

Geraldton Harness Racing Club (Inc)

Attention John McGrath

Dear Sir,

Attached is the submission from the Committee of The Geraldton Harness Racing Club (Inc).

Yours truly,

Bruce Brown

Secretary/Treasurer

Ph: - (08) 9964-3510



Geraldton Harness Racing Club gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors



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Submission to Parliamentary Commission

25th November 2009

The effectiveness of the operations of RWWA.

- Effectiveness: - Geraldton Turf Club suddenly increased the rent from \$800 to \$3,000 per meeting and RWWA ignored our plea for help.
- Communication: - There is a lack of response to many requests. It's very difficult to contact top management.
- Problems: - GHRC do not have the same problems that another club may have, eg Gloucester Park, therefore solutions need to be tailor-made for the particular clubs needs. One solution does not fit all.
- Education: - GHRC has not been invited to any seminars or workshops that would assist in the running of our club.
- Support: - Having periodic get-togethers to discuss and compare strategies would be of use. Information sharing is a vital part of keeping up with marketing, sponsorship, attracting trainers & owners and the running of the bar, canteen, VIP tents, children's attractions etc.
- Equipment: - Regional clubs like Geraldton need financial help from time to time to purchase equipment eg. tractor.

The need for the continuation of the operations of RWWA

- Continuation: - We would like to see RWWA with a more flexible and broader outlook; It needs to do more than just facilitate race meetings.
Each club needs specialised consideration to their varied needs.

Any other matters that appear to the Joint Standing Committee to be relevant to the operation and effectiveness of these Acts.

- Mediation: - GHRC asked RWWA to mediate between the two racing codes here in Geraldton, when the Turf Club increased the rent by 370%.
GHRC again asked RWWA to mediate between the two codes to help facilitate a merge. Their refusal has left both clubs in limbo because neither club has expertise in this area.
- Consultation: - RWWA has a very dictatorial attitude evidenced by it's unwillingness to consult clubs when making decisions;
 - Stopping the Owners Incentive Payment.
 - Changing the stakes distribution
 - Reducing number of race meetings per season.
 - Reducing the number of races per meeting.
 These decisions have huge implications on the long term viability of clubs such as Geraldton and should be the subject of thorough and thoughtful negotiation involving all stake holders before being taken.
- Sky Channel: - Because regional race courses have a smaller local market to draw upon they need Sky. RWWA has failed to assist us. Geraldton Harness Racing was one of the highest revenue earners prior to the introduction of Sky but now struggle to compete. Even though our venue is setup for Sky, the Geraldton Turf Club (gallops) enjoys Sky. RWWA have ignored our pleas. They suggested we hire The Big Screen instead; which is financially out of our reach and in no way addresses the objective of increasing offcourse turnover and product exposure.
- Finances: - During our thirteen years of racing GHRC have never been a financial drain on RWWA.

Community Service: - Regional clubs provide a service to their community offering an opportunity for families to enjoy the splendour and excitement of Harness Racing. To that end, GHRC offer free admission and are constantly looking for ways to involve families.

Geraldton is on the threshold of a boom with the Oakajee port and rail project approved and new mining developments starting. We have been successfully operating for some 13 years but because of our geographical disadvantage and the extra financial burden imposed by GTC we need RWWA's help.