



8<sup>th</sup> November 2019

The Chair  
Horse Racing and Integrity Commission  
Terry Martin SC

[Contact@inquiry.gric.qld.gov.au](mailto:Contact@inquiry.gric.qld.gov.au)

Dear Sir,

Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses in Queensland.

We note the Terms of Reference and have provided comment on some points, but as stakeholders in the horse world we commence with a brief on our Organisation.

Pony Club Queensland (PCQ) is a State Sporting Organisation under the Associations Incorporations Act Queensland. It has been in existence for a period of 60 years and is comprised of clubs throughout the State. It has an affiliation with Pony Club Australia.

PCQ has at present, 208 clubs and 7000+ members linked via a huge network, where clubs and in turn horse owners are joined by a common interest, their love of horses and ponies. PCQ prides itself on a robust syllabus of instruction which not only covers the riding aspect of horse ownership but also has a strong focus on horsemastership and horse care. PCQ does not condone poor horse welfare in any respect and bases its horsemastership teachings around the Five Freedoms for Horse Health and Welfare.

- Freedom from hunger and thirst
- Freedom from discomfort
- Freedom from pain, injury and disease
- ***Freedom from fear and distress***
- Freedom to behave normally

Of particular concern to us in this review is ***freedom from fear and distress***.

PCQ, does recognise some of the problems with the management of retired racehorses. Retraining can be difficult, takes time and is a costly process and quite often they may not be sound or fit for any riding activity. We do see numerous ex racehorses make the transition to pony club or the show ring but in some cases, even with time and experience, they are just not suitable.

In an ideal world we would like to think that all horses were “put down” at home by a kindly vet when their time comes, but we are aware that the abattoir is an option and may not be the worst death imaginable (if correctly managed) when considering neglect in cruel circumstances.

We understand that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is ultimately responsible for Best Management at abattoirs. To this we recommend,

- (1) That a review of this Department's processes be undertaken and that Best Management Practices be clearly documented.
- (2) That the Dept. receive adequate funding, maintain appropriate skilled and qualified staff to ensure that the abattoir industry is adequately supervised, with standards maintained throughout the process including during transportation and on site.
- (3) That accountability be clearly documented.
- (4) That harsh penalties be imposed for any of breaches of best management practices.
- (5) That consideration be given to establishing an "industry good fund". Funded from within the racing industry and utilised to better manage the transition from racing to whatever the future holds for these equines.

We respectfully ask the QRIC to drive some positive changes and better management practices around the welfare of those animals who are delivered to the abattoir.

PCQ State Chief Instructor Michael Carlson oversees and manages coaching within our system including the horse welfare components. Michael can be contacted via our offices should you have any questions about this submission.

Submitted on behalf of the Executive Officers of Pony Club Queensland.



Grant Lynham  
**President**



Michael Carlson  
**State Chief Instructor**