

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL
RACECOURSE**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 15 July 2024

Partially
Confidential

Submission to the Inquiry into the Proposal to Develop Rosehill Racecourse

Dear Select Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry regarding the proposal to develop Rosehill Racecourse in NSW. I have grave concerns about potential impacts on Thoroughbred welfare, which fall under the Terms of Reference (g) *“the impact on animal welfare and any integrity concerns associated with the proposal which relate to animal welfare, and (h) any other related matters.”*

The model of Australian Racing exploits horses for gambling and entertainment. It has lost its social licence. The Racing industry do not want people to know about the ugly side of the industry, that horse racing is based on an economic model where the bottom line is always paramount. Horses are therefore just treated as commodities and not sentient beings with needs.

The forceful handling and use of restrictive or painful equipment are considered acceptable and have been normalised in the NSW racing industry. However, these handling practices do not align with good welfare according to the 2020 Five Domains Model for animal welfare assessment.

That is not to say that there aren't genuine horse lovers that try to follow the welfare aspects of the Five Domains Model and ensure their horse's needs are met.

The Churn Model

The racing industry appears to operate on the churn model and I have observed horse owners and punters that accept that people have to 'dog' horses. (Dogging refers to slaughter either for human consumption or pet food) The model encourages people to try the horse out and then discard it.

Slaughter was the dirty secret of the horse racing industry until it was exposed in 2019. Now it is still happening. Some PRAs, although they officially ban slaughter, just want the trainers or owners not to get caught.

How many times have decisions about trainers disposing of horses to slaughter **NOT been overturned on appeal?**

Prize Money

Racing NSW and other PRAs are taking a certain percentage of prize money supposedly for the welfare of the retired horses. NSW Racing has indicated that in the year 2018/19, 1301 horses were retired and in the year 2019/20, 1689 horses retired. That amounts to nearly 3,000 horses and yet it seems that Racing NSW has only managed to retrain and rehome 61 horses in 2023. These numbers are based on GIPAs from Racing NSW.

Where are the horses going?

Retired horses	2018/19	1301
	2019/20	1689
Rehomed / retrained	2023	61

The following is from a GIPA to Racing NSW 2024:

Decision and Access

Pursuant to section 58(1)(a) of the GIPA Act, you are advised that Racing NSW has decided to respond to your request by providing you with the information below. The source document includes personal information of multiple persons that would require extensive and time-consuming consultation with those third parties. Accordingly, Racing NSW provides the information to you by way of the response below:

Jan-Dec 2023	Number
Number of horses retrained and rehomed in Racing NSW's Equine Welfare Program (being the total number of horses that have been physically rehomed during the relevant period after being successful retrained not the number that have been receiving retraining during that period, which is significantly more than 61)	61
Number of Surrender Applications Ineligible for Racing NSW's Equine Welfare Program	7

No one involved in racing knows where the prize money percentage is going. It looks very much like Racing NSW is taking the money to buy land and facilities and the poor retired horses are not being looked after. Many owners are complaining that they can't surrender a horse to Racing NSW, so this raises the question:

Where is the money going?

In addition to the 1% of prizemoney utilised for the care, retraining and rehoming of retired thoroughbred horses, Racing NSW has spent over \$24 million since October 2016 on purchasing and developing properties for use in the care, retraining and rehoming of retired thoroughbred horses with Racing NSW staff directly undertaking the rehoming process at these properties.

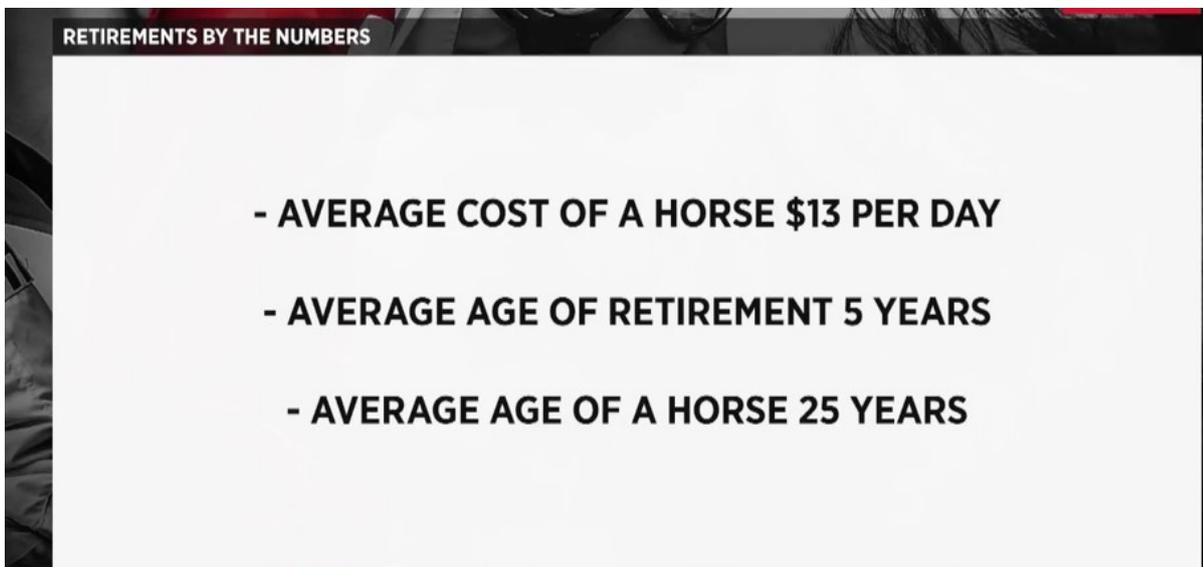
(NOTE : The 1% is now 1.5%)

The racing industry has a moral obligation to look after all the racehorses it breeds. To date, the racing industry's promises to rehabilitate and rehome their retired animals have proven inadequate and insufficient. The large numbers of horses retiring from racing in NSW each year cannot be accommodated by pony clubs, private buyers, and other rehoming programs. The racing industry refuses to disclose any information about the whereabouts of these horses.

Cost of retirement

When the racing industry was in shock after the revelations of the 7.30 Report in 2019, a racing show called After the Last had a panel discussing the cost of providing every horse retiring from racing with a life instead of disposing of them. Although they are talking about Victorian numbers, it is not dissimilar to NSW.

They estimated that 1600 horses retired every year. That each horse cost \$13 a day multiplied by 365 days a year and 20 years of life.



That means that just for one year, those retired horses would cost 7.5 million, and over their lifetime – \$151,840,000. Each year, another 1600 horses retire and that is added every year.

- 1600* ESTIMATED RETIRED HORSES A YEAR
- 1600* X \$13 X 365 DAYS X 20 YEARS OF LIFE
= \$151,840,000 FOR ONE YEAR OF RETIREMENTS
OR
\$94,900 PER HORSE

IN THAT 20 YEAR SPAN AN ESTIMATED FURTHER 32,000 HORSES WILL
HAVE RETIRED

*SOURCE: RACING AUSTRALIA

I request that the NSW Government intervenes to impose some transparency on Racing NSW and the ATC. Racing NSW is a statutory authority, the NSW Government must hold it accountable to the people of NSW. It is not ok to breed horses for racing and then turn them into meat for dogs or people when they don't become the next fairytale horse.

I would like to see the sale monies used to benefit Thoroughbred racehorses as listed below:

1. Ensure lifelong traceability of every horse in the NSW racing industry.
2. Fund a safe, lifelong retirement for every horse in the NSW racing industry.
3. Instigate immediate action to improve racehorse welfare on the racetrack and off track by replacing current standards of welfare with those based on the 2020 Five Domains Model for animal welfare assessment, and require that members of the racing industry are educated accordingly.
4. Provide a fund to help transition members of the racing industry into professions outside racing.

Yours faithfully,