

## **Agriculture and Environment Committee**

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**From:** Ross Boucher [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 24 January 2016 2:10 PM  
**To:** Agriculture and Environment Committee  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Racing Integrity Bill Submission

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an active business participant in the QLD Thoroughbred Racing industry as a thoroughbred breeder and owner of racing stock.

I consider myself to be a middle tier investor in the industry to the scale of between 250k to 300k per annum. This investment is easily transportable to another jurisdiction such as NSW or Victoria, should there be an adequate disincentive or reason to not continue to invest in the QLD industry.

The current "Transition to Sustainability" model that has been announced by the current government appointed administrator of Racing QLD has 80% convinced me to transport my annual investment to a more vibrant and industry focussed jurisdiction than QLD.

The Racing Integrity Bill is probably making up the other 20% of the disincentive required for me to relocate my investment.

My 3 main concerns with the bill in its current form are as follows :

1. Although I agree with the moral and ethical conclusions of the McSporrans report, and if the Racing Integrity Bill is the governments community led response to the issue, then all costs involved in creating, operating, maintaining and improving the bureaucracy of this new Integrity Dept should be borne by the budget of the QLD Govt. This needs to be enshrined in the legislation or the Bill should be withdrawn.
2. The formation of the Racing Control Board is too heavily skewed towards non racing knowledgeable people. Whilst having independent board members with business, legal, and marketing knowledge is a plus, the need for participants views via industry representatives needs equal weighting for such a board to be successful. NSW and Victoria have proven in recent years, that industry knowledge in their board formation, is crucial when "selling" new concepts to government and seeking their arms length support. This section of the bill should be amended after proper consultation with industry stakeholder groups, such as Breeders, Owners, Trainers etc.
3. The industry needs less government involvement in its major commercial decisions, not more. Creating this government Integrity unit may at face value seem to provide a "separation of powers" of sort, but it may have completely unknown future commercial repercussions for the industry, if an integrity decision is made that has a major impact on the confidence of industry participants to invest their time and money in this state compared to others. The change brought about by this bill in QLD is in contrast to our southern competitors industry model, this could cause a stampede south, if the transition to the new body is perceived by participants in a negative manner.

Due to my concerns as listed above, I feel that a sequence of events in QLD since the McSporrans report was released that could have a disastrous effect on the participants of this great industry in QLD, the result of which could lead to the loss of many thousands of jobs.

These jobs may just relocate to NSW and Victoria, but surely the responsibility of the QLD government is to encourage employment growth in this state, not by its actions causing a cascading series of events that erode the local industry to a point of complete no confidence.

In summation, this Racing Integrity Bill should be withdrawn and reexamined at length by relevant industry bodies before being considered again. The appointment of board members should be carried out under the current Racing Act as soon as possible.

If it stands in its current form my investment in this industry and those of many others of my scale that I have held discussions with, will transport to NSW and Victoria, to the benefit of their stakeholders and constituents, not Queenslanders.

I am available to present to the committee if requested.

Ross Boucher  
Boucher Family Trust

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