



Improving the welfare of horses during land transport

Summary of consultation process

In 2024, the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee and Agriculture Ministers Meeting are considering amendments to the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Land Transport of Livestock, specifically the standards and guidelines applicable to horses. A Decision Regulation Impact Statement (DRIS) includes the proposed amendments, and a detailed rationale for the changes, including an evaluation of alternative options. This summary is provided as a quick overview of the targeted and public consultation processes that led to the proposed amendments and informed the analysis in the DRIS.

Consultation in 2021

Prior to releasing the CRIS, the AWTG undertook targeted consultation in February 2021 with the equine industry and livestock transporter stakeholders across Australia. A total of 244 stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on how the standards and guidelines could be improved to better reflect horse welfare. Stakeholders were also asked to suggest any alternative options, as well as types of data the AWTG should collect to support its analysis of horse land transport. The February 2021 consultation paper was based on AWTG's review of scientific research and current international standards and legislation from Europe, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, and the World Animal Health Organisation, as well as findings and recommendations of the *Inquiry into Animal Cruelty in the Management of Retired Thoroughbred and Standardbred Horses* (the Martin Inquiry), and animal welfare inspections and investigations.

Feedback on the consultation paper was received from 85 stakeholder groups and individuals across Australia (see List 1). The proposals in the CRIS were informed by that feedback and evolved significantly based on valuable insights on industry best practice, and on the practical application of research to real-life scenarios.

The AWTG also sought specific feedback on the impacts of the proposals for feral horse and donkey management programs via the national Environment and Invasives Committee. Technical input from the Australian Veterinary Association was also sought on managing the risks of heat stress.


Consultation regulatory impact statement (CRIS) in 2022

The CRIS was open for comment from 16 September to 28 October 2022. A total of 63 submissions were received from a range of stakeholders in response to the proposals in the CRIS (see List 2).

The purpose of the CRIS was to seek feedback, data and input on the options proposed to achieve improvement in the welfare of horses during land transport from the following stakeholders: the equine industry; equestrian groups; the livestock transport industry; transport regulators; animal welfare groups; equine veterinarians; and other interested stakeholders across Australia. The consultation outcomes have provided valuable assistance in the qualitative and quantitative assessment of each option.

Following the consultation period DAF met with several stakeholders to discuss feedback, including with Australian racing authorities, some commercial transporters and equine and veterinary experts. The AWTG has analysed all stakeholder feedback on the CRIS and has used it to develop final policy proposals presented in the Decision RIS.

All stakeholder feedback received during the consultation period for the CRIS has been considered in making final policy recommendations to the Australian Government via the AWTG and Agriculture Ministers' Meeting.



List 1 – Stakeholders who provided a submission to the consultation paper in February 2021

Animal Liberation Queensland
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Qld
Australian Veterinary Industry (AVA) Queensland Division
Animal Welfare Advisory Board (AWAB)
Rudd's Horse Transport
Wild's Livestock Transport
Crane Livestock Transport
AgForce Queensland
Meramist Abattoir
Racing Queensland
Harness Racing Queensland
Donkey Society of Queensland
Lucies Haven Waler Horses & Teamster Donkeys
Equestrian Queensland
Pony Club Queensland
Queensland Racing Integrity Commission
Eddie Gill
Craiglea Stud
Ultimate Horse Transport
Platinum Horse Transport
NSW Police Force
NSW Animal Welfare Advisory Council (AWAC) members (x3)
Magnificent Horse Transport
Cooma Local Land Services
Thoroughbred Racing NT
NT Mounted Police
NT Cattlemen's Association
Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)
Equestrian WA (EWA)
Racing and Wagering WA (RWWA)
WA Horse Council.
Horse SA
TT Line/Spirit of Tasmania
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) TAS
Biosecurity Tasmania
Livestock and Rural Transporters of Victoria
Victorian Police Mounted Branch
Animal Welfare Science Centre
Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc.
RSPCA VIC

Gill Brothers Rodeo
Ron Woodall
Combined Horse Transport
Prestige Horse Transport
Australian Veterinary Association (VIC)
Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (VIC)
Liz Walker (Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (VIC))
Glenys Oogjes (Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (VIC))
Ellen Jongman (University of Melbourne)
Breez Horse Transport
Complete Horse Transport
Harness Breeders Victoria
East Coast Horse Transport
Polocrosse Association of Victoria Inc.
Pony Club Association of Victoria
Joseph Woodall and Sons (Woodall Rodeo Promotions)
Racing Victoria
Animals Australia
Coalition for the Protection of Racehorses
Animals Angels
Animal Care Australia (ACA)
Sentient
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Australia
Animal Health Australia (AHA)
Equine Veterinarians Australia (EVA)
Thoroughbred Welfare Initiative Thoroughbred Aftercare Welfare Working Group
National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR)
Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA)
Cattle Council of Australia
Dr Barbara Padalino
Qld Chamber of Agricultural Societies
Harness Racing Australia
Australian Endurance Riders Association (AERA)
Australian Stock Horse Society Ltd (ASHS)
Australian Campdraft Association (ACA)
Pony Club Australia
Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC)
Julie Fiedler
Meet Our Horse Meat
Australian Equire Unification Scheme
Stan Johnston
Pam Treeby
Arieon Equestrian



List 2 - Stakeholders who provided a submission to the CRIS

Sport, racing and leisure stakeholders

Harness Racing Australia
Harness Racing Victoria
Magic Millions Sales Pty Ltd
Queensland Racing Integrity Commission
Racing and Wagering Western Australia
Racing Australia
Racing Queensland
Racing South Australia
Racing Victoria
Thoroughbred Breeders Australia
Thoroughbred Breeders Western Australia
Thoroughbred Racing Northern Territory
Western Australian Racehorse Trainers/Western Australia Racing Trainers Association Incorporated
Animal Care Australia
Animal Liberation Queensland
Animals Australia
Animals' Angels Australia
Australian Equine Unification Scheme
Coalition for the Protection of Racehorses
FarmedWell/Minderoo

Meet our Horse Meat
Project Horse Welfare Victoria
RSPCA Australia
RSPCA Queensland
Sentient
World Horse Welfare
Australian Veterinary Association
Horse, Livestock and Bird Import Program (Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry)
New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service
Animal Emergency Incident Management Network
Australian Horse Industry Council
Western Australia Horse Council
Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association
Combined Horse Transport
East Coast Transport
Goldners Transport
Magnificent Horse Transport
TT-Line Company Pty Ltd
AgForce
Australian Agricultural Company
Meramist Pty Ltd
Individuals (22)