

Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired thoroughbred and standardbred horses in Queensland

Terms of reference

Purpose

On 17 October 2019, the ABC's 7.30 aired footage of horses, including retired thoroughbred and standardbred horses, being cruelly treated at a Queensland abattoir. The report also raised serious questions about the welfare and management of retired racing horses including horses transported from other states.

Consistent with its functions as an independent statutory body overseeing the integrity and welfare standards of racing animals and racing industry participants in Queensland, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) will conduct an inquiry into the regulatory and oversight arrangements for:

1. the operations of abattoirs and other facilities accepting horses for slaughter
2. the management of retired race horses (thoroughbred and standardbred) in Queensland, including of horses moved from interstate.

The inquiry will make recommendations on:

1. amendments to Queensland's regulatory arrangements, including under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*, *Racing Act 2002* and *Racing Integrity Act 2016*, and applicable rules for racing following an assessment of:
 - a. the adequacy of current arrangements for detecting, assessing, mitigating and prosecuting breaches of the welfare of retired racing horses in Queensland, including of horses moved from interstate
 - b. the adequacy of current arrangements for detecting, assessing, mitigating and prosecuting breaches of animal welfare in the horse meat processing industry
 - c. a comparative assessment of regulatory arrangements in place in other Australian states and territories
2. changes required to the oversight of the tracking and welfare of retired horses.

In making recommendations, the reviewers should consider the need to promote integrity and public confidence into the racing industry and animal welfare arrangements in Queensland.

Process

The review will be supported by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries who administers the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. Additional expertise will be provided to assist the review on QRIC's request.

QRIC will consult with and receive submissions from stakeholders including the racing and meat processing industries, and animal welfare organisation including the RSPCA.

Before finalising the review report, QRIC will consult with relevant entities on draft findings and recommendations.

Final report

A report will be provided to the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs by no later than 31 January 2020.