

Submission
No 112

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL
RACECOURSE**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 14 July 2024

Partially
Confidential

Submission to the Inquiry into the Proposal to Develop Rosehill Racecourse

To The Select Committee,

Please find my submission for the Inquiry regarding the proposal to develop Rosehill Racecourse in NSW.

I understand that the Australian Turf Club (ATC) is likely to benefit by up to \$10 billion from the sale of Rosehill. I would like to be assured that the ATC will view the sale funds as an opportunity to improve the welfare of NSW racehorses. To date, the racing industry has demonstrated little genuine concern for racehorses, and is secretive about the fate of horses who stop racing.

The potential \$10B sale income from the Rosehill racecourse will enable Racing NSW to set up its own traceability register, ensuring transparency into, and traceability of all Thoroughbred horses born into the NSW racing industry. In doing so, all un-registered foals, breeding horses or ex-racehorses would be accounted for, and the responsibility for their welfare could be traced back to their owners at any point in time. No more excuses about lack of funds to implement these most basic necessities.

The racing industry has a moral obligation to look after all of the racehorses it breeds, those who are racing and those who exit the industry.

In 2023, Australia wide, 168 Thoroughbreds died on track or shortly after as a direct result of racing, with the most common injury being a catastrophic front limb injury. New South Wales racetracks were responsible for approximately 30% of these deaths. This is abhorrent and must stop.

The effects of cruelty on the racetrack is evidenced on television every race day – horses breaking down, distressed, injured and their deaths hidden from the public behind a green screen. Whipping, the use of tongue ties, sharp mouthpieces, prohibiting horses' hearing with earplugs and blocking their vision with blinkers or blindfolds cause physical and psychological harm, pain, and distress to horses and are completely unacceptable. The use of pain and fear of pain, which is a common method to force a horse to enter the barrier and race, is used solely to force the horse to race which is incomprehensible.

The accommodation in which horses are kept whilst being used to race is inappropriate as they are confined to stalls for up to 23 hours per day. The inability to graze, combined with their feeding regime, leads to most racehorses suffering from painful stomach ulcers. I cannot believe that this is accepted practice in an industry that supposedly loves 'their' animals.

Combined with isolation and restraint, many stabled racehorses develop stereotypical behaviours such as wood chewing, box walking, windsucking and weaving to try to cope with the stress. This is distressing to know and I cannot imagine what this must be like for horses.

The racing industry has lost its social licence with many people shocked by the horrors that racehorses who make it to the track and those who don't, are subjected to and many are absolutely disgusted by the focus on gambling and other violence that results as an extension from the racing industry itself. This in itself, a human issue must also be addressed because wherever profits are placed above welfare and wherever cruelty in an industry exists, the violence and corruption spills out into families and society itself.

I therefore support the proposal for Rosehill Racecourse to be sold and developed for purposes other than racing.

I request that the NSW Government intervenes to impose conditions on the ATC's use of sales to stipulate that NSW racing must work on the welfare of racehorses.

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.