

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Monday, 5 October 2020

WORK FOR NATIONAL HORSE TRACEABILITY SYSTEM UNDERWAY

The Victorian Government is co-leading the development of a national horse traceability register, which will improve biosecurity and tracking measures for all horses across Australia.

A National Horse Traceability Working Group has been established to inform the design of the register, following agreement at the Australasian Racing Ministers Conference and Australian Agriculture Ministers' meeting that Victoria and Queensland would lead its development.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today announced the following industry organisations and representatives will make up the Working Group:

- Kathy Gibson, Animal Health Australia
- Linda Kelly and Dr Meredith Flash, Australian Horse Industry Council
- Karen Day, Racing Australia
- Kathleen Mullan, Harness Racing Australia
- Dr Bidda Jones, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
- Equine Australia
- Representatives from state and territory governments as well as the Commonwealth.

Stuart McLean OAM will chair the group, bringing a depth of traceability experience as the current Chair of the Australian Livestock Saleyards Association and having provided exceptional leadership in a variety of local, state and national roles. The group will meet for the first time this month.

The Working Group will analyse existing animal traceability systems and technologies in Australia, such as the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), informed by a review already undertaken by Agriculture Victoria; and will put forward recommendations on what form a national register for all horses in Australia should take.

An effective horse traceability system will benefit all horse owners in Australia, including the racing industry, with better traceability for exotic diseases such as equine influenza and African horse sickness, as well as endemic diseases such as Hendra virus.

Quote attributable to Victorian Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

"Creating a national horse register is an important step in improving biosecurity arrangements for all horses, and will give peace of mind to industry that the health and welfare of their animals is protected."

Quote attributable to Victorian Minister for Racing Martin Pakula

"A national horse traceability register would substantially improve transparency at all stages of a horse's racing career, and working with industry on its development will ensure it is a practical tool."

Quote attributable Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Mark Furner

"Improved horse welfare and biosecurity preparedness is an outcome of benefit to more than horse owners – it supports a large industry, including many ancillary businesses, as we learned from the successful eradication of equine influenza from Queensland and NSW in 2008."

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