

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND

The Next Lap

A plan for the future of
Queensland racing



Queensland
Government

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Racing is a cornerstone of Queensland's story. It fuels regional economies, supports local jobs and brings energy, pride and connection to communities right across the state.

Today we are delivering a fresh chapter for Queensland's racing industry, one built on partnership, resilience and a shared vision for a strong and thriving future.

Independent analysis shows the industry now contributes nearly \$2.5 billion to Queensland's economy each year and supports approximately 14,500 full-time jobs, with more than half of the benefit flowing to regional towns. It's an important reminder that racing is not just a sport, but a driver of opportunity, connection, and pride across Queensland.

Racing in Queensland exists within a government-supported framework that enables the industry to function effectively. It is our collective responsibility to act with careful stewardship. It's a privilege that comes with an obligation to lead with integrity, to act with care and make decisions that will set Queensland racing on the course to ensure it remains strong and sustainable for generations to come.

Across all three of our racing codes, Queensland clubs must be empowered to deliver on their core mission: staging high-quality race meetings for their communities.

Commercial ambition is welcome, but it must always serve, not overshadow, that central purpose.

That's why the Queensland Government proudly welcomed the final report of the independent Queensland Racing Review, a milestone that marks both reflection and renewal for the industry.

I extend sincere gratitude to Matthew McGrath, Chair of the Queensland Racing Review, and the Steering Committee members, Scott Neaves, Kym Daly and Lynette Keep for their tireless efforts in delivering the Review and its recommendations.

Today we deliver more than a report, but a clear and inspiring roadmap to guide Queensland's racing industry into a prosperous new era.

For racing to endure, and ultimately prosper, the entire industry will have a part to play. This is not a task for government alone. Clubs, participants, volunteers, and industry bodies must all share in the responsibility to shape a stronger future. Together we can ensure Queensland racing stands the test of time.

There will be decisions to make and trade-offs to navigate, but I have great faith in our collective capacity to strengthen an industry that is sustainable and built to last. It will take time, but it's a journey worth taking because the steps we take now will define the future of racing for decades to come.

In responding to the Review, the Queensland Government is committed to strengthening trust, supporting animal welfare, bolstering integrity, and modernising infrastructure.

After 10 years of successive Labor governments with no plan for Queensland racing, we have delivered a plan that paves the way to a brighter future.

We will pursue reforms to deliver operational stability, fit-for-purpose infrastructure, the ongoing viability of country racing, animal welfare and integrity improvements, and provide opportunities to modernise how our clubs function so that the industry can adapt and grow with confidence. These reforms are designed to make Queensland's racing industry more resilient, sustainable and ultimately able to proudly stand on its own two feet.

This is more than a moment of change, it's a moment of opportunity. With clear purpose, collaboration, and determination, Queensland racing can step confidently into a new era.

Let us move forward together as we embark on *'The Next Lap.'*



The Honourable Tim Mander MP

Minister for Sport and Racing
Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games



Clubs, participants, volunteers, and industry bodies must all share in the responsibility to shape a stronger future. Together we can ensure Queensland racing stands the test of time.



Eagle Farm, Brisbane.
Image courtesy of Racing Queensland.

INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE CHAIR FOREWORD

I am extremely pleased to present the independent *Queensland Racing Review Recommendation Report* to the Queensland Government for its consideration.

As a former Chairman of the Australian Turf Club and someone who is passionate about racing, it was a privilege to Chair the independent Review into the three codes of racing in Queensland.

The Steering Committee and I carefully reviewed 1,223 public submissions received during the Queensland Racing Review consultation period in March and April 2025. These submissions, gathered through surveys and written contributions, reflected diverse perspectives from stakeholders across Queensland, including those involved in country and metropolitan racing.

This input has been instrumental in shaping the independent Steering Committee's understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Queensland's racing sector.

For us, we were guided by five key pillars to shape our report: Financial, Social, Wagering, Welfare and Ownership as well as two overarching principles of Governance and Integrity.

Concurrently, we travelled throughout South East Queensland, Darling Downs and South West, Central Queensland, North Queensland, and Western Queensland and the Gulf, ensuring diverse geographic representation and visited 73 race clubs to engage face-to-face, hearing a diverse range of ideas and viewpoints.

By connecting directly with club officials, participants, and volunteers, we captured the real-world challenges and opportunities faced by grassroots racing communities. This approach ensured the needs of rural and remote racing communities were reflected in the Review's findings.

We also spoke directly with a number of relevant industry associations.

Each of these conversations helped inform the independent report, which has been presented to the Queensland Government to inform its response.

The Steering Committee conducted a thorough assessment of the current operations within Queensland and identified some systemic challenges or inefficiencies that are hindering the good functioning of the industry.

Looking at the strategic focus areas within the Terms of Reference, the Review has made recommendations to address Legislative and Governance Arrangements; Financial Sustainability; Integrity; Infrastructure; Country Racing; and Animal Welfare.

These recommendations are designed to deliver a sustainable, world-class industry with long-term success.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, it has been an honour to play a role in ensuring an extremely bright future for racing in Queensland.

Matthew McGrath

Independent Committee Chair of the Queensland Racing Review

By connecting directly with club officials, participants, and volunteers, we captured the real-world challenges and opportunities faced by grassroots racing communities.





Albion Park, Brisbane.

WE'RE DELIVERING A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF QUEENSLAND RACING

The Next Lap sets a clear course of action for industry, government and the broader community. It outlines the next steps and how each segment of Queensland racing must work together to turn commitments into a reality.

On a practical level, *The Next Lap* reinforces the shared responsibilities that keep Queensland racing strong:

- **Government** provides the framework, through regulation and legislation, that makes racing possible.
- **Industry** delivers the race meetings that bring the sport to life, ensuring the safety of participants, volunteers, animals and race goers, while creating memorable experiences for all.
- **Communities** drive the economic heartbeat of racing, supporting the livelihoods of more than 14,500 Queenslanders across the state.

Each group plays a vital role. For racing to not only endure but to thrive, every part of this ecosystem must contribute with purpose and unity. *The Next Lap* delivers a plan Queensland needs to succeed.

The Next Lap is a considered and practical roadmap which will be implemented with focus, consistency and discipline.

This plan charts the course for every facet of Queensland's racing industry.

Each component has been carefully designed to work in balance, ensuring any increase in operating costs is matched by corresponding gains in revenue.

Importantly, infrastructure investment will be strategically sequenced so that Racing Queensland (RQ) can deliver projects in a considered manner, on time and within budget.

RQ will lead the next phase, appointing a dedicated Implementation Lead to design a detailed Implementation Program and summarise the actions and milestones. This will be released in early 2026.

This Implementation Program will clearly outline the timing of:

- legislative change
- delivery of priority infrastructure
- structural changes within statutory bodies
- future engagement with industry.

This is the plan Queensland racing has been calling for. It's what our industry needs and what it deserves.

HIGHLIGHTS OF *THE NEXT LAP*



Prizemoney levels will be retained

The Queensland Government recognises that prizemoney represents real wages to racing participants across all codes. That is why we will deliver our plan for Queensland racing without cutting standard or feature prizemoney.



Infrastructure will be improved

Our plan will deliver a \$200 million Racing Future Fund, a new look program to help deliver modern and fit-for-purpose racing infrastructure across the state, while also providing a platform for industry wide investment opportunities.

In addition, significant investment will occur in SEQ with the redevelopment of the John Power Stand at Eagle Farm; upgrades to Marburg Showgrounds as an Elite Harness Training and Racing Centre; harness racing will be re-established at the Toowoomba Turf Club infield and new lights will be installed at the Toowoomba Turf Club thoroughbred track.

Other regions will also benefit from improved infrastructure with Bundaberg Greyhound Racetrack to be rebuilt.



Country racing will be safeguarded for the future

Country racing is the lifeblood of communities right across Queensland. We have a plan to make our country race clubs stronger, through access to infrastructure investment, a stronger management framework, enhanced feature race meetings and measures to address workforce shortages.



Governance will be more efficient

The Queensland Government will establish a more efficient racing governance model, while ensuring Racing Queensland (RQ) and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) maintain independence.



Animal welfare protocols will be enhanced

The Queensland Government takes animal welfare very seriously. Our plan puts the care of racing animals ahead of profits, with many initiatives aimed at improving racing safety and post-racing welfare outcomes.



Racing integrity will be bolstered

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, across the industry. This plan outlines the strategic investments that will ensure safer and fairer racing for all.

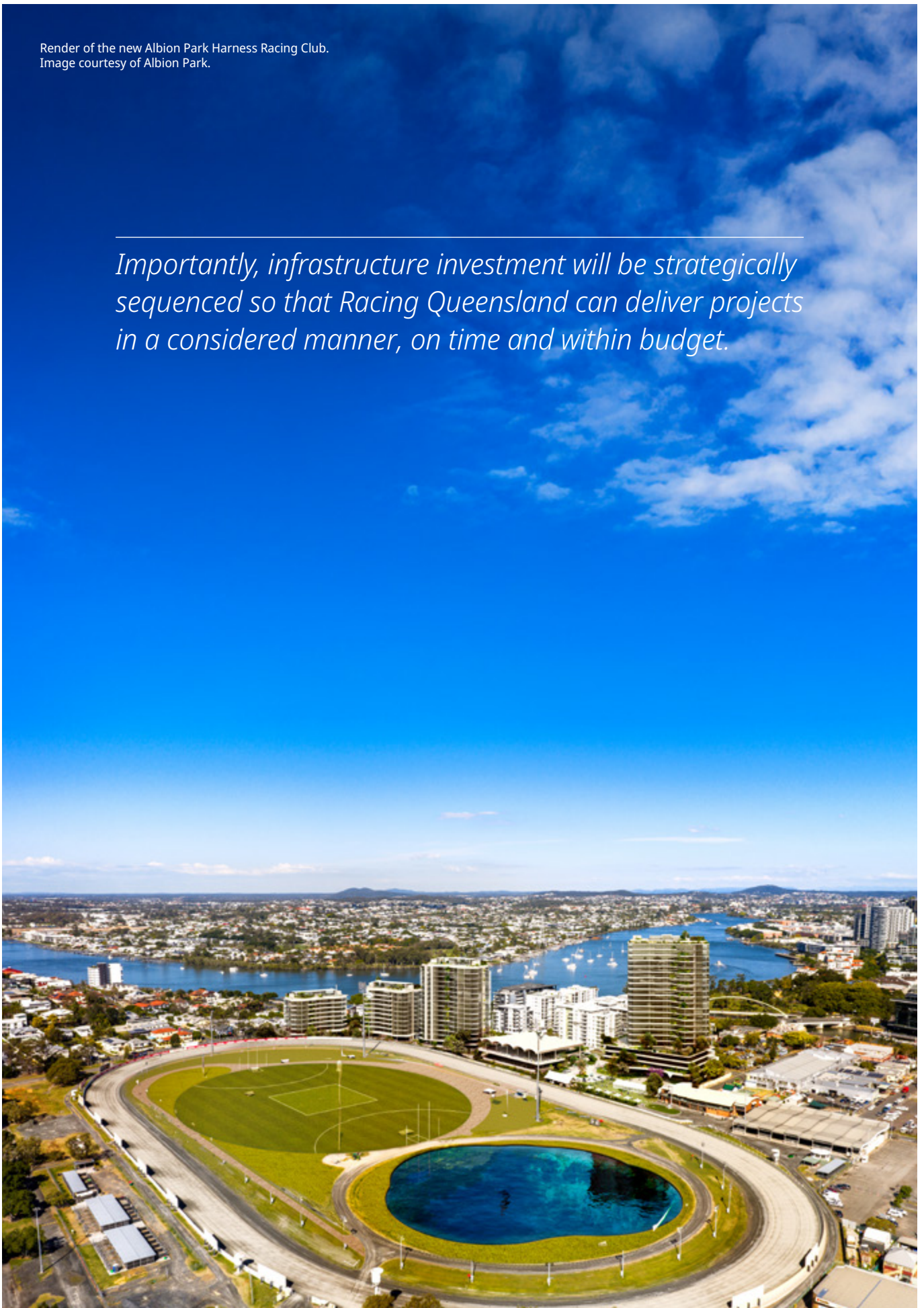


Racing will better engage with communities

Racing's social license is essential to its longevity. Our plan outlines opportunities to connect more Queenslanders to racing through unique partnerships and activations.

Render of the new Albion Park Harness Racing Club.
Image courtesy of Albion Park.

Importantly, infrastructure investment will be strategically sequenced so that Racing Queensland can deliver projects in a considered manner, on time and within budget.



BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering modern and fit-for-purpose racing infrastructure across Queensland to improve the safety, functionality and livelihood of our race clubs.

Infrastructure enhancements offer clubs the chance to strengthen their connection with community, to diversify their offering and become more sustainable in the long term.

Investment in infrastructure requires fresh thinking, with independent oversight.

More than 800,000 racegoers visit Queensland race clubs each year. While some may only hold an annual event, some clubs race multiple times per-week. Better facilities will enhance the experience – for staff, jockeys, drivers, trainers, animals and racegoers alike.

Develop a new 'Racing HQ' at Albion Park

The Queensland Government will work to carry out the Albion Park masterplan. This will include a new central location for Queensland's racing administration at the home of Queensland harness racing. As part of the plan:

- Racing Queensland (RQ) and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) will relocate to Albion Park.
- The Albion Park masterplan includes residential apartments and new facilities for harness racing participants and patrons.
- A new Racing Science Centre (RSC) will be developed on site.

Under the previous government, Brisbane's home of harness racing was to be relocated from Albion Park to Norwell, halfway between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The harness code has consistently stated a strong desire to maintain a presence in the city. Developing a 'Racing HQ' at Albion Park secures a metropolitan home for harness racing for the future.

Commercialising Albion Park will help RQ diversify its revenue streams, setting it up for long-term financial stability.

The RSC is operating at full capacity, and requires upgrades to ensure enhanced integrity measures can be implemented effectively.

Partner with the Brisbane Racing Club to deliver a new grandstand

RQ will form a partnership with the Brisbane Racing Club (BRC) to deliver a new grandstand at Eagle Farm. The ageing John Power Stand is set to be condemned in August 2026. Our plan recognises that Eagle Farm is Queensland thoroughbred racing's spiritual home and must have facilities befitting of the state's premier track.

This plan will see \$100 million invested to provide a new stand. This partnership will be in support of the BRC's commercial ventures over an agreed period, consistent with ensuring the Queensland Government is repaid the significant investment in a full and timely manner.

Improve greyhound racing infrastructure

The Queensland Government is committed to upholding the highest animal welfare and safety standards at the \$90 million 'The Q' track. Investigations regarding the design and construction of the track and the circumstances surrounding the abandonment of the Brisbane Cup meeting in June 2025 have been completed and the recommendations will be implemented by RQ, QRIC and the Queensland Greyhound Racing Club (QGRC).

The Bundaberg Greyhound Racing Club (BGRC) track will have a high-quality rebuild that aims to ensure greater animal welfare outcomes. Investment in the BGRC is an opportunity to set a benchmark for safe and sustainable greyhound racing in regional Queensland. Applying best-practice design will aim to reduce injury risk, extend the careers of racing greyhounds and support confidence in the sustainability of Bundaberg greyhound racing.

RQ will investigate the need for upgraded racing infrastructure for the Rockhampton and Townsville Greyhound Racing Clubs.

Create a new Harness racing corridor

In addition to the 'Racing HQ' at Albion Park, the Queensland Government will strengthen the regional harness footprint. Marburg Showgrounds will be upgraded as an Elite Harness Training and Racing Centre. The venue's strategic location between Brisbane and Toowoomba places it near key standardbred populations. Upgrades will address infrastructure gaps, reduce reliance on metropolitan sites, and create a high-quality western racing corridor.

The addition of a dedicated harness racing training centre aims to unlock further opportunities for new participants to enter the sport.

Toowoomba will have harness racing re-established at the Toowoomba Turf Club infield. Restoring harness racing to the Darling Downs caters to regional breeders, owners, and trainers and unlocks further opportunities for regional growth in harness racing.

Render of the new Albion Park Harness Racing Club.
Image courtesy of Albion Park.



Install new lights at Toowoomba Turf Club

New lights will be installed at the Toowoomba Turf Club. The current infrastructure is more than 30 years old and has reached end-of-life stage. New lights will ensure Toowoomba remains at the heart of a night racing strategy driving significant wagering uplift for the industry and supports regional economic activity.

Recalibrate RQ's property portfolio

RQ will seek to rationalise its property portfolio and take steps to dispose of the former proposed harness racing site at Norwell. QRIC will dispose of the Bowen Hills property that was earmarked for a new Racing Science Centre. These changes will offer a mechanism for new and upgraded infrastructure.

Careful consideration will be given to the sale of Deagon Racecourse, following discussions with participants and the local community.

Safeguard future infrastructure decision making

The Queensland Government will establish an independent Racing Infrastructure Board to ensure infrastructure decisions are driven by evidence-based proposals and prioritised by industry needs. Queensland racing infrastructure decisions require more transparent and arms-length governance to address historic concerns around investment decisions. By separating infrastructure investment approvals from operational management, the model would mirror probity protocols used in state infrastructure agencies, hospitals and school boards. Requiring all infrastructure projects over an

Render of new grandstand at Eagle Farm.
Image courtesy of the Brisbane Racing Club.



agreed threshold to pass through the board also creates an internal check on club expenditure and enhances consistency in value-for-money assessments. Monthly Ministerial reporting will ensure accountability without overreach.

In line with this, a statewide racecourse ownership and land audit will be undertaken to guide investment decisions. This will lead to a fulsome land register, helping clubs and RQ to understand and unlock the full potential of those sites.

Build a racing fund for the future

The Queensland Government will launch a new joint industry fund to secure better returns for clubs. Queensland race clubs will be invited to invest in the fund, set to be managed with the appropriate oversight. The Review states clubs would be able to track their investment in real-time and have access to their funds when needed. Clubs across the state held approximately \$53 million in banked cash in FY24, with combined annual profits of \$34 million. A centralised fund, supported by the \$200 million government investment, can collectively unlock higher interest returns, offset duplication in financial management and ensure sector-wide capital is strategically deployed for long-term industry benefit. The Racing Infrastructure Board will have a clear mandate to encourage industry-wide investment.

Capitalise on the lucrative night racing market

RQ will engage with race clubs to produce an enhanced, coordinated SEQ Night Racing Schedule for the thoroughbred code.

It's proposed that meetings will be allocated across Wednesday to Saturday evenings, aligned with national and international racing times. Significant investments in racecourse lighting infrastructure have created the opportunity for a coordinated, year-round SEQ Night Racing product. Night racing is an attractive offering with potential to increase wagering turnover and race meeting attendance, that may appeal to a new audience.

A coordinated approach can maximise these outcomes without any reductions in animal or participant welfare. Subsequently, RQ will implement and oversee a revamped five-tier club structure for thoroughbred racing, based on geographic location and race frequency.

COUNTRY RACING IS PART OF QUEENSLAND'S IDENTITY

Country racing is central to Queensland's regional and rural communities, offering more than just a sporting spectacle.

For many regional towns, the annual race day is the number one social event every year. It provides a platform for people to come together, celebrate tradition and connect.

Deeply rooted in Queensland's history, country racing reflects the resilience and vibrancy of rural communities, making its preservation vital to the state's cultural heritage.

Beyond its cultural and social significance, country racing is a key driver of regional economies. Race days create local jobs, boost income for businesses, and attract visitors who contribute to sectors including accommodation, food and tourism.

As the backbone of Queensland's racing industry, country racing also serves as a pathway for emerging talent, from trainers and jockeys to breeders and volunteers, ensuring grassroots participation and the long-term sustainability of the industry.

Safeguarding the ongoing viability and success of country racing is a key focus for the Queensland Government.

In addition to investing \$200 million into a Racing Future Fund, RQ, on behalf of the Queensland Government, will ensure that country racing thrives through several initiatives.

With 120 licensed race clubs in our state, Queensland's geographic scale and highly variable club activity necessitates more efficient coordination.

RQ will take the lead to ensure country racing is celebrated and a key focus for Queensland's tourism offering.

Trial a 'Hub and Spoke' model for regional clubs

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 larger clubs as 'Hubs', RQ can ensure funding is matched to organisational maturity and that Hubs are appropriately rewarded for their effort to support the smaller clubs Spokes with which they are associated. The model reduces the reporting burden on smaller clubs while strengthening their strategic voice through partnered Hubs.

Boost country racing features

The Battle of the Bush is a winner, and its expansion will see it reach its full potential. Currently, the Battle of the Bush format sees 16 heats, culminating in a single \$200,000 final.

The format is proposed to be increased to 70 heats across 35 weekends with the potential for prizemoney increases. RQ will also develop a strategy to prioritise Country Cups and Town Plates as significant events to provide genuine uplift for regional and country clubs. For the greyhound and harness codes, new series' will be programmed to be held at upgraded regional tracks.

Develop an annual feature race calendar

The calendar will include links to local tourism information, accommodation and regional highlights for each featured meeting. It will then expand to Metropolitan and Provincial clubs, providing consistent state-wide visibility of all feature race meetings. It means patrons can plan holidays, owners can better coordinate with trainers, and clubs gain clarity to organise feature events.

Recalibrate country meetings

RQ will work with clubs to reduce 1-2 race meetings per year on a voluntary basis. Prizemoney would be redirected to enhance clubs' feature race days through increased stakes and marketing investments. Reallocating funds to create enhanced feature race days can deliver greater impact and value for regional clubs and their communities.

Encourage participation to ensure sustainability

A jockey retirement fund will be established, encouraging riders to compete at non-TAB meetings. Queensland non-TAB race fields can often be affected by multiple scratchings due to the unavailability of jockeys at race meetings. RQ will also liaise with local breeders and owners to introduce a Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme (QTIS) Life program, aimed at extending the careers of Queensland-bred horses racing in the country.

2023 Longreach Cup.
Image courtesy of Racing Queensland.
(photographer Roxy Weston)



A NEW OPERATING MODEL

Queensland's racing industry is more than a sport, it is part of the state's identity, woven through regional towns, metropolitan centres and generations of families who contribute to it with passion and pride. For this legacy to continue, the industry must operate on a foundation that is transparent, accountable and financially stable.

A strong, stable working model is not just about short-term performance, it is about ensuring that every decision, process and partnership strengthens the long-term future of the industry. To achieve this, reforms will focus on improving governance capability, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and ensuring racing maintains its public confidence and its social license.

A key priority is to deliver a streamlined racing governance model

The current arrangements between Racing Queensland (RQ) and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) have served an important purpose in supporting the state's racing industry and ensuring integrity across the three codes.

However, these arrangements have also created overlap in certain functions and vulnerabilities in others. Different data collections, varying reporting periods, and administrative responsibilities shared across two departments have led to inefficiencies and inconsistencies.

The Queensland Government will facilitate a move to a modernised structure that provides clearer lines of accountability, reduces duplication and strengthens coordination across the industry.

Stewarding and integrity functions will remain the independent responsibility of QRIC, while operational support functions will sit with RQ. This separation preserves the integrity of decision-making while enabling efficiencies and a more coordinated approach to delivering services.

A Commissioner of Stewards role will report directly to the Minister for Racing, with a secondary line of engagement with the RQ Board to maintain transparency. Co-location of shared services will strengthen collaboration while protecting the independence of integrity functions. This hybrid model will be enshrined in legislation to give the industry confidence and certainty.

Once the transition is complete, RQ will lead a detailed review of operational areas such as programming, handicapping and grading, ensuring the governance model delivers practical improvements for participants and spectators alike.

Broaden expertise on the Racing Queensland Board

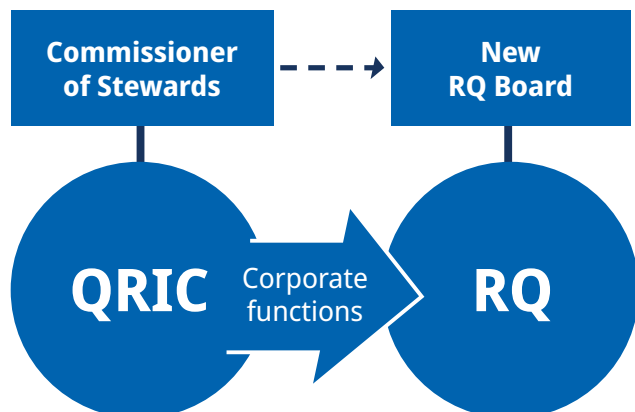
Reform will also extend to the composition and capability of the RQ Board. The Board will be strengthened to include members with expertise in integrity and country racing, ensuring a wider breadth of industry knowledge is represented in decision making. The three code-specific



The Q, Purga.

A New Operating Model

'hybrid' organisational model for governance and integrity.



positions will remain, preserving the voice of each discipline. All members will be permitted to own racehorses or greyhounds, provided appropriate declarations are made. To further ground Board members in the realities of the industry they serve, the government will consider directing a portion of their first-year remuneration to travel, enabling them to engage with race clubs and stakeholders across Queensland's vast racing community.

Strengthen clubs across Queensland

Strong governance at the club level is equally important. The sustainability of Queensland racing depends on race clubs that are well run, financially responsible and connected to their local communities. To support this, a series of governance measures will be pursued. RQ will assist clubs in working towards each club having at least one accredited Director. As part of this initiative, a tailored governance training program will be developed for race club directors and committee members, providing them with the skills and tools to manage clubs effectively.

Clubs will also be required to publish their Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting minutes on the RQ website, and to provide templated annual and mid-year financial reports to RQ. These reforms will strengthen transparency, protect members and sponsors, and ensure clubs are accountable to their communities.

Put Queensland racing first

The Racing Australia voting structure is heavily weighted towards NSW and Victoria which have the right to veto. The Queensland Government will offer its support to RQ to advocate for reform to the voting structure to ensure fairness and better alignment with the interests of all states and territories.

This is an ambitious goal that will aim to help deliver stronger national coordination and reflect Queensland's significant contribution to the Australian racing landscape.

Introduce 'Super Maidens'

The popular 'Super Maiden' concept will be explored for Queensland, with weekly races offering enhanced stakes for horses that are yet to win a race. A tiered system with designated races across the week will aim to provide greater returns to participants sooner and enhance the quality of midweek and non-TAB fields.

Restructure incentive schemes

RQ will seek to restructure the QTIS, QBRED and QGOLD schemes to extend racing careers and support post-racing outcomes. Grandfathering provisions will ensure that horses already enrolled under the existing programs continue to receive benefits under the new arrangements.

Queensland Thoroughbred Incentive Scheme (QTIS)

The QTIS was designed to reward local breeding, but recent structures such as QTISx have underperformed, with only 48% of its FY24 budget utilised. While this program will be discontinued, a new scheme known as QTIS Life will be introduced. This program will seek to reward QTIS-eligible non-TAB starters to extend racing careers and promote grassroots participation. RQ will examine the re-introduction of the QTIS registration fee to ensure the incentive scheme remains financially sustainable into the future.

QBRED

A new QBRED payment schedule will be introduced for harness. This realigns the bonus model to an appearance-based structure that supports consistent participation. This will provide harness participants with equitable distributions across horse ages and create a clear incentive for horses to remain active over several years, without disproportionately rewarding a smaller cohort of high-performing animals.

QGOLD

The QGOLD greyhound scheme will be restructured with a portion of the Starter and Win Bonus payments to be reallocated to a new Greyhound Retirement Program. This reallocation 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 their greyhounds.

A FOCUS ON INTEGRITY

Integrity must be the foundation of the Queensland racing industry. It underpins community confidence, protects animal welfare, and ensures a fair and transparent sport for all.

To deliver on this commitment, the Queensland Government will implement a series of targeted, ground-up measures to reinforce the integrity of the industry. QRIC will engage in a significant increase in swabbing at racetracks across the state. Raising swab rates is essential to maintaining fairness and public trust, and will bring Queensland into line with national benchmarks.

A new “swab blitz” will be introduced, with one random race each week across the three codes in which every runner is tested—removing opportunities for circumvention and improving transparency. In addition, every race will include a minimum of three swabs: the winner, the last placegetter, and one random selection. Scaling up this regime is a key investment in both integrity and animal welfare. This will be rolled out in a staged process as capacity is built within QRIC.

A senior wagering role will be established within QRIC to ensure appropriate oversight of betting activity. This elevated position will strengthen the ability to identify and address potential breaches and ensure confidence in wagering systems. A review of national best practice will also be undertaken to guide improvements to Queensland's wagering integrity framework.

Stewards play a vital role in maintaining the standards and fairness of racing. The Queensland Government will work with QRIC to strengthen the Stewarding workforce through benchmarking salaries and conditions, reducing reliance on casual staff, and introducing formal qualifications. These reforms will help continue to promote Stewarding as a highly respected and attractive career pathway for new recruits.

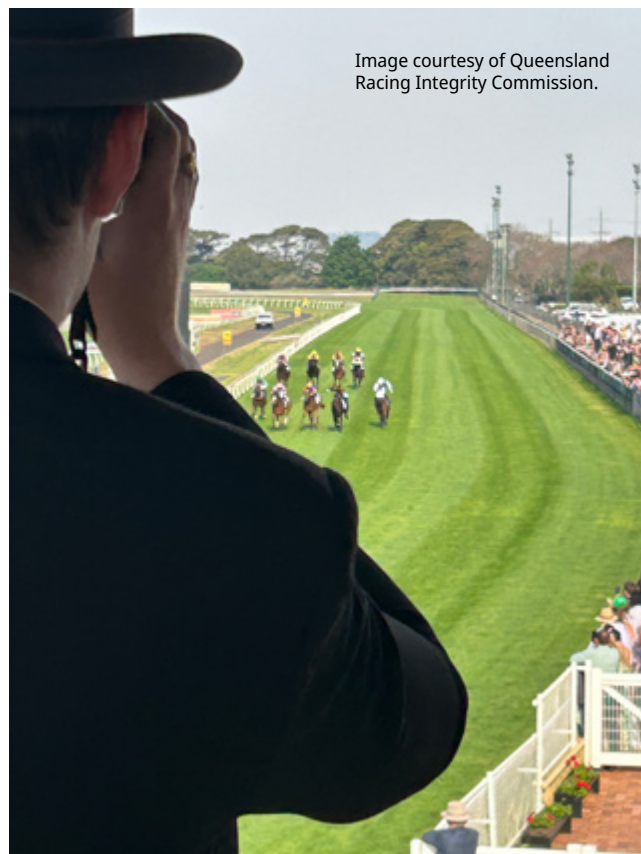


Image courtesy of Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.

To modernise officiation and improve efficiency, QRIC will trial a centralised “Stewards’ Bunker” for remote officiation from a metropolitan hub. Beginning with televised regional thoroughbred meetings and expanding to harness and provincial tracks, this technology-driven approach will reduce operational pressures while ensuring consistency and high integrity standards.

Compliance must also evolve alongside the industry. A review will be undertaken to ensure all Racing-Controlled Entities meet AUSTAC's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing requirements. An additional review will examine the whistleblower policies currently in place, introducing stronger protections for anonymous disclosures, and formalising Apprentice Deeds and Child Safety Compliance protocols.

Through strengthened oversight, modernised systems, and the highest standards of governance, the Queensland racing industry will continue to thrive on a transparent and resilient foundation of integrity.



Increase swabbing
across three codes



Enhance wagering
integrity systems



Conduct Stewards
workforce reform



Introduce a
Stewards’ Bunker



Strengthen
compliance

Hall of Fame trainer Tony Zammit and Valpolicella,
Queensland's greyhound of the year 2024.
Image courtesy of Racing Queensland.



AN UNDENIABLE COMMITMENT TO ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal welfare must remain at the heart of all racing codes in Queensland.

To ensure comprehensive care and trust throughout the lives of racing animals, the Queensland Government, in conjunction with RQ and QRIC, will pursue a set of initiatives designed to strengthen protection, improve retirement pathways, and enhance safety from track through to rehoming.

A nation-leading lifetime traceability framework will be developed, beginning with the greyhound code and progressing to equine codes. This critical system will incorporate a digital passport that tracks animals from naming through every stage to end of life. Implementing such a system is key to enabling better oversight, transparency and robust support for welfare obligations across all codes.

A new Greyhound Retirement Program will be introduced, supported by strategic adjustments to the bonus and incentive scheme. Through this program, owners of retired greyhounds will receive monthly vouchers for ongoing care costs. Participation in this initiative will be linked to the digital passport system, with welfare updates submitted via that tool. RQ will investigate transitioning the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) toward an independent charitable foundation, following successful interstate models, to ensure sustainable and high-quality rehoming outcomes.

The Queensland Government will implement or trial a comprehensive range of measures to ensure safer racing for animals and participants.

These essential safety provisions will see new or enhanced measures such as preferential box draws, accreditation of barrier attendants, mandatory stand-down periods after falls, judicious consideration of field sizes, enhanced scratching and stand-down rules, changes to time between starts, and new hydration policies. Trials on these measures will be reviewed and refined to ensure balance between safety, race integrity, and animal welfare.

Off-track welfare initiatives will be expanded. A metropolitan equine therapy program using retired racehorses will be considered, with alignment with a broader rehoming work.

The Queensland Off The Track (QOTT) program has been a resounding success. It will continue to be benchmarked against other states to continue improving the program into the future. Collaboration with Save A Horse Australia (SAHA) will continue, including support through the Off-The-Track program's partnership to formalise a safety net and rehabilitation pathways for former racehorses. Trials will also be explored with Corrective Services, where retired greyhounds may serve as companion animals, contributing to community wellbeing and enhancing rehoming outcomes. This would complement programs currently in place in Queensland corrections facilities.



Birdsville Races.

RACING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Racing has long been a source of connection and opportunity in Queensland.

Its presence in regional towns and cities alike is felt in the excitement of race days, the gathering of local crowds, and the shared sense of identity. As community expectations evolve, so too will the ways the racing industry gives back. A series of initiatives will pursue deeper engagement, lasting benefit, and stronger relationships between racing and the communities it serves.

To expand access to therapeutic and equine-assisted programs, options will be explored for a purpose-built facility dedicated to the Riding for the Disabled Association Queensland (RDAQ). The plan involves investigating partnerships with the Equine Therapy Program to align services, share facilities where possible, and maximise participant reach. A centrally-located metropolitan facility will be considered to reduce travel burdens, and co-location with veteran and police equine therapy operations may be trialled. These actions aim to generate efficiencies and also open meaningful secondary opportunities for retired racehorses.

Several racetrack infields represent untapped potential for community use and social benefit. The RQ Infrastructure Team will assess racetrack infields for possible activation—events, markets, and community gatherings—that respect racing schedules and operations. Through these efforts, clubs will have avenues to generate modest revenue streams and strengthen ties with their surroundings. Activating infields offers both financial sustainability for clubs and shared enjoyment for the wider public.



Fashions on the Field at Cairns Jockey Club.

Mental health will be elevated as an industry priority through an annual “You Are Not Alone” Weekend across all race meetings. This initiative will aim to foster awareness, reduce stigma, and raise funds. Proceeds will support the creation of a dedicated RQ mental health resource, accessible to participants in all roles.

Partnerships will be explored to generate mutual benefits. In regional clubs, prisoners may gain work experience by assisting with manual tasks such as track preparation and event setup—a model that has already proven effective in Innisfail. Another potential partnership could involve prisoners caring for and training retired greyhounds, building on successful examples from other regions. These programs provide valuable vocational opportunities, support clubs with practical labour, and promote the welfare of retired racing animals.

There will also be an audit of social media strategies currently employed by regional and rural clubs. The findings will determine how best to roll out packaged social media support to clubs across the state.

AN INDUSTRY WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF

Queensland should aspire to be a racing powerhouse, and success will require government, clubs, participants, and the wider community each playing a part to build a stronger, smarter and more connected sector.

To achieve this, a coordinated education and training framework will be enhanced to strengthen career pathways across all racing codes. Led by RQ, the program will align with national TAFE and Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) standards to deliver accredited, industry-relevant qualifications. This approach will provide clearer, more consistent pathways into the industry, while also supporting international recruitment and career mobility.

Beyond those who have chosen racing as a profession, the importance of volunteers to the racing industry cannot be overstated. From local race meetings to major events,

volunteers are the heartbeat of racing communities. A new initiative will acknowledge their contribution, providing clubs with one-day membership passes that can be used across the state as tokens of appreciation. Recognising and supporting volunteers reinforces the sense of community that underpins racing's success across the state.

Technology and innovation will drive the next stage of growth for Queensland. A forward-looking digital strategy will guide how the industry adopts new tools to enhance operations, improve engagement, and generate new revenue.

Key initiatives under consideration include an Asset Recycling Marketplace for clubs, a "Q Syndications" app to support affordable ownership in greyhound racing, and the provision of Starlink connectivity for rural clubs on feature race days. Further exploration will be undertaken into opportunities to expand virtual sponsorship signage, "In Play" wagering technology, and an artificial intelligence roadmap, each designed to ensure Queensland's racing industry remains modern, efficient, and connected.

Potential insurance reform will also be investigated through engagement with WorkCover Queensland to explore the best outcomes for industry.

Finally, a dedicated greyhound racing media team will be developed to better recognise the sport's social contribution, ownership benefits and commitment to strengthening animal welfare.

Together, these initiatives will turn the insights of the Review into meaningful progress—building capability, stability, and opportunity across every level of Queensland's racing industry.

Doomben Racecourse.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games acknowledges Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways.

We respectfully recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to country as an integral element of identity, culture, customs, and the rich diversity within their communities.

We offer our respect to Elders past, present and future and recognise their ongoing connection to Country and community over thousands of generations, and the significant contributions they continue to make to Queensland where we live, work and play.

We are committed to strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We aim to build a stronger, culturally safe, and inclusive workforce, ensuring our policies, procedures, and governance reflect genuine respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and contribute to delivering quality services for all Queenslanders.