



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2016

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Racing Queensland**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.10 am): This Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of building a stronger racing industry in Queensland. In the 18 months since the Palaszczuk government took office we have acted decisively to implement a series of racing reforms to benefit the entire industry following the live-baiting scandal. In line with the MacSporrán commission of inquiry's recommendations, we have already established a new stand-alone Queensland independent racing commission, QRIC, headed by highly decorated police officer Commissioner Ross Barnett. QRIC is enforcing the strictest animal welfare and integrity regime of any Australian racing jurisdiction.

I am pleased to inform the House that we have also delivered on a key MacSporrán recommendation—namely, the creation of a new board for Racing Queensland. The Racing Queensland Board has been restructured to reflect Racing Queensland's new commercial focus and comprises seven members—four members independent of the racing industry and three members with relevant industry experience. I welcome Ms Sharon Dawson, Ms Susannah George and Mr Max Walters OAM FCA, who were appointed on 1 July 2016 as independent members, and Mr Mark Sowerby, who was appointed as an industry member. They joined existing board members Mr Steve Wilson AM, chair of Racing Queensland, along with industry members Ms Margaret Reynolds and Mr Dale Cartwright.

I am also pleased to announce that Racing Queensland's new Chief Executive Officer, Dr Eliot Forbes, will take up his new role next Monday. Dr Forbes, who is from Queensland, is an internationally renowned racing executive and qualified veterinarian who has held racing industry leadership roles in Australia and abroad, most recently as CEO of Tasracing. His appointment has been widely welcomed by racing industry participants. If the positive feedback I received from racegoers at Eagle Farm on Saturday is any indication, it confirms we are on the right track.

One of the board's key priorities will be to deliver a five-year commercial strategy for the racing industry in Queensland to improve its financial position and secure its long-term viability. The board will also be responsible for developing an annual racing infrastructure plan, which will identify a list of priority infrastructure projects aligned to its commercial strategy.

The new board, CEO and QRIC mark a new era for racing in Queensland. I am confident that together they can take racing in this state to a whole new level. I also look forward to attending the Queensland Thoroughbred Awards this Saturday night at Doomben. This is horseracing's night of nights in Queensland and a great chance to celebrate the tremendous achievements of the state's hardworking and dedicated thoroughbred professionals. I want to wish all of this year's finalists the very best of luck.