



Hon. Robert Swarten MP
Member for Rockhampton



**Queensland
Government**

Ref: 01950/04

**Minister for Public Works,
Housing and Racing**

02 SEP 2004

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to the petition concerning the alleged removal by Queensland Racing of sponsorship funds raised by Moranbah Race Club which was tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 18 August 2004, as paper number 351-04.

As a secretary of a race club, Ms Beryl Stott would be aware that the State Government is not involved in the day to day management of the racing industry and does not allocate race dates or prize money. The *Racing Act 2002* passed unanimously by Parliament is the Government policy, by which control bodies have the responsibility to manage and regulate their code of racing.

Notwithstanding this, as a result of enquiries made of Queensland Racing in relation to this matter, I am advised that the petition incorrectly states the facts regarding Moranbah Race Club's application to add additional prize money for its 28 August 2004 race meeting.

Queensland Racing has addressed the Moranbah Race Club's claims in a news release, a copy of which is enclosed, and can be accessed through Queensland Racing's website at www.queenslandracing.com.au.

I am informed that Queensland Racing only directs non-TAB race clubs to limit the level of prize money for a race meeting when it assesses that the higher prize money level would adversely impact on the quality and outcome of a programmed TAB race meeting.

As people who derive a livelihood from the racing industry know, it is the revenue generated by TAB meetings that funds the vast majority of prize money, capital works, marketing and administration for both TAB and non-TAB (country) racing.

I trust this information addresses your enquiry. If I can be of assistance with other matters within my portfolio, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely

Robert Swarten MP
**Minister for Public Works,
Housing and Racing**

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Moranbah Race Club Comments 'Sadly Misinformed'

THE Chairman of the Board of Queensland Racing, Mr Bob Bentley, today rejected claims Queensland Racing had prevented the Moranbah Race Club from adding to their allocated prize money, describing them as 'sadly misinformed'.

"At no time was the Moranbah Race Club advised by Queensland Racing that extra prize money could not be added to the program," he said

The facts are:

- o The Secretary of the Moranbah Race Club, Beryl Stott, contacted Queensland Racing prior to the May deadline for the June edition of the Queensland Racing Magazine, advising she was unaware of the total sponsorship available for the 28 August 2004 race meeting.
- o She was advised to make application for the extra prize money once she was aware of the Cattlemen's Union sponsorship.
- o Ms Stott contacted Queensland Racing on Wednesday 14 July 2004, when she was advised \$7,000 in sponsorship could be added to bolster Queensland Racing's \$20,000 allocation to a total of \$27,000. Queensland Racing advised \$1,000 could be added to each of the four (4) support races and \$3,000 to the feature race on the program.

The Member for Charters Towers, Mr Shane Knuth, had contacted Queensland Racing's Country Racing Manager, Mr Darcy Tyrrell, on 14 July 2004 and raised his concerns.

Mr Tyrrell informed him there was no difficulty adding \$7000 to the prize pool.

Mr Bentley said the decision to reduce the number of race dates for Moranbah from five to two for the 2003-04 racing season was based on recommendations from the Central West Queensland Racing Association and the Queensland Regional Racing Council.

He said the Moranbah Race Club had not made any submissions to Queensland Racing when it was conducting its Review of Race Date Schedule for the 2003-04 racing season in January.

Mr Bentley said that during the 2001-2002 racing season almost 50 per cent of races run at non-TAB meetings had less than the targeted benchmark of six runners and more than 30 meetings were cancelled because of lack of nominations and acceptances. In the 2002 financial year – over \$500,000 was lost to industry participants due to insufficient nominations or acceptors.

Mr Bentley said each cancellation because of lack of nominations costs the owners, trainers and jockeys about \$20,000. That did not include the costs individual clubs outlaid for advertising, catering etc.

Since the changes introduced by Queensland Racing on August 1 2003 – fewer than 12 per cent of non-TAB races have had less than six starters in a race.

He said prize money had been increased by 33 per cent to \$4000 per race in 2003; a starters' rebate had been introduced, which has slashed the cost of starting a horse from \$88 to \$18 at most tracks; and the QTIS Scheme had been expanded to include bonus stakes for eligible four-year-olds at designated country or non-TAB meetings from July 2003.

QUEENSLAND Racing web news: For further information, contact Country Racing Manager Darcy Tyrrell on (07) 3869 9720.