2019

Equine Welfare Strategic Plan

Racing Victoria

Our vision

TO BE RECOGNISED AS SETTING THE STANDARD IN EQUINE WELFARE

Racing Victoria's Equine Welfare Vision

To be recognised as setting the standard in equine welfare

How:

Build legitimacy, credibility and trust

With:

- **STRONG GOVERNANCE**
- **KNOWING THE FACTS**
- **TANGIBLE INITIATIVES**
- **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**
- **OPEN AND TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION**

02 : The Vision and Mission Statement

Racing Victoria's Equine Welfare Mission Statement

To promote the safety & welfare of the racehorse at
all stages of the horse's life through initiatives that are:

- **BOLD YET PRACTICAL**

- **EVIDENCE-BASED AND FORWARD THINKING**

- **MEASURABLE SO WE CAN BE TRANSPARENT**

03

RACING VICTORIA'S SIX PILLARS OF EQUINE WELFARE

1

GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

Setting standards, and providing a structure of support and governance that maximises welfare before, during and after racing.

2

POPULATION DYNAMICS

Effectively monitor population dynamics, identify risk periods for welfare outcomes and implement initiatives to increase visibility.

3

RACING

Maximising the health and welfare of the thoroughbred during racing by understanding the risks and having processes, resources, facilities, and education that mitigate them.

4

POST-RACING OUTCOMES

Develop a structure and program of initiatives that maximise outcomes for thoroughbreds bred for racing.

5

INDUSTRY CULTURE

Empower industry participants to become equine welfare advocates.

6

INDUSTRY REPUTATION

Demonstrate RV and industry commitment to equine welfare to the wider community.

Racing
Victoria

PILLAR 1
GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS

PILLAR 1

GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

Setting standards, and providing a structure of support and governance that maximises welfare before, during and after racing.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

- Horse-centric decision making.
- Efficient Equine Welfare Investigations.
- Penalties that reflect the serious nature of welfare breaches.
- Preparedness for 'Crisis'.
- Monitored horse husbandry standards at licensed premises.
- Licensing structure that promotes and rewards good practice.
- Appropriate jurisdiction and authority to support welfare standards.
- A definition for 'good welfare' before, during and after racing.

PILLAR 1

GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

Setting standards, and providing a structure of support and governance that maximises welfare before, during and after racing.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August 2020, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Incorporate equine welfare as a standard consideration for all RV Board reports.

2. Equine investigation Standard Operating Procedure.

3. Develop policy and criteria for 'emergency aid' for neglect cases.

4. Liaise with CFA to provide fire plan advice to participants and incorporate into licensing polices and stable inspection process.

5. Education package for new industry tribunal in relation to the negative impact of welfare breaches.

6. Update Licensing Policies to reflect importance of equine welfare.

PILLAR 1

GOVERNANCE & STANDARDS

Setting standards, and providing a structure of support and governance that maximises welfare before, during and after racing.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

- Formalise standards for licensed premises.

- Internal policy re: suggested minimum penalties for breaches of Rules of Racing relating to welfare.

- Introduction of an Equine Welfare Advisory Council to provide guidance and an equine lens for Rules of Racing, new racing initiatives and key welfare issues.

- Develop Stable Inspection Policy and Strategy to defined horse husbandry standards.

- Review licensed persons categories to address high risk areas and gaps in jurisdiction.

- Review of rules relating to welfare and address any identified gaps.

- Stable Accreditation Scheme/Trainer Gold Standard.

- Document, publish and promote defined 'good welfare' before, during and after racing.

- Investigate feasibility of a Welfare Assessment Tool.

PILLAR 2
POPULATION DYNAMICS

PILLAR 2

POPULATION DYNAMICS

Effectively monitor population dynamics, identify risk periods for welfare outcomes and implement initiatives to increase visibility.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

- 100% traceability of birth to training stage of life.

- A definition for and promotion of responsible, purposeful and ethical breeding.

- 100% accountability for horses listed as 'active', 'spelling' and 'transferred' in Single National System.

- Owner accountability for horse's first transition following retirement from racing.

- Increased visibility post retirement.

- An understanding of the role of livestock sales for the thoroughbred population.

- Responsible 'End of Life' management.

- A map of the whole life journey of the thoroughbred.

PILLAR 2

POPULATION DYNAMICS

Effectively monitor population dynamics, identify risk periods for welfare outcomes and implement initiatives to increase visibility.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August 2020, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Publish and communicate findings from 2015 Foal Analysis.

2. Collaborate with TBV (in liaison with breeders) to define responsible, purposeful and ethical breeding.

3. Audit 'active' , 'spelling' and transferred' horses that have not raced or trialled for 18 months.

4. Stable Return/Retirement Form to mandate details of responsible persons and location.

5. Automated communication to owners/trainers on post-racing options.

6. Database to track horses competing in OTT events and their owners.

7. Review of 12 months data of thoroughbreds at livestock sales.

8. Complete Lifecycle Study of 2005 and 2010 foal crops.

PILLAR 2

POPULATION DYNAMICS

Effectively monitor population dynamics, identify risk periods for welfare outcomes and implement initiatives to increase visibility.

THE PRE-RACING WELFARE COORDINATOR ROLE

• Annual audit of Victorian mares with no foal return for prior season.

• Mandatory reporting of horses that exit the industry prior to entering training.

• Liaison with the Australian Stud Book (ASB) to support penalties for failure to comply with ASB rules and relevant Rules of Racing to be enforced fully and in a timely manner.

• Greater accountability for mare and stallion owners via Acknowledged breeders program.

• Victorian Breeder's Permit.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

• Establish a Welfare Coordinator resource for pre-racing.

• TBV to publish, communicate and educate on standards for responsible purposeful and ethical breeding.

• Audit of all horses 12-18 months post-retirement.

• Stable Return capability to document location/owner of horse when identified post retirement.

• Expand OTT database to capture all horse as they retire.

• Support proposal for a National and/or State based Horse Register.

• Formalise RV position on role of livestock sales.

• End of Life Policy providing guidance for decision making.

• Develop relationships with knackeries and abattoirs and explore initiatives to provide visibility.

• Formalise RV position on the role of knackeries and abattoirs.

• Document known birth to death journey, identify gaps in visibility and high risk stages for welfare outcomes.

PILLAR 3
RACING

PILLAR 3

RACING

Maximising the health and welfare of the thoroughbred during racing by understanding the risks and having processes, resources, facilities, and education that mitigate them.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

• Research driven practice.

• An industry wide understanding of Responsible Medication.

• An improved understanding of training risks.

• Risk mitigating processes.

• Racing and training facility policies that support trainers to achieve best welfare outcomes.

• Skilled and sustainable jump racing population.

PILLAR 3

RACING

Maximising the health and welfare of the thoroughbred during racing by understanding the risks and having processes, resources, facilities, and education that mitigate them.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August 2020, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Communication and education of Equine Limb Injury research objectives and findings to date.

2. Research plan with clear objectives for future research ahead of FY 21.

3. Educate and communicate the importance of responsible medication.

4. Code of Practice for Industry Veterinarians.

5. Expand pre-race off course examination program.

6. Expert insight and feedback to trainers following fatalities.

7. Collaborate with the AJRA to educate and communicate what makes a good jumps horse.

8. Collaborate with the AJRA on initiatives that continuously upskill jumps jockeys.

PILLAR 3
RACING

Maximising the health and welfare of the thoroughbred during racing by understanding the risks and having processes, resources, facilities, and education that mitigate them.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

- Practices and policies to reflect research findings.
- Implement mandatory electronic 'treatment tracker'.
- Review Rules of Racing relating to medication and veterinary practices from a welfare perspective.
- Process for follow up/audit on horses that die while 'in training' but not on the track.
- Scope coordinated central reporting of all injuries.
- Investigate subsidised mandatory GPS tracking for all horses in training.
- Risk profiling to identify 'high risk' horses.
- On course raceday checks of identified 'high risk' horses at all meetings (not just feature races).
- Track rating system for training tracks.
- Investigate subsidised diagnostic imaging for trainers.
- Investigate the optimal training track surface.

Racing
Victoria

PILLAR 4
POST-RACING
OUTCOMES

PILLAR 4

POST-RACING OUTCOMES

Develop a structure and program of initiatives that maximise outcomes for thoroughbreds bred for racing.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

- A sustainable acknowledged re-trainers program.
- A support and education program for owners of Off The Track (OTT) horses.
- A framework of opportunities for non-competitive OTT horses.
- A framework for thoroughbreds in need.
- Maximised return on investment of OTT sponsorships.
- A support and education program for racing owners of retiring racehorses.
- An OTT Masterbrand supporting a holistic post-racing framework.
- Identified future funding sources to support post-racing framework and initiatives.

PILLAR 4

POST-RACING OUTCOMES

Develop a structure and program of initiatives that maximise outcomes for thoroughbreds bred for racing.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August 2020, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Develop a tiered framework, standard procedures and incentives program for re-trainers.

2. Develop OTT community and support network.

3. Develop a foster program in collaboration with RSPCA and TBV to provide short-medium term solutions for TBs in need.

4. Define OTT sponsorship objectives and success measures, consolidate sponsorship agreements with key equestrian bodies and develop a sponsorship strategy for FY 21.

5. Work with RV Customer Journeys team to provide education to owners in relation to post-racing options throughout their ownership journey, in particular with the Welcome Pack and at point of retirement.

6. Investigate future funding sources to support post-racing framework and initiatives.

PILLAR 4

POST-RACING OUTCOMES

Develop a structure and program of initiatives that maximise outcomes for thoroughbreds bred for racing.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

- Scope a pilot program for OTT equine therapy.
- Develop online portal/website for OTT horses.
- Build on offerings for OTT community.
- Investigate feasibility of OTT Acknowledged Instructors.
- Develop a network of Acknowledged Re-homers.
- Develop a network of Acknowledged Retirement Agistments.
- Investigate other opportunities for OTTs (E.g. Victoria Police).
- Collaborate with RSPCA to develop a physical and behavioural assessment tool for TBs in need.
- Develop a network of Acknowledged Rescue Groups.
- Develop a network of industry participants, owners, breeders and re-trainers who are willing to provide short-medium term assistance to TBs in need.
- Use OTT database to facilitate success measuring and make strategic sponsorship decisions.
- Investigate OTT partner brands.
- Publish and communicate post-racing framework including a 'decision map'.

Racing
Victoria

PILLAR 5
INDUSTRY
CULTURE

PILLAR 5

INDUSTRY CULTURE

Empower industry participants to become equine welfare advocates.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

- Racing Victoria recognised as providing leadership in equine welfare to the industry.

- An industry wide understanding of participant and stakeholder responsibilities.

- A holistic approach across breeding, racing and equestrian stakeholders.

- An effective industry communication strategy and processes.

- Tools and resources with equine welfare messaging for industry use.

- Empowered participants.

- A culture of continuous improvement.

PILLAR 5

INDUSTRY CULTURE

Empower industry participants to become equine welfare advocates.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Communicate the Equine Welfare Strategic Plan 2019.

2. Transparency of equine welfare spend.

3. RV equine welfare representatives to have active engagement with industry. E.g. training centre trainers' meetings.

4. Defined responsibilities for participant and stakeholder groups.

5. Guidelines and metrics for club funding equine welfare initiatives.

6. Develop structured educational and promotional content with consistent messaging for use by all stakeholders.

7. Compulsory introductory equine welfare online education module for trainers, jockeys, and stable employees.

8. Pilot Trainer Education Program – discovery phase and breakthrough education.

9. Educate and engage owners in day to day care of their horse.

10. Scope Grant Scheme for equine welfare initiatives driven by stakeholders/participants.

PILLAR 5

INDUSTRY CULTURE

Empower industry participants to become equine welfare advocates.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

- Regular equine welfare voice in Inside Racing magazine.

- Consider new mediums for communication. E.g. podcast, videos.

- Form Equine Welfare Industry Working Group with key stakeholders from pre, during and post-racing.

- Identify and engage industry 'change makers' (champions).

- Grant Scheme for equine welfare initiatives driven by stakeholders/participants.

- Dedicated online portal for participants containing news and information on equine welfare.

- Structured plan for CPD in equine welfare for participants (collaboration with Veterinary Services).

- Compulsory introductory equine welfare online education module for owners.

PILLAR 6
INDUSTRY REPUTATION

PILLAR 6

INDUSTRY REPUTATION

Demonstrate RV and industry commitment to equine welfare to the wider community.

END GOALS

Three years from now we will have:

- Open and transparent communication.
- A platform to communicate equine welfare messaging from.
- Strong consistent messaging on industry approach to equine welfare.
- Communication of the good work being done.
- Identified and prioritised welfare concerns as perceived by the wider public.

PILLAR 6

INDUSTRY REPUTATION

Demonstrate RV and industry commitment to equine welfare to the wider community.

YEAR 1 PRIORITY PROJECTS

By 1 August 2020, the following identified priority projects will have been completed:

1. Update equine welfare section on RV website.

2. Acknowledge shortfalls and plans to address them.

3. Develop a year-round pro-active external communication strategy.

4. Plan and develop library of strategic video and editorial content.

5. Develop a year-round pro-active media engagement strategy.

6. Identify and develop industry and non-industry ambassadors.

7. Investigate opportunities to promote Racing Victoria's commitment to equine welfare to a wider audience.

PILLAR 6

INDUSTRY REPUTATION

Demonstrate RV and industry commitment to equine welfare to the wider community.

YEAR 2 AND 3 BUILDING PROJECTS

- Publish key welfare figures with supporting narrative.

- Develop a brand and narrative to tell the story of the importance of the horse (E.g. BHA Horse Comes First).

- Develop resources for stakeholders (E.g. Race clubs, TBV etc) to use.

- Form a working group of key stakeholders to monitor public concerns, recommend the industry position or initiatives to address the concerns (E.g. whips, spurs) and develop and deliver effective communication in relation to industry position.
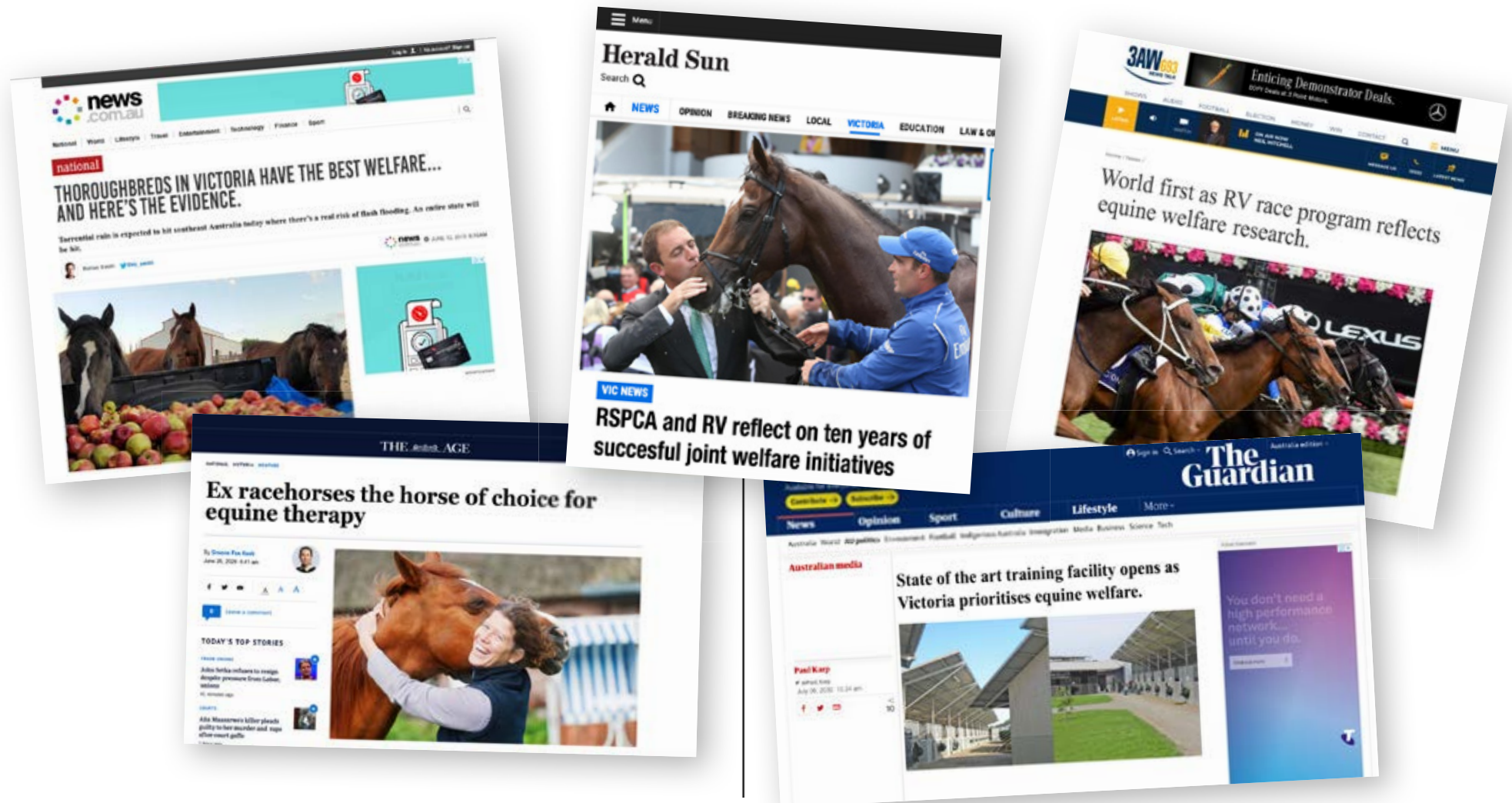
05

10 YEAR FLASH FORWARD

05 : 10 year flash forward

Headlines of the future