

Question on Notice
No. 225
Asked on Thursday, 22 February 2007

MR HOBBS asked the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport (MR FRASER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the massive vote of support by Members of the Brisbane Turf Club (BTC) condemning the sale of the Doomben Race Course and overwhelmingly voting not to merge while the threat of the same remained and the Courier Mail article of 24 November 2006 that suggested that if BTC members voted not to merge, Queensland Racing (QR) would not allocate any race dates to the course-

- (1) Will he respect the wishes of BTC members to retain their race track and not support QR to cut their race dates?
- (2) Will he also be proactive and explore other avenues of funding to upgrade facilities for Doomben and Eagle Farm, after all the Government did that for Lang Park?

ANSWER:

- (1) I have consistently maintained that the matter of whether the two clubs merge is rightly for the members of both the Queensland Turf Club and Brisbane Turf Club to determine. The issue of race date allocation a matter for the Queensland Racing Ltd. In this context I would point out that NSW and Victoria are now following Queensland's lead in terms of reform of the industry.
- (2) The critical difference here is that Suncorp Stadium is owned by the Queensland Government. The Eagle Farm and Doomben racecourses are not. That's why the sale is not a matter to be determined by the Government, but by the members of the clubs. Similarly, the owners of these racecourses are responsible for the maintenance and upgrading of their assets, not the Queensland Government. If the government did own the courses the upgrade and maintenance of facilities would be undertaken by the government.

It should be noted the Government has transferred racecourse assets to the value of approximately \$60 million to the racing industry since the privatisation of the Queensland TAB in November 1999. Also, the Government provides \$2 million per annum under the Training Track Subsidy Scheme and \$175,000 through the Community Racing Scheme to assist country racing clubs hold race days. In any terms, that is significant support.