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The Cabinet Office



Minutes

Record of meeting with Racing NSW

Friday, 17 November 2023
9:30 – 10:00am
Level 21, 52 Martin Place

Attendance and declarations

In attendance

Russell Balding, Chair, Racing NSW (RNSW)
Peter V'landys, CEO, RNSW
William Murphy, A/Secretary, TCO
Natasha Luschwitz, Executive Director, Social Policy, TCO

Declaration

Russell Balding declared that he is a non-executive director of ComfortDelGro, which is in a joint venture with UGL to prepare an EOI for the MetroWest Operations package procurement. Note there was no discussion of MetroWest or related procurement in the meeting.

Context

- RNSW sought a meeting to share its perspective on a potential Australian Turf Club (ATC) unsolicited proposal and governance issues in the racing sector.
- A confidentiality agreement was provided to RNSW and signed by both RNSW attendees on the basis that there was the potential for commercially sensitive information to be discussed.

Business items

Item 1: ATC unsolicited proposal

- RNSW advised that they were aware of the potential for ATC to submit an unsolicited proposal for development at Rosehill, Warwick Farm and Horsley Park.
- While very supportive of the proposal, RNSW had a few additional comments to make:
 - The proposed Horsley Park Centre of Excellence should be designed to accommodate the needs of the current Equestrian users. This would mean, in their opinion, that

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additional surrounding land might be required to augment the current site, either as freehold or lease.

- Making the Horsley Park facility a genuinely world-class Centre of Excellence will be important to ensure key trainers remain in NSW. There is competition for trainers to relocate to other jurisdictions, particularly Victoria.
- RNSW considers that Warwick Farm might be expensive to convert to a full top grade racecourse. Subject to deeper investigation there may not be enough room. On this basis, it is important to consider the state of racing venues across NSW to potentially share the load.

- TCO noted the comments.

Item 2: Sector governance

- RNSW suggested that there may be a need to reform the governance of the ATC via legislation, particularly if the unsolicited proposal is taken up.
- The key elements of RNSW's proposed legislative reform include:
 - Ensuring the ATC is governed by an appropriately skills-based Board to ensure the right mix of capability required.
 - Reforms to ensure that the revenue derived from the ATC proposal is reinvested to benefit the racing industry as a whole.
- TCO noted the comments and advised that any proposals for legislative reform would be dealt with via the Minister for Gaming and Racing rather than as part of any USP process.
- There was no specific request or commitment to action made on governance reform.

Item 3: Kembla Grange

- RNSW provided a short history of ownership issues around the Kembla Grange racecourse.
- In the opinion of RNSW, the Kembla Grange racecourse should be an industry asset, and on that basis, transferred under freehold or long term lease to RNSW.
- TCO noted the comments.

The parties reiterated the importance of maintaining confidentiality of these discussions given the commercially sensitive nature of the ATC's proposal.

Meeting closed at 10:00am.

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