



WA RACING TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION

**Joint Standing Committee
Review of Racing and Wagering Acts
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000**

December 14, 2009

Dear Sirs:

A meeting of this Association held on December 10 instructed me to present the following points to your committee in support of the retention of the operations of Racing and Wagering WA.

TRAINING ASSOCIATIONS:

There are some 700 trainers in Western Australia spread over a vast area of the State and ranging from full-time professionals employing the bulk of those working in the industry to owner-trainers who have one of two horses. In this State two association's serve this section of the industry – the West Australian Racing Trainers' Association and the WA branch of the Australian Trainers' Association, both of which have a voluntary membership.

The WARTA has a membership of some 350 and deals primarily with all domestic matters – ie training tracks and conditions, racing facilities and costs, individual problems or complaints from members and general matters involving the health of the industry in this State. Normally meetings are held monthly.

The WA branch of the ATA deals with industrial matters – racing awards, wages and conditions of employment of stablehands. It provides various services to those employing persons in the industry, much of which comes through the head office in Melbourne. The branch rarely meets, referring most problems to the head office.

The WA Racing Trainers' Association makes the following points to the Joint Standing Committee on the Review of Racing and Wagering WA Acts:

1. The association believes RWWA has served a vital role in overseeing racing in Western Australia and has led to a healthy growth of the industry. It has eliminated the appearance that Perth Racing and the major provincial race clubs control all aspects of the industry and has helped raise the prosperity and standard of racing throughout the State. In particular, it has given all industry bodies a "right of appeal" over the bigger clubs whose priorities are not always the best for industry

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2. As an independent body, it has overseen a healthy growth in the industry, both in the number of horses racing and the numbers employed in the industry as well as lifting returns to the participants through increasing TAB turnover.
3. It follows that this Association strongly supports the continuation of operations of RWWA especially at a time when the major source of industry funding is coming under threat from what are now termed "corporate bookmakers." This is the section of racing that yesterday might have been referred to in the same breath as SP operators, in that corporate bookmakers do not contribute as much to industry funding as TABs and continue to look at ways and means of dodging taxation issues or of looking for and using the cheapest option.
4. RWWA needs to broaden its product range so that it can compete in other areas of wagering by way of new licences and this will require Government action within its existing legislation.
5. The most vital and important requirement of RWWA is additional funding to provide infrastructure development for more than 50 metropolitan and country based racing clubs in this State.

Racing is one of the largest employers of labour in the State. It is also one of the main contributors to decentralization which has become even more evident with the growth of racing in Western Australia over the last 40 years and especially in the last decade.

Forty years ago, most horses racing and those employed in racing came from the metropolitan area where three permanent race tracks catered for city racing and training and about 10 tracks catered for provincial racing with a few dozen small outer country tracks. Few horses were trained at provincial centres. The "city" people took racing to the bush – horses, workers and for the most part spectators. And, at the end of the day, they were back in the metropolitan area.

Today, at least half a dozen provincial areas can conduct their own race meetings with little or no support from their city counterparts. Albany and Esperance in the south, Bunbury in the south-west, Geraldton in the north and Kalgoorlie to the east have a sizeable home-based training scene, especially during their racing seasons.

Bunbury Example:

No more is this evident than in Bunbury where the last decade has seen a huge increase in the number of horses being prepared in that district. Chief reason is the huge costs and lack of opportunities for young trainers to buy properties in the shrinking training areas around Perth.

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Today, Bunbury is busier than the training complex at Lark Hill. As recent as mid-December more than 200 horses were trained at the Bunbury track on a Saturday morning, causing many trainers to leave their horses in floats or on trucks until stalls became available.

Bunbury is desperately in need of new facilities.

But this is just one example of where aging facilities are in need of more than an upgrade. In most cases provincial race clubs are racing and training on the same tracks they did 60 years ago, the stalls have been patched up for decades and other facilities have been ignored.

Racing and Wagering WA has the responsibility of providing infrastructure development for all metropolitan and country-based clubs. While some requirements may be sourced from regional development funds, this remains a political decision made at the whim of the government of the day.

The industry and RWWA need the certainty of funding and taxation relief which will enable the industry to update infrastructure and to progress into the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Paddick
Hon. Secretary
75 Gardiner Street
BELMONT WA 6104

WA RACING TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION

Ms Dawn Dickinson
Principal Research Officer
Joint Standing Committee
Review of Racing and Wagering WA

December 14, 2009

Dear Ms Dickinson

I am attaching a submission for consideration by the Joint Standing Committee on the Review of the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Acts.

This submission falls behind the deadline, for several reasons. This association's monthly meeting when this item was considered was held on December 10 which was the first occasion I had an opportunity to gauge opinions from members.

Secondly, the President, Bruce Hyde, was seriously injured in an accident while training a horse and I waited on his return from hospital to seek his approval before forwarding the submission.

Should the committee require further comment or input from trainers this can be arranged.

Meanwhile, I will post to you the signed copy of this.

Yours sincerely

Brian Paddick
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