

**Investigation of the equine area  
of the sector:  
Animals used for work, sport,  
recreation and on display**

**A report for the Australian Animal Welfare  
Strategy**

31 May 2007

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The information in this report was correct at the time the report was prepared in July 2007. Some of the material will have changed by the time of publication.

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# Acronyms

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| AAWS    | Australian Animal Welfare Strategy                                      |
| ACAC    | Australian Companion Animal Council                                     |
| AHA     | Animal Health Australia   |
| AHIC    | Australian Horse Industry Council                                       |
| DAFF    | Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry |
| NCCAW   | National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare                       |
| RIRDC   | Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation                   |
| WSRD WG | Animals Used for Work, Sport, Recreation and on Display Working Group   |



# Background

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The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) is an agreed blueprint for animal welfare in Australia that aims to enhance welfare outcomes for all animals. It has been developed with extensive stakeholder consultation and has been endorsed by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council.

Implementation of the strategy through comprehensive action plans will help improve animal welfare; provide for more effective communication, education and training across the whole community; and improve the general level of understanding of animal welfare. It will also identify the best ways of continuing to improve animal welfare outcomes in Australia.

Six broad working groups have been established as part of the strategy, covering all animal use sectors. The Animals Used for Work, Sport, Recreation and on Display Working Group (WSRD WG) has the responsibility to develop and implement the action plan for the sector relating to work, sport, recreation and display using animals. This is a large and diverse sector. The WSRD WG decided that the first step towards the development of policies for sustainable improvement in animal welfare within the sector in Australia was to review the policies, programs and systems currently in place for many of the identified groups in the sector. The review (Atkinson 2006) also examined the adequacy and content of existing and proposed training programs relevant to animal welfare in this area of animal use. This information has been used to build on the strengths identified in the system and identify areas for improvement.

The current document builds on the outcomes of the first review, and presents information collected in an attempt to answer some of the questions it raised.



# Summary of previous review

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## Conclusions

The first review (Atkinson 2006) concluded that it would be necessary to describe more completely the nature of the WSRD sector before a complete and detailed report on welfare arrangements for the sector could be developed. There is a demonstrated need to try to identify areas of commonality and differences among all the groups involved in the sector, especially in the activities involving dogs, and horses in recreation, rodeos and zoos, to enable future planning that will best advance the care and welfare of the animals involved in these very different activities.

## Recommendations

Recommendations from the previous review stated:

A project should be undertaken to provide information to allow a better description of all the animal use activities covered by the WSRD WG. This will require the identification of some of the groups and activities for which information was not available for this report. There will need to be some comparative analysis carried out to determine any similarities in purpose and policies between groups providing for similar animal use activities. This is needed for the development of future processes to ensure the best welfare outcomes for animals used in these types of activities.

Once the various groups are more adequately identified, it would be appropriate to try to bring similar largely unorganised groups together (such as recreational and/or sporting horse groups). The concept would be to facilitate action to address common welfare issues and to assist the development of strategies and standards that can improve/ensure animal welfare outcomes for the animals under their care.

## Problems identified

Common gaps, weaknesses and risks identified by the first review include:

- Most responses to the questionnaire for the initial report identified the almost complete lack of specific legislation pertaining to animals used in activities covered by the WSRD WG. The existing animal welfare legislation was considered by some to be relatively ineffective for maintaining or improving the welfare of animals within the sector.
- Most responses also suggested that the dispersed nature of most of the groups involved make it difficult to monitor rules and codes developed by 'peak industry bodies'. As a result, assurance of animal welfare outcomes can be limited in some areas.
- Some industry sectors in WSRD considered that there appears to be a major concern in some sections of the community about certain activities covered by those industries. This reflects the fact that many activities are subject to obvious public scrutiny. Working group members questioned the actual welfare position in relation to the level of scrutiny.
- The working group members suggested that it might be assumed that a perceived level of poor welfare in any situation could be associated with a number of measures, such as the numbers of people involved in an activity, the numbers of animals

involved or the pressure to achieve performance by the animals involved. However, no information is readily available on the accuracy of this perception.

- The physical structure of some of the industries considered by the WSRD WG lacks organisation and the capacity to achieve a high level of monitoring. Communication with members—to recommend improvements or to provide mechanisms for education of participants—is limited.
- Information provided by the WSRD WG members indicated that there was little formal training across the sector.
- There are no national standards covering all activities for animals in this sector.

## **Other issues identified**

Several other issues were identified:

- Horses were seen as a group of animals that might be considered by other working groups (e.g. the Companion Animals Working Group). This was confirmed in the initial report of the Companion Animals Working Group.
- Members of the WSRD WG identified a number of animal use activities for which no information was available for the initial report. These include:
  - endurance horse racing
  - pony clubs
  - riding for the disabled
  - show horses
  - animals used for hunting.

## **Summary of specific horse groups**

The following is a brief summary of the horse industry groups identified in the first review and their positions for protection of the welfare of the animals involved, as described in the material submitted by the WSRD WG (for those animal use activities for which information could be provided).

### **Horse racing (flat racing and jumps racing)**

The horse racing industry in Australia is very large economically and in terms of employment. The industry is highly regulated in every state and has very detailed and well-considered rules governing its functioning. Information on these controls is readily available. Compliance is managed by a strong system of supervision and monitoring by stewards appointed by the industry. The strong structure of the industry allows it to address many of the most significant problems and perceptions relating to the treatment of horses. Foremost among these is the use of illegal substances and identification of animal welfare statements, as addressed in the *Equine welfare inventory* released in 2006 (ARB 2006).

### **Harness racing**

Harness racing is not as large an industry as horse racing. It comes under some of the same legislative frameworks as the horse racing industry. A major difference between the

two industries is the more 'amateur' approach by many of the participants in harness racing. Many of the owners and trainers are associated with very small numbers of animals. The industry has developed some specific rules and policies relating to the care and management of horses. Again, compliance with these rules and with legislation is supervised by stewards appointed within the industry.

### **Rodeos**

Most rodeo events in Australia are run under the auspices of a number of state and territory organisations, and follow the terms of the relevant codes of practice developed by these organisations in recent years (e.g. WA DLGRD 2003; NSW DPI 2005; Vic. DPI 2005) The Australian Professional Rodeo Association has developed a training package for its officials and judges that includes aspects relating to the welfare of the animals used in events.

### **Recreational horses**

This is a very diverse and dispersed group of animal use activities. Information gathered from many sources suggests that more than 100 different organisations provide leadership and guidance for the use of horses in a very large range of activities including dressage, pony camps, trail riding and riding for the disabled. Apart from those organisations that have adopted the Fédération Équestre Internationale rules and processes, few groups have policies and procedures for addressing the welfare of the animals involved. In some cases, such as the endurance horse events, stringently applied rules for the welfare of the competing horses have been adopted internationally and apply to all sanctioned events in Australia.



## Proposal

In response to the initial report to the WSRD WG, a decision was taken to examine further the horse industry in Australia. The intention was to investigate, at a more detailed level (including their interests and activities), more of the groups that use horses for work, sport or recreation. Examples of possible areas to be covered included:

- work
  - horses used for stock work
- sport
  - horses used for racing: flat racing, jump racing, quarter horses
  - horses in rodeo: saddle bronc, bareback, barrel racing, roping, steer wrestling, pick-up riders
  - quarter horses: many disciplines, including cutting, reining, western pleasure
  - camp drafting
  - endurance riding
- recreation
  - trail riding
  - riding schools
  - riding for the disabled
  - riding with hounds (fox hunting)
  - show jumping
  - eventing (1 day and 3 day)
  - dressage
  - hacking
  - show horses
  - pony clubs
- others
  - trick riding
  - horses in film, TV, etc.
  - horse breeding, spelling, training.

## Broad approach adopted

The process used to develop the report was as follows:

- Use a list of equine interest groups identified by Animal Health Australia (AHA) as part of another equine-related project. It was thought that this list included some 120 groups identifying various equine activities.
- Seek information from the Companion Animals Working Group on which groups and activities would be covered by its investigations. If the Companion Animals Working Group were not specifically examining such issues, all equine activities could be investigated within the current project.
- Develop a letter to introduce the project to the identified groups and to request their involvement in the project.
- As part of this process, develop a questionnaire to seek information about:
  - the aims of the group
  - the size of the group, based on the numbers of horses, members and formal activities, and the geographical spread of the group
  - the basis of the welfare assurance processes used by the group
  - the training with respect to animal welfare that the group provides or accesses for instructors, officials and members
  - mechanisms for disciplining members for animal welfare breaches (e.g. Has it been done previously? How often?)
  - linkages to other organisations, at state, national and international levels.
- Make written contact with all identified groups.
- Collate responses.
- Seek assurances from groups about their future involvement in this backgrounding process and in any future AAWS activities for equine groups.
- Seek an indication about the groups' level of interest in participating in a 'focus group' meeting to advance implementation of the AAWS.
- Develop an agenda for focus group meetings.
- Arrange and conduct focus group meetings (say 3–4 meetings in different centres). The meetings will use, as the central activity, the concept of a code of practice covering animal welfare, based on the codes of practice and standards being developed by the National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare (NCCAW).
- Report on outcomes of focus group meetings.

The final report from this process would include:

- an expanded description of the equine sector
  - nature of activities
  - number of groups, size of groups, member involvement, animal welfare arrangements of groups

- involvement by equine interest areas and groups in codes of practice and standards
  - review process
  - adoption possibilities
  - implementation and enforcement opportunities
- gaps, weaknesses and failures in animal welfare identified by this backgrounding process and any proposals to fix these
- recommendations.

After discussions with the Chair of the WSRD WG and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), it was agreed that the rodeo sector would be examined in less detail than other groups. This is because the rodeo sector has already been studied in considerable detail during the production of the NCCAW guidelines and the development of several state and territory specific codes.

### **Additions to the program**

In addition to the processes described above, other steps taken to develop this report were as follows:

- A detailed and systematic survey of available websites to identify current details of contacts within groups and organisations involved in the horse industry in Australia.
- Telephone contact with executives of identified national or state bodies involved as ‘breed societies’ or as ‘activity’ coordinating bodies for sections of the horse industry, including groups identified as acting for a number of different organisations with similar interests (‘umbrella’ groups).
- Face-to-face meetings with people contacted, as above, to discuss the role of their organisations in the horse industry in Australia. Meetings were limited to Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. Issues discussed included involvement of the groups in the AAWS process, and what mechanisms were available to ensure a capacity existed within these groups to allow them to make contact with and to involve the maximum number of people within the industry in horse welfare issues.
- Holding one focus group meeting in Tamworth because of the concentration in that area of organisations representing horse interest groups. Since it was not possible to bring sufficient people together to run successful focus groups, all other planned focus group meetings were replaced by face-to-face meetings.



## Methods

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As indicated in the proposal for this project, contact was made with AHA to obtain a listing of contact details for the horse industry. Information from AHA indicated that any such list would be held by the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC), an organisation based in Victoria. AHA had an agreement with AHIC to develop mechanisms for making contact with horse groups under certain circumstances relating to emergency disease situations.

AHIC made available a list compiled on behalf of AHA, and obtained the necessary clearances for the information involved. This list provided the basis for subsequent attempts to identify and contact a significant number of horse industry groups and to try to involve them in the process. Through a member of the WSRD WG, a smaller contact list was received, which provided some additional contact details and some more up-to-date information.

A letter introducing the project (Appendix 1) and a questionnaire (Appendix 2) were drafted, and comments from the Chair of the WSRD WG and DAFF were incorporated. These documents formed the basis for making contact with groups and organisations within the horse industry. The project was always identified as being part of the AAWS implementation process, and under the control of the WSRD WG and DAFF. An explanation of the central aims and objectives of the AAWS was given, since very few people contacted had even heard of the AAWS.

The letter and questionnaire were sent to the email address for the organisation where an email address was provided in the information supplied with the AHIC list. Where only a mailing address was supplied, hard copies of the information were mailed out. The same information was sent to contacts identified in the additional list. Approximately 20% of the emails sent were returned with unknown recipients. About the same proportion of letters sent by mail were also returned as 'address unknown'.

Only 21 responses were received to all the material sent out. Of these, one response indicated that they were no longer involved with the group and could not provide more information, and another indicated that the group concerned had ceased to exist and therefore could not be part of this process. A third response provided current contact details for the new office holders in the organisation. Of all the responses, the large majority were from groups within the Tamworth area, including some national bodies as well as state groups.

As a result of the poor success rate of initial attempts to contact groups, a web search was undertaken using the AHIC contact list as a guide, to try to obtain more current contact details for various identified horse groups. The results of this process are provided in Appendix 3. Information was added to the list as more contact details were provided by some of the additional people contacted. A list of organisations with whom contact was made following attempts to verify addresses or contact details is provided in Appendix 4.

To enhance the possibility of achieving better results from the project, specific people were contacted directly by telephone and through email. These people were identified as holding leadership positions within larger groups or with several groups, or were involved in one of the organisations with a degree of 'umbrella' or 'peak' body status in the industry. They were invited to meet with me in person in Tamworth, Brisbane, Sydney or

Melbourne. A small number of people accepted these invitations. A number of people were not able to attend but provided verbal and written comments, which have been incorporated in this report. The outcomes of the meetings were, in all cases, most useful. Much of the information in this report was obtained through this process.

A number of mechanisms to facilitate discussion about the horse industry were considered. Several scenarios were used to facilitate feedback and information about the activities of groups and organisations. One particular scenario achieved uniformly good responses. This related to discussing the levels of communication between the various parts of the horse industry. Specifically, the scenario involved possible ways to achieve maximum levels of notification of horse owners in the case of a theoretical outbreak of an exotic horse disease. Another scenario involved possible ways to achieve discussion of the draft *Australian model code of practice for the welfare of animals—horses* (Qld DPI 2005) or to achieve industry-wide uptake of such a code.

## Effectiveness of the methods

In several cases, the person contacted immediately terminated all discussions on the basis of a possible animal welfare ‘witch hunt’ or something similar. A small number of people also objected to any process that seemed to imply that additional constraints should be imposed on the freedom of people to undertake whatever activity in whatever way they chose. It was not possible to engage these people in the project, and little useful information was obtained from them. A small number of people indicated that they were constrained for time and could not help on that basis. In many cases, no contact was made because no answer was received to telephone calls, letters or emails. Telephone messages left for many people were not returned.

Apart from the incidents identified above, most people contacted were very interested in the process and ready to provide whatever information they could. People involved with larger organisations or in paid employment of organisations were most ready to become involved. Because most of the office holders in groups and associations in the horse industry are volunteers, very few felt able to attend meetings with me or to provide more than the most basic information about their groups. This proved to be the most significant barrier to achieving even greater information about the industry.

Thirteen people came to the group session in Tamworth. The participants represented the full range of organisations—national groups, state groups and local groups. Only two people were able to meet me in Sydney, though they each were able to provide information about several activities and a number of associated groups. In Brisbane, meetings were held with five people representing three different groups. In Melbourne, four people with roles in ‘peak’ bodies were able to attend the meeting. The outcomes of these meetings have provided most of the information in this report (other than information from website reviews).

At the Tamworth meeting, I discussed with the group what they thought should be included in a code of practice for the welfare of horses (i.e. welfare issues as seen by those at the meeting). With this list as a guide, the group then examined the most recent available early draft of the proposed Australian code of practice for the welfare of horses (Qld DPI 2005). Surprisingly in some respects, they uniformly felt that the draft standards were too weak and nonspecific for many of the issues identified. This information has been provided to the group writing the standards.

## Status of the horse in Australia

The 'horse' in Australia fills a number of quite distinct niches. Horses were pivotal to the early development of Australia during various exploration expeditions and in the opening up of the interior of the continent. The development and expansion of the very extensive pastoral industries in Australia depended on horses. Almost all of the early transportation of people and much of the transportation of goods and produce also depended on horses. Consequently, the horse has a significant historical position in this country.

The development of national identity in Australia through involvement in wars in Africa and Europe in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century involved the widespread use of horses. This led to an elevation of the horse to an iconic status. The legendary 'waler' horse of the First World War is revered by lovers of horses in Australia. Although the origins and breeding of the waler is considered by some as somewhat dubious and nonspecific, many of the so-called 'wild' horses now inhabiting parts of Australia are often considered to be directly related to those horses of old. These wild horses are also said to be descendants of horses that either escaped from holdings or were set loose by landowners during the earliest days of the colonisation of Australia.

Wild horses are often found in environmentally sensitive parts of Australia. There are consistent tensions between supporters of these 'brumby' horses (including walers) and people concerned with the protection of significant environmental areas (Beavis 2000). Thus, depending on the perspective taken, the wild or feral horse is considered as either a pest animal needing to be controlled, or as an icon needing special protection in spite of any threats to the environment. Such divergent positions will continue to exist while supporters insist on these wild horses being retained in their current situations and managed accordingly.

From another perspective, horses are still very important as working animals in Australia. Working horses are still found in pastoral holdings, and could include horses involved in a 'professional' sporting sense—that is, where prize money or wagering is involved. On the other hand, a very large number of horses in Australia would be considered by their owners as companion animals—that is, used predominantly for pleasure and leisure. A smaller number of horses would be considered as production animals being maintained for food or for the production of products such as pharmaceuticals. There is some evidence that the perception of the way horses should be treated may vary, depending on the purpose for which they are kept.

Again, it has been suggested that the nature of the non-racing horse industry has changed dramatically in the past few decades. The previous situation, where most horses in Australia were maintained as part of pastoral industry activities in areas beyond the coastal zones, has changed dramatically. Motorcycles and helicopters have largely replaced horses in the production animal industries. Although it is suggested that horse numbers have remained somewhat similar during this period, the distribution of horses is now very much concentrated in peri-urban areas.

## Size of the industry

The size of the horse industry is difficult to define clearly. This is because not all horses or horse owners are identified in the record systems of groups and organisations. Many horses and owners are not recorded in any way since they do not belong to identified groups or organisations.

Two recent reports have attempted to quantify the size and value of the horse industry to the Australian economy. In a report sponsored by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), Dr Jenny Gordon estimated that the numbers of horses in Australia might be between 0.9 million and 1.8 million (Gordon 2001). Dr Gordon's report indicates that a large proportion of these, perhaps up to 300 000, are 'feral horses' (i.e. this could represent 20–30% of the horses in Australia). The report also estimates that somewhere between 10% and 50% of horses may be registered in Australia. The horse racing and harness racing parts of the industry require 100% registration for participation in their activities. This suggests that registration rates for horses in other parts of the industry are very low.

The *Australian racing fact book* (Howard 2005) reports that 196 683 horses started in races in Australia in 2004–05. To May 2007, the Australian Stud Book recorded that just over 9000 owners of brood mares were registered in Australia, and that nearly 29 000 breeding mares were registered; in 2006, nearly 18 000 foals were born. The highest number of brood mares registered in Australia was 44 000, in 1988.

A report for the Australian Companion Animal Council (ACAC) (Hill 2006) indicates that approximately 70% of the horses in Australia would be considered 'pleasure' horses, as distinct from horses involved in any form of work. That is, up to 800 000 horses could be considered as pleasure horses.

In economic terms, Dr Gordon (Gordon 2001) suggests that, in 2001, the horse industry might have contributed more than \$6.3 billion directly to the Australian economy. Much of the industry functions with the use of volunteer labour. When the value of this labour is factored into the equation, the 'real' value of the industry would be nearly \$8 billion per year. Horse racing and its associated activities, including the costs of caring for young horses, provide about half the total economic contribution of the horse industry. Taxation alone on the labour element of the horse industry could contribute \$100 million to national revenue.

The Gordon report indicates that comparing the horse industry to the livestock industry in Australia is an interesting exercise. The livestock industries, as considered by Dr Gordon, contributed around \$7 billion per year to the economy. The horse industry therefore should be considered as having a very high level of economic importance within Australia.

The *Australian racing fact book* (2004–05) reports that prize money alone in Australia was nearly \$362 million, the third highest offered internationally in those years. Wagering turnover on thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing in 2004–05 was valued at almost \$18 billion. This amount is not included in the value of the industry reported above. Although the turnover in wagering on thoroughbreds and harness racing in Australia is about \$18 000 million a year, information provided suggests that this represents about 10% of the total value of the gaming industry in Australia. Wagering on horse racing of various sorts is important, but it has been suggested that other aspects of racing events will become more important than betting in future years.

The 2006 report for ACAC (Hill 2006) attempted to value the contribution of horses to the companion animal industry. Quoting the RIRDC report, it reports the cost of horse maintenance and care as up to \$7500 per year for a horse kept in urban areas. If the number of horses involved as ‘pleasure’ horses (see above) is currently about 800 000 and the cost per horse across Australia averages half (averaged across urban/peri-urban/rural areas with costs lower in rural areas) of \$7500, this part of the industry alone would be worth about \$3 billion per year. This does not include the costs of membership of horse organisations (indicated as \$50–\$200 per organisation per year), the costs of nominating for competition events or the estimated expenditure on pharmaceuticals (\$200), harness and saddlery (\$400) and clothing and footwear (\$200). These costs would add a further \$1000 or so per year to the costs identified above for horse owners. As can be seen, participation in the horse industry is very expensive. With increasing expenses, there is a decline in the membership rates for horse activity and breeding groups (Gordon 2001).

## Diversity of the industry

The horse industry in Australia can be defined within three areas:

- horse breeding (breed societies or associations; Appendix 5 lists horse breeds and associated breed societies)
- horse colour groupings (palominos, duns, etc.)
- horse activities (racing, rodeo, camp drafting, pony club, etc.).

It is clear that many people who do not participate in horse activities in a competitive sense, and people who breed horses but do not wish them to be registered as a specific breed or colour, may not belong to any specific grouping. On the other hand, many people contacted in this project noted that it was necessary for them to be members of many groups and have their horse(s) registered with several organisations in order to compete with horses of specific breeding. Because of this feature of the industry, it might not be possible to identify the total number of people involved, nor to accurately define the number of horses in Australia. Gordon (2001) reports that figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics suggest that, in 1998–99, nearly 260 000 people participated in horse riding activities, 70% of these in nonorganised riding activities.

In many cases, horses are only permitted to partake in sanctioned events if they are registered with certain organisations. The best examples of this are the horse racing and harness racing industries. In these activities, horses, owners, trainers, riders and jockeys are registered as part of the overall control of the industry. As identified in the initial report to the WSRD WG, this allows these parts of the horse industry to exercise high levels of control over many aspects of the activities of the people and horses involved. Up-to-date records of horse ownership and whereabouts are also kept in detailed registers.

Hundreds of groups and organisations are involved with horses, their breeding and activities in Australia. Some groups have a defined structure, whereas others appear to be groupings of people with similar interests in horse activities. There appears to be only a small number of ‘peak’ organisations for the horse industry in Australia. Each of these peak organisations has a relatively small membership of other groups. Identified organisations with a peak status include The Pony Stud Book Association, the Equine Federation of Australia, the Australian Horse Industry Council and the Australian Horse Alliance. Other organisations with a large national structure include the Pony Club Association of Australia, Racing Australia, the Thoroughbred Stud Book and the Harness Racing Association. Examples of smaller organisations with strong structures and

processes include the Australian Quarter Horse Association and the Australian Stock Horse Society. Most of the organisations involved in managing and running rodeo events have adopted one of a number of rodeo codes of practice, which are very similar and operate in a similar manner.

An example of website information for horse disciplines is provided in Appendix 6.

## **Horse welfare groups**

A fairly recent development in Australia is the emergence of groups of people specifically interested in the welfare of horses. Similar groups are involved in the rescue and care of donkeys. These groups are additional to organisations such as the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League that operate shelters and carry out regulatory activities associated with horses suffering poor welfare. Members of these new groups are interested in ‘rescuing’ horses that have been poorly treated, or that might be destined for slaughter or euthanasia, having ceased being of use to their owners or being excess to owner needs. Several groups in each state are also heavily involved in the process of trying to protect wild horses, either within their home range or as part of a management process; management might include regular rounding up of horses in an area and their removal for rehoming when numbers are greater than the agreed carrying capacity of the area. The rehoming process includes arrangements to hold the relocated horses until they can be assessed for suitability for breaking-in and training before being moved to new owners.

Experience in New Zealand and reports from people involved in this project suggest that not all these animals are suited for breaking-in. These horses will require long-term holding on designated properties or sale to horse abattoirs to supply meat for the pet food industry or for human consumption.

It was reported on several occasions during this project that there is considerable tension relating to the management of these animals between members of welfare groups and the authorities responsible. Some horse owners are also concerned that other horses excess to needs are not necessarily receiving the same level of concern.

The project also identified groups that have been formed to use horses that are no longer principally involved in the harness racing industry. The nature and levels of training of these animals mean that they are suitable for other forms of harness activity use, as well as for riding.

## **Issues identified during consultations**

### **Structure of industry groups**

As discussed above, only a small number of identified peak bodies exist within the horse industry in Australia. Although many people suggested the importance of developing a cohesive and well-coordinated industry, all those consulted indicated that the very nature and diversity of the industry in Australia would make such a situation most unlikely. There seems to be agreement that costs and the differing specific interests of people in the horse industry are the main hurdles to a more cohesive industry. Suspicion was reported about the activities and ambitions of some groups by members of other groups; since communication between groups is rare and poor, such barriers are not easily disrupted. This is possibly the most significant hurdle to bringing the industry closer together.

Membership of, or association with, peak groups is related to a number of issues, including insurance for animals and events, requirements for participation in events or breeding registration, and the use of specific association ‘rules’ and procedures. In some cases, association with a peak group depends on use of specific functions, such as databases for recording animal identities and registration details or to ensure standardisation of practices. On this basis, the Australian Stud Book is used by groups other than the thoroughbred industry, and the Australian Pony Stud Book provides record keeping for many smaller groups involved in breeding different pony breeds. The Pony Club Association of Australia provides one of the best models for a national organisation with a defined structure, down to small local branches with only a few members. The Australian Trail Horse Riders Association seems to have an unusual structure. Information was supplied that individual members might be members of the national group, but only state branches with affiliated local branches are ‘true’ members of the organisation. Individuals may participate in officially sanctioned events only through membership of the local branches.

On the other hand, other horse activity groups have few members, but the level of participation in the activity (people and horses) can be quite large. Examples include groups that organise trail-riding events where individual people bring their own horses, and businesses that provide horses for people to ride for recreation (riding stables or holiday farms and ‘ranches’).

As discussed above, there were many reports about the need for people with horses to be members of more than one group to allow them to participate in their chosen interest with horses. It is possible, for example, for a person to have membership of a peak body for insurance, of a breed association for the breed of the horse, and of several activity groups to allow participation with their horses. At the same time, the groups in which the person is a member may in turn be members of a peak body—the costs of such membership form part of the membership costs of the smaller or local group.

### **Response to questionnaires**

Of the 21 questionnaires returned, three were not able to provide any responses (as indicated above). Of the rest, 80% were from activity groups, not all of which represented national bodies. As also noted above, the majority of the responses were from the Tamworth area. Since the Tamworth district is one of the most significant in the horse industry in Australia, with a concentration of breed and activity organisations, perhaps this outcome is not surprising. The responses received are summarised as follows:

- All (100%) reported that the group has membership rules.
- Not all groups include animal welfare within their rules.
- Not all groups include ethical conduct for members in the rules.
- Only 70% include quality assurance issues in their rules.
- Only 60% include a risk assessment process for their activities.
- Most identified the use of international standards and rules.
- Some groups have no licensing accreditation for personnel.
- Membership ranged from 10–20 to 4000–6000 (the smaller groups being more local, the larger reflecting national figures).

Very few groups have any identified animal welfare standards or even rules covering the welfare of horses in their areas of interest. Many rely on rules developed by national organisations or international organisations, and these are sometimes referred to in their available information. Some groups indicated that they have specific rules and even training for their officials and judges. A few groups indicated they had developed mechanisms for assuring that those officials retained competency in various areas, including ensuring the welfare of horses. Few groups actively enforce any animal welfare standards other than compliance with state legislation.

## **Issues identified from questionnaires and discussions**

### **Problems**

Problems with the horse industry identified in responses to questionnaires and during discussions included:

- the obvious fragmentation of the industry and poor communication between groups in the industry
- animal welfare not being part of the aims of most groups
- problems or perception of problems with training methods in use
- poor equipment or use of equipment
- problems with understanding horse behaviour or how to manage bad horse behaviour
- very poor understanding of suitable housing and correct feeding techniques
- the numbers of ‘novice’ horse owners who have poor understanding of horse management, training and fitness
- lack of training of people involved in the industry
- poor facilities at events to allow adequate exercise and holding of horses during events
- transport of horses, including length of travel times to and from events
- ‘wastage’ (the early removal of horses from the industry and selling for other purposes due to poor performance and/or injury) in some horse groups, such as thoroughbreds
- use of drugs to mask animal problems and to enhance performance
- emerging problems of ‘geriatric’ horses
- the use of ‘corrective surgery’ to allow horses, which would otherwise be deemed unsuitable, to participate in events
- the effect of heat and humidity on horses competing in events in Australia
- knowledge of the effects on horses of stress and how this can be managed to assist the welfare of the horse
- lack of adoption of humane killing techniques for horses
- the potential for overuse of horses, or use of horses improperly trained and with inadequate fitness
- continued breeding from horses known to carry genetic and physical defects
- potential oversupply in the horse breeding industries, particularly in the area of recreational horses

- horses not being accepted by authorities as a primary industry and so not qualifying for many of the schemes in place for other production animal industries
- severe effects on local environments when horses are kept inappropriately on small holdings, usually in peri-urban areas
- the incapacity of the broad horse industry to achieve a mechanism for a permanent identification system that can be used for all horses in Australia
- the failure of one of the largest industry groups in Australia to mount any form of well-supported program on behalf of the industry due to the fragmented nature of the industry
- emerging problems with people using electronic marketing for the purchase of horses and equipment
- conflict with governments and other groups about allowing people with horses to use public areas such as national parks
- public perceptions that parts of the horse industry are poorly run and that horse welfare is poor—this is related to the often ‘hidden’ nature of the industry and its activities
- the insurance crisis for horse owners and event organisers
- horse spelling and grow-out properties often not being associated with any specific group—large numbers of horses are often managed on these properties, and the processes and outcomes might need more rigorous scrutiny.

#### **Potentially useful issues**

Potentially useful issues for future exploration and utilisation identified in responses to questionnaires and discussions included:

- the existence of several databases capable of keeping records on behalf of all horse industry groups in Australia
- the existence of successful programs for identification and parentage verification for horses
- the ability to maintain a register of all horse brands in Australia
- the use of a tamper-proof system for identifying branding of horses
- the capacity demonstrated by some groups such as the Australian Stud Book to better manage the processes required for the export or import of horses
- the emergence of a move by some local governments to manage horse and other animal use on small holdings in local government areas
- the emergence of horse riding (principally trail riding and farm holiday) as an important tourism activity deserving of investigation and support, and other tourism events including entertainment programs such as the ‘Outback Show’ on the Gold Coast)
- the identified size of the horse industry as a resource to be harnessed on behalf of the whole industry
- prospective funding and support reported to be under consideration by some local government authorities for managing the environment and horses.



# Discussion

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A number of the issues raised during the consultations for this project are worthy of further examination.

## Fragmentation of the horse industry

The most consistent issue identified by participants in the project was the very fragmented nature of the horse industry in Australia. The comments suggested the total number of groups and organisations involved as one aspect of the problem. Appendix 3 lists some of the identified groups that existed at the time of writing this report. Some of the problems can be highlighted by the miniature horse breed associations. By following various links through the internet, I found references to seven different groups identifying themselves as representing this breed (variety) of horse. Some of the contact details provided on websites were apparently not accurate, since no contact was possible using the information available. Information subsequently provided during the consultations suggested that some of these groups may not survive due to very low membership numbers.

While researching a specific colour grouping and during discussions with people from another group, I was informed that the information from my research, while accurate, should not be relied on because the group I identified was considered by most people involved in this part of the industry as the wrong group to represent the interests of people with this type of horse. Suggestions were made that similar situations exist with other interest groups within the horse industry. This further confirms the impression that considerable antagonism exists between various parts of the industry.

Several people commented that new groups frequently emerged when personality conflicts occurred between people working within an interest area. When antagonism developed within a group, the result was often the formation of splinter groups. Another example provided was the formation of a breakaway group by a judge from the parent group. In this case, the judge was apparently required by the rules of the parent group to undertake more training before being considered for recertification. This person decided instead to form a new group with much simpler and less stringent rules. People who were not permitted as members of the first group would be allowed to compete and to judge as members of the new group. As a consequence, continuing and considerable ill-feeling exists between some members of the two groups, and the possibility of reconciliation was reported as unlikely. The reported poor communication within the horse industry may have exacerbated some of the outcomes reported.

## Welfare of horses

Many people who were contacted felt that horse welfare was not a big issue within their particular area and was not always included in the rules of groups because of the dedicated attitudes of their members. On the other hand, when this issue was discussed in group situations, several welfare issues were raised. There was a suggestion that few people involved in the industry actually understood the requirements of the various laws, regulations and codes. Even when there was knowledge of the existence of these regulatory frameworks, people might believe that these regulations would not apply in

their specific case. Some specific incidents were provided to raise some urgent questions about this attitude.

Drugs to modify the personality and behaviour of horses were acknowledged to be a serious problem in the industry. However, a practice that is apparently quite common is to use other methods to manage horse behaviour. The example of walking horses continuously for 10–12 hours before entrance into a show ring to prevent the horse misbehaving was suggested as a relatively common practice. The use of severe aggression towards horses and even flogging horses to assert dominance of the rider over the horse is still apparently practised, according to reports offered. Surgical intervention, such as neurectomy for horses with navicular disease, is considered by some as a major problem for horses competing in certain events.

While these types of behaviour are being addressed by many groups through regular and targeted drugs testing and insistence on standards for management of horses, the available information suggests that these reported events are of concern to other parts of the industry. Until standards to address such issues are applied across all parts of the industry, those raising the issues are concerned that the welfare of horses will continue to be at risk in some areas.

An unexpected issue for the welfare of some horses was described as the size of the horse relative to the weight of the rider. Small horses and ponies have become favoured and are often recommended for people with small holdings. These horses are used for riding and, increasingly, for pulling carriages of various sorts. The apparent mismatch in size between the horse and the rider or driver is seen as a situation needing to be addressed.

The identified change in demographics of the horse industry raises several issues of concern to people in the industry. It was suggested that the increasing affluence of people in urban areas is allowing people to participate in activities that were not previously accessible, including the dream to own and ride horses. The suggestion is that many people without any previous experience with horses are now horse owners. Some of the concerns raised about how horses are managed come from this situation. Total naivety about how to care for horses and their needs is seen as a problem that needs to be addressed.

Many of these horses are being held on very small blocks of land in peri-urban areas, and there is considerable concern about both the impact on the horse and the environmental impact of this practice. The environmental issues are of concern to many groups in the community, and a growing number of local government authorities are examining the implications for their areas. It was suggested by quite a number of people that this will be a major issue to be dealt with by the industry in the future. Apart from any effects on the horse, effects on neighbours and waterways from flies, smells, the disposal of wastes and land degradation were identified as problems.

A number of local government authorities are now trying to address this situation through limiting numbers of animals permitted on non-farm holdings. Some councils are also requiring land management plans when considering the development of structures such as training arenas. It was suggested that land management and/or environmental plans should be developed by anyone wishing to bring horses and other large animals into an area, especially in the peri-urban residential areas.

The change in the status of horses to companion animals in recent years is also producing a number of other problems (other than the environmental one discussed above). The

most important situation raised in this regard by participants and by groups such as the Australian Veterinary Association, is the need to develop processes to assist both horses and their owners to manage the ageing population of horses. This is emerging as a major potential welfare and health problem for horses that owners feel unable to euthanase because of strong emotional connections to the horses. People are also wishing to have these animals disposed of on their own land when they die or eventually need to be euthanased. Local councils and environmental protection agencies will need to address this situation.

## **Breeding**

An area of continuing concern in those industries is still the apparent oversupply in the horse breeding section of the industry. There is a suggestion that breeding in the recreational area might be the greatest concern. Many of the people in this category are possibly considered to be ‘hobby’ breeders, who breed from their horses because of a passion for their animals rather than to address a specific market need. A suggestion has been made that breed societies might consider an incentive for castration by lowering registration costs for castrated colts. However, many people argue that they cannot afford the cost of castration (which is required by state legislation to be carried out by veterinarians). Others believe that their animals need to have the experience of breeding before being removed from the breeding pool. Potentially many unwanted or unused horses can be produced this way.

## **Insurance**

Since the ‘insurance crisis’ began in Australia, the largest problem for all horse groups has been to achieve adequate insurance coverage for horses, their owners and event organisers. A specific area identified that is poorly addressed in the Australian horse industry is adequate insurance coverage for so-called ‘slip and trip’ accidents occurring on premises or at events. A concern is that lack of understanding of these situations by members of groups and organisers of events is unnecessarily putting people at risk of litigation or examination by Worksafe if someone is injured. The risk is considered by some to be very large.

The fragmented nature of the industry continues to make achievement of a solution for this situation most difficult. Some of the aggregations of groups within umbrella organisations are finding the insurance situation more manageable, and some umbrella groups are specifically using this situation as a drawcard for their existence. The largest groups, such as the thoroughbred racing and harness racing groups, have been most successful in reaching agreements with insurers to provide appropriate insurance cover at an affordable cost to their members. They may be able to assist other groups to achieve the same outcomes, provided that there is a capacity for different groups to work together in this way. The insurance costs have been related to economies of scale—the bigger the numbers involved, the smaller the cost to each.

## **Other issues**

The issue of ‘wastage’—the apparently premature sale of horses found to be unsuitable for their expected purpose—was raised on several occasions. The suggestion that this was a problem mainly in the thoroughbred industry matches perceptions in the general community. The thoroughbred and harness racing industries have been addressing this issue for a number of years and claim to be achieving success in reducing the numbers of young and poor-performing horses being sent to the horse abattoirs. A great many of

these horses are now being rehomed. According to feedback from people in those industries, these horses are ideal for other uses, once their initial careers have finished. Horses with no limiting physical conditions or injuries that would hamper their welfare are considered to be very well handled, broken in, basically trained and reliable. Thoroughbreds have been used for many years in other sports, such as eventing, and several groups have been formed to take retired harness racers for carriage horses and even for riding.

Perhaps the best illustration of the change in the destiny of horses in Australia can be seen in the dramatic reduction in the number and function of horse 'knackeries'. Only two units are currently registered to produce horse meat for human consumption in eastern Australia. There are still numerous small units killing horses for the pet food market, but most of these are relatively small local businesses with limited capacity.

# Recommendations

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Discussions with participants in the project have provided many suggestions that form the basis for recommendations.

## General recommendations

There is a great need for some mechanism to bring the industry closer together. If this is achieved, many of the issues raised could be addressed. It was suggested that this would need the involvement of a central agency with no direct or apparent involvement with the industry. One suggestion was that 'a home for the horse industry in government' would be the most effective mechanism. Perhaps the initiative in 2007 by the then Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the Hon. Peter McGauran MP) to include a representative for the horse industry on the minister's advisory committee, NCCAW, might be one move towards such a situation. On the whole, however, everyone consulted felt pessimistic about the possibility of a significant level of cohesion in the industry.

The example of the success of a program in the United Kingdom to help unite the horse industry was discussed. In the United Kingdom, several large groups combined to meet with the government about this issue, and the government response was to appoint a Minister for Horses. The responsible government department has also agreed to fund the development of a strategic plan for the whole of the horse industry.

Another critical need, as identified by all participants, is for an effective, single and permanent identification scheme for horses. Identification must be linked to compulsory recording of information about the horses and their owners. A number of groups, small and large, already require horses to be identified by microchip, with all data recorded on a number of databases. The suggestion is that compulsory identification should be introduced for horses (such as that introduced for cattle and sheep, and required under state legislation for dogs and, in some cases, for cats). Problems with acceptance of a standard microchip and reader must be solved. Legislative changes will also be required, including a high degree of harmonisation of requirements between all states and territories.

## Specific recommendations

A number of concepts for specific actions were identified during discussions with representatives of the industry:

- The Australian Stud Book currently undertakes a number of activities on behalf of the thoroughbred sector and provides facilities and services for several other significant groups. This example could provide a model for use by other parts of the industry, or a basis for the expansion of these activities.
  - The stud book maintains a complete register of all brands registered for use in thoroughbred horses. This suggests the basis for a register of all horse brands.
  - The stud book maintains a register of all registered thoroughbred horses in Australia. The register records identification of all these horses, including microchip identification. In the United States, the USA Jockey Club maintains a

combined register for all thoroughbred horses and all quarter horses. This provides a potential model for Australia.

- Parentage verification is carried out for all thoroughbred foals to be registered and for all Australian quarter horses. The records of these tests are maintained by the stud book. This indicates the basis for a common record for all parentage testing in Australia.
- Through access to their records and databases, the stud book has established a mechanism to enable rapid communication with owners of all registered horses and their veterinarians as part of the emergency disease vaccination protocols. Such a system supports the argument for compulsory permanent identification of all horses, with centrally maintained records of horses and owners.
- Effective education programs are necessary to assist new horse owners with the best care, management and equipment use for their animals. It is suggested that many of the perceived health and welfare problems in horses involve novice owners. Linked with this is the need to protect these owners when they try to buy horses and equipment. The emergence of electronic marketing of horses and various services has exposed inexperienced buyers to risks. It seems that the incidence of people buying horses through such mechanisms is increasing. One suggestion is to develop a ‘Burke’s Backyard’-type television program for new horse owners.
- State and local government authorities should be encouraged to establish mechanisms to protect the environment where horses are being maintained in small areas or in larger numbers in larger areas. Issues that must be addressed include minimum areas for running horses, covenants on how certain land might be used, requirements for landowners to manage waste associated with keeping horses, and requirements for landowners to adequately manage their land to address environmental considerations.
- The practice of training horses and allowing them to compete under the often extreme temperature and humidity conditions in Australia was identified as one of the most significant health and welfare problems facing the industry in Australia. It is recommended that research be undertaken to elucidate the actual risks to horses under extreme weather conditions and to develop recommendations to minimise possible effects for the horse. The suggestion to develop a model to predict heat-related risks for horses was well received.
- Testing for illicit drug use should be expanded to all forms of horse activity.

## Research recommendations

Equine research programs of funding groups such as RIRDC are investigating aspects of horse health. A number of areas of research recommended by this report include:

- the effects of the Australian climate on horses during training and competition; this was listed by participants as a high-priority requirement
- the injuries and risks to horses from some less well-known activities such as trail horse riding, or farm-stay riding events
- alternative therapies that are becoming popular, especially those for treatment of injuries
- the size:weight ratios of horses and riders
- the stresses being applied to horses during stabling, training, loading and transportation, and the effects of that stress.

# Conclusions

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As a result of this project, a number of mechanisms for engaging in consultation with the majority of the horse industry in Australia have been suggested. It is evident that different messages and issues for discussion would be appropriate for different groups, as identified in this project. Communicating directly with individual participants in the horse industry is extremely difficult with the current industry frameworks. However, several techniques to improve this process have been suggested. For example, the horse-owning population appears to have good access to the popular media and more specifically to many of the horse industry-specific publications. These already provide a good mechanism for communication with many of the participants in this industry.

Some of the identified organisations have very effective mechanisms to provide their members with relevant information. These mechanisms, including group-specific websites and newsletters, and email processes, would provide an excellent avenue for transmission of specific information by government or other agencies. Some of the industry groups have procedures allowing them to place information into some of the widely dispersed horse magazines and advertising journals. These avenues can potentially be accessed by government or other agencies for information dissemination.

Several of the peak or umbrella groups have the capacity to send information to all their affiliate groups. There have been indications that these groups are prepared to provide mechanisms to their affiliate groups to allow them to access specific information sites on the bigger websites.

This project has demonstrated that the horse industry is fragmented and that communication between various groups is a difficult process. There is also significant acrimony between parts of the industry. Nevertheless, those people who were prepared to assist with the project were most willing to become involved and demonstrated a commitment to trying to make the industry united and strong. There is also a demonstrated concern about welfare issues in the horse industry and a determination to make improvements where problems are identified.

The process of face-to-face meetings provided an excellent opportunity to gather useful and insightful information for the project and was invaluable for completing the project. The meetings also allowed me to provide the participants with feedback on the information provided previously. In many cases, this was a most useful exercise for those involved.



## THE AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL WELFARE STRATEGY

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### Animals Used for Work, Sport, Recreation or on Display Working Group

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I have been appointed by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to undertake a project as part of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) implementation process to look at the animal welfare issues for the horse industry in Australia.

Let me initially re-iterate what the AAWS is.

The AAWS is

- An agreed blueprint for the future of animal welfare in Australia
- A shared vision to enhance welfare outcomes for all animals
- Builds on strong foundations laid by the Australian Government, key industry groups, community organisations and the States and Territories
- Being developed with extensive stakeholder consultation
- Recognises expectations regarding animal welfare are changing
- Endorsed by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) in 2004

The AAWS Goals:

- Enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes
- Sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards; and
- Effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare.

The AAWS Working Groups:

- Following a workshop in 2005 with around 100 stakeholders, working groups were established to represent six broad animal use sectors
  - Livestock and production animals

- Animals in research and teaching
  - Companion animals
  - Animals for work, sport, recreation or on display (AWSRD)
  - Animals in the wild
  - Aquatic animals
- Horses have been identified to fall mainly within the *Animals for work sport recreation or on display* working group's area of interest. Some aspects of the horse industry would also be covered by the Companion animals working group.
- The working groups are to facilitate AAWS implementation by developing robust and inclusive action plans for their sectors
  - These action plans are to map out the priority actions and responsibilities for stakeholders to successfully implement the AAWS within their sectors.

What is my background?

I come from a background as a Veterinary Practitioner for some 25 years in a rural practice. I then became a Head Teacher of Animal Care in the NSW TAFE system, after which I have most recently been the Animal Welfare Manager/ Veterinary Officer for the University of New England and CSIRO Armidale. I am now an independent veterinary consultant in animal welfare and animal research ethics. I also Chair the NSW Minister for Primary Industries Animal Welfare Advisory Council and sit as a member of the Committee advising the Minister on matters pertaining to the Animal Research Act in NSW. I have had an involvement with several of the AAWS working groups during the past year.

On behalf of the AWSRD working group I am contacting you to seek your assistance and the involvement of your group in this process. This consultancy is considered an important step in the implementation of AAWS and your input is essential. The information collected through this project will be used to provide a report to the AWSRD working group and through them to the AAWS Advisory Committee. If any information provided during this process is considered confidential it will be treated as such at all times during the project.

The aims of this project are to add to information already collected about the nature, scope, size and current situation of the whole of the horse industry in Australia. Information about your part of this industry, the rules pertaining to your group's activities and what animal welfare standards/codes of practice/guidelines etc. are written into your rules are some of the features being sought as part of the project.

To facilitate the widest possible input to the report to be developed from this process, I will be holding a number of focus group meetings with representatives of as many parts of the horse industry sector as possible. Part of the aim of these meetings will be to examine the animal welfare features of the new draft *National Code of Practice for Horses*. The AWSRD working group is interested in how this industry will be able to incorporate this code into their activities and rules.

At this point I am seeking three things:

1. Your acknowledgement of the receipt of this letter and that you are indeed the appropriate person to act as a spokesperson for your group

2. I need your help to complete the attached Questionnaire which will help us assess the current situation and provide your feedback about any animal welfare issues identified by your group. We also need your input about any identified gaps or weaknesses in any Laws/Codes/Standards/Training where animal welfare of your animals is concerned.
3. I would like you to provide an indication of the willingness of your group to support a delegate to partake in the focus group when they are arranged.

I would like to thank you for your involvement and any assistance you are able to provide for this important project for the welfare of the horses of Australia.

Yours sincerely

Steve Atkinson BVSc., MACVSc (Animal Welfare), DipContEd., CMAVA.

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20<sup>th</sup> December, 2006



**Questionnaire** to assist in assessment of current industry situation with respect to animal welfare, and to help identify gaps and issues

**1. Name of Organisation or Group**

.....  
.....

a. Is this a National / State / Regional group?

Yes  No

b. Briefly outline the nature of the activities covered by your group where horses are used

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

c. How many members in the group?

d. Is membership of the organisation compulsory or voluntary to allow involvement in activities? Compulsory Voluntary

e. What proportion of people involved in the types of activities carried out by your organisation are members of your group?

25% 30% 45% 50% 60% 75% 90% 100%

**2. Please provide details of the best contact person for your group**

.....  
.....  
.....

**3. Does the Organisation / Group you represent have specific Rules for membership?**

Yes  No

a. How are these Rules enforced within the group?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Do the Rules specifically cover the welfare of horses as used in your activities?  
 Yes  No
5. Do the Rules refer to any Codes of Practice; Codes of Ethical Conduct or guidelines for the welfare of horses?  
 Yes  No
6. Are there any specific Laws relating to the types of activities with horses covered by your group? Yes  No

Name the Law

.....

**7. Quality Assurance / Risk Management**

8. Has your organisation developed any Quality Assurance programs that might include the welfare of horses?  
 Yes  No
9. Have any Risk Assessments been carried out by your group into the welfare of horses used in activities covered by your group?  
 Yes  No
10. Are any Standard Operating Procedures developed to ensure the welfare of horses?  
 Yes  No
11. Are any international standards or other rules incorporated in your rules or in Australian Standards applying to your activities?  
 Yes  No

**12. Training**

13. Does your group run any training programs for members or for officials within the group?  
 Yes  No
14. Do any of these activities specifically address animal welfare issues?  
 Yes  No

15. Is any accreditation process or Licensing of personnel involved in your group?  
Yes  No

a. How are members / officials assessed for competency to carry out activities within the group?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

16. Is any Audit for compliance with Rules / Laws / Codes carried out by your group? Yes  No

a. If so is this audit carried out by internal or external means?

.....  
.....

b. If so are these outcomes based or associated with completion of a questionnaire only? Yes  No

17. Issues for your part of the horse industry

a. What animal welfare issues have been identified as important to your part of the horse industry? (eg transport; housing; feeding; humane destruction; animal behaviour issues; animal training issues)?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

b. How commonly would these be a problem within your area?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

18. What weaknesses or gaps do you identify in the protection of the welfare of horses in your activity areas?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

19. What areas of research would you recommend to improve the use of horses in your area of activities?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



## Appendix 3 List of potential contact groups

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The following organisations were identified as potential groups to contact.

| Organisation  | State |
|---|-------|
| ACPRE Australia Inc.                                    |       |
| American Saddlebred Horse Association of Australia      |       |
| Andalusian Horse Association of Australasia             | Vic.  |
| Appaloosa & Australian Spotted Ponies of Australia Inc. | Vic.  |
| Appaloosa & Spotted Pony Association                    | Vic.  |
| Arabian Horse Society of Australia Ltd                  | NSW   |
| Arabian Warmblood                                       | Vic.  |
| Australasian Caspian Society Inc.                       | SA    |
| Australasian Warmblood Friesian Assoc Inc.              | SA    |
| Australasian Warmblood Friesian Assoc Inc.              | Vic.  |
| Australian Appaloosa Association Inc.                   | NSW   |
| Australian Barrel Horse Association                     | NSW   |
| Australian Bushmen's Campdraft & Rodeo Association      | NSW   |
| Australian Campdrafters Association Inc.                | Qld   |
| Australian Continental Equestrian Group (ACE)           | Vic.  |
| Australian Draught Horse Stud Book Society              |       |
| Australian Driving Society Inc. (Federal)               | Qld   |
| Australian Endurance Harness Drivers                    | Vic.  |
| Australian Endurance Riders Association                 | NSW   |
| Australian Endurance Riders Association                 | Qld   |
| Australian Friesian Horse Society Inc.                  | Vic.  |
| Australian Haflinger Horse Breeders Association Inc.    | SA    |
| Australian Harness Racing Council                       | NSW   |
| Australian Horse Riding Centres                         | Vic.  |
| Australian Jump Racing Association Inc.                 | Vic.  |
| Australian Lipizzaner Registry                          | Vic.  |
| Australian Long Distance Riders Equestrian Council      | NSW   |
| Australian Miniature Horse Association Inc. (Federal)   | NSW   |
| Australian Miniature Pony Society Inc.                  | NSW   |
| Australian Morab Association Inc.                       | NSW   |
| Australian Carriage Driving                             |       |
| Australian Endurance Riders Association                 | WA    |
| Australian Heritage Light Horse Troop                   |       |
| Australian Knabstrupper Association                     | Qld   |
| Australian Light Horse Association Ltd                  | ACT   |
| Australian Mountain Racing Association Inc.             | NSW   |
| Australian Mounted Games Association                    | Qld   |
| Australian National Saddle Horse Association            | Vic.  |
| Australian National Saddlehorse Association             |       |
| Australian Palomino Horse Association Inc.              | Qld   |

| Organisation   | State |
|--|-------|
| Australian Palomino Horse Breeders Association                         | NSW   |
| Australian Palouse Pony Association Inc.                               | NSW   |
| Australian Performance Trakener Association                            | Vic.  |
| Australian Peruvian Paso Horse Association                             | NSW   |
| Australian Polo Council  | NSW   |
| Australian Pony Club Council Inc.                                      | NSW   |
| Australian Pony Owners & Breeders Association                          | NSW   |
| Australian Pony Stud Book Society                                      | NSW   |
| Australian Pony Stud Book Society (Federal Office)                     | Vic.  |
| Australian Professional Rodeo Association                              | Qld   |
| Australian Quarter Horse Association Inc. (Federal)                    | NSW   |
| Australian Quarter Horse Racing Association                            | Qld   |
| Australian Racing Board  | NSW   |
| Australian Rare & Minority Breeds Association Inc. (Federal Secretary) | Vic.  |
| Australian Saddle Pony Association Ltd                                 | NSW   |
| Australian Small Horse and Performance Association Inc.                | Vic.  |
| Australian Standardbred Breeders Association                           | NSW   |
| Australian Stock Horse Society Inc.                                    | NSW   |
| Australian Stock Horse Society Inc.                                    | Vic.  |
| Australian Stud Book   | NSW   |
| Australian Stud Saddle Pony Society Inc.                               | NSW   |
| Australian Tentpegging Association                                     | NSW   |
| Australian Tentpegging Association                                     | Vic.  |
| Australian Thoroughbred Breeders Association                           |       |
| Australian Trail Horse Riders Association—National                     | NSW   |
| Australian Trail Horse Riding Association Vic.                         | Vic.  |
| Australian Trainers Association  | NSW   |
| Australian Waler Association   | Vic.  |
| Australian Warmblood & Sporthorse Association                          | Vic.  |
| Australian Warmblood Horse Association Ltd                             | NSW   |
| Australian Warmblood Horse Association Ltd                             | Vic.  |
| Australian White Horse Association                                     | WA    |
| Bashkir Curly  | NSW   |
| Belgian Horses   | WA    |
| Buckskin Horse Association of NSW                                      | Vic.  |
| Carriage Driving NSW   | NSW   |
| Cleveland Bay Horse Society of Australasia                             | NSW   |
| Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society                                  | SA    |
| Connemara Pony Breeders Society of Australia                           | WA    |
| Countrywide Miniature Horse Registry                                   | Vic.  |
| Dartmoor Pony Society of Australia                                     | SA    |
| Donkey Society of NSW Inc.   | NSW   |
| Equestrian Federation of Australia Inc.                                | Vic.  |
| Establecimientos Falabella   | NSW   |
| Friesian Horse Association of Australasia Inc. (Federal)               | NSW   |
| Hack Council of NSW  | Vic.  |

| Organisation  | State |
|---|-------|
| Hackney Horse Society of Australia                      | WA    |
| Haflinger Horse Society of Australia Inc.               | NSW   |
| Hanoverian Horse Society of Australia Inc.              | NSW   |
| Highland Pony Society of Australia                      | NSW   |
| Holsteiner Breeders Association                         | Qld   |
| Holsteiner Horse Association of Australia Ltd           | Qld   |
| Holsteiner Horse Association of Australia Ltd           | Vic.  |
| Independent Miniature Horse Registry Inc.               | WA    |
| International Caspian Society                           | Vic.  |
| International Jousting Association, Australian Chapter  |       |
| International Sporthorse Studbook Australia             |       |
| Irish Draught & Sporthorse Society of Australia         |       |
| Irish Draught & Sporthorse Society of Australia         | Vic.  |
| Irish Sport Horse Asssocation                           | Vic.  |
| Lipizzaner Horse Society Inc.                           | Vic.  |
| Little Horse and Miniature Breeds of Australia Registry | Vic.  |
| Lusitano Horse Association of Australia                 | SA    |
| Miniature Horse & Pony Enthusiasts of Australia Inc.    | NSW   |
| Miniature Horse Association of Australia (Federal)      |       |
| Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc.           | NSW   |
| Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc.           | WA    |
| Miniature Horse International Inc.                      | WA    |
| Morgan Horse Association of Australia Inc.              | Qld   |
| Morgan Horse Association of Australia Inc.              | Vic.  |
| National & Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Association    | Vic.  |
| National American Saddlebred Horse Society              | NSW   |
| National Arabian Racehorse Association                  | Vic.  |
| National Buckskin Society Inc.                          | NSW   |
| National Campdraft Association Council                  | Vic.  |
| National Cutting Horse Association of Australia Inc.    |       |
| National Halter Horse Association                       | NSW   |
| National Miniature Register Inc.                        | NSW   |
| National Pleasure Horse Association                     | NSW   |
| National Reining Horse Association of Australia Inc.    | WA    |
| National Rodeo Association                              |       |
| National Rodeo Council of Australia                     | NSW   |
| New Forest Pony Owners & Breeders                       | Qld   |
| Norwegian Fjord   | Qld   |
| Novelty Racing Association of Australia                 | Vic.  |
| NSW Dressage Council Inc.                               | SA    |
| NSW Horse Trials Council                                | Vic.  |
| NSW Mini Trotting Association                           | NSW   |
| NSW Polo Association                                    | NSW   |
| NSW Showjumping Council                                 | NSW   |
| NSW Showjumping Council Inc.                            | NSW   |

| Organisation   | State |
|--|-------|
| Paint Horse Association of Australia                               | NSW   |
| Palominos Australia  | NSW   |
| Parelli Natural Horsemanship                                       | NSW   |
| Percheron Association of Australia Inc.                            | WA    |
| Percheron Horse Breeders Association of Australia                  | NSW   |
| Peruvian Paso Registry of Australia                                | NSW   |
| Peruvian Paso Registry of Australia                                | Qld   |
| Pinto Horse & Pony Association                                     |       |
| Polocrosse Association of Australia Inc.                           | NSW   |
| Pony Club Association—NSW  | Qld   |
| Pony Club Australia  | ACT   |
| RDA Australia (National Office)                                    | NSW   |
| Riding Pony Stud Book Society Inc.                                 |       |
| Riding Pony Stud Book Society Inc.                                 | Vic.  |
| Rough Riders Association of Victoria                               | NSW   |
| SA Vaulting Association  | NSW   |
| Shetland Pony Enthusiasts of Victoria                              |       |
| Shetland Pony Society of Australia                                 | SA    |
| Shire Horse Association of Australia Ltd                           | Vic.  |
| Shire Horse Society  | NSW   |
| Southern Tablelands Hunt Club                                      | NSW   |
| Standardbred Pleasure and Performance Horse Association            | NSW   |
| Standardbred Pleasure and Performance Horse Association            | Qld   |
| The English and Irish Donkey Society of Australia Inc.             | NSW   |
| Thoroughbred Breeders Australia                                    | NSW   |
| Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Association                          | NSW   |
| Trakehner Breeders Assoc of Australia                              | NSW   |
| Trakehner Society of Australia                                     | Vic.  |
| United Palomino, White, Buckskin & Dun Association                 | ACT   |
| Victorian Racing Quarter Horse Association Inc.                    | NSW   |
| Waler Galloway and Hack Registry                                   | WA    |
| Waler Horse Society of Australia                                   | Vic   |
| Warmblood Friesian Horse Association of Australasia Inc. (Federal) | NSW   |

## Appendix 4 List of organisations with whom contact was attempted

Following attempts to verify addresses or contact details, contact with the organisations listed below was attempted.

| Society  | Breed            |
|--|------------------|
| ACPRE (Asociacion de Caballos De Pura Raza Espanola)       | Spanish          |
| American Saddlebred Horse Association of Australia         | Saddlebred       |
| Andalusian Horse Assoc of Australasia                      | Andalusian       |
| Arabian Horse Society of Australia Ltd                     | Arab             |
| Australian Draft Horse Stud Book Society                   | Draft            |
| Australian Friesian Horse Society                          | Friesian         |
| Australian Miniature Pony Society Inc.                     | Miniature Pony   |
| Australian Palomino Horsebreeders Association              | Palomino         |
| Australian Warmblood Horse Association Ltd                 | Warmblood        |
| Australian Warmblood Sport Horse Association Inc.          | Warm Sport       |
| Australian Appaloosa Association Ltd                       | Appaloosa        |
| Australian Lipizzaner Registry                             | Lipizzaner       |
| Australian Saddle Pony Association Ltd                     | Saddle Pony      |
| Australian Haflinger Breeders' Association                 | Haflinger        |
| Australian Harness Racing Council                          | Trotter          |
| Australian Harness Racing Authority                        | Trotter          |
| Australian Palouse Pony Association Inc.                   | Palouse          |
| Australian Pony Stud Book Society Inc.                     | Australian Pony  |
| Australian Quarter Horse Association                       | Quarter          |
| Australian Racing Quarter Horse Association                | Quarter          |
| Australian Shetland Pony Stud Book Society                 | Shetland Pony    |
| Australian Stock Horse Society Ltd                         | Stock Horse      |
| Cleveland Bay Horse Society of Australia                   | Cleveland        |
| Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Inc.                 | Clydesdale       |
| Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Federal Council Inc. | Clydesdale       |
| Gypsy Vanner and Cob Society                               | Gypsy Vanner/Cob |
| English Hackney Horse Society                              | Hackney          |
| Haflinger Horse Society of Australia                       | Haflinger        |
| Hanoverian Horse Society of Australia                      | Hanoverian       |
| Holsteiner Breeding Association Inc.                       | Holsteiner       |
| Holsteiner Horse Association of Australia                  | Holsteiner       |
| Irish Draught and Sport Horse of Australia                 | Irish Draught    |
| Miniature Horse Association of Australia (Inc.)            | Miniature Horse  |
| Morgan Horse Association of Australia                      | Morgan           |
| NSW Harness Racing Board                                   | Harness          |
| Paint Horse Association of Australia                       | Paint Horse      |
| Percheron Association of Australia Inc.                    | Percheron        |

| <b>Society</b>                                    | <b>Breed</b>          |
|---|-----------------------|
| Peruvian Paso Horse Association of Australia Inc. | Peruvian Paso         |
| Riding Pony Stud Book Society                     | Riding Pony           |
| Shire Horse Society, East of England Showground   | Shire                 |
| Tasmanian Paint Horse Association                 | Tasmanian Paint Horse |
| Trakehner Society of Australasia Inc.             | Trakehner             |
| Victorian Pinto Society                           | Pinto                 |
| Waler, Galloway & Hack Registry Corporation       | Waler                 |
| Welsh Pony and Cob Society of Australia Inc.      | Welsh Pony            |

# Appendix 5 Examples of breed information available on websites

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## Common horse breeds (with links to breed societies)

The following information is taken from <http://horsedirectory.com.au>

|  |  |                                       |                                    |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">American Saddlebred</a>    | <a href="#">Andalusian Horse</a>             | <a href="#">Appaloosa Horse</a>       | <a href="#">Arabian</a>            |
| <a href="#">Australian Stock Horse</a> | <a href="#">Cleveland Bay Horse</a>          | <a href="#">Clydesdale Horse</a>      | <a href="#">Connemara Pony</a>     |
| <a href="#">Dartmoor Pony</a>          | <a href="#">Donkey</a>                       | <a href="#">Fjord Horse</a>           | <a href="#">Friesian Horse</a>     |
| <a href="#">Hackney Horse / Pony</a>   | <a href="#">Haflinger Horse</a>              | <a href="#">Hannoverian Horse</a>     | <a href="#">Highland Pony</a>      |
| <a href="#">Holsteiner Horse</a>       | <a href="#">Irish Draught Horse</a>          | <a href="#">Lipizzaner Horse</a>      | <a href="#">Morgan Horse</a>       |
| <a href="#">New Forest Pony</a>        | <a href="#">Paint Horse</a>                  | <a href="#">Palomino Horse</a>        | <a href="#">Percheron Horse</a>    |
| <a href="#">Peruvian Paso Horse</a>    | <a href="#">Pinto Horse</a>                  | <a href="#">Quarter Horse</a>         | <a href="#">Shetland Pony</a>      |
| <a href="#">Shire Horse</a>            | <a href="#">Standardbred Horse</a>           | <a href="#">Trakehner Horse</a>       | <a href="#">Thoroughbred Horse</a> |
| <a href="#">Waler Horse</a>            | <a href="#">Welsh Pony &amp; Cob C&amp;D</a> | <a href="#">Welsh Mountain Pony A</a> | <a href="#">Welsh Pony B</a>       |

## Breeds and types of horse and pony from around the world (with links to breed societies)

The following information is taken from <http://equiworld.net/uk/horsecare/Breeds>



Breeds and types of horse and pony from around the world



### A

- [The Abaco Wild Horse](#)
- [The Akhal-Teke](#)
- [The American Cream Draft](#)
- [The American Paint Horse](#)
- [Andalusian](#)
- [Anglo and Part-Bred Arab](#)
- [Appaloosa](#)
- [The Arab Horse](#)
- [The Ardennes](#)
- [Australian Stock Horse](#)
- [The Azteca](#)

### B

- [The Bashkir](#)
- [The Bashkir Curly](#)
- [Bavarian Warmblood](#)
- [The Blazer Horse](#)
- [Boulonnais](#)
- [Brandenburg](#)
- [Brindle Horses](#)



British Spotted Horse & Pony  
The Budenny

**C**

The Canadian Pony of the Americas

Camargue Horse

Caspian Horse

Caspian Arabian

The Chincoteague Pony

Cleveland Bay

Cleveland Bay #2

Clydesdale Horse

Colorado Ranger Horse

Coloured Horse and Pony Society (UK),

Connemara Pony

Criollo

Curly Haired Missouri Fox Trotters

**D**

Dales Pony

Dartmoor Pony

The Don

Donkey

**E**

Eriskay Pony

Exmoor Pony

**F**

Falabella

Fell Pony

Fjord Horse

Florida Cracker

Friesian Horse

**G**

Georgian Grande Horse

The Gidrán

The Gotland Pony

**H**

Hackney Horse

Haflinger

Hanovarian

Hessian Warmblood

Highland Pony

Holstein

Hungarian Warmblood

**I**

Icelandic Horse

The Irish Draught Horse

Irish Thoroughbred

**K**

The Kabardin

The Kisber Felver

The Kiger Mustang

The Knabstrupper



## L

[Lipizzaner](#)  
[Lippitt Morgan](#)  
[Lundy Pony](#)  
[Lusitano](#)

## M

[Marwari Horse](#)  
[Mecklenburger](#)  
[The Medicine Hat Horse](#)  
[Morab](#)  
[Morgan](#)  
[Mountain Pleasure Horse](#)  
[Mule](#)  
[Mustang](#)

## N

[New Forest Pony](#)  
[Newfoundland Pony](#)  
[Nokota Horse](#)  
[Noriker](#)

## O

[Oldenburg](#)  
[The Orlov-Rostopchin](#)  
[The Orlov Trotter](#)  
[Ostfriese](#)

## P

[Paso Fino](#)  
[Percheron Horse](#)  
[Peruvian Paso](#)  
[The Pintabian](#)  
[Poitevin](#)  
[The Pottok](#)  
[Prezwalski's Horse](#)

## Q

[The Quarriesian](#)  
[Quarter Horse](#)  
[Quarter Pony](#)

## R

[The Racking Horse](#)  
[The Rancho Stock Horse](#)  
[Rheinlander](#)  
[Russian Trakhener](#)

## S

[Schleswiger Heavy Draft](#)  
[Shetland Pony](#)  
[Shire Horse](#)  
[Singlefooter](#)  
[Skyros Pony](#)  
[Sorraia Horse](#)  
[Spanish Horse](#)  
[Spanish Mustang](#)  
[Standardbred](#)



Suffolk Punch  
Sulphur Springs Mustang

**T**

Tennessee Walking Horse  
Thoroughbred  
Tersk  
Tiger Horse  
Trakehner

**W**

The Waler  
Welara Pony  
Welsh Pony and Cob  
Westphalian  
Wuerttemburger

**Z**

Zebra  
Zweibrucken

## Appendix 6 Example of information on a typical website: Eventing

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The following information is taken from the eventing section of the Equestrian Federation of Australia, NSW, website

[www.nsw.equestrian.org.au/default.asp?MenuID=Disciplines/14127/0/,Eventing/c14167/8940](http://www.nsw.equestrian.org.au/default.asp?MenuID=Disciplines/14127/0/,Eventing/c14167/8940)

### About Eventing

#### The Sport

Eventing is an Olympic sport and one in which Australia has recently won three consecutive Gold Medals (1992, 1996 and 2000).

The sport of eventing may be more aptly described as an equestrian triathlon. There are two types of competition, long format CCI (international) or CCN (national) and short format CIC (international) or CNC (national) events.



The combination of horse and rider compete in three phases, covering the disciplines of dressage, cross country and showjumping.

#### Dressage

This is basically an obedience test and in today's competitive game, a good test is essential for a top placing.

Horses perform a series of movements that are marked for accuracy, movement and rhythm. The marks are converted to a percentage and from this a penalty score is calculated.

#### Cross Country

This is run on the second day of an event scheduled over two or more days.

There is an optimum time for each course and there are penalties for exceeding time. In National events of Pre-Novice standard and below there are also time penalties for coming in more than 20 seconds under the time.



Jumping penalties accrue on the cross country course as follows:

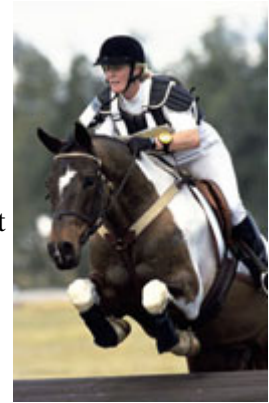
- The first refusal is 20 penalties, a second at the same jump collects 40.
- After three refusals in total on the course the combination is eliminated.
- Only one fall of rider is allowed (65 penalties).
- A fall of horse incurs immediate elimination.

At all events a veterinarian is present to ensure that horses finishing the course are sound.

## Show Jumping

If showjumping is held after the cross country (normally the case for CIC competitions), the horses are presented for a 'trot-up' before the ground jury to ensure they are fit and sound to continue after the rigours of the cross country.

All those competitors remaining in the competitions (ie have not been eliminated on cross country or in the case of an international event not accepted by the ground jury) then ride the showjumping course. For top classes at an event this will usually be in reverse order of placing over a show jump course for an exciting finish. For other classes, this is usually in numerical order. An additional 4 penalties are added for any refusal or dropped rail. In all other cases, and if the showjumping is held before the cross country, the competitors jump in numerical order.



The winner is the combination that finishes the competition with the least number of penalty points.

## Levels of competition

There are four international levels recognised in the sport. One Star (Novice), Two Star (Intermediate), Three Star (Advanced) & at the very top, Four Star. There are only four CCI \*\*\*\* events in the world, Badminton and Burghley in the UK, Kentucky in the USA and Adelaide in South Australia. The Olympic Games and the World Equestrian Games, each held every four years are also classified Four Star level.

No horse may be started before the age of 6 in a Two Star event or 7 in a Three or Four Star event. The event horse reaches its potential between the ages of 10 and 14 years.

## Australian Competitions

Australia has seven major International eventing competitions (CCI or Long format events) throughout the year, two in NSW (Sydney and Scone) and Victoria and one in each of the other states.

Between these, competitions (CIC, CNC or One Day Events) are run at both National and International level. They provide training runs, serve as excellent form pointers and provide qualifying runs for the major CCI events.

## Olympic Games

A maximum of five horse and rider combinations from each country may be nominated to the Olympic Games. The three best scores for each country provide a team score from which medals are awarded. The top twenty combinations overall, with no more than three from any one nation, compete over a further show jumping round on a fourth day to determine the three Individual medals.

The next Olympic Games will be held in 2008 in Hong Kong.

## **World Games**

World Equestrian games are held in the alternate two years between the Olympic games. Here six combinations represent each country, four nominated to the team. All riders also compete as individuals.

At the most recent World Games, Aachen in Germany, Australia won a bronze medal. Riders are authorised to wear the Australian flag when they have represented the country at either a World Games or Olympic Games. At other times when representing the country at (say) Trans Tasman, or the State (where teams events are run, riders may only wear the issued National or State badges during the conduct of the event to which they relate.



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