to manage all Queensland Harness tracks and implement strategic direction.
- c. Position to be part-funded using a user-pays model:
  - 40% funded by race clubs, proportionate to race volumes
  - 60% funded by RQ.

### Rationale:

Outside of Albion Park, Harness venues in Queensland are managed primarily by volunteers. While dedicated, these volunteers lack the capacity and resources to effectively plan, execute and align their operations with statewide strategies. A dedicated CEO for the code will provide consistent leadership, operational efficiency and ensure all clubs are progressing toward shared goals for the code. The user-pays model is intended to balance fairness with affordability. This structure aligns with contemporary management models across racing jurisdictions and will professionalise Harness racing delivery across Redcliffe, Marburg, Toowoomba and other tracks.

## 79 QBRED Bonus System

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a new QBRED payment schedule, with a particular attention to the Appearance Bonus applied to provide immediate cash flow to Owners, to balance a reduction in the overall scheme (aligned to the horse winning three races over a period of four years).

QBRED payment schedule:

No. Wins	Age	Original payment schedule	QBRED payment schedule
1 <sup>st</sup> win	2yo+	\$14,000	\$12,000
2 <sup>nd</sup> win	3yo+	\$7,500	\$6,000
3 <sup>rd</sup> win	4/5	\$3,000	\$0

Starter Bonus for first two starts (each year):

Age	Bonus
3yo	\$250
4yo	\$250
5yo	\$250
6yo	\$250

*Note: All bonuses paid to Owners at 90% and Trainer at 10%. \$1,000 cash bonus for low prize money races to remain.*

### Rationale:

The cost of the QBRED program has escalated rapidly, with its budget increasing 80% in three years (to \$4.5 million). This recalibration is designed to balance financial sustainability and relevance by shifting the emphasis from a back-loaded bonus model to an appearance-based structure that supports consistent participation.

The new structure delivers earlier, more predictable returns to owners, easing cash-flow constraints. Shifting the bonus split to 90/10 Owner/Trainer (in place of Owner/Breeder) is intended to stimulate trainer participation at yearling sales, addressing stakeholder feedback on low trainer attendance and to lift breeder outcomes upfront via stronger sale prices rather than small, back-loaded bonuses years later. The rebalanced profile spreads benefits more evenly across ages and creates a clear incentive to keep horses in work over multiple seasons, without disproportionately rewarding a small cohort of top performers.

## 80 Toowoomba Lights and Track

### Recommendations:

- a. Support the return of Harness Racing to Toowoomba Turf Club to restore regional access and balance track distribution across SEQ.

### Rationale:

The Review received detailed proposals and strong local support to reinstate harness racing at Clifford Park racecourse (in Toowoomba). Toowoomba sits in a population-dense harness corridor and already possesses relevant infrastructure that can serve as a base for this proposal. Re-establishing Toowoomba forms a key node in a rationalised SEQ Harness network, with the broader configuration of Redcliffe, Marburg and Brisbane (Doomben) ensuring that all key racing and training hubs are within 100km of each other. Reopening Toowoomba as a harness

venue also directly addresses the regional demand from trainers and owners, in addition to creating new participation and wagering opportunities in Queensland's fastest-growing inland city.

## 81 Marburg Super Site

### Recommendations:

- a. Allocate \$25 million from the SEQ 15 Point Plan (see Recommendation 59) to redevelop Marburg as a premier Harness training and racing centre.
- b. RQ to negotiate either full land purchase or a secure a long-term lease (minimum 30-years) with the Marburg Showgrounds to underpin investment certainty.

### Rationale:

Marburg is optimally located between Brisbane and Toowoomba and is the geographic centre of Harness participation in Queensland. Despite being the smallest track currently in operation, its location justifies the creation of a flagship Harness centre. Investment in stabling, track infrastructure and participant facilities at Marburg will deliver enduring value for the industry by leveraging the sites strategic position, centralising training and expanding the regional racing presence. Notwithstanding the value of the opportunity, a long-term lease or outright purchase is critical to de-risk the investment and ensure the retention of value by the racing industry.

## 82 Norwell Sale

### Recommendations:

- a. Sell the Norwell site to reallocate capital towards more viable Harness infrastructure (as identified in Recommendation 59).

### Rationale:

The Norwell property was purchased to serve as a new Harness headquarters, but site constraints and planning challenges have rendered it unviable, and this initiative has not substantially progressed. Given the site is no longer aligned to the industry's infrastructure needs, a clear imperative exists to unlock the invested capital and reallocate it to proceed with more valuable and strategic opportunities, for example higher-impact projects such as Marburg (see Recommendation 81) and the Brisbane Equine Centre at Doomben (see Recommendation 59). This reinvestment approach ensures public funds and industry resources are directed toward fit-for-purpose, strategically located assets with high usage potential and capability to generate more significant economic return.

## 83 Albion Park Closure

### Recommendations:

- a. Close and sell the Albion Park Raceway and reinvest funds via the SEQ 15 Point Plan (see Recommendation 59) to develop a new Harness venue in the infield of Doomben Racecourse (Brisbane Equine Centre), including a possible 1,000-seat grandstand and associated facilities.

### Rationale:

Albion Park has served as the heart of Harness racing in Queensland since 1968. The site has been considered for sale for some time in the context of relocating racing to alternative venues with the potential use of the site as an Olympics venue. The Norwell site was purchased through the Racing Infrastructure Fund as a potential alternative harness venue in lieu of Albion Park, however, has subsequently been deemed as an unsuitable location. Further to that, the 100 Day Olympics Review definitively determined in 2025 that the site would not be used as an Olympics venue.

This background creates a context and opportunity to relocate Harness racing to Doomben as part of a broader strategic plan, with the sale of Albion Park providing RQ with significant capital that can be reinvested to achieve these objectives.

## 84 Development of SEQ Harness ‘North Star’ Series

### Recommendations:

- a. Launch a multi-track harness series, with local eligibility criteria, offering increased prize money for distance-based heats and finals (hosted at the Brisbane Equine Centre).
- b. RQ, four participating clubs and local Trainers to determine the best distances, qualifications and timing.

### Rationale:

The "North Star" Intrastate Series builds a regional identity for Queensland Harness racing, leveraging the full SEQ circuit (post-relocation from Albion Park). It will provide meaningful prizemoney, promote club collaboration and fill a strategic programming void following site changes. The rotation of heats and standardised qualification rules will incentivise sustained local participation and reward regional loyalty. Hosting finals at the new Equine Centre creates a premier event that will drive both wagering and attendance, while offering a structured narrative arc over the series. It's design mirrors successful models such as Victoria's Breeders Crown or the NSW Inter-District Series, adapted for Queensland's context.

## 85 Harness Driver Silks

### Recommendations:

- a. As an initial six-month trial at the new Toowoomba location, replace traditional driver silks with saddlecloth-colour-matching "hi-vis" silks at Toowoomba Harness.
- b. Based on outcomes, expand to Redcliffe and other Harness tracks through a staged rollout.

### Rationale:

Current Harness silks can be difficult for racegoers to identify, especially when horses are obscured in transit or in tight finishes. Saddlecloth-based hi-vis colours will enable clearer identification of horses during the race, enhancing the viewing experience for both on-course and off-site viewers (e.g. in pubs, clubs, or on mobile devices). This small operational change stands to address a long-standing visibility issue, improve wagering engagement and align Harness presentation with contemporary broadcast and spectator expectations. The staged implementation is designed to allow for iteration based on feedback and to reduce or eliminate any disruption of current racing operations.

## 86 Handicapping Harness Review

### Recommendations:

- a. Commission an independent expert panel review of Queensland's Harness ratings/handicapping settings, with draft options for implementation.
- b. Prohibit "drop-back" or any points-relief mechanism that rewards poor placings; do not permit ratings reductions for finishes worse than fifth.
- c. Publish a plain-language class/rating progression model with transparent, uniform adjustment rules and examples for licensees, owners and punters.
- d. Align ratings, ballots and penalties with prizemoney tiers and the four regular SEQ tracks to support competitive balance and ownership investment.

- e. Include a legal adviser (to assess any divergence from HRA National Rules) and a QRIC stewarding lead to embed enforceability and integrity from the outset.

### Rationale:

The current settings can incentivise poor performance to trigger grade relief, undermining integrity, stewarding, punter confidence and ownership returns. A principles-based reform—removing “drop-back”, clarifying progression and aligning to track/prizemoney tiers—reduces gaming, improves field quality and supports sustainable participation. Legal and stewarding involvement ensures compliance and practical enforceability.

## 87 Gate Attendants

### Recommendations:

- a. Only licenced individuals with official race-day credentials may access stabling enclosures.
- b. Gate Attendant responsibility to follow a hierarchy:
  - 1. Club employee
  - 2. QRIC or RQ official (charged to Club)
  - 3. Licenced security guard (charged to Club)
  - 4. Steward (charged to Club if no alternative available).
- c. All access points to be audited, with full CCTV coverage required.

### Rationale:

Site visits to Harness tracks revealed critical gaps in access control to horse stabling areas. Unregulated access poses major integrity, biosecurity and welfare risks. By enforcing licenced-only entry and mandating a designated gate attendant at all key access points, tracks can better prevent tampering, contamination and unauthorised interactions. QRIC and RQ involvement will ensure consistent enforcement and accountability. Requiring CCTV coverage creates transparency and evidence in the event of investigations. This policy mirrors best-practice racing protocols seen interstate and strengthens the public’s confidence in Harness oversight.

# Appendix D – Greyhound Recommendations

## 88 Greyhound Board Member at RQ

### Recommendations:

- a. A Panel will be established to appoint, via an interview process, a director to the Racing Queensland Board with significant Greyhound experience. Whilst this Director will be the 'greyhound advocate' they will be fully engaged in all board decisions and will exercise the same responsibilities as the other board members.

### Rationale:

The newly-formed nine person RQ Board will have a director with strong experience in the Greyhound industry. To ensure the integrity of the process, the director must undergo a stringent panel interview process. This director will be held to the same standards and responsibilities as other board members but will also bring a specific expertise. Evidence in other jurisdictions has shown that racing boards are better equipped to address the challenges of the code when furnished with industry specific insights by at least one member and this proposal seeks to ensure that RQ will always have access to such insight.

## 89 Greyhound CEO at RQ

### Recommendations:

- a. The new RQ Organisational Structure (see Recommendation 1) will include a new role of 'Greyhound Racing CEO'. This role will report directly to the EGM Racing Operations (who reports to the RQ CEO) (see Recommendation 2).
- b. The "Greyhound Racing CEO" will manage all Queensland Greyhound Tracks to create a consistent operational approach and ensuring the strategy of the RQ Board is administered promptly and accurately.
- c. The role will be subsidised on a 'user pay' model of the volume of races for each Track considering 40% of the CEO costs, whilst the remaining 60% will be paid by RQ.

### Rationale:

Operational consistency and leadership are lacking across regional greyhound clubs. Volunteers currently manage critical responsibilities without executive oversight. The Review found that volunteer led clubs struggle to align their operations to strategic agendas set out by RQ, engage with stakeholders transparently, or put in places changes necessary to achieve contemporary track safety standards, however a dedicated CEO within Racing Queensland will be well positioned to achieve these objectives. This model is common in other racing jurisdictions and urgently needed in Queensland.

## 90 QGOLD Starter Payment

### Recommendations:

- a. Amend the QGOLD greyhound scheme by halving the current Starter and Win Bonus payments:

<p><b>Starter Bonuses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$30 for short distances races</li><li>• \$40 to middle distance races</li><li>• \$50 for long distance races</li><li>• <b>&lt;440m: \$30</b></li><li>• <b>441–530m: \$40</b></li><li>• <b>531–650m: \$50</b></li><li>• <b>651m: \$60</b></li><li>• </li></ul>
<p><b>Win Bonuses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Start Bonus: \$500</li><li>• First Win Bonus: \$500</li><li>• Masters Win Bonus: \$500</li></ul>

This equates to a reduction from \$4.8 million to \$2.4 million annually.

- b. Redirect \$2.4 million towards a new Greyhound Retirement Program (see Recommendation 94).

### Rationale:

The reallocation of QGold payments improves long-term welfare outcomes by funding a lifetime care program for retired greyhounds, while still preserving modest incentives for owners and trainers to campaign animals responsibly and reducing incentives to over-race (consistent with MacSporran and welfare-driven racing reforms).

## 91 Greyhound Syndication – “Q Syndications”

### Recommendation:

- RQ to work with the Queensland Greyhound Racing Club (QGRC) to establish “Q Syndications” as an ASIC-accredited program with a supporting app, creating an affordable and engaging ownership pathway that reconnects the sport with the community.
- Launch “Q Syndications” under QGRC’s ASIC accreditation to offer low-cost (\$1,000–\$2,000) ownership shares in greyhounds.
- Develop an ownership app with education, updates and rehoming guidance.
- Create a national framework via Greyhounds Australasia for consistency.

### Rationale:

Queensland greyhound racing is well placed to expand community engagement, but ownership remains inaccessible to many. Not because of cost, but due to a lack of easily accessible information. RQ does have information on its website, but potential owners must know where to access this information.

Syndicated owners could visit a track, but it is impossible to discern who is the best trainer for them. They could go online and look for dogs or pups for sale; but they would need an understanding around breeding and/or

greyhounds' suitability for certain tracks. Furthermore, unlike big racing stables, the majority of greyhound trainers have little understanding of how to promote themselves or the sport. Those interested in racing a greyhound need to be able to access information.

A well promoted, affordable, structured syndication can deliver new participants, enhance social licence and increase wagering. With ASIC accreditation already in place through the QGRC, Queensland has a unique opportunity to establish a public syndication model. Once in place and with suitable promotion, a syndication would promote the sport by the sharing of self-interest social media posts, increase wagering and would all but guarantee a home for the dog once it retires.

## 92 Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a lifelong digital "Passport" for every greyhound from naming through to death, managed by GRP.
- b. The Passport will include:
  - All racing and official trial data, injuries, stewards' reports, kennelling, ownership and location history.
  - Welfare-linked entries such as Preferential Box Draw history, voucher usage and rehoming status.
  - Public access to the data described above.
  - Biannual compulsory owner updates to maintain GRP eligibility (see Recommendation 94).

### Rationale:

The Greyhound Digital Passport will accompany each dog throughout its life, maintained by the current owner or trainer and managed by the GRP. It will record key details such as racing and trial history, Stewards Reports, injuries, kennelling, ownership, retirement voucher activity and "Preferential Box" history. This comprehensive record will be publicly accessible and available for download. This proposal has the potential to dramatically increase transparency and public confidence that the industry is committed and adhering to very high welfare standards.

## 93 Cross-Jurisdictional Greyhound Welfare Partnership & Digital Tracking (RQ-GRNSW)

### Recommendations

- a. Enter a formal partnership with GRNSW to co-deliver adoption initiatives, specialist/international placements and regional adoption days.
- b. Adopt or licence NSW's whole-of-life digital tracking and rehoming platform and pilot in SEQ before statewide rollout.
- c. Establish a sustainable welfare funding and communications model (cost-neutral to Government) by adapting an NSW-style levy and launching a co-branded welfare campaign.

### Rationale

Partnering with GRNSW avoids duplication and accelerates outcomes by leveraging proven welfare innovations and global placement networks. A whole-of-life digital platform strengthens integrity and transparency, reduces administrative burden and supports earlier interventions that lower euthanasia and injuries. A dedicated, cost-neutral funding setting sustains technology, vet support (including tele-vet) and ongoing adoption throughput, improving public confidence and industry sustainability.

## 94 Greyhound Retirement Program

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## Recommendations:

- a. Establish a Greyhound Retirement Program (to enact important welfare initiatives proposed by the MacSporran Report) with the following components:
  - Each owner of a retired greyhound receives a \$100 monthly voucher (to approved vendors like Petbarn, RSPCA) for life.
  - Owners must upload a monthly timestamped photo and complete an annual vet check for continued eligibility.
  - The GRP targets 2,000 greyhounds annually at \$1,200 per dog.
  - An administration team (annual cost \$100,000 indexed at CPI) will manage the GRP, voucher processing and audits.
  - Create a GRP quality standard and allocate additional support to accredited third parties.

The scheme is to be funded by savings identified in the strategy put forward by the Review in Recommendation 90.
- b. Review the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) and benchmark rehoming effectiveness against third-party agencies (e.g. Greyhound Rescue, Friends of the Hound).

## Rationale:

The GRP proposes a lifelong support fund for retired greyhounds, funded by reallocating half of the Starter Bonus budget, resulting in a potential allocation of up to \$2.4 million annually. Each owner of a retired greyhound would receive a \$100 monthly voucher redeemable at approved outlets, with participation requiring regular photo updates and annual veterinary checks. This initiative ensures ongoing welfare for up to 2,000 retired greyhounds each year.

## 95 Greyhound Race Day Gaps

### Recommendation:

- a. Replace the existing monthly race limit with a mandatory 96-hour minimum gap between starts; or
- b. Limit greyhound racing participation to a maximum of four starts per fortnight.

## Rationale:

Currently, greyhounds can race up to seven times per month, without a requirement to allow adequate recovery between starts and theoretically allowing a racing dog to have all seven starts for the month within a short period of time. Introducing a 96-hour gap between races will help safeguard animal welfare by ensuring sufficient recuperation time, while also aligning race frequency with sustainable performance standards.

## 96 Amend Water Policy

### Recommendations:

- a. Mandate hydration protocols, ensuring greyhounds receive water within a regulated timeframe prior to racing (provided min 250ml and max 500ml prior to race event).

## Rationale:

Queensland currently prohibits the hydration of greyhounds after kennelling on race days. For example, at the Townsville meeting on 15 April 2025, kennelling began at 6:30pm, with the final race held at 10:55pm. This meant that some greyhounds, particularly those in the last race, went without water for up to four and a half hours, raising concerns about animal welfare.

## 97 Introduce Automatic 14-Day Stand Down for Fallen Greyhounds

### Recommendations:

- a. Apply an automatic 14-day stand down period for any greyhound recorded in the Stewards Report as having fallen during a race and which has failed to finish. This must also be recorded in the Greyhound Digital Passport (see Recommendation 92).

### Rationale:

Currently, there is no automatic stand down period where a greyhound experiences a fall during a race and fails to finish. A mandatory stand-down period provides time for possibly concussed racing dogs to be thoroughly assessed, for signs of injury to manifest and for recovery to occur, providing clear benefits to the welfare of racing dogs.

## 98 Repeal the Compulsory Muzzling of Greyhounds

### Recommendation:

Queensland should legislate to remove the compulsory muzzling requirement for retired racing greyhounds across all councils. This will modernise outdated laws, encourage adoption and strengthen public trust in the industry's commitment to animal welfare.

### Rationale:

Under Queensland law, all greyhounds are required to wear a muzzle in public, regardless of temperament. This applies away from the racecourse as well as in everyday community settings. Since around 2015, some exemptions have been permitted through the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP). Greyhounds that successfully complete behavioural assessments receive a "green collar" that removes the muzzle requirement—but only in council areas that have adopted the exemption. While several south-east Queensland councils have removed the muzzle restriction, others continue to enforce it.

The inconsistent application of muzzle rules creates confusion for owners, potential adopters and the wider public. Many community members still perceive greyhounds as dangerous dogs due to the visible muzzle, despite the breed's generally gentle nature. This perception discourages adoption, limits socialisation opportunities for the dogs and undermines public confidence in the industry's welfare standards. The patchwork of council approaches further complicates ownership, with rules changing depending on location.

## 99 Kennel to Couch: Transforming Greyhound Adoption Through a Charitable Foundation

### Recommendations:

- a. Transition the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) from a government-operated model to an independent charitable foundation, mirroring the proven NSW approach.
- b. Deploy regional coordinators and foster networks to expand adoption reach, placing greyhounds closer to where they are bred and raced.
- c. Develop an AI-driven adoption app to match greyhounds with potential owners and track whole-of-life outcomes, supported by targeted marketing and adoption ambassadors.
- d. Expand rehabilitation and partnership programs with correctional centres, therapy schemes, schools and international adoption networks.
- e. Establish a diversified funding model through donations, sponsorship, lotteries and volunteer engagement, reducing reliance on government grants.

## Rationale

Transitioning GAP to a charitable foundation would deliver cost savings, while strengthening welfare delivery, transparency and social licence. The NSW “kennel to couch” model demonstrates that a public-facing charity accelerates rehoming outcomes, unlocks philanthropic support and fosters community trust. Queensland’s current GAP facility at Churchable is costly, remote and administratively constrained, limiting adoption throughput and public engagement. A foundation model would enable faster rehoming, shorter kennel stays and advanced behavioural support, while regional delivery reduces geographic barriers. Leveraging technology, marketing and partnerships enhances adoption visibility and integration into community programs. This approach modernises welfare delivery, aligns with national best practice and positions Racing Queensland to sustain rehoming outcomes without ongoing government subsidy.

### **100 Introduce a Mandatory Greyhound Licence Training Scheme**

#### Recommendations:

- a. All potential greyhound racing industry participants who require a licence to operate are required to undergo a full-day training program to educate them on the rules associated with holding a licence.
- b. The Scheme will encourage teachers with a minimum 5 years in the industry to facilitate the education.
- c. All licenced participants should fill out a questionnaire designed by RQ annually to maintain their licence.
- d. If a potential greyhound racing industry participants has held a trainers licence to operate for the last 5 years is not required to undertake the full-day training program.

#### Rationale:

Mandatory induction education provides the structures to address knowledge gaps on welfare, safety and integrity and creates a meaningful licensing regime. The annual competency questionnaire and declaration ensures that licencees retain knowledge of the expected standards and industry policies. This system reflects the approach adopted by the NSW Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission and the licensing regime applied by Racing Victoria. It also helps to ensure that the greyhound industry maintains professional standards, while supporting its social licence.

### **101 Preferential Box Draw**

#### Recommendations:

- a. Mandate Preferential Box Draws across all greyhound tracks in Queensland from 1 January 2026.
- b. Boxes will be allocated based on greyhound racing pattern (rail, mid-track, wide).
- c. Where multiple dogs share bias, draws consider the dogs as a cohort and preferential box draw will be clustered accordingly.

#### Rationale:

The preferential box draw system, successfully implemented across various Australian and international venues, aligns greyhound box draws with each dog's natural racing bias. Greyhounds that prefer the rail are assigned inside boxes, those with a straight run are placed in the middle and wide runners are allocated outer boxes. Research shows that Preferential Box Draws reduce collisions and injuries, promoting fairer, safer racing and giving each greyhound the best chance of successfully completing the race without injury.

### **102 Statewide Transition to Six Dog Racing for non-Refurbished Tracks**

## Recommendation:

- a. "The Q" will continue to run eight-dog fields until 30 June 2026, subject to data collection on race-day incidents.
- b. All other greyhound venues, excepting the Q, will move to a six-dog configuration (Boxes 3 and 6 left vacant) from 1 January 2026, except for Open Class races.
- c. If any venue exceeds incident thresholds (to be benchmarked against UK/Ireland), it will be temporarily closed until track safety is addressed. Once a track has been refurbished and certified (through proven decline in injury rates to an acceptable benchmark), the track will be eligible to race eight-dog fields.

## Rationale:

Independent evidence from the UK, Ireland and parts of Victoria demonstrates that six-dog racing reduces collisions and injury severity, providing clear support evidence for the change. Staging the introduction of the reform facilitates collection of robust safety data at "The Q", whilst implementing the reform at older tracks where safety concerns are more heightened as quickly as possible increases safety and decreases the risk of injury to racing dogs.

## 103 Programming & Grading

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a performance-based ratings system (Vic FastTrack-style) to drive fair, transparent grading.
- b. Return race-day programming to clubs (with RQ oversight) and require demand-led variety across each card.
- c. Require a balanced mix of sprint, middle-distance and staying races on every program.
- d. Publish full nominations (greyhound names) prior to grading and publish "not required" lists when fields are drawn.
- e. Program up to two Maiden races and at least one Sixth Grade race at all non-city race meetings.
- f. A review of programming and grading to include RQ, club officials and trainer representatives with an aim to replicate the ratings system used in Victoria, to have programming placed back onto each club and to ensure nominations are listed prior to grading and those greyhounds not drawn are listed when fields are drawn.

## Rationale:

Greyhound racing's sustainability depends on balancing welfare, competitive opportunity and wagering success. The current settings over-favour short-course, low-class races, constraining quality racing, depressing wagering value and forcing smaller operations to travel across multiple meetings. A technology-driven, performance-based rating system (akin to Victoria's) will improve equity and field quality; club-led, demand-based programming with mandated distance variety will broaden opportunities, reduce trainer travel and enhance welfare. Transparent nominations (including "not required" lists) will lift confidence in grading decisions. Collectively, these changes are expected to increase wagering turnover, improve participant viability and support long-term industry sustainability.

## 104 Greyhound Race Day Scratching

### Recommendations:

- a. Introduce a 3-day stand down period (with vet certificate) to replace the current 10-day stand down penalty for greyhounds scratched on race morning.
- b. Alternatively, allow a 5-day stand down with no certificate but cancel all prior nominations (excluding major features).

## Rationale:

Greyhound trainers face a 10-day stand down period for a greyhound which is scratched on the morning of race day. This stand down period is out of step with other codes, with thoroughbred trainers being permitted to scratch horses on the morning of a race before a set deadline without incurring a penalty. While the decision to scratch a greyhound would remain at the trainer's discretion, the current penalty structure potentially discourages trainers from implementing responsible withdrawals by inadvertently creating the incentive to risk racing a greyhound that would have benefitted from being scratched, to avoid the stand-down penalty. This recommendation seeks to reduce the incentive to risk racing a dog by creating a more rationale framework to deal with scratching and ensure that dogs are fit to race.

## 105 Central and North Queensland Greyhound Series – 'Reef Series'

### Recommendations:

- a. Develop an annual series between Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Townsville for greyhounds domiciled or active in Central and North Queensland (contingent on track upgrades).

### Rationale:

A new race series is proposed to recognise the opportunity created by the \$4 million upgrade planned for Bundaberg Greyhounds. The new race series is proposed for Central and North Queensland and will target greyhounds that have either raced six times or been domiciled in the region for six months. The series would run annually across Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Townsville, featuring heats over three distances and culminating in high-prize finals. Subject to track investment, the initiative aims to boost regional racing with a total prize pool of \$250,000.

## 106 Introduction of "SIXY" Bet Type for Greyhounds

### Recommendations:

- a. Implement "SIXY", a new bet type for six-dog races where punters predict the finishing order, with options to box or multi the selections.
- b. Consider expansion into a "Triple Trio", allowing punters to box the first three greyhounds across three races.

### Rationale:

Innovative bet types are critical for stimulating interest in six-dog racing formats. Products like "SIXY" and "Triple Trio" have proven appeal in international wagering markets, with a potential to expand the entertainment value and deepen engagement in greyhound events where field sizes are smaller.

## 107 Rockhampton Greyhounds Relocation

### Recommendation:

- a. RQ to assess the feasibility of conducting greyhound racing activities on land offered by the Rockhampton Jockey Club (south of the existing track).
- b. If the findings of the RQ feasibility assessment are positive, relocate the Rockhampton Greyhound Racing Club to the land being offered by the Rockhampton Jockey Club under a minimal-cost land transfer or lease arrangement.
- c. Support the Rockhampton Jockey Club to re-purpose the infield, which was previously utilised for greyhound racing activities, improving dual-code synergies.

## Rationale:

The Rockhampton greyhound track is currently located within the thoroughbred racing circuit and without a tunnel, greyhounds are required to cross the thoroughbred track on race days. While this arrangement is currently manageable, it presents logistical challenges. However, the Rockhampton Jockey Club (RJC) has expressed willingness to allocate surplus land to the south of the course for the development of a dedicated greyhound track. This provides the opportunity to install a contemporary greyhound track, uplift the prominence of greyhound racing in Rockhampton and improve the spectator experience and dual-code synergies.

## 108 Townsville Relocation

### Recommendations:

- a. Transition Townsville to six-dog fields from 1 January 2026 and implement Preferential Box Draws (see Recommendations 101 and 102).
- b. Townsville will remain a six-dog venue until a new facility is opened within 50km of the current site.
- c. RQ and the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club to jointly identify and secure a site for a new facility, incorporating best practice track design and welfare infrastructure.
- d. Allocate \$10 million from the Racing Infrastructure Fund to deliver the project, with preferred ownership by RQ or a 20-year peppercorn lease arrangement.
- e. Townsville Greyhound Racing Club to secure an extra meeting to provide opportunities for greyhounds ready to race, but unable to secure a start due to the reduction in number of runners in previously scheduled races.

### Rationale:

The current lease at Townsville Showgrounds does not offer a sustainable long-term solution for the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club or RQ, due to ongoing limitations in access, track maintenance and on-course kennelling. In contrast, “The Q” represents a world-class investment prioritizing safety, patron experience and high-performance standards, expectations that should be consistent across all greyhound racing venues in Queensland. While the Club has entered a new two-year lease under similar terms, its racing population is largely drawn from within 100 kilometres of Townsville, given the significant distance to the next nearest venue in Rockhampton and the industry must seek to find a solution that provides a contemporary, safe racing venue within the Townsville area to provide ongoing racing opportunities for local trainers and opportunities to participate in the sport for local racegoers and punters.

## 109 Deliver High-Quality Track Rebuild at Bundaberg Greyhounds

### Recommendations:

- a. Ensure that the track is designed in consultation with a specialist in greyhound racing sand track design, to ensure that the track is correctly laid and meets the highest safety standards.
- b. Delivery of the design must be accompanied by an education program for track employees on appropriate track maintenance and if appropriate by a documented asset management plan, manual or guideline.
- c. Assess the impact on thoroughbred racing operations, particularly regarding sight lines and infield crossings. If the current configuration poses challenges, a track reconfiguration should be undertaken to ensure safe and efficient use of the facility for all racing codes.

### Rationale:

The Bundaberg Greyhound Racetrack has undergone several closures and re-openings as the industry aims to address the persistent animal welfare concerns raised by the track’s use. A re-design of the track, guided by expert

advice on the safe greyhound racing on sand tracks, will demonstrate the industry's unwavering commitment to animal welfare.

Investment in the Bundaberg Greyhound Racetrack is an opportunity to set a benchmark for safe and sustainable greyhound racing in regional Queensland. Applying best-practice design will reduce injury risk, extend the careers of racing greyhounds and support confidence in the sustainability of Bundaberg greyhound racing among the general public as well as industry participants and WSPs.

## 110 Communications & Promotional Push in Greyhound Racing

### Recommendations:

- a. Racing Queensland to immediately activate a Greyhound Racing media team; with specific KPI's to deliver daily, fact-based promotion of welfare, ownership and social benefits
- b. Appoint a credible spokesperson and adopt a UK-style storytelling strategy to secure the industry's future

### Rationale:

Industry participants are disheartened with the lack of promotion for greyhound racing and a perceived absence of an appetite to counter the anti-greyhound racing activists claims by governing bodies. Despite RQ and QRIC having dedicated media and communications teams, greyhound racing in Queensland experiences chronic under-promotion. The result is an industry that has allowed narratives defined by activists and mainstream media to define it, welfare gains go unrecognised, ownership benefits are hidden, and the sport's social contribution is invisible.

Without daily, proactive communication, critics will continue to dominate the public debate. The absence of leadership and storytelling leaves the industry vulnerable to calls for closure, as seen in Tasmania and New Zealand. Industry participants are disheartened with the lack of support from the racing body to promote greyhound racing.

# Appendix E – SEQ Plan

## SEQ Racing Precinct & Surrounds Plan (SEQ Plan)

The SEQ Plan is made up of the following 15 Points:

1. Dispose of Underutilised SEQ Racing Assets
2. Racing Queensland to acquire Doomben Racecourse from Brisbane Racing Club to Establish the Doomben Racing Precinct
3. Racing Queensland to develop a detailed implementation plan to activate Doomben Racecourse
4. Racing Queensland to lease Doomben to the Brisbane Racing Club
5. Relocate Albion Park Harness Racing to Doomben (harness racing to take place in the infield)
6. Develop the John Power Stand at Eagle Farm
7. Construct a dual-carriageway tunnel to access the Doomben infield
8. Upgrade Marburg to develop an elite harness racing training centre
9. Re-establish Harness Racing in Toowoomba (in the infield at Clifford Park)
10. Deliver reliable night-time lighting at Toowoomba Turf Club
11. Install lighting and grandstand upgrades at Doomben
12. Relocate RQ Administrative and Integrity Functions to Doomben
13. Relocate Wagering Service Providers to the Doomben Racing Precinct
14. Relocate Riding for Disabled and PTSD programs to the Doomben Racing Precinct
15. Relocate other industry functions to the Doomben Racing Precinct as opportunities arise.

### Point 1 – Dispose of Underutilised SEQ Racing Assets

- a. Racing Queensland to dispose of Albion Park Raceway.
- b. Racing Queensland to dispose of Norwell Training Centre.
- c. Racing Queensland to dispose of Deagon Racecourse.
- d. QRIC to dispose of Bowen Hills property.

### Rationale:

The disposal of underutilised infrastructure across SEQ is essential to the viability of the SEQ Plan. These four assets are operationally redundant or no longer suitable for future racing use:

- Albion Park is a harness-only venue with ageing facilities, incurs high operating costs and occupies high-value land
- Norwell and Deagon provide limited strategic value and duplicate existing capabilities at Eagle Farm and Marburg
- Bowen Hills has historically housed scientific functions but does not appropriately integrate with broader industry activities.

Disposal of these sites enables a self-funded capital program valued at approximately \$225 million, removing the need for government investment in the SEQ Plan. This mirrors capital-recycling models adopted in New South Wales and Victoria, whilst rationalisation of the asset base should reduce long-term operational overhead.

## Point 2 – Racing Queensland to acquire Doomben Racecourse to establish the Doomben Racing Precinct

### Rationale:

Acquisition of Doomben by Racing Queensland is a critical enabler of the SEQ Plan.

Doomben currently races only ~35 times annually, lacks a training centre and has underutilised infrastructure including its infield. BRC's constitution requires assets to be used to promote Thoroughbred racing, making divestment to Racing Queensland aligned with their constitutional objectives. Further to that, the acquisition creates a significant benefit to the people of Queensland by protecting the land for a racing use and public enjoyment and ensuring that it is not sold for residential or commercial development. The acquisition situates publicly owned assets into the heart of a racing precinct and unlocks the potential to develop that precinct in a coordinated manner for the enjoyment of the public.

## Point 3 – Racing Queensland to develop a Detailed Implementation Plan to Activate Doomben

### Rationale:

The acquisition of Doomben must be accompanied by a formal, staged implementation plan to ensure the site's reactivation aligns with industry needs and is effectively delivered. This includes zoning for dual-code use, infrastructure sequencing (e.g., lighting, tunnel) and prioritised tenancy planning. It also helps secure stakeholder buy-in, mitigates cost escalation and shortages of infrastructure providers in the lead-up to delivery of the 2032 Olympics.

## Point 4 – Racing Queensland to lease Doomben to Brisbane Racing Club

- a. Racing Queensland leases Doomben to Brisbane Racing Club on a 30-year peppercorn lease.

### Rationale:

Offering the BRC an opportunity to lease Doomben serves several purposes:

- Retention of the BRC's historic and commercial interest in the site
- Ongoing Thoroughbred racing at Doomben, ensuring the continuity of the metropolitan racing calendar
- If leased as a "peppercorn" lease, allows continuity of racing operations at the site at no additional cost to BRC, i.e. no commercial disincentive from the divestment
- As a past owner of the asset, BRC is well positioned as a tenant to have responsibility for overall operations, management and maintenance of the precinct.

However, as the asset will remain in public hands, Racing Queensland will maintain the long-term asset control.

## Point 5 – Relocate Albion Park Harness Racing to Doomben (Harness Racing to take place on the infield)

- a. Racing Queensland relocates Harness Racing from Albion Park to Doomben infield.
- b. Racing Queensland builds a 500 – 1000 seat grandstand and dedicated harness track (located to the east on the opposite end of the finish straight when compared to the Thoroughbred finish line).
- c. Racing Queensland offers a peppercorn lease for Harness Racing at Doomben.

### Rationale:

Harness Racing in SEQ has traditionally been head-quartered at Albion Park, however the future of the site has been uncertain for a period of years, which, along with a lack of investment in maintenance and upgrades, has led to the site becoming obsolescent.

The Doomben infield provides a unique opportunity to create a purpose-built, world-class venue with a 1000m circumference and 200-250m straight. This co-location model reduces land duplication, maximises precinct activation and aligns with 'Activate the Infield' policies seen in comparable jurisdictions. By remaining a tenant of Racing Queensland, the harness racing club can receive ongoing financial support in the form of a "peppercorn" lease and investments in fit for purpose infrastructure including a 500 – 1000 seat grandstand within the Doomben infield with viewing of the harness track.

## Point 6 – Develop the John Power Stand at Eagle Farm

### Rationale:

The existing John Power Stand is approaching the end of life and poses an imminent safety risk, which will need to be managed to the detriment of operations at race days, including an eventual de-build of the existing stand.

However, a modern grandstand is essential for Eagle Farm to maintain premier status and to compete with premier racing facilities in Sydney and Melbourne. The proposed new stand will provide modern amenities, improve the spectator experience and meet accessibility standards. Its delivery also resolves one of the most visible gaps in patron-facing infrastructure in Queensland's metropolitan racing. The BRC should proceed with developing the stand and will be financially able to do so given the proceeds of asset divestment described at Point 2, without need for additional government investment.

## Point 7 – Construct a dual-carriageway tunnel to access the Doomben infield

### Rationale:

Point 5 (and some of the subsequent Points) necessitates significant increases in the frequency and intensity of access to the infield at Doomben, which needs to be provided without compromising the integrity of the turf track. A tunnel ensures equine and patron movement can occur safely, with one lane for horses and one for spectators. In addition to protecting track surface quality, the proposed tunnel improves race-day logistics and operations by supporting mixed-use functionality in line with international best practice at dual-code venues. The tunnel also supports future activities like Riding for the Disabled, veterinary or education services that may co-locate at the infield precinct.

## Point 8 – Upgrade Marburg into an Elite Harness Training Centre

- a. Racing Queensland acquires long-term and secure tenure for the Marburg site (either acquisition or long-term lease).
- b. Racing Queensland upgrades Marburg Showgrounds into a premier Harness Racing training and racing facility.

### Rationale:

Marburg is strategically located between Brisbane and Toowoomba and lies at the heart of Queensland's standardbred horse population. Its conversion into a fit-for-purpose, elite training centre addresses long-standing capacity gaps in SEQ harness infrastructure whilst also reducing reliance on metropolitan sites and creating a high-quality western racing corridor aligned with future Olympic equestrian planning in Toowoomba that is readily accessible for standardbred owners and trainers.

However, the current ownership and lease model is not sufficiently secure to support large scale investment in the site; as such securing long-term tenure is a key enabler for this action. Co-investment with other local users (for example the Marburg show) could be possible depending on the needs of each party and the Marburg centre would create significant amenity for the community.

## Point 9 – Re-establish Harness Racing in Toowoomba (in the infield at Clifford Park)

### Rationale:

Harness racing has a historical presence in the Darling Downs region, with strong support expressed by the community during site visits and high-level project planning already completed by the club. Re-establishing a track at Toowoomba fills a regional gap left by closures over the past decade, creating new opportunities for breeders, owners and trainers based west of Brisbane, in addition to additional equine capacity in Toowoomba to support the Olympic equestrian (to be hosted at the Toowoomba Showgrounds). Utilising the infield at Clifford Park is a cost-effective, synergistic use of existing racing land, with the relevant investment able to be supported with funds from the divestment of underutilised Racing Queensland assets.

## Point 10 – Install Reliable Night Lighting at Toowoomba Turf Club

### Rationale:

Lighting failure at Toowoomba in early 2025 significantly disrupted racing schedules and harmed the industry's reputation. Restoring and upgrading lighting, with dual-code compatibility, ensures the venue is compliant, safe and capable of hosting flexible night-time programming across Thoroughbred (current state) and Harness (enabled by Point 9) racing codes. This increases meeting frequency, enables greater programming coordination with metropolitan and international fixtures and improves wagering returns by hosting races at times of peak engagement, whilst also supporting Olympics equine activity. Racing Queensland will be able to support or fully fund this initiative with proceeds of divestment activities described in earlier Points.

## Point 11 – Install Lighting and Grandstand Upgrades at Doomben

### Rationale:

Brisbane remains the only major Thoroughbred racing capital city without permanent lighting for metropolitan Thoroughbred racing. This limits programming flexibility and restricts Queensland's ability to tap into the high-yield night racing market, which has proven commercially successful in Sydney, Melbourne and Hong Kong and as such represents a missed opportunity to promote engagement and increase the financial sustainability of the racing schedule. Installing dual-code-compatible lighting at Doomben would allow coordinated scheduling with national and international meetings (for both Thoroughbred and Harness racing codes), stimulate new wagering activity, support the region's night-time economy and create a distinct value proposition for racing at Doomben (compared to Eagle Farm). Upgrading the Doomben grandstand concurrently enhances the race-day experience, lifts attendance capacity and supports venue use for other major events, hospitality and mixed community engagement.

As the asset owner it is anticipated that Racing Queensland would fully fund these initiatives with proceeds from the divestment of underutilised assets (Point 1).

## Point 12 – Relocate RQ Administrative and Integrity Functions to Doomben

### Rationale:

Co-locating Racing Queensland and Queensland Racing Integrity Commission functions (currently located at Deagon Racecourse and Bowen Hills, respectively) within the Doomben Precinct consolidates operations into a centralised, purpose-built environment. For this reason, this is a strategically advantageous initiative, as well as being necessary given the divestment of the current locations (as per Point 1). The move embeds governance and regulatory presence within the heart of Queensland's racing activity and facilitates better integration with industry stakeholders, including stewards, trainers and wagering entities. This model also aligns with infrastructure integration principles used by the Hong Kong Jockey Club and British Horseracing Authority, which co-locate administrative and integrity functions near active racing centres.

## Point 13 – Relocate Wagering Service Providers to Doomben

### Rationale:

Establishing a critical mass of wagering service providers within the Doomben Precinct enhances industry efficiency, fosters information-sharing and promotes digital innovation. Further to that, co-locating Wagering Service Providers with Racing Queensland, Queensland Racing Integrity Commission and race clubs can improve racing data management, stewarding support and real-time wagering oversight. This model mirrors best practice in Victoria and the UK, where proximity between racing authorities and wagering operators has improved strategic alignment and compliance.

As commercial entities, these tenancies would be on a commercial basis with appropriate market-based rents, sub-let by the BRC which provides an ongoing revenue stream for the club and assists to offset any expenses associated with managing or maintaining the precinct.

## Point 14 – Relocate Riding for the Disabled and PTSD Programs to Doomben

### Rationale:

Allocating space at Doomben for Riding for the Disabled and equine-assisted PTSD rehabilitation initiatives provides a clear community benefit and reinforces the industry's social licence to operate. The program would provide direct access to horses, volunteers and facilities, enhancing both visibility and participation. Integration of retired racehorses into these initiatives also supports whole-of-life animal welfare outcomes. Central placement within metropolitan Brisbane increases accessibility for participants and contributes to the precinct's mixed-use, inclusive vision.

Given the not-for-profit and community-benefit nature of these organisations, it is envisaged that access to appropriate facilities within the precinct would either be licenced or sub-let by BRC on a peppercorn basis.

## Point 15 – Relocate of Other Industry Functions to Doomben as and when Opportunities Arise

- a. Racing Queensland facilitates relocation of other industry services to Doomben as commercially and strategically viable.
- b. Potential tenants include veterinary clinics, training academies, the jockey riding school and turf or equine service providers.

### Rationale:

The Doomben Precinct provides a rare opportunity to co-locate multiple racing and equine-related services within a single, interconnected hub. Potential services for relocation include:

- veterinary support
- education and accreditation services (e.g. training academies, a jockey riding school)
- commercial suppliers (e.g. turf providers, farriers, saddlers, etc.).

Relocating key functions contributes to:

- the creation of a vibrant, industry-specific ecosystem
- greater collaboration
- lower operating costs
- enhanced visibility of career pathways
- streamlined delivery of critical services.

By leasing available space to such tenants, BRC and Racing Queensland can activate underutilised assets while reducing fragmentation across the broader industry. This should occur in the future once the previously described precinct initiatives have been delivered and when relevant strategic or commercial opportunities become known.

# Appendix F – Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations of the Queensland Racing Review 2025 have been summarised below in the following order:

- General Racing Industry Recommendations
- Recommendations for Thoroughbred Racing
- Recommendations for Harness Racing
- Recommendations for Greyhound Racing.

A more detailed account of the recommendations, with relevant justification and explanation, has been provided in Appendix A – D. The SEQ Investment Plan is provided in Appendix E.

## 8.3 General Racing Industry Recommendations

**Table 5: General Racing Industry Recommendations**

#	Recommendation	Description	Related Recommendations
1	Adoption of the ‘Hybrid’ Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity	Adopt a Hybrid Model that consolidates all non-core functions into RQ, retains stewarding and integrity under an independent Commissioner of Stewards (COS) and eliminates duplicative corporate overhead across QRIC and RQ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2: RQ CEO Appointment and Remuneration Benchmarking</li> <li>• 5: Elevate Wagering Integrity Role to GM within QRIC</li> <li>• 51: Stewards Workforce and Capability Reform</li> <li>• 30: Transparency in Appeals Panel Performance</li> <li>• 78: Harness Board Member RQ</li> <li>• 89: Greyhound CEO at RQ</li> <li>• 10: Whistle Blower Policy</li> </ul>
2	RQ CEO Appointment and Remuneration Benchmarking	Appoint a CEO with elite sports and business leadership experience; salary should align with Primary Racing Authorities benchmarks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1: Adoption of the ‘Hybrid’ Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> <li>• 9: Rebalancing Racing Australia Voting Power 59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>
3	Reform the RQ Board	Reform to include 9 members with code and governance expertise; rotation system introduced; Board appointed by the Minister after a rigorous merit-based public application process. Chair is appointed by the Minister.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4: Appointment of a Rural Advocate Director to the RQ Board</li> <li>• 8: RQ Board Remuneration Commuted to Travel in Year 1</li> <li>• 9: Rebalancing Racing Australia Voting Power 77: Harness Board Member RQ</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88: Greyhound Board Member at RQ</li> <li>• 10: Whistle Blower Policy</li> </ul>
4	Appointment of a Rural Advocate Director to the RQ Board	At least one RQ Board member must reside in rural Queensland to ensure regional representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3: Reform the RQ Board</li> </ul>
5	Elevate Wagering Integrity Role to General Manager within QRIC	Appoint a Wagering Integrity General Manager within QRIC to lead surveillance, oversight and strategic integrity functions across all wagering channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1: Adoption of the 'Hybrid' Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> <li>• 32: Conduct a Jurisdictional Analysis of Wagering Integrity Systems</li> </ul>
6	Clarification and Allocation of Functions	Clarify and separate QRIC and RQ powers based on RNSW's model to eliminate duplication and stakeholder confusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11: Public Availability of Race Club AGM and EGM Minutes</li> <li>• 15: AML/CTF Compliance</li> <li>• 31: Adoption of Excluded Persons and Locations Protocol</li> <li>• 12: Club Travel Governance and Spend Caps</li> <li>• 16: Related Party Transactions</li> <li>• 29: Monthly Wagering &amp; Betting Tax Payment Schedule</li> <li>• 57: WorkCover Insurance and Levy Distribution Reform</li> <li>• 10: Whistle Blower Policy</li> <li>• 64: Recalibration of Thoroughbred Race Meetings</li> </ul>
7	Board Accreditation Requirements	Mandatory AICD or equivalent accreditation for all RQ and Club Boards; minimum 2 accredited directors per Club.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12: Club Travel Governance and Spend Caps</li> <li>• 16: Related Party Transactions</li> <li>• 10: Whistle Blower Policy</li> </ul>
8	RQ Board Remuneration Commuted to Travel in Year 1	For the first year of the operation of the new RQ Board, 50% of remuneration will be converted to travel to ensure Directors are seen and are among the industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3: Reform the RQ Board</li> <li>• 12: Club Travel Governance and Spend Caps</li> </ul>
9	Rebalancing Racing Australia Voting Power	Increase Queensland's voting power in Racing Australia to 25%; reduce NSW and Victoria to 32.5% each. Reduce power of Veto to 50%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2: RQ CEO Appointment and Remuneration Benchmarking</li> <li>• 3: Reform the RQ Board</li> </ul>

10	Whistle Blower Policy	Develop a publicly accessible Whistleblower Policy for RQ and QRIC, with protections for anonymous disclosures and formal officer training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Adoption of the 'Hybrid' Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> <li>3: Reform the RQ Board</li> <li>7: Board Accreditation Requirements</li> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
11	Public Availability of AGM and EGM Minutes	Meeting minutes must be published online within 30 days post-sign-off for member transparency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
12	Club Travel Governance and Spend Caps	Standardise race club-related travel reimbursements and approvals to ensure cost-efficiency and fairness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7: Board Accreditation Requirements</li> <li>8: RQ Board Remuneration Commuted to Travel in Year 1</li> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
13	Annual Financial Reporting Template for Clubs (Grants & Donations)	Grants, donations and any one-off payments (excluding sponsorships), should be displayed below EBITDA to ensure accurate operating financial performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> <li>14: Mid-Year Financial Reporting Template for Clubs</li> </ul>
14	Mid-Year Financial Reporting Template for Clubs	Introduce a RQ short form and simple reporting template for all clubs to use for the mid-year submission of their financials to RQ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> <li>13: Annual Financial Reporting Template for Clubs</li> </ul>
15	AML/CTF Compliance Across Racing-Controlled Entities	Implement AML/CTF compliance training for relevant racing organisations; clarify AUSTRAC obligations across entities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
16	Related Party Transactions	Set spending guidelines for related party transactions, with restrictions in metro/regional Clubs and approval framework for remote Clubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7: Board Accreditation Requirements</li> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
17	Overheads Allocation Review	Audit overheads applied to each race club and develop a transparent cost-allocation model linked to true cost-to-serve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10: Whistle Blower Policy</li> </ul>
18	Racecourse Ownership and Land Audit	Audit and bank valuation of all racecourse land assets; consider Crown land acquisition to support infrastructure strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> <li>23: Establishment of a Future Fund</li> <li>59: SEQ 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>
19	Tiered Minimum Standards for Race Clubs	Review QRIC/RQ roles and adopt NSW's tiered standard model to reduce duplication and clarify responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27: Infield Activation and Shared Use</li> <li>33: Swab Blitz</li> </ul>
20	Hub & Spoke Race Clubs	Implement a governance model where accredited 'hub' clubs support smaller 'spoke' clubs. A Balanced Scorecard will guide performance-based recognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21: Asset Recycling Marketplace</li> <li>28: Social Media Strategy and "Daily Press" Model</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48: Volunteers Reward &amp; Recognition</li> </ul>
21	Asset Recycling Marketplace	Establish a digital RQ-managed asset marketplace for clubs to list surplus infrastructure and facilitate reuse across the industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20: Hub &amp; Spoke Race Clubs</li> </ul>
22	Establish a Race Club Fund Amalgam	Amalgamate existing race club funds to streamline infrastructure investment and ensure more equitable distribution across clubs and codes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> </ul>
23	Establishment of a Future Fund	Establish a Racing Future Fund to support strategic capital investment and reduce reliance on ad hoc government grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22: Establish a Race Club Fund Amalgam</li> <li>• 24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> <li>• 18: Racecourse Ownership and Land Audit</li> </ul>
24	Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund	Create an independent three-member panel reporting to the Minister to oversee and approve infrastructure projects above \$50,000.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22: Establish a Race Club Fund Amalgam</li> <li>• 23: Establishment of a Future Fund</li> <li>• 18: Racecourse Ownership and Land Audit</li> <li>• 75: Jockey Retirement Fund (JRF)</li> <li>• 107: Rockhampton Greyhounds Relocation</li> <li>• 108: Townsville Relocation</li> <li>• 109: Bundaberg Greyhounds Track Rebuild</li> </ul>
25	Corrections Racetrack Maintenance Work Experience Program	Establish a partnership with Queensland Corrective Services to create a racetrack maintenance work program that provides skilled labour for clubs while supporting prisoner rehabilitation and community reintegration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 39: Greyhound Welfare in Corrections and Community Support Programs</li> </ul>
26	Expansion of Virtual Signage at Racecourses	RQ to support all TAB clubs to enter into a financial arrangement with Sky Channel to have the Club's sponsors shown during their races by way of virtual signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45: Support for Rural Pubs, Clubs and "In-Play" Technology</li> <li>• 28: Social Media Strategy and "Daily Press" Model</li> </ul>
27	Infield Activation and Shared Use	Enable clubs to develop infield land for agriculture, recreation, or renewable energy uses. RQ Infrastructure Team to identify and support viable projects to enhance club self-sufficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19: Tiered Minimum Standards for Race Club</li> <li>• 47: Riding for the Disabled</li> <li>• 18: Racecourse Ownership and Land Audit</li> </ul>
28	Social Media Strategy and "Daily Press" Model	Review findings from the Daily Press social media audit and develop a scalable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20: Hub &amp; Spoke Race Clubs</li> </ul>

		support model for clubs racing 1–5 times per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45: Support for Rural Pubs, Clubs and "In-Play" Technology</li> </ul>
29	Monthly Wagering & Betting Tax Payment Schedule	Shift to monthly betting tax payments from Treasury to RQ to improve cashflow stability and generate \$1m p.a. in interest earnings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
30	Transparency in Appeals Panel Performance	Ensure that Appeals Panel performance is displayed in RQ and QRIC Annual reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Adoption of the 'Hybrid' Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> <li>51: Stewards Workforce and Capability Reform</li> </ul>
31	Adoption of Excluded Persons and Locations Protocol to Strengthen Animal Welfare Protections	Develop a statewide excluded persons and banned locations register to support integrity enforcement and safe venue access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
32	Conduct a Jurisdictional Analysis of Wagering Integrity Systems	Conduct a targeted review of wagering integrity risks and opportunities across all codes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5: Elevate Wagering Integrity Role to GM within QRIC</li> </ul>
33	Swab Blitz	A random weekly race will be drawn by the Commissioner of Stewards across each Queensland Code where all runners will be subject to a pre-race or post-race swab, with an emphasis on hair samples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34: Cross-Code Swabbing Reform</li> </ul>
34	Cross-Code Swabbing Reform	Mandate a minimum of three swabs per race (winner, and two random runner) across all codes, with 30 swabs supplied for a standard 10-race meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>33: Swab Blitz</li> </ul>
35	National Post Racing Welfare System (NPRW)	Develop a national, lifetime traceability and welfare system for all three codes, led by industry and government experts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>46: PTSD Equine Therapy Program</li> <li>39: Greyhound Welfare in Corrections and Community Support Programs</li> <li>36: Traceability Framework</li> </ul>
36	Traceability Framework and Digital Passport Rollout	Advocate for and contribute to the development of a national welfare and traceability framework covering all three codes of racing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35: National Post Racing Welfare System</li> <li>37: National Benchmarking and Expansion of OTT Program</li> </ul>
37	National Benchmarking and Expansion of the Queensland OTT Program	Benchmark OTT Welfare against similar programs and attempt to create a national approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35: National Post Racing Welfare System</li> <li>36: Traceability</li> </ul>
38	Save A Horse Australia (SAHA) visit	Conduct a structured engagement visit to Save A Horse Australia (SAHA) to review its facilities, rehoming practises and potential for partnership opportunities with RQ's Off-The-Track and welfare programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35: National Post Racing Welfare System</li> <li>37: National Benchmarking and Expansion of OTT Program</li> </ul>

39	Greyhound Welfare in Corrections and Community Support Programs	Support rehoming and welfare programs pairing greyhounds with inmates and PTSD sufferers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25: Corrections Racetrack Maintenance Work Program</li> <li>46: PTSD Equine Therapy Program</li> </ul>
40	Reduction of POCT Rate from 20% to 15%	POCT to reduce from current 20% to be in line with other States at 15%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41: Removal of \$300k POCT Threshold</li> <li>42: Race Field Fees</li> <li>43: National Tote</li> <li>44: World Pool</li> </ul>
41	Removal of \$300,000 POCT Threshold	Remove the \$300k POCT threshold and introduce a \$300k penalty for operators structuring to avoid tax obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40: POCT Rate Reduction</li> </ul>
42	Race Field Fees Aligned with National Average	Increase Race Field Fees from blended 2.25% to 3.1% to align with national average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40: POCT Rate Reduction</li> </ul>
43	Support the Implementation of a National Tote	Support Queensland's participation in the creation of a unified National Tote.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40: POCT Rate Reduction</li> <li>44: World Pool</li> </ul>
44	Strategic Engagement with the World Pool, JRA and HKJC	Coordinate Queensland's integration into the World Pool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>43: National Tote</li> </ul>
45	Support for Rural Pubs, Clubs and "In-Play" Technology	Maintain \$0 TAB fees for rural pubs and clubs and pilot In-Play wagering terminals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26: Virtual Signage Expansion</li> <li>28: Social Media Strategy</li> </ul>
46	PTSD Equine Therapy Program for Veterans and Police	Develop a metropolitan PTSD equine therapy program using retired racehorses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>39: Greyhound Welfare in Corrections and Community Support Programs</li> <li>35: National Post Racing Welfare System</li> </ul>
47	Riding for the Disabled	Establish a central RDAQ facility at Doomben to complement regional programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27: Infield Activation</li> <li>59: SEQ 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>
48	Volunteers Reward & Recognition Program	Develop a consistent, statewide policy to acknowledge the contribution of volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49: "You Are Not Alone" Mental Health Weekend</li> </ul>
49	"You Are Not Alone" Mental Health Weekend	Across all races for the chosen weekend, RQ donates a sum of money (matched by WSPs) into a pool to fund a mental health support officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>48: Volunteer Recognition</li> <li>45: Rural Pubs &amp; Clubs</li> </ul>
50	Industry Academy and Skills Pathway Program	Establish a RQ-led education program, funded by government and aligned with national TAFE/CRICOS standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53: Apprentice Deed and Child Safety Compliance</li> <li>52: Regional Skilled Migration Pathway</li> </ul>
51	Stewards Workforce and Capability Reform	Review and address stewarding workforce needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Hybrid Organisational Model</li> <li>30: Appeals Transparency</li> <li>55: Remote Stewarding</li> </ul>

52	Regional Skilled Migration Pathway for Jockeys and Farriers	Partner with DFAT to recruit and place skilled international workers in regional areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50: Industry Academy</li> </ul>
53	Apprentice Deed and Child Safety Compliance	Mandate a formal Apprentice Deed linking apprentices to approved trainers and require Blue Cards for minors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50: Industry Academy</li> </ul>
54	Barrier attendant accreditation	Accredit Barrier Attendants with an annually renewed certificate for safety and professional standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34: Academy &amp; Pathways</li> </ul>
55	Remote Stewarding and Technology Deployment Steward	Trial a 12-month 'Stewards Bunker' program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51: Stewards Workforce</li> </ul>
56	Annual Feature Race Calendar	Mandate a 12-month forward calendar of all major race days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45: Rural Pubs &amp; Clubs</li> </ul>
57	WorkCover Insurance and Levy Distribution Reform	Review WorkCover arrangements for licenced racing participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
58	Artificial Intelligence Strategy for Racing	Engage expert advisory services to assess application of AI across codes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Hybrid Organisational Model</li> </ul>
59	Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan	Implement a coordinated 15-point strategy for South East Queensland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2: CEO Appointment</li> <li>18: Racecourse Ownership</li> <li>47: Riding for the Disabled</li> </ul>

#### 8.4 Thoroughbred Racing Recommendations

**Table 6: Thoroughbred Racing Recommendations**

#	Recommendation	Description	Related Recommendations
60	Country Cups & Town Plates Enhancement	Standardise prizemoney for Cups and Plates at regional and rural clubs, setting a minimum of \$30,000 for Cups and \$20,000 for Plates to improve participation and economic stimulus. Where possible, events should align with the Battle of the Bush series.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45: Support for Rural Pubs, Clubs and "In-Play" Technology</li> <li>70: Tier Renaming and Scheduling Framework</li> <li>61: Battle of the Bush Series Expansion</li> </ul>
61	Battle of the Bush Series Expansion	Transform the Battle of the Bush into an Autumn, Winter and Spring country racing series with increased prizemoney, regional finals and metropolitan grand finals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60: Country Cups &amp; Town Plates Enhancement</li> <li>63: Benchmarking Thoroughbred Ratings</li> </ul>
62	Implementation of 'Super Maidens' Race Series	Introduce a weekly schedule of nine maiden races modelled on NSW's 'Super Maidens' concept to incentivise early-career horses and reduce interstate racing leakage. Prizemoney levels to be adapted for the Queensland context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63: Benchmarking Thoroughbred Ratings</li> </ul>
63	Benchmarking Thoroughbred Ratings	RQ to conduct a review of the benchmark systems across Australia to ensure that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60: Country Cups &amp; Town Plates Enhancement</li> <li>62: Super Maidens Series</li> </ul>

		horses are being assessed fairly for their performances. This review will benchmark horses against other States on both a Metropolitan and Regional level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70: Tier Renaming and Scheduling Framework</li> </ul>
64	Recalibration of Thoroughbred Race Meetings	Undertake a detailed review of race meeting allocations across all tiers to ensure alignment with wagering performance, horse population and club capacity. Rebalance the calendar to maximise full fields and financial returns, while preserving regional access and industry development goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6: Clarification and Allocation of Functions</li> </ul>
65	Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme Reform	Reform the QTIS scheme to better target value, sustainability and participation by recalibrating payment structures, cancelling underperforming components (e.g. QTISx) and reallocating funds into lifetime starter bonuses and Hendra vaccination-linked eligibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>66: QTISx Cancellation</li> <li>67: QTIS Initial Payment</li> <li>68: QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme</li> <li>69: Hendra and QTIS Scheme</li> </ul>
66	QTISx Cancellation	QTISx has deployed less than 50% of its allocated funding; this inefficient initiative should be cancelled with funds reallocated to higher-order recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65: QTIS Scheme Reform</li> <li>75: Jockey Retirement Fund (JRF)</li> <li>68: QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme</li> </ul>
67	QTIS Initial Payment	Reintroduce the \$1000 payment for the 2yo and 3yo programmes. The Payment will be used for QTIS LIFE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65: QTIS Scheme Reform</li> <li>69: Hendra and QTIS Scheme</li> <li>68: QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme</li> </ul>
68	QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme	Establish QTIS LIFE to provide a lifetime starter bonus for QTIS-eligible horses racing at non-TAB venues, encouraging rural participation and extending horse racing careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65: QTIS Scheme Reform</li> <li>69: Hendra and QTIS Scheme</li> <li>66: QTISx Cancellation</li> <li>67: QTIS Initial Payment</li> </ul>
69	Hendra and Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme	Mandate Hendra vaccination as a prerequisite for QTIS eligibility to ensure horse and participant safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65: QTIS Scheme Reform</li> <li>67: QTIS Initial Payment</li> <li>68: QTIS LIFE – Lifetime Starter Bonus Scheme</li> </ul>
70	Tier Renaming and Scheduling Framework	Redefine Race Clubs based on number of races per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60: Country Cups &amp; Town Plates Enhancement</li> <li>63: Benchmarking Thoroughbred Ratings</li> </ul>
71	Brisbane Racing Club John Power Stand Redevelopment	Redevelop the John Power Stand at Eagle Farm to align with expectations for a Group One facility and enhance patron experience, under the broader SEQ 15 Point Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>
72	Restoration of Toowoomba Night Racing	Resolve infrastructure issues with Toowoomba’s racecourse lighting system to enable the resumption of Saturday night racing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: SEQ 15 Point Plan</li> <li>80 Toowoomba Lights and Track</li> </ul>
73	Coordinated approach to Night Racing	Develop a coordinated night racing schedule across SEQ lit venues to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: SEQ 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>

		optimise market alignment and ensure participant welfare.	
74	Starlink for Rural Clubs	Support the provision of Starlink satellite internet for rural clubs to enhance digital connectivity and enable race day operations. Encourage sponsorship or cost-sharing with RQ in the initial implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28: Social Media Strategy and “Daily Press” Model</li> </ul>
75	Jockey Retirement Fund (JRF)	Create a fund supporting jockeys who ride at non-TAB meetings, with deferred payments accessible at age 40 (or earlier, based on specific conditions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> <li>65: QTISx Cancellation</li> </ul>
76	Trainer Attraction Strategy	Clubs and RQ need to determine how to attract more satellite stables in QLD to elevate the diversity of horses, bring in new investment and ensure costs for owners are commensurate with the cost to Trainers. This could include a subsidy model for SEQ and Interstate Trainers taking permanent satellite stables in Cairns, Townsville or Rockhampton as racing hubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56 Annual Feature Race Calendar</li> </ul>

## 8.5 Harness Racing

**Table 7: Harness Racing Recommendations**

#	Recommendation	Description	Related Recommendations
77	Harness Board Member RQ	RQ Board to include representation from Harness racing to ensure code-specific expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3: Reform the RQ Board</li> </ul>
78	Harness CEO at RQ	The new RQ Organisational Structure will include a new role of ‘Harness Racing CEO’. This role will report directly to the EGM Racing Operations (who reports to the RQ CEO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Adoption of the ‘Hybrid’ Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> </ul>
79	QBRED Bonus System	Recalibrate the QBred Bonus scheme to spread the prize money across the three codes. An appearance bonus is to be applied to provide immediate cash flow to Owners and to balance a reduction in the overall scheme that is aligned to the horse winning three races over a period of four years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>84: Development of SEQ Harness ‘North Star’ Series</li> </ul>
80	Toowoomba Lights and Track	Support the return of Harness Racing to Toowoomba Turf Club to restore regional access and balance track distribution across SEQ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> <li>72: Restoration of Toowoomba Night Racing</li> </ul>
81	Marburg Super Site	Improve basic infrastructure at key regional harness venues, including Toowoomba and Marburg, to support safety, broadcast capability and night racing. At Marburg improve stabling and training facilities to encourage regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>

		participation in harness racing, including support for mobile stabling, float access and track lighting.	
82	Norwell Sale	Divest the Norwell site to fund development of Marburg site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> </ul>
83	Albion Park Closure	Resolve long-term venue arrangements for metropolitan harness racing in Queensland, including development of a new dedicated facility in SEQ if Albion Park is divested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> <li>72: Restoration of Toowoomba Night Racing</li> <li>80: Toowoomba Lights and Track</li> <li>81: Marburg Super Site</li> <li>82: Norwell Sale</li> </ul>
84	Development of SEQ Harness 'North Star' Series	Launch a multi-track harness series with distance-based heats and finals hosted at the Brisbane Equine Centre, offering increased prizemoney and local eligibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>79: QBRED Bonus System</li> </ul>
85	Harness Driver Silks	As an initial six-month trial at the new Toowoomba location, replace traditional driver silks with high-visibility colours matching saddlecloth numbers to improve identification and viewer experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>59: Southeast Queensland (SEQ) 15 Point Plan</li> <li>72: Restoration of Toowoomba Night Racing</li> <li>80: Toowoomba Lights and Track</li> </ul>
86	Handicapping Harness Review	RQ to review the National Rating System, including input from an expert panel (with expertise including the handicapping approaches applied throughout Australia).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>79: QBRED Bonus System</li> </ul>
87	Gate Attendants	Attendants in place to ensure that only licenced people, who report to the secretary office and with a valid pass for that race day, can access the stabling enclosure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19: Tiered Minimum Standards for Race Clubs</li> </ul>

## 8.6 Greyhound Racing

**Table 8: Greyhound Racing Recommendations**

#	Recommendation	Description	Related Recommendations
88	Greyhound Board Member at RQ	RQ Board to include representation from Greyhound racing to ensure code-specific expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3: Reform the RQ Board</li> </ul>
89	Greyhound CEO at RQ	The new RQ Organisational Structure will include a new role of 'Greyhound Racing CEO'. This role will report directly to the EGM Racing Operations (who reports to the RQ CEO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Adoption of the 'Hybrid' Organisational Model for Governance and Integrity</li> </ul>
90	QGOLD Starter Payment	Halve the Starter and Win Bonuses to a payment of \$2.4m to fund the GRP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>94: Greyhound Retirement Program</li> <li>105: Central and North Queensland</li> </ul>

			<p>Greyhound Series – ‘Reef Series’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 104: Greyhound Race Day Scratching</li> </ul>
91	Greyhound Syndication – “Q Syndications”	Establish “Q Syndications” under QGRC’s ASIC accreditation to create affordable ownership shares (\$1,000–\$2,000) supported by an app, improving accessibility, education and community engagement. This structured syndication model will attract new participants; boost wagering and strengthen social licence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 89: Greyhound CEO at RQ</li> <li>• 94: Greyhound Retirement Program</li> <li>• 99: Kennel to Couch Charitable Foundation</li> <li>• 110: Communications &amp; Promotional Push</li> </ul>
92	Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport	Introduce the Greyhound Digital Passport first, then extend to equine codes under a unified national welfare framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94: Greyhound Retirement Program</li> <li>• 96: Amend Water Policy</li> <li>• 102: Statewide Transition to Six Dog Racing for non-Refurbished Tracks</li> <li>• 103: Programming &amp; Grading</li> <li>• 100: Introduce a Mandatory Greyhound Licence Training Scheme</li> <li>• 97: Introduce Automatic 14-Day Stand Down for Fallen Greyhounds</li> <li>• 95: Greyhound Race Day Gap</li> <li>• 93: Cross-Jurisdictional Greyhound Welfare Partnership &amp; Digital Tracking (RQ–GRNSW)</li> </ul>
93	Cross-Jurisdictional Greyhound Welfare Partnership & Digital Tracking (RQ–GRNSW)	Establish a formal partnership between RQ and GRNSW to share welfare data, integrate digital tracking systems and deliver nationally consistent lifetime traceability for greyhounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
94	Greyhound Retirement Program	Establish a lifetime voucher-based support scheme for rehomed greyhounds to cover post-care costs and improve long-term welfare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90: QGOLD Starter Payment</li> <li>• 92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
95	Greyhound Race Day Gaps	Replace monthly start limits with a minimum 96-hour gap between races to reduce fatigue and injury risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
96	Amend Water Policy	Mandate hydration protocols consistent with NSW standards, ensuring greyhounds receive water within a regulated timeframe prior to racing. Restrict kennel room access to QRIC-authorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>

		handlers to improve integrity and ensure consistent animal handling.	
97	Introduce Automatic 14-Day Stand Down for Fallen Greyhounds	Introduce a mandatory 14-day standdown period for any greyhound that falls during a race, recorded in the Stewards Report and Digital Passport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
98	Repeal the Compulsory Muzzling of Greyhounds	Remove Queensland's outdated compulsory muzzle laws for retired greyhounds to encourage adoption and improve public perception. This reform modernises welfare legislation and aligns with community expectations and interstate practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>94: Greyhound Retirement Program</li> <li>99: Kennel to Couch Charitable Foundation</li> <li>110: Communications &amp; Promotional Push</li> </ul>
99	Kennel to Couch: Transforming Greyhound Adoption Through a Charitable Foundation	Transition GAP to an independent charitable foundation, mirroring NSW, to deliver faster rehoming, unlock donations and broaden community engagement. A foundation model reduces costs, increases adoption reach and enhances the industry's social licence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90: QGOLD Starter Payment</li> <li>91: Greyhound Syndications</li> <li>94: Greyhound Retirement Program</li> <li>98: Repeal Compulsory Muzzling</li> <li>110: Communications &amp; Promotional Push</li> </ul>
100	Introduce a Mandatory Greyhound Licence Training Scheme	Establish a formal scheme to upskill licenced participants through structured modules covering safety, animal welfare and integrity compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
101	Preferential Box Draw	Implement a preferential box draw system aligned with greyhound racing styles to reduce collision risk and improve safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>102: Statewide Transition to Six Dog Racing for non-Refurbished Tracks</li> <li>103: Programming &amp; Grading</li> </ul>
102	Statewide Transition to Six Dog Racing for non Refurbished Tracks	From 1 Jan 2026, mandate six-dog race formats at non-refurbished tracks to improve safety. Data from 'The Q' to guide long-term adjustments, with preferential box draws introduced statewide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> <li>101: Preferential Box Draw</li> <li>103: Programming &amp; Grading</li> </ul>
103	Programming & Grading	Every race card must have a programme with a mix of race distances. Every race meeting must include up to two Maidens and at least one Novice race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> <li>105: Central and North Queensland Greyhound Series – 'Reef Series'</li> <li>102: Statewide Transition to Six Dog Racing for non-Refurbished Tracks</li> </ul>
104	Greyhound Race Day Scratching	Reduce the current 10 day stand down (following a race day scratching) to 3 days, with an independent veterinarian certificate allowing the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90: QGOLD Starter Payment</li> </ul>

		greyhound to race at the conclusion of the stand down period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92: Implement a Greyhound Digital Passport</li> </ul>
105	Central and North Queensland Greyhound Series – ‘Reef Series’	Develop an annual series between Bundaberg, Townsville and Rockhampton for greyhounds domiciled or active in North Queensland, contingent on track upgrades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90: QGOLD Starter Payment</li> <li>103: Programming &amp; Grading</li> </ul>
106	Introduction of “SIXY” Bet Type for Greyhounds	Implement ‘SIXY’, a new bet type for six-dog races where punters predict the finishing order, with options to box or multi the selections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>43: Support the Implementation of a National Tote</li> </ul>
107	Rockhampton Greyhounds Relocation	RQ to survey the site that the RJC is proposing to relocate the RGRC and if viable relocate the RGRC to that space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> </ul>
108	Townsville Relocation	Relocate Townsville greyhound racing to a purpose-built venue, improving welfare standards and operational sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> </ul>
109	Deliver High-Quality Track Rebuild at Bundaberg Greyhounds	Ensure that the track is highest quality and engage the relevant specialist to ensure the sand track is correctly laid, with an education program in place to ensure it is properly maintained. Consider impact of the greyhound track on Thoroughbred racing with sight lines and crossings to infield. If required, reconfigure the track.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24: Independent Racing Infrastructure Fund</li> </ul>
110	Communications & Promotional Push in Greyhound Racing	Activate a dedicated greyhound racing media team with clear KPIs and a credible spokesperson. A UK-style storytelling strategy will promote welfare improvements, counter activist narratives and strengthen industry visibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>91: Greyhound Syndications</li> <li>98: Repeal Compulsory Muzzling</li> <li>99: Kennel to Couch Charitable Foundation</li> <li>93: Cross-Jurisdictional Greyhound Welfare Partnership</li> </ul>