




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Women, Racing Industry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.57 am): Racing in Queensland is thriving under the Miles government. We are supporting our \$2.2 billion racing industry, which has grown over 80 per cent since 2015. Not only does racing provide economic and social benefits, particularly to communities in regional Queensland; it also provides workers with incredible career opportunities, including young women in this state. As International Women's Day approaches I am proud to say that, when it comes to racing in Queensland, the Miles government and Racing Queensland are supporting female participation in the racing industry.

It is truly remarkable how far we have come since Pam O'Neill became the first female Australian jockey in 1979. I am pleased to report that today 31 per cent of all senior jockeys in Queensland are women. Even more pleasing is that young women make up 75 per cent of all apprentice jockeys and 87 per cent of all apprentice track work riders taking part in training opportunities through Racing Queensland. The trend of increased female participation is not just isolated to the thoroughbred code. While just 21 per cent of licensed harness racing drivers are women, amongst the up-and-coming concession drivers 41 per cent are female.

At the recent Queensland Harness Awards I presented the Mini Trotting Driver of the Year Award for each of Queensland's three harness racing clubs. All three awards went to brilliant young women: Lorelei Limpus, Briana Davis and Charlee Neaves, who have a great future ahead of them as drivers. In a traditionally male dominated industry, a barrier that women in racing face is the lack of gender equitable facilities at racing clubs such as female change rooms for jockeys. Our racing infrastructure investment has delivered new or refurbished female jockey and driver facilities across the state, including: the Stanthorpe Jockey Club in Southern Downs; Marburg Pacing Association at Ipswich West; the Moranbah Race Club in Burdekin; the Birdsville Race Club in Gregory; and the Laura Amateur Turf Club in Cook.

I am proud of the many trailblazing young women who have made a career in the racing industry. The Miles government and Racing Queensland will continue to back women and build the infrastructure they deserve so they can thrive in this sport. When it comes to racing in Queensland, the future truly is female. While I am on my feet, let me confirm that the excellent Eagle Farm Racecourse is going nowhere—especially not for the ridiculous fire sale price of \$40 million. What I say is: tell them they're dreaming.