



RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Investigation of horse movements**

Racing and Wagering WA (RWWA) is committed to ensuring that racing animals in all three codes are afforded appropriate care and attention before, during and after their racing careers.

RWWA aims to be a leader in animal welfare and build a racing culture in which the health and wellbeing of racing animals is paramount to all participants and owners.

RWWA and the Racing Industry seek to at all times implement strategies to demonstrate best practice in animal welfare.

The Thoroughbred Rules of Racing require that the death or retirement of any horse must be notified to the Registrar.

In that respect the industry seeks to ensure that the location of all horses is known at any time and their status tracked accordingly.

RWWA Stewards periodically conduct audits of horse locations and these records to ensure such rules are being complied with and investigate as is appropriate.

RWWA's Stewards and Investigators also regularly visit breeder's and trainer's premises to ensure that they are maintaining the highest level of care for the horses at all times.

RWWA take all claims of animal welfare misconduct seriously, and as such have been performing a number of operations to assess the validity of claims concerning alleged euthanasia of horses in Broome through the 2018 racing season.

Utilising the extensive powers available to RWWA pursuant to the RWWA Act, including access to horse information in local and national databases, a comprehensive audit and investigation was conducted.

This operation, conducted over several weeks, including attendance at Broome by a Senior RWWA Investigator, included all trainer's stables and horses that competed during the Broome season.

It was established that of the 141 horses that competed under the control of the 29 licensed trainers who participated in the Broome season, 121 returned with their trainer on completion of the racing season.

Of the remaining 20, 16 were sold or rehomed to other trainers or third parties outside of the racing industry. Where possible this was verified through either subsequent race performances, transfer documents, direct contact with those involved or other means available.

It was also confirmed that unfortunately four horses were euthanized due to serious or catastrophic injuries. There was no evidence that such euthanasia's were carried out contrary to the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act.

The investigation did not reveal any evidence to suggest that ex-racehorses were being, or had been, deliberately released into the wild outside of Broome by any persons bound to the RWWA Rules of Racing.

As the above figures reflect, there was also no evidence found to support any claims that suggest that there is a large scale disposal of racehorses at the end of the season.

RWWA will continue to monitor the movement of these horses in Broome and other horses as prescribed by the Rules, which require notification of death or retirement. This is to ensure the industry continues to meet community expectations with respect to the management of horse welfare both during and post-racing.

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