

Submission
No 127

**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

Dear Select Committee,

Time to move into the 21st century and the right side of history by ending the exploitation of horses for \$\$\$\$. The amount of horses bred and ultimately sent to slaughter is horrific, cruel and totally unnecessary. Please do not be complicit with this Racecourse.

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.”

I understand that the Australian Turf Club (ATC) is likely to benefit by up to \$10 billion from the sale of Rosehill. Regardless of the type of development at Rosehill, I am concerned that such a large amount of money will allow the racing industry to expand and intensify its operations in ways that may negatively impact the lives of Thoroughbreds. I hope instead that the ATC will view the sale funds as an opportunity to improve the welfare of NSW racehorses. This would also help to improve its somewhat tarnished image. To date however, the racing industry has demonstrated little genuine concern for its racehorses, and is notorious for a lack of transparency regarding the fate of horses who exit racing.

I support the proposal for Rosehill Racecourse to be sold and developed for purposes other than racing. My support depends upon the use to which the sale monies are put, particularly those which cause further negative impacts on Thoroughbreds.

I request that the NSW Government intervenes to impose some conditions on the ATC, regarding use of the potential \$10 billion Rosehill sale income. The sale of Rosehill presents an opportunity for NSW racing to make a genuine contribution to the welfare of racehorses. A lack of funds will no longer be an excuse.

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,

Introduction

NSW is a major state in the Australian Thoroughbred racing industry, and accounts for almost 30% of all tracks, race meetings, races and starts. In 2023, NSW also comprised 29% of individual racing Thoroughbreds (10,534 animals), and 38% of Broodmares (7,123 mares), who birthed 5,778 foals, being 45% of Australian foals. The sale of Rosehill Racecourse will have a major impact on racing in NSW and of course the surrounding area. This huge financial windfall is an opportunity for racing to properly address the many animal welfare concerns that pervade the industry.

1. Horse Traceability Register

The potential \$10B sale income from the Rosehill racecourse would 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.

2. Rehabilitation and retirement plan for racehorses

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. An estimated 3,500 Thoroughbred horses exit racing in NSW each year, that simply cannot be accommodated by pony clubs, private buyers, and other rehoming programs. The racing industry does not know, and refuses to disclose any information about the whereabouts of these horses.

I urge the NSW Government to ensure that a properly funded rehabilitation and rehoming program is implemented to ensure the lifelong retirement of all current and future Thoroughbred horses involved in the NSW racing industry.

3. Breeding

Horses are bred based on industry demand without any consideration for their welfare after racing. Approximately one third of all horses bred for racing will not even make it to the racetrack. Mares are typically bred from every year until they exit at around the age of 10, with very little hope of being re-homed. The racing industry keeps no publicly available records of mares exiting breeding.

I urge the NSW Government to put a cap on breeding numbers, and make the NSW racing industry responsible for the welfare of all the horses they breed and have profited from. Funding could be provided by the sale of Rosehill Racecourse.

4. Animal Welfare in Racing

The racing industry clearly demonstrates that it puts profit above animal welfare. The racing industry compromises Thoroughbred welfare through its breeding programs, its day-to-day and racetrack treatment of the horses, and directly causes Thoroughbreds' early deaths on track and at slaughterhouses.