

From: QRIC Communication
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From: Karen & Michael Sparkes
Sent: Monday, 21 October 2019 12:48 AM

Subject: The Welfare of All Horses in Racing and Retirement, Thoughts and Suggestions- from the perspective of 2 Owners....

Importance: High

Dear all,

as devout, passionate owners and part owners of horses, racing across both Equine codes, we wish to express our views in relation to those horrendous revelations, which have been exposed by the ABC 7:30 report, along with some proposals, we sincerely hope you may all consider, with any upcoming forums or discussions to reform and enhance our Industries to meet the expectations of the general public, and most importantly the welfare of all horses.

Firstly for us, as owners, and passionate animal welfare supporters, the 7:30 report episode, left us in an initial state of shock and disbelief of how low certain elements of the Human race could go to, with acts of cruelty that one could only describe as Criminal.

Secondly, it was a defining moment in time that made us realize we could no longer take comfort in our small world of racing, surrounded and protected by fellow owners, syndicators and trainers, whose compassion and care for horses, equaled that of ours.

The only positive is that with the release of this program and the following justifiable public outcry, the terrible suffering these innocent horses would have endured shall not be in vain.

Firstly we wish overarchingly, outcomes are achieved to ensure adequate resources , facilities, and funding, are combined with effective awareness, education, legislation and enforcement, that result in a fully transparent, engaging and prosperous focus for Racing across both Equine Industries.

Thus ensuring Horses are placed at the Pinnacle of Industry structures re-built to deliver a Successful Racing future for all.

Below a List of proposals for consideration, review , discussion, debate, resolution, and hopeful implementation for some if not all. (Please note these numbered Topics have been grouped from what we have heard and read across industry responses as well personal views):

1. Horse Studs throughout Victoria and Queensland to take same proposed stance as what has been put forward by New South Wales Thoroughbred Studs- That in the instance a person owning a retired horse is unable to support that horse due to financial circumstances, they (the stud industry) will pay \$1000 for the horse and ensure it is then placed in a recognized re-homing organization- This proposal needs to extend to Standardbred Studs as well. For the welfare of all retired race horses, breed should have no prejudice. In effect a United front funded by Studs across both codes Nationwide.
2. A State or National Racing Body reserve of \$800 to be imposed for every single horse across either code that is placed in any sales (Live or Online), be it weanling, yearling, 2 year old ready to race, tried race horse, Brood mare. In the Instance that sale includes a foal at foot, that reserve then increases to \$1600 allowing for the foal as an individual horse.
If in the instance a horse cannot meet that reserve, then the respective breeder/owner who has placed the horse for sale should be made aware and given options to surrender the horse to an Industry recognized re-homing organization. This requires discussion with Horse Sales and Auction Groups to gain full support and best ways to implement.
3. A National and All State Registration/ Data Base implemented with the Support of all State Governments, so as each and every retired horse can be traced through any transfers of ownership or residence, through-out Australia for the entirety of its natural life.
4. In reference to points 2 and 3 above. If a horse is retired from racing, a transfer of full ownership needs to apply and any new owner is then recorded as custodian of that horse on above noted data base. This needs to be maintained by Governments as dog registrations are currently maintained by respective councils. Perhaps even more vigorously
5. If in the instance an owner, either individual or Syndicate Manager, decides that they wish to sell any Race horse of either code, for slaughter, then they, Syndicate or Partnership group are made liable to pay a fee of no less than \$1000 imposed by the respective Integrity Body, and all proceeds are to be passed on to applicable established Horse retirement fund . A horse can then only be made legally eligible for slaughter, once official receipt has been disseminated by Racing Integrity Body.
6. If in the instance, any person that purchases a retired racehorse of either code, at any stage of the horse's life, and intend to sell that horse for slaughter, then in the first instance they must submit a request as registered owner to government body, and in the 2nd instance the initial owner who retired the horse must be notified by due Government body, and sign an agreement, before any sale for slaughter can be legal , and even if agreed, the new owner must be made liable to pay a fee of no less than \$1000 as imposed by respective State Government policy, and all proceeds are to be passed on to applicable horse retirement fund.
7. No Abattoir nor Knackery can legally slaughter a registered or branded retired racehorse of either code unless having possession of official government receipts verifying all of the above criteria applicable to points 5 and 6 have been met. Shall require close monitoring to effectively manage
8. Any Noncompliance and or Breaches of the above POINTS 5, 6 or 7 by any individual, group, or Company, must be met with effective enforcement and penalty, inclusive of: substantial fines by value, suspension or expulsion from industry, and criminal charges if applicable
9. The establishment of Taxable Donation entities/ sites for Horse re-homing, promoted to all owners, with provision to cater one off , or regular account/ credit deductible options. *This is a must and have no doubt will gain full support from most of every owner.*
10. A One off or Annual affordable levy imposed to owners based on a percentage of purchase cost of any horse, to provide additional funding across retirement/ re-homing programs.

11. Implementing a fully rigorous adoption and monitoring program such as that established by Standardbred Association Queensland, where potential new owners have to complete and meet criteria from initial application, and receive ongoing monitoring over the next twelve month period after adoption
12. Information, Awareness, and in instance of newcomers to industry, Education Programs , to clarify, promote, and re-enforce Industry Transparency, Future Growth, and Strengths, based on Priorities focused on the Welfare of all Horses.

For Guaranteed assurance that effective Equine welfare is achieved throughout the entirety of a Horses Life, inclusive of retirement years, it will require a united front, across all states, across both industries. This requires leadership from both National Racing Entities combined with all State Racing Entities, to initiate full interactions with every Associated Organization, Participants, Sales/ Auction Groups, Owners, Trainers, Jockeys and Drivers, without any delay or distraction.

Thank-you all for your time to read this.

If in the instance we have been unable to reach any respective Executive Officers, could this email please be forwarded on our behalf.

Kind Regards
Mike and Karen Sparkes

