MEDIA RELEASE

RACING AUSTRALIA EQUINE WELFARE MEETING

Officials from State and Territory Thoroughbred racing authorities met in Sydney today, at a meeting coordinated by Racing Australia, to identify options to further strengthen Australian racing’s equine welfare programs.

“People who work across the Thoroughbred industry share the public’s outrage at the recently identified cruel and inhumane treatment of horses at a Queensland abattoir,” Racing Australia Chairman Greg Nichols said.

“In 2016 Australian racing led the world with equine welfare reforms which ensured their authorities had oversight on the location of Thoroughbreds from birth to retirement.

“Today’s meeting reaffirmed the industry’s commitment to building on those reforms,” Mr Nichols said.

The session identified a number of immediate initiatives including:

- seeking national adoption of the prize money levy and introduction of a sales levy to help finance an expansion of national Thoroughbred aftercare programs;

- further strengthening industry rules and penalties on the ownership, location and retirement destinations of Thoroughbreds and committing resources to ensure compliance;

- working with governments to ensure the introduction of the National Traceability Register for all Horses;

- upgrading racing’s technology platforms to simplify participants’ ability to comply with the industry’s equine welfare rules and make access to data more transparent and robust;

- promoting the Thoroughbred industry’s welfare policies and practices.

Chair of Racing Australia’s Equine Welfare Committee, Steve Wilson AM, said “our goal is for Australian Thoroughbreds to be the best cared for members of the animal kingdom”.

“Racing Australia and the State racing authorities are keen to work with Federal, State and Territory governments to achieve the changes needed to provide better outcomes for Thoroughbreds after they leave our industry,” Mr Wilson said.

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