

**The Queensland Government's response to recommendations from the independent 'Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbreds and Standardbred horses in Queensland' (Martin Inquiry).**

**February 2020**



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## Background

On 17 October 2019, the ABC's 7:30 broadcast a story focused on the "wastage" and slaughter of retired racehorses at knackeries for pet food and abattoirs for human consumption. The story also raised serious questions about the welfare and management of retired racehorses at slaughter facilities and during their transport to these facilities.

In response, on 22 October 2019, the Queensland Government announced that it would undertake an independent inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbreds and Standardbred horses in Queensland.

Retired District Court Judge Terry Martin SC with the support of equine veterinary surgeon and Australian Veterinary Association representative Dr Peter Reid, undertook the inquiry to make recommendations on:

1. Amendments to Queensland's regulatory arrangements, including under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*, *Racing Act 2002* and *Racing Integrity Act 2016*, and applicable rules of racing following an assessment of:
  - a. The adequacy of current arrangements for detecting, assessing, mitigating and prosecuting breaches of the welfare of retired racing horses in Queensland, including of horses moved from interstate.
  - b. The adequacy of current arrangements for detecting, assessing, mitigating and prosecuting breaches of animal welfare in the horse meat processing industry.
  - c. A comparative assessment of regulatory arrangements in place in other Australian states and territories.
2. Changes required to the oversight of the tracking and welfare of retired horses.

On 14 January 2019, the inquiry findings and recommendations were provided to the Honourable Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and the Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs in a report "*Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses in Queensland*" (Martin Inquiry Report).

The Martin Inquiry Report has made a total of 55 recommendations relating to the management of retired racehorses and the operation of establishments accepting animals for slaughter. No specific recommendations were made regarding the comparative assessment of regulation in other Australian states and territories.

The Queensland Government has considered the Martin Inquiry Report and fully supports or supports in principle all of the recommendations made.

The Queensland Government's response to the recommendations is provided below.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) will lead actions to progress 27 recommendations that have been supported in full or in principle by the Queensland Government.

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) will lead actions to progress the implementation of 8 recommendations that have been supported in full or in principle by the Queensland Government.

Racing Queensland will lead actions to progress 19 recommendations that have been supported in full or in principle by the Queensland Government.

One recommendation that was supported requires no further action to be undertaken.

# **Part 1 – Management of retired racing horses**

## **Section 2 of the report**

### **Recommendation 2.1.1**

Racing Queensland, the QRIC and Queensland's peak racing industry bodies support the federal Senate Committee's efforts in establishing a national working group to progress the development of a national registration and traceability scheme for all horses.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.1.2**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to extend their lifecycle monitoring capability and systems to cover retired racing horses.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.1.3**

Racing Queensland incentivises owners, within and beyond the racing industry, to keep retired racing horse ownership and location details up to date through access to Off the Track benefits.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.1.4**

Queensland should not develop its own lifetime traceability register for retired racing horses, so as to avoid exacerbating the existing problems of inconsistency and incomplete equine lifecycle records.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.2.1**

Racing Queensland advocates for Thoroughbred breeders to be licensed through Racing Australia.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Advocacy to Racing Australia will support adequacy and consistency of Australian Rules of Racing.

### **Recommendation 2.2.2**

Racing Queensland advocates for Standardbred breeders to be licensed through Harness Racing Australia.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Advocacy to Harness Racing Australia will support adequacy and consistency of the Harness Racing Australia Rules of Racing.

### **Recommendation 2.2.3**

The QRIC establishes a breeder licensing process and standard requiring applicants to demonstrate knowledge and competency. Those who consistently breed horses which do not make it into training, should be excluded from holding a licence.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Subject to national agreement on licensing breeders (see recommendations 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).

### **Recommendation 2.2.4**

DAF takes steps to amend the *Racing Integrity Act 2016*, if necessary, to expand the purposes for which a standard for a licensing scheme for a code of racing can be made to provide for the licensing of breeders.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.2.5**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to introduce a welfare levy to be added to the current foal birth notification and stallion return fees. The size of this levy should be sufficient to act as a deterrent to indiscriminate and poor quality breeding and make a meaningful contribution to the pool of funds available to support the rehoming programs being run by the control bodies in each state.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Any levy will need to consider the costs of breeding and Queensland as a net importer of racehorses.

### **Recommendation 2.2.6**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to develop a sustainable breeding model for racing in Australia that balances the need for industry sustainability with the need to ensure good welfare outcomes for horses bred for racing.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.2.7**

In the absence of national agreement on 2.2.6, Racing Queensland develops a sustainable breeding model for racing in Queensland.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

As a first option it is preferred Racing Queensland advocates to the relevant national bodies to amend the national rules as Queensland is a net importer of racehorses.

### **Recommendation 2.2.8**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of the QRIC's resources to ensure that they are adequate to undertake licensing and auditing of breeders in Queensland.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.3.1**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to amend their respective national rules such that licensed and registered racing industry participants, in whose name an officially retired racing horse, including a breeding horse, is retained, have a continuing obligation to notify the national bodies of the retired horse's ultimate retirement destination from the care of the racing industry participant. Participants also be required to provide notification of the fact and cause of death of the retired racing horse while in their care.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Advocacy to relevant national bodies will support adequacy and consistency of national rules.



### **Recommendation 2.3.2**

The QRIC should be responsible for enforcing these proposed reporting requirements in Queensland.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Enforcement by QRIC would be subject to implementation of the response to recommendation 2.3.3.

### **Recommendation 2.3.3**

DAF takes steps to amend the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* to extend the QRIC's animal welfare jurisdiction to a horse retired from racing, but still in the care of a registered or licensed person under the Australian Rules of Racing or Australian Harness Rules of Racing.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 2.3.4**

The QRIC amends the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the QRIC, Biosecurity Queensland and the RSPCA to reflect the adjustment in the QRIC's jurisdiction and to clarify that Biosecurity Queensland and the RSPCA remain responsible for the welfare of retired racing horses not in the care of a licensed or registered industry participant.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Subject to the implementation of recommendation 2.3.3, the MOU between the QRIC, Biosecurity Queensland and RSPCA will be amended.

### **Recommendation 2.3.5**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of the QRIC's resources to ensure that they are adequate to strenuously enforce the substance of the recommendations above.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Section 3 of the report**

### **Recommendation 3.1**

The QRIC and Racing Queensland deliver a targeted education program for registered owners and trainers about the importance of accurate lifecycle records and their obligations to complete retirement and death notifications and stable returns.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 3.2**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to amend their respective stable return processes to collect the detail of a horse's retirement outcome when a retirement is notified via that method.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 3.3**

The QRIC commits more resources to the active enforcement of retirement notifications including the auditing of 'high-risk' categories such as racing horses that have been 'spelling' for more than 12 months and horses that are still registered but have not had a race start in the last 12 months.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

The QRIC maintains an intelligence-led, risk-based approach to enforcement activities including undertaking inspections and investigations.

### **Recommendation 3.4**

The QRIC develops a penalty standard for the failure to provide timely retirement and death notifications that reflects the critical role they play in monitoring the welfare of retired racing horses.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 3.5**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of the QRIC's resources to ensure that they are adequate to strenuously enforce the substance of the recommendations above.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## Section 4 of the report

### Recommendation 4.1

Racing Queensland establishes and governs a retraining/rehoming program for Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses, bred for the racing industry, and domiciled in Queensland at the time of their retirement.

#### Queensland Government response

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Racing Queensland and the QRIC have joint responsibility for this recommendation.

### Recommendation 4.2

The funding model for Queensland's Off the Track program be based on the principle that 'those who benefit, pay'.

Hence, without limiting further sources it identifies, Racing Queensland seeks additional funding from the following:

- Registered Owners, through a welfare component to be added to the 'Registration to Race' and 'Transfer of Ownership' fees for racing and eligible horses. This would be applied nationally and facilitated through Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia.
- A welfare levy added to foal birth notifications and stallion returns, as recommended in Recommendation 2.2.5.
- Wagering providers - The Inquiry recognises that racing wagering providers are not obliged to contribute financially to ensuring good welfare outcomes for retired racing horses. However, it is feasible that their sense of corporate responsibility will make them willing. Tabcorp specifically lists 'supporting the racing industry to enhance animal welfare' as one of their main areas of commitment in ensuring they only deliver responsible entertainment.
- The Queensland Government - The Inquiry recognises that the Queensland Government already makes a substantial financial contribution to racing and racing animal welfare in Queensland. The Government is forecast to collect \$1.099M from racing industry participants in fees, fines and penalties in 2019-20. It is recognised that, as part of state consolidated revenue, this money contributes to covering the costs of providing government services to Queenslanders. However it is recommended that a portion of this money be used to support the Off the Track program as a sign of joint commitment and partnership in maximising good welfare outcomes for retired racing horses. Specifically, a portion of the funds contributed should cover the cost of staffing and administering the program so that all monies collected through welfare levies and philanthropic donations could be directed straight to retraining and rehoming activities.
- A percentage of the sale of Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses made through horse sales companies.

#### Queensland Government response

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 4.3**

In terms of the design of the program, it is recommended that, beyond the elements already proposed by Racing Queensland in its submission, the Off the Track program:

- Contain provision for horses that are bred for racing but never make it to the track. Although these horses are not 'retired racing horses' and do not therefore fall within the official scope of the Inquiry, they have been identified as the first point of potential 'wastage' for the industry and it would be careless of the Inquiry not to take the opportunity to promote their interests. Further, it would be indefensible for the industry not to do something to ensure they are given the opportunity of a long and healthy life.
- Contain provision for retired racing horses located in regional areas of Queensland.
- Require retired racing Thoroughbreds to have a minimum six week 'let down' period, immediately post-racing, before being eligible for the program. An appropriate 'let down' period for retired Standardbreds be defined.
- Require registered owners to make two genuine attempts to rehome their racing horse (as envisaged by Recommendations 6.1-6.7) before they are able to submit it to the program for consideration.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

See recommendations 4.1 and 4.2.

## **Section 5 of the report**

### **Recommendation 5.1**

The racing industry be held accountable for ensuring a high-quality first transition out of racing and breeding, for all retired racing horses.

Specifically:

- Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to extend the retirement and death notification requirements under their respective national rules to apply to horses retired into the care of licensed or registered racing industry participants, including breeding horses, as recommended at Recommendation 2.3.1.
- The requirement to provide notification of retirement and death under the rules of racing be actively enforced in Queensland by the QRIC.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Recommendation 5.2**

The QRIC and Racing Queensland deliver a targeted education program for registered owners and breeders about their moral and social obligation to ensure a high quality first transition out of racing and breeding.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Section 6 of the report**

### **Recommendation 6.1**

Racing Queensland advocates for Racing Australia and Harness Racing Australia to adopt national rules of racing requiring the owner of a horse to rehome it upon retirement.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Consistency of rules nationally reduces ambiguity between Australian and Local Rules.

### **Recommendation 6.2**

In the interim, or in the absence of national agreement on such a rule:

Racing Queensland amends the Local Rules of Racing to impose upon the owner of a horse, at the time the decision is made to retire it from the racing industry, whether a named or an eligible horse, and which is domiciled in Queensland, the obligation to rehome that horse and to retain the welfare obligation to that horse until compliance with the substance of Recommendation 6.3.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

As a first option it is preferred that Racing Queensland advocates to the relevant national bodies to amend the national rules.

### **Recommendation 6.3**

Racing Queensland amends the Local Rules of Racing to provide that:

- a. The owner must make two genuine attempts to rehome a horse before the owner is permitted to submit it to Queensland's official Off the Track program.
- b. "A genuine attempt" is defined as taking all reasonable steps to rehome, and includes, but is not limited to:
  - Seeking to rehome the horse with at least two appropriate persons capable of ensuring the welfare of the horse.

- Seeking to rehome the horse through at least two equestrian/equine sporting organisations.
- Seeking to rehome the horse with at least two recognised rehoming organisations.
- Advertising in at least two respected equestrian publications.

For clarity, each of these points comprises one genuine attempt.

- c. The owner must notify the QRIC, within seven days of rehoming the horse, of that fact, the details of the new owner and the location of the horse's new home.
- d. An owner is exempt from rehoming obligations if the horse is unsuitable for rehoming whether because of age, injury, sickness or temperament. For the owner to be exempt:
  - i. A registered veterinarian must certify that the horse is unsuitable for rehoming and the reason for its unsuitability.
  - ii. The owner must provide to the QRIC within one month of the notification of the horse's retirement, the veterinarian's certificate.
- e. Once an owner has satisfied the obligations in 6.3 a) and b) above, but failed to rehome the horse, the owner must submit the horse to Queensland's official Off the Track program before euthanasia or slaughter of the horse may be considered.
- f. In the event the horse is not accepted into Queensland's official Off the Track program, the owner may euthanase the horse or send it to a slaughter establishment, with slaughter being the option of last resort.
- g. All owners, including owners exempt from rehoming obligations, must notify the QRIC within seven days of sending a horse to a slaughter establishment or having euthanased it, of that fact.
- h. All notifications referred to above must be provided in writing in a form prescribed by the QRIC.
- i. There are appropriate penalties for non-compliance with the substance of the above recommendations, sufficient to encourage compliance and deter noncompliance.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

As a first option it is preferred that Racing Queensland advocates to the relevant national bodies to amend the national rules.

#### **Recommendation 6.4**

DAF takes steps to amend the Racing Integrity Act to provide that all abattoirs and knackerries in Queensland record and provide regularly to the QRIC the microchip numbers, brandings and vendor details of all horses with racing brandings processed at these facilities.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

DAF will review and implement an appropriate approach, which may include legislative amendment, to ensure records of all racing horses processed at facilities are provided to the relevant competent authority.

### **Recommendation 6.5**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of the QRIC's resources to ensure there are adequate resources to strenuously enforce the substance of the recommendations above.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Section 7 of the report**

### **Recommendation 7.1**

The QRIC publishes annual injury, death, euthanasia, slaughter and retirement data for racing and retired Thoroughbreds and Standardbreds on its website.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 7.2**

Biosecurity Queensland publishes annual data on its website detailing the number of animal welfare complaints and investigations (by type) it manages and the investigation outcomes achieved.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 7.3**

Racing Queensland publishes data on its website of the number of horses accepted, retrained, rehomed, euthanased or sent to slaughter through the Off the Track program.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 7.4**

Racing Queensland publishes annual data on its website detailing all funding contributions to the Off the Track program and how all monies were spent.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Part 2 – The operation of establishments accepting animals for slaughter**

### **Section 10 of the report**

#### **Recommendation 10.2.1**

DAF, under the guidance of an expert panel, urgently develops a compulsory Code of Practice for Horses Processed at Slaughtering Establishments (including knackeries) in Queensland, to ensure best practice for the humane treatment of horses from arrival to exsanguination.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Biosecurity Queensland will influence and actively support the national development and implementation of the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Processing Facilities* to ensure the humane treatment not only of horses but all species at processing facilities.

If timely national agreement cannot be reached then Queensland will consider independently making its own Code of Practice.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.2**

DAF takes steps to amend the ACPA to provide that establishment management store for at least 30 days the CCTV footage recorded at all critical animal welfare points and make available the recorded footage to Biosecurity Queensland upon request on 48 hours' notice.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

DAF will explore options for legislative amendments to ensure inspectors can examine CCTV footage.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.3**

Biosecurity Queensland implements a process for examining the CCTV footage to ensure a prompt and effective response to any suspected or identified breaches of all relevant Codes of Practice including any new Codes developed as a result of this Inquiry.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.



See response to Recommendation 10.2.2. Examination of CCTV footage would support a prompt and effective response to any suspected or identified breaches.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.4**

DAF takes steps to amend the ACPA to make the use of an electric prodder on a horse an act of cruelty.

##### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.5**

Biosecurity Queensland ensures all Inspectors appointed under the ACPA be effectively trained:

- In the content of all relevant Codes of Practice including any new Codes developed as a result of this Inquiry.
- To recognise breaches under all relevant Codes of Practice including any new Codes developed as a result of this Inquiry
- As to their powers and obligations in enforcing all relevant Codes of Practice including any new Codes developed as a result of this Inquiry.

##### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.6**

DAF takes steps to amend the ACPA to permit, without the need for consent, an experienced Biosecurity Queensland Inspector to be present when horses are being unloaded, kept and processed at a slaughter establishment.

##### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

A monitoring program under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* for compliance with the (current) Code of Practice for Transport of Livestock would enable an inspector to enter without consent to monitor unloading of horses. DAF will explore options for entry by inspectors without consent to monitor keeping and processing of horses at slaughter establishments.

#### **Recommendation 10.2.7**

DAF takes steps to amend the ACPA to mandate that establishment management gives Biosecurity Queensland at least two days prior written notice of horse arrivals and slaughter.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Consideration will need to be given to circumstances where the facility has less than 2 days' notice of the arrival and slaughter (e.g. emergency slaughter).

### **Recommendation 10.2.8**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of Biosecurity Queensland's resources to ensure they are adequately resourced to meet these requirements.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Biosecurity Queensland will immediately allocate additional resources to its animal welfare program to ensure it can implement this response. Biosecurity Queensland will also make an assessment of the capacity and capability of resources required to implement its Animal Welfare Program to ensure it can continue to meet obligations and deliver on strategic priorities in a changing and dynamic environment, together with its compliance partners. Any capability gaps will be built into the updated training package for inspectors as relevant.

### **Recommendation 10.3.1**

Biosecurity Queensland undertakes an immediate review of procedures and practices at the knackery. Any animal welfare issues identified be addressed.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 10.3.2**

Biosecurity Queensland engages with management to undertake an immediate audit of the knackery yards and facilities and address any animal welfare issues.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 10.3.3**

The Queensland Government makes an assessment of Biosecurity Queensland's resources to ensure they are adequately resourced to meet these requirements.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

See response to Recommendation 10.2.8

## Section 12 of the report

### Recommendation 12.1

DAF takes steps to amend the Code of Practice for the Transport of Livestock to achieve a more reasonable balance between the welfare of the horses being transported and the interests of persons transporting them.

To that end, an expert panel be convened to undertake a review of the Code of Practice for the Transport of Livestock and specifically consider:

- reducing the journey time that a horse can be transported without breaks/rest to no more than eight hours
- the frequency of providing water to horses during transport
- appropriate handling standards for handled/broken-in horses and unhandled horses
- appropriate vehicle design, especially for handled horses
- requirements for the humane euthanasia of an animal if it becomes necessary during a journey
- reducing the journey time requirement for the keeping of records
- prescribing a minimum body condition score before a horse may be loaded for transport without veterinary advice.

#### Queensland Government response

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Biosecurity Queensland will influence and actively support a review of the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Land Transport* to make sure the specific needs of horses are provided for and record keeping requirements are reviewed.

If timely national agreement cannot be reached then Queensland will consider independently amending its own Code of Practice.

### Recommendation 12.2

If necessary, DAF takes steps to ensure that any changes to the Code of Practice for Transport of Livestock provide for extraterritorial application.

#### Queensland Government response

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Consideration may need to be given to amend the empowering Act.

### **Recommendation 12.3**

The expert panel consider and make recommendations about the types of amenities which need to be available enroute, to enable transporters to meet requirements to unload, feed and water horses at acceptable points of a journey.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in principle.

Biosecurity Queensland is of the view that using the existing national animal welfare standards and guidelines framework will provide sufficient expertise and engagement. Under the national framework, a stakeholder advisory group would be formed to provide advice and stakeholder engagement. The group includes veterinarians, animal welfare groups and industry representatives. Further expert advice can be sought to assist in the development or review of standards and guidelines. Elements including amenities requirements enroute will be considered as part of the review of the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Land Transport*.

### **Recommendation 12.4**

Biosecurity Queensland develops and implements a compliance program that includes routine and regular monitoring for compliance with the provisions of the new Code of Practice for the Transport of Livestock.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 12.5**

Biosecurity Queensland conducts a targeted enforcement operation to test compliance with the requirements of the current Code of Practice for the Transport of Livestock.

#### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

## **Section 13 of the report**

### **Recommendation 13.1.1**

DAF co-ordinates the drafting of a memorandum of understanding between it and the federal Department of Agriculture to:

- clarify their respective roles at the export establishment in relation to the welfare of horses being processed for slaughter; and
- ensure timely and appropriate responses to any animal welfare breaches.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Biosecurity Queensland will review and discuss the most appropriate approach to working with its compliance partners including the federal Department of Agriculture, to ensure timely and appropriate responses to identified animal welfare breaches at facilities where horses are processed for slaughter and formalise the arrangements in an MOU as appropriate.

### **Recommendation 13.2.1**

The importance of animal welfare be reflected in the structure and staffing in Biosecurity Queensland.

Specifically:

- A separate Animal Welfare Program be established in Biosecurity Queensland, headed by a person of senior position and supported by a team of experienced investigators with the skills and knowledge to detect, investigate and prosecute animal welfare breaches, and thereby mitigate future offending.
- The program should report directly to the Deputy Director-General of Biosecurity Queensland.
- In the appointment of Inspectors under the ACPA, Biosecurity Queensland should ensure a balance of technical animal/livestock knowledge and experience in regulation.
- Inspectors have certificate level training in investigative skills, or equivalent, prior to their appointment.
- A better balance of education and enforcement in response to breaches of animal welfare incidents to ensure an appropriate use of regulatory tools.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation in part.

The Queensland Government will make an assessment of the capacity and capability of resources required to implement the Animal Welfare Program to ensure DAF can continue to meet its obligations and deliver on strategic priorities in a changing and dynamic environment. However, it is proposed that the animal welfare program continues to report to the Queensland Chief Veterinary Officer because the position has the relevant expertise.

## **Section 14 of the report**

### **Recommendation 14.1.1**

Biosecurity Queensland immediately engages with Meramist to ensure the prompt implementation of the substance of the recommendations applicable to Meramist, prior to the implementation of regulations.

### **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government supports this recommendation.

Implementation prior to the implementation of regulations will require the cooperation of Meramist. The Inquiry noted Meramist's stated commitment to animal welfare and its demonstrated cooperation with the Inquiry.

### **Part 3 – Comparative assessment of regulation arrangements in other states and territories.**

The Inquiry made no specific recommendations for the Queensland Government to respond.