



South Africa | Cape Town | 2020

# **Jamie Stier** **Racing Victoria**

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Executive General Manager  
Integrity Services

# Why has equine welfare become such a focal point within Australia?

- Community expectations
- Our moral obligation
- High-profile equine cruelty cases
- Racing's influence and responsibility



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## EQUINE WELFARE

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# Community expectations - are we losing the battle?

It's time for the Australian racing industry to show leadership and a coordinated approach to meet our obligation to the community:

	ACTUAL	PERCEPTION
Pre-racing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong breeding industry</li><li>• Limited rules and guidelines</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Over breeding</li><li>• Lack of responsible breeding</li></ul>
During racing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High percentage of participants do the right thing</li><li>• Best care afforded</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High profile rule breaches swaying public confidence</li><li>• Lack of transparency</li></ul>
Post-racing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Well managed / high-profile horses finding a second career</li><li>• Lack of opportunity for the less desirable horses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Straight to the knackery</li><li>• Industry couldn't care once the horse leaves racing</li></ul>

# Our moral obligation - is there a right or wrong way?



- The only acceptable approach is one that ensures the welfare of every horse
- Racing's approach to equine welfare should meet the unique conditions and environments of each jurisdiction
- Minimum ethical and legal standards are required to be met but are not what we will be measured on
- Ultimately, we must deliver on our promises and commit to long-term sustainable equine welfare outcomes

# High profile equine cruelty cases - the challenges



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**RACING'S DARKEST DAY**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2019 \$1.70

**Herald Sun** HERALDSUN.COM.AU

**CUP-WINNING TRAINER DARREN WEIR ARRESTED**

**ANIMAL CRUELTY ALLEGATIONS OVER SHOCK TREATMENT**

SPECIAL REPORTS PAGES 2-7, SPORT

**JIG IS UP**

**ANIMALS**

**Fury as pictures of starving and dead horses on Queensland farm go viral**

## Racetrack to abattoir: kill buyer speaks out

**Chip Le Grand**  
Chief reporter

Peter Loffel is the face of horse racing's unpalatable truth. He is known as a kill buyer, although he prefers the term horse trader. He buys horses no one wants and trucks them to a place no horse wants to end up - the Meramist abattoir featured in last week's...

## Aquanita fallout goes on

**LEO SCHLINK**

THE disqualification of horses, and reallocation of prize-money from more than 80 races resulted in the Aussies...

involvement in "actual administration" (doping), but struck out 46 counts against the trio. Smerdon (life and \$90,000 fine), Webb (four years) and...

After last week's judgment, Smerdon, Webb, Vasil and RV had 28 days in which to seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

## TWO TRAINERS FACE CHARGES

## Don't ban whip

**LAUREN WOOD**

HALL of Fame trainer David Hayes said an industry-wide ban on the whip would be a "terrible over-reaction". Hayes said there was...

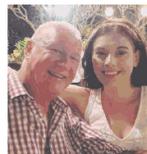
"Maybe they can look at modifying them a bit more, but if it was me, I'd leave it with the stewards and I wouldn't change too much." Hayes said he had been "horrified" by the ARC report.

## TRAINERS STUNNED BY ABATTOIR EVIL



The Meramist abattoir in Caboolture, where three horses (Dorian) were cruelly killed (opposite) often went their way (top), and some from the program. Pictures: AAP, ABC.

## Taylor Swift Cancels Gig at Australian Horse Racing Event After Animal Rights Activists' Outcry



### CONCERNS IN COURT

**SHANNON DEERY**

SENIOR lawyers say they dreaded appearing before Magistrate Rodney Higgins after his now fiancée, Ashleigh Petrie, bragged about helping him decide on sentences. A lawyer told the Herald Sun the 23-year-old court clerk described Mr Higgins as "too soft" and said she encouraged him to come down harder on people who appeared before him. The Herald Sun revealed yesterday the couple (above) had raised eyebrows with their unconventional romance. FULL REPORT, PAGE 5

## Police swoop on Melbourne Cup winning trainer Darren Weir HORSE TORTURE CHARGES

**LEO SCHLINK AND MARK BUTTLER**

RACES involving former Darren Weir horses Red Cardinal, Yogi and Toson Basil are allegedly at the centre of animal cruelty and conspiracy offences, after Victoria Police issued 33 charges against the trainer and three other men. Weir, 49, faces nine charges, including three of allegedly "torturing, abusing, overworking and terrifying" horses. The Melbourne Cup-winning handler was banned for four years in February after raids at his home found jiggers - devices that give horses electric shocks. CONTINUED PAGE 6

Darren Weir got a four-year ban.

**EDDIE'S COMING HOME**

SPORT

**\$1 A WEEK**

MIN COST \$4. CONDITIONS APPLY

**FOR THE FIRST 8 WEEKS**

DETAILS PAGE 6

## Please speak up

New RV policy to encourage whistleblowers



# Racing's influence and responsibility



The reality of meeting community expectations in a fast-evolving society:

	Racing Industry	Outside the racing bubble
<b>Public opinion on the racing industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shift public opinion at a time when the industry is being attacked due to various high-profile issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address our concerns</li> <li>Be transparent</li> <li>Open the books</li> </ul>
<b>Social licence to operate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make decisions not purely based on science and fact but those that align to community expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make rule changes</li> <li>Increase penalties</li> <li>Appropriateness of animals being used for betting and entertainment in 2020</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibility to care for all horses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs to address racing's impact before and after racing</li> <li>Shared responsibilities across the entire industry to address welfare issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible breeding</li> <li>Expectation that the racing industry cares for horses beyond their racing career</li> </ul>
<b>Approach to animal welfare debate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balanced</li> <li>Fact-based</li> <li>Reputation focused</li> <li>Stakeholder and government consideration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggressive</li> <li>Often misleading</li> <li>Extreme views</li> <li>PR savvy</li> <li>A lack of accountability</li> </ul>

# What's the current situation in Australia?

**Audit on the industry's traceability systems and processes**

A standalone equine welfare taskforce

Assisting retrainers with the production of a dedicated webpage for advertising their services and retired horses for sale

Working with partners to form an action plan to drive further participant education and compliance

Strengthen existing rules and introduce an ownership bond

**Urgent inquiry into the treatment of retired racehorses**

Actively seize and rescue thoroughbreds on welfare grounds

Multi-purpose racehorse welfare facility for the use of re-training and emergency care for retired racehorses

**Land acquisition for use by equine welfare programs**

\$25 million accelerated equine welfare action plan

Partnering with university programs to assist in the re-homing of behaviourally and challenged horses

A dedicated Off The Track program to assist the transition of retired thoroughbreds

**The introduction of a passport to track all retired racehorses**

# What are we doing in Victoria ...

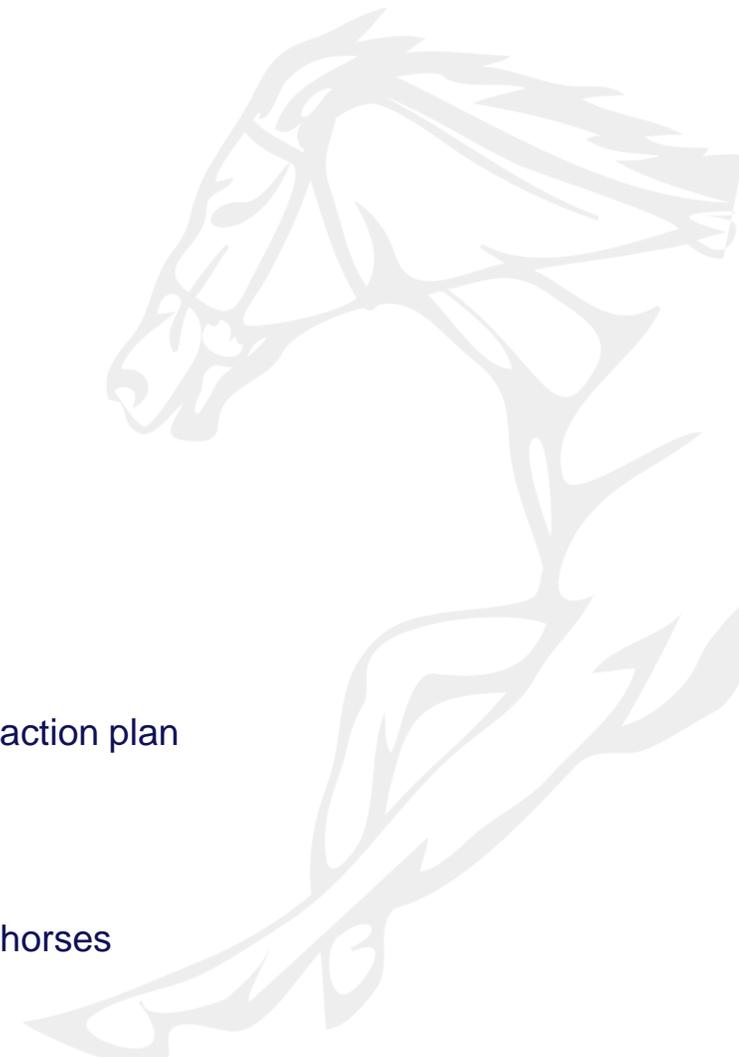
## In the context of the ABC 730 Report:

### PRE

- \$350 million spent annually by owners on the training, care and welfare of racehorses
- 1 per cent of prizemoney offered in Victoria is retained to support equine welfare
- Off The Track (post-racing program) established in 2012
- New three-year equine welfare action plan launched in July 2019
- International Injury Review – 2018 Spring Racing Carnival
- Equine Limb Injury Prevention

### POST

- An additional \$25 million commitment to accelerate and expand the three-year equine welfare action plan
- Implementation of an in-house equine welfare taskforce to address our strategic priorities
- An increased 2 per cent of prizemoney offered in Victoria is retained to support equine welfare
- Expanded Off The Track program to support the more vulnerable horses and better track ex-racehorses



# Where we want to be...

- A collective approach to equine welfare to ensure the sustainability of the industry
- Direct efforts and funding to all phases of a horse's lifecycle
- Dispelling mistruths about the industry and the treatment of racehorses
- Improved data collection, industry transparency and the tracking of ex-racehorses

“Victoria’s vision is to be a leader in equine welfare practices. Whilst the industry has achieved many great outcomes over recent years and has a clear pathway for the future, it is clear we need to step up and do more”

**Racing Victoria Chairman, Brian Kruger**



THANK YOU