

MEDIA RELEASE



Tuesday, 24th October 2019

National Horse Register will not stop horses being slaughtered.

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

Shocking horse slaughter footage has filled our TV screens and social media pages in recent days. The Meramist Abattoir is now under investigation, resulting in calls for the National Horse Register to provide transparency, and prevent horses having to be needlessly slaughtered.

But can a microchip and a database of how many times a horse has been sold really accomplish that?

The handling and method of destruction of a number of the horses featured this week is (or should certainly be) illegal. It's not standard practice, or industry supported. Improving welfare of all horses throughout their life, including at the point of slaughter clearly requires our attention.

Racing NSW is on the defensive stating it is unable to trace its registered horses once they leave the racing industry and therefore isn't responsible. Tracing animals where the source organisation wishes and funds a no slaughter policy requires a robust registration system combined with appropriate legislative sticks.

While racehorses are currently the focus, there is another unpalatable side to the horse industry. Overwhelming numbers of horses bred specifically for the recreational and equestrian sport market are also slaughtered as they are bred in huge quantities resulting in increasing numbers of unwanted horses. Re-homing is a limited part of the solution - horse owners are struggling to feed their own animals; they simply cannot adopt more. There are not hundreds of sanctuaries waiting with open arms to take every unwanted, failed racehorse, sporting horse or rejected pet.

The proposed National Horse Register must be accompanied by suitable systems and regulation supported by all states, and by the horse community if it is to achieve what it hopes to. Animal Care Australia supports the Register only if it is introduced alongside consistent related legislation, in all states, to ensure a robust system. Promote, educate and encourage responsible breeding and horse ownership. Make a horse valuable and not just a throw-away commodity. Change the culture. This is what improves welfare.

Animal Care Australia is a national incorporated association representing the interests of all animal hobbyists and encourages the welfare of all animals within our care. The association has a strong committee composed of representatives for each major animal group. Via our member clubs we represent some 150,000 people.

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For further information contact Animal Care Australia
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