

Ref: MA-IB20-000270

QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)
11-01 s. 47G(1)(a) - Martin report

QUESTION: Are you aware of allegations of animal cruelty at an abattoir in Queensland?

KEY POINTS:

- The Liberal and Nationals Government does not condone the mistreatment of animals.
- The video footage aired by the ABC's 7.30 report relating to the mistreatment of former racing and harness horses at an export-registered abattoir in Queensland is confronting and upsetting. We all want to see good animal welfare.
- My department has an ongoing investigation relating to the animal welfare issues depicted in the 7:30 Report.
- I understand that the report of Queensland's Independent Inquiry into Equine Welfare (Martin Report) will be released shortly. Neither I nor my department have seen the report and I await its recommendations.
- My department made a written submission to the Independent Inquiry into Equine Welfare, and responded to requests for additional information.
- The Australian public has the right to expect that animals are treated humanely at all times.
- State and territory governments are responsible for animal production and welfare legislation and enforcing animal welfare laws.
- My department is responsible for ensuring the Australian export standards are complied with.
- I have full confidence that this matter will be investigated thoroughly.
- My department has informed Australia's major export market for horse meat, the European Union, of the reported animal cruelty incidents and has undertaken to provide updates as needed.
- I would urge anyone with evidence or concerns about animal welfare to report it immediately to the relevant state jurisdiction so that it can be acted upon quickly.

If asked — Do you support a Royal Commission into the Race Horsing Industry?

- The welfare of all horses is important and there is already work underway looking at the race horse industry.
- I welcome the report into the feasibility of a national horse traceability register released by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport on 27 November 2019.

[DLM]

- My predecessor has previously communicated with state and territory agriculture and racing ministers about the urgent need to establish a national horse traceability register.
- The recommendations of the Senate inquiry report will help inform the development of the most effective model for a national traceability scheme.
- My predecessor and her state and territory agriculture ministerial colleagues agreed to undertake a review into the implementation of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock for horses.

s. 47C(1)

s. 33(a)(iii)

s. 47C(1)

s. 47C(1)

BACKGROUND:

- On Thursday 17 October 2019, the ABC's 7.30 report aired an investigation into the mistreatment of former racing and harness horses.
- The footage included mistreatment both prior to entering the Queensland export meat processing establishment and in the establishment itself. The department has written to the ABC requiring a copy of all video footage in relation to the mistreatment of horses at this establishment.

s. 37(2)(b), s. 47G(1)(a)

s. 47B(a)

CONTACT: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) PHONE: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) DIVISION: Exports
DATE: 6/2/2020 DEPARTMENTAL INPUT CLEARED BY: Fran Freeman

[DLM]

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11-01 s. 47G(1)(a) - Martin report

QUESTION: Are you aware of allegations of animal cruelty at an abattoir in Queensland?

KEY POINTS:

- The Liberal and Nationals Government does not condone the mistreatment of animals.
- The video footage aired by the ABC's 7.30 report relating to the mistreatment of former racing and harness horses at an export-registered abattoir in Queensland is confronting and upsetting. We all want to see good animal welfare.
- The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has an ongoing investigation relating to the animal welfare issues depicted in the 7:30 Report.
- The Queensland Government released the report into the Independent Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standards horses in Queensland (Martin Report) on 7 February 2020.
 - My department is currently considering the report and its 55 recommendations.
- The independent inquiry examined the regulatory and oversight arrangements of abattoirs and other facilities accepting horses for slaughter, and the management of retired racehorses in Queensland, including horses moved from interstate.
 - My department made a written submission to the inquiry and responded to requests for additional information.
- I look forward to discussing horse traceability at the Agriculture Ministers' Forum later this month.
- I welcome efforts by the thoroughbred industry to establish a taskforce to facilitate a national discussion on horse welfare. There are a range of welfare issues that the industry can tackle—particularly the question of horses at the end of their racing career.
- The Australian public has the right to expect that animals are treated humanely at all times.

[DLM]

- State and territory governments are responsible for animal production and welfare legislation and enforcing animal welfare laws.
- My department is responsible for ensuring the Australian export standards are complied with.
- I have full confidence that my department's ongoing regulatory investigation will thoroughly examine the welfare issues identified in the 7.30 Report.
- My department has informed Australia's major export market for horse meat, the European Union, of the reported animal cruelty incidents and has undertaken to provide updates as needed.
- I would urge anyone with evidence or concerns about animal welfare to report it immediately to the relevant state jurisdiction so that it can be acted upon quickly.

If asked — Do you support a Royal Commission into the Race Horning Industry?

- The welfare of all horses is important and there is already work underway looking at the race horse industry.
- I welcome the report into the feasibility of a national horse traceability register released by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport on 27 November 2019.
- My predecessor has previously communicated with state and territory agriculture and racing ministers about the urgent need to establish a national horse traceability register.
- The recommendations of the Senate inquiry report will help inform the development of the most effective model for a national traceability scheme.
 - My predecessor and her state and territory agriculture ministerial colleagues agreed to undertake a review into the implementation of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock for horses.

If asked — What are you doing about the slippage in racehorses through to slaughterhouses and abattoirs?

- Together with my state and territory agriculture ministerial colleagues, my predecessor wrote to racing ministers in early November to urge them to consider the establishment of a national racehorse register.

s. 47C(1)

s. 33(a)(iii)

s. 47C(1)

BACKGROUND:

- On Thursday 17 October 2019, the ABC's 7.30 report aired an investigation into the mistreatment of former racing and harness horses.
- The footage included mistreatment both prior to entering the Queensland export meat processing establishment and in the establishment itself. The department has written to the ABC requiring a copy of all video footage in relation to the mistreatment of horses at this establishment.

s. 37(2)(b), s. 47G(1)(a)

- The department informed the EU on 24 October 2019, of the matters aired in the ABC's 7.30 Report and has undertaken to provide updates as required.
- A senate inquiry into the feasibility of a National Horse Traceability Register released its report to Parliament on 27 November 2019. Agreement on a mandatory identification and traceability scheme for horses has been difficult due to the potential costs to the public and the lack of agreement on voluntary standards for horse microchipping.

- The Queensland Government conducted an independent inquiry into the regulatory and oversight arrangements of abattoirs and other facilities accepting horses for slaughter, and the management of retired racehorses in Queensland, including horses moved from interstate.
 - The department made a written submission and provided additional information and clarification.
 - The report was published on 7 February 2020 and the department is currently considering the reports and its 55 recommendations.

s. 47B(a)

CONTACT: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) PHONE: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) DIVISION: Exports
DATE: 11/02/2020 DEPARTMENTAL INPUT CLEARED BY: Andrew Patterson

Ref: MA-IB20-000270

QUESTION TIME BRIEF (QTB)
11-01 s. 47G(1)(a) - Martin report

QUESTION: Are you aware of allegations of animal cruelty at an abattoir in Queensland?

KEY POINTS:

- The Australian Government does not condone the mistreatment of animals.
- The video footage aired by the ABC's 7.30 report relating to the mistreatment of former racing and harness horses at an export-registered abattoir in Queensland is confronting and upsetting. We all want to see good animal welfare.
- The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has completed its investigation relating to the animal welfare issues depicted in the 7:30 Report.

s. 37(2)(b)

- Requiring compliance with the Industry Animal Welfare Standards for Livestock Processing Establishments will ensure greater animal welfare outcomes throughout the abattoirs entire supply chain, and provide greater assurance to export markets.
- The Queensland Government released the report into the Independent Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standards horses in Queensland (Martin Report) on 7 February 2020.
 - My department is currently considering the report and its 55 recommendations.
 - The Queensland Government fully supported, supported in-part or supported in-principle all recommendations by the inquiry.
- The independent inquiry examined the regulatory and oversight arrangements of abattoirs and other facilities accepting horses for slaughter, and the management of retired racehorses in Queensland, including horses moved from interstate.
 - My department made a written submission to the inquiry and responded to requests for additional information.

[DLM]

s. 47B(a)

- I welcome efforts by the thoroughbred industry to establish a taskforce to facilitate a national discussion on horse welfare. There are a range of welfare issues that the industry can tackle—particularly the question of horses at the end of their racing career.
- The Australian public has the right to expect that animals are treated humanely at all times.
- State and territory governments are responsible for animal production and welfare legislation and enforcing animal welfare laws.
- My department is responsible for ensuring the Australian export standards are complied with.
- My department has informed Australia’s major export market for horse meat, the European Union, of the reported animal cruelty incidents and has undertaken to provide updates as needed.
- I would urge anyone with evidence or concerns about animal welfare to report it immediately to the relevant state jurisdiction so that it can be acted upon quickly.

If asked — Do you support a Royal Commission into the Race Horsing Industry?

- The welfare of all horses is important and there is already work underway looking at the race horse industry.

- I welcome the report into the feasibility of a national horse traceability register released by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport on 27 November 2019.

s. 47B(a)

- The recommendations of the Senate inquiry report will help inform the development of the most effective model for a national traceability scheme.
- Queensland will lead the development of Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Processing Establishments. Queensland will also lead a review of the suitability for horses of the existing Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock

If asked — What are you doing about the slippage in racehorses through to slaughterhouses and abattoirs?

- Together with my state and territory agriculture ministerial colleagues, my predecessor wrote to racing ministers in early November to urge them to consider the establishment of a national racehorse register.

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 - The report was published on 7 February 2020 and the department is currently considering the reports and its 55 recommendations.

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DATE: 21/02/2020 DEPARTMENTAL INPUT CLEARED BY: Andrew Patterson

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- The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has completed its investigation relating to the animal welfare issues depicted in the 7:30 Report and regulatory action against the export-registered abattoir has been undertaken.

s. 37(2)(b)

s. 37(2)(b)

- The Queensland Government released the report into the Independent Inquiry into animal cruelty in the management of retired Thoroughbred and Standards horses in Queensland (Martin Report) on 7 February 2020.
 - My department is currently considering the report and its 55 recommendations.
 - The Queensland Government fully supported, supported in-part or supported in-principle all recommendations by the inquiry.

[DLM]

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CONTACT: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) PHONE: s. 22(1)(a)(ii) DIVISION: Exports
DATE: 26/02/2020 DEPARTMENTAL INPUT CLEARED BY: Nicola Hinder

[DLM]