




Speech By
Hon. Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Racing Industry

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (10.01 am): On Saturday the Crisafulli government unveiled its plan to ensure the long-term viability of Queensland's \$2.5 billion racing industry. In response to the most substantial review of Queensland racing in more than 25 years, I was proud to deliver *The next lap: a plan for the future of Queensland racing*. The positive response from industry has been overwhelming. Unlike the former Labor government—which had no clear plan for this industry—we are delivering a course of action for racing, which employs over 14,500 hardworking Queenslanders.

In summary: this government is retaining standard and feature prize money for participants; we are delivering new racing infrastructure and establishing a \$200 million Racing Future Fund; we are ensuring Queensland racing governance is more effective and efficient; we are enhancing animal welfare and integrity protocols; and, importantly, we are safeguarding the future of country racing. The members for Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South and you, Mr Speaker, as the member for Condamine, know how important racing is for their regions as it contributes more than \$170 million to the local economy.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr MANDER: I am coming to you, member. That is why we are delivering new lights for the Toowoomba Turf Club, correcting one of many broken promises by those opposite. The club wrote to me this week and they are delighted. I thank the member for Toowoomba North for his advocacy. We are rebuilding the Bundaberg greyhound track—yet another broken promise from Labor—and I thank the member for Burnett for his advocacy. Harness racing now has a bright future, after years of infrastructure neglect under Labor. Harness contributes more than \$233 million to the state and we want to see that grow, which is why we will build a new training centre at Marburg and return harness to Toowoomba. Labor had no plan to fix the grandstand at Eagle Farm, but this government will deliver a new grandstand at our feature track in Queensland. We are also developing Albion Park, after Labor's Olympic infrastructure chaos left the harness industry in limbo about the future home for their sport.

Our measures to ensure Queensland racing governance is more efficient and effective will see RQ and QRIC move to a hybrid model of operation. Animal welfare will be strengthened with a range of new initiatives, continuing the good work shown by industry to protect their racing animals. We are delivering integrity enhancements through major increases to swabbing rates, formal education for stewards and a new stewards bunker—a video referee for racing.

Importantly, we are protecting the future of country racing. Country racing is part of the fabric of this state and it went backwards under Labor. Stakeholders in Gregory, Warrego, Southern Downs, Burdekin, Cook and Callide—plus their local members right across the state—are benefiting from the Crisafulli government's plan for country racing. We are boosting participation, reducing the burden on clubs to run race meetings, providing investment opportunities and addressing workforce shortages.

We are undertaking a major expansion of the highly popular Battle of the Bush Series to include more towns and increase participation. After a decade of broken promises and budget blowouts, the Crisafulli government has delivered a fresh plan for racing. We are a government delivering for Queensland and we will not go back to Labor's decade of decline.