



Speech by
Mike Horan

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

Hansard Tuesday, 28 September 2004

TOOWOOMBA TURF CLUB

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (9.11 p.m.): For many years the Toowoomba Turf Club has not only contributed greatly to the social event of racing in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs but also has been a major contributor to south-east Queensland. With some 600 horses always in work in Toowoomba, it has been the Toowoomba training establishment. The Toowoomba thoroughbred industry has provided many of the runners to metropolitan tracks and the other major provincial tracks.

This past financial year, the Toowoomba Turf Club has made a profit of \$209,000, which is a real credit to the committee for the way in which it runs that club so efficiently. That is after allowing some \$110,000 for depreciation. The Toowoomba Turf Club has only eight per cent of its races with fewer than eight runners per race. The Queensland state average is 16 per cent. That is a real testimony to the administration of the club, the popularity of the club and the popularity of the track.

There is a real inequity in Queensland Racing when it comes to the way in which the Toowoomba Turf Club is provided with funding for the races and the number of races that are held there each Saturday. All the other provincial TAB clubs in Queensland—that is clubs like the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Mackay, Rockhampton and Townsville race clubs—are fully funded for eight races per meeting. The Toowoomba Turf Club, despite its massive contribution to racing in Queensland, is funded for only seven races per meeting.

In addition, all of those major provincial clubs receive \$17,500 per race meeting for the cost of operating their club and the administration of those particular race meetings. The Toowoomba Turf Club receives \$15,000 per meeting. Despite all of that, the club has proved to be one of the most successful clubs in Queensland and, more importantly, makes a massive contribution to the success of racing throughout south-east Queensland.

I call on the Racing Minister and the secretary to the Racing Minister to take note of what I have said tonight and ensure that the Thoroughbred Racing Board gives the Toowoomba Turf Club due equity and respect. Our club should have eight races per Saturday, fully funded like every other provincial TAB club in Queensland. Our club should receive \$17,500 per race meeting for administration costs. If that occurred, then we would be treated equitably and there would be some respect for the contribution that this club makes to thoroughbred racing in Queensland.

I would like to commend the chairman, Mr Neville Stewart, and the committee—and the committee members have all been re-elected—for the magnificent way in which they have run the club to return a profit of over \$200,000, all of which goes back into facilities and into racing. Throughout the past financial year, they have increased the prize money by some \$900 per race through good and efficient management of the club, the obtaining of good sponsorship and the support that the club has received through its good management.