

19 March 2013

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
PO Box 6201
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission No. 19

(Quarantine Facility)

Date: 19/03/13

Dear Secretary

RE: Construction of a new post-entry quarantine facility at Michleham, Victoria.

Equestrian Australia (EA) welcomes the opportunity to provide input in relation to the post entry quarantine facility currently under consideration by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

A recognized national sporting organization (NSO) for equestrian sport in Australia, EA represents its 6 State Branches and more than 17,000 members, coaches and officials who participate in and or have business in equestrian sport.

Equestrian Australia fully supports the steps taken by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to ensure biosecurity for Australia remains of the highest standards and is based on sound science.

Equestrian Australia's international standing on the world sporting stage requires significant travel by elite riders to the top international competitions across the globe.

Further to this, EA aims to build its international competition here in Australia to increase our standing within the Asia-Pacific group, which would further increase the number of international horses travelling to Australia.

For these reasons, EA proposes the following considerations to be further investigated as part of the consultation process:

1. Incorporation of a multi-purpose training arena of 80x50metres

By allowing a multi-purpose training arena to be included inside the quarantine facilities will allow horses to recover quicker from long haul flights and ensure they can remain competition fitness. The major deterrent in attracting international riders and for Australian based owners sending their horses to overseas events, is the inability to allow horses to be worked while in quarantine and therefore reducing the preparation for major competitions.

2. Accommodation and other appropriate amenities provided for grooms

Grooms having 24/7 access to the horses while in quarantine is of the highest importance. Horse welfare is of primary concern to all our members and owners and allowing the grooms to have the adequate facilities to monitor the horses around the clock is crucial.

Reaction time to any instances must be immediate and can only be done efficiently if grooms are onsite. While we acknowledge that the current documentation does provide 24/7 access and accommodation close by, sleeping facilities onsite are important in order to support the staff during the stressful time of quarantine.

As a member of the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC), EA supports the views expressed by AHIC in their letter dated 19 March 2013 and also shares the concerns raised by EA's preferred transportation company IRT and fellow industry body Harness Racing Australia.

EA again welcomes the new facility and sees it as essential to the equine industry. We hope to be able to work collaboratively with the Government and other equine leaders to bring about a facility that best meets the needs of all stakeholders.

Regards

Grant Baldock
CEO
Equestrian Australia