



The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission releases annual report

29 September 2017

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) has announced the release of the Commission's annual report for 2016-17.

"The annual report highlights the great work achieved by Commission staff over the past year including the first race fixing charges in the harness code under the match fixing laws enacted in Queensland in 2014," Commissioner Ross Barnett said.

"The fact that State Parliament saw fit to include a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment reflects the seriousness of match fixing offences, which is an issue for sports administrators across the world.

"The arrest of three people in our first year for systemic race fixing in the harness industry demonstrates both the need for the laws and the Commission's determination to ensure they're enforced.

"Furthermore, our partnership with the Queensland Police Service through the Racing Crime Squad resulted in 40 charges being laid against a total of 22 offenders.

"This partnership acts as a valuable deterrent to industry participants who might otherwise engage in serious animal welfare and integrity offences.

"Looking ahead, the Racing Crime Squad is set to expand from four to six members and the Commission will expand the use of body worn cameras to allow officers to make accurate, real-time records of their fieldwork and inspections," Commissioner Barnett said.

But Commissioner Barnett adds that it's important to remember the vast majority of licensees across the three codes are law-abiding responsible industry participants.

This is reflected by the fact that 99.6% of the 19,000-plus swabs analysed by the QRIC's Racing Science Centre returned negative results.

The Commission's efforts to safeguard the welfare of animals involved in racing have also been supported by the community with 318 retired greyhounds rehomed through the Greyhound Adoption Program, with a non-return rate of 94%.

"This achievement represents a 38% increase on the previous financial year," Commissioner Barnett said.

"Unfortunately, 101 greyhounds had to be euthanased during the reporting period and the Commission will continue to work with owners and trainers to reduce this number," Commissioner Barnett said.

"We're helping them to understand the scientific research that shows environments that foster confident, social dogs result in greyhounds that are easier to train and perform better.

"Our Greyhound Adoption Program staff are also implementing pre-screening processes to ensure we maximise the number of suitable greyhounds going into Queensland homes after their racing careers are over."

The QRIC's officers supervised 1,521 race meetings, conducted more than 955 stable and kennel inspections and carried out 96 welfare and integrity investigations during the reporting period.

They issued eight animal welfare directions and declined 34 license applications on ability or suitability grounds.

The QRIC handled more than 20,000 animal related transactions during the year and now has just over 6,300 licensed participants.

The QRIC will invest more than \$7.75 million over four years to support the Racing Science Centre's Capital Acquisition Strategic Plan.

This will see new advanced technology acquired to enable both an increase in samples collected for testing and enhanced scope of testing.

"The past year has had its challenges including the transitioning of a suite of business-as-usual operational and policy activities from Racing Queensland to the QRIC," Commissioner Barnett said.

"But our vision for an ethical and safe racing industry is backed by our organisational values of professionalism, fairness, accountability, transparency, courage and collaboration."

ENDS

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