

## Question on Notice

No. 319

Asked on 29 March 2023

**MR M BERKMAN** asked the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (HON M FURNER)—

### QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise (a) the policy rationale behind permitting the possession of an electric prod or jigger in the vicinity of horse chutes at rodeos (under the mandatory rodeo code of practice) when it is not permitted at horse race venues (under the Queensland Thoroughbred Rules of Racing) and (b) given that the department has acknowledged difficulties prosecuting offenders for the use of electric prods or jiggers at rodeos due to the requirement to prove that either the electric prod or jigger made contact or was turned on, has the government considered reforms to improve enforcement and better protect rodeo animals?

### ANSWER:

The Queensland Government remains committed to ensuring the welfare of all animals in Queensland, including horses, protecting the reputation of Queensland's animal industries and meeting community expectations.

Queensland's animal welfare law, the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* (the Act) affords high levels of care and protection to all animals in Queensland.

In 2020, the Act was amended to include the use of electric prodders on horses as an act of animal cruelty as recommended by *The Independent inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standardbred horses*, headed by retired District Court Judge Terry Martin SC. This prohibition applies to all places which use horses, including but not limited to rodeos, racetracks and other horse training facilities.

The use of an electric prod on cattle is permitted if certain conditions are met under the Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012, the Code of Practice about cattle (Schedule 2B, Section 11) and the Code of Practice for Rodeos (Schedule 3B, Section 25).

Both cattle and horses are used at rodeos in a variety of events. It is not uncommon for stock contractors to be in possession of an electrical prod to assist in moving cattle which have not moved after using other methods such as handling aids. However, its use on horses for any reason would be illegal. It is incumbent upon rodeo organisers, rodeo officials, stock contractors and competitors to be aware of and comply with the relevant requirements under the Code of Practice for rodeos.

Following the adoption of the Code of Practice for rodeos on 1 January 2020, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has been monitoring compliance with the Code of Practice for rodeos at various rodeos across Queensland.

Where evidence is obtained that supports (to an appropriate standard) that a person has used an electrical prod on a horse, regulatory action is taken.