

Submission
No 116

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL
RACECOURSE**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 16 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 long-standing concerns about Thoroughbred welfare and am concerned that the sale of Rosehill could see proceeds used to intensify racing. Instead, I request that some proceeds are required to be used to improve the welfare of racing's forced participants – the animals. I believe these concerns 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.", and I would appreciate the Committee considering these issues.

The Australian Turf Club (ATC) stands to gain up to \$10 billion from the sale of Rosehill. Regardless of the type of development, such a substantial influx of funds poses risks of expansion and intensification of racing operations that could adversely affect the lives of Thoroughbreds. I hope instead that the ATC views these funds as an opportunity to enhance the welfare of NSW racehorses, thereby improving its public image, which has been tarnished by persistent concerns over racehorse treatment and transparency issues.

I support the proposal for Rosehill Racecourse to be sold and developed for purposes other than racing. However, I believe there should be conditions imposed regarding the utilization of sale proceeds, to ensure that Thoroughbred welfare is improved, not degraded.

Recommendations for Utilization of Sale Proceeds

1. **Ensure Lifelong Traceability:** Establish a comprehensive traceability register for all horses in the NSW racing industry. This would ensure transparency and accountability for the welfare of every horse, from birth through to retirement and beyond.
2. **Fund Safe, Lifelong Retirement:** Implement a robust, well-funded program to ensure the lifelong care and retirement of every horse involved in the NSW racing industry. Current rehoming efforts are inadequate, and a dedicated fund from the sale proceeds could address this gap.
3. **Improve Welfare Standards:** Adopt the 2020 Five Domains Model for animal welfare assessment to replace current standards. This model provides a more humane and scientifically validated approach to animal welfare, both on and off the racetrack. Additionally, mandate education for industry participants on these new standards.
4. **Support Industry Transition:** Create a fund to assist individuals in the racing industry to transition to other professions. This could help reduce reliance on practices that may compromise animal welfare and foster a more sustainable and humane industry environment.

More generally, the NSW horse racing industry has **significant governance** issues which currently prevent animal welfare issues being adequately considered and addressed in line with public expectations. The public expects an independent, expert entity should exist, with responsibility for animal welfare – and *that* body should be considering the implications of the sale of Rosehill Racecourse. Such a body should be structured to ensure a formal and complete separation between the integrity and regulatory functions from the commercial functions. Self-regulation by conflicted racing bodies (overseen in turn by conflicted Racing Ministers) are not acceptable to the

public. The public also expects that mandatory welfare standards should exist nationally, to better protect racehorses.

Conclusion

The sale of Rosehill Racecourse presents a pivotal opportunity to reform the NSW racing industry and address long-standing animal welfare issues. I urge the NSW Government to impose conditions on the ATC to ensure that the sale proceeds are directed towards substantial and meaningful improvements in the welfare of Thoroughbred racehorses. This not only aligns with ethical responsibilities but also with the growing public demand for more humane treatment of racehorses.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours faithfully,