



In the past 12 months Horse SA has continued to communicate on all levels with local and state government areas as an advocate on issues of broad importance to horse owners.

The Office for Recreation & Sport (ORS) continues to support Horse SA each year with a grant, for which we thank the Minister, as it enables us to carry out valuable work to support healthy active lifestyles. **ORS** has moved in with the Department for Planning & Local Government. This move follows on from the state government's desire to roll out the State Infrastructure Plan and related strategies. It will be as important as ever for all sectors of the horse industry to have solid forward plans for all levels of facilities and take an active part in planning related issues to keep our profile high. Horse SA currently has a survey online to help develop an overarching picture for horse venues & activities in the state. The results will feed directly into state & local government forward planning, so you are encouraged to take part. It is noted with concern that the Trails Unit within ORS has now been effectively dissolved with no dedicated staff remaining.

Primary Industries & Resources SA (PIRSA) is seeking, as a result of a directive of Treasury SA, to introduce an animal health fee. It is proposed to change the Livestock Act so effectively the majority of those who possess a Property Identification Code will be further charged. HorseSA, along with all other animal industry groups, are actively opposing this.

Fees aside, Dr Mary Carr of PIRSA is doing some excellent research work on the *Kunjin* virus, which has killed 81 horses nationally in the last 12 months.

Emergency response roles are under review. PIRSA and RSPCA will form part of a secondary level response unit should a bushfire or other natural disaster occur. The Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue workshops and establishment of a large animal emergency shelter manual are two ways that Horse SA is moving to meet responsibilities being shifted to the not-for-profit sector.

The Department for Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) is working on a state-wide Visitor Strategy & *Linking Adelaide with Nature* Strategy. There is unlikely to be any outcomes of note for horse riders as the conservation movement continues to drive a strong lobby agenda not matched by the horse riders. There are currently no overnight horse camps on any DENR land, the permit system does not easily facilitate casual access and the horse riding policy remains draft form (after 12 years).

Forestry SA continues to provide campsite upgrades including additional yards and roads installed at Kuitpo Forest recently. However, Horse SA is concerned about equity of riders having to pay, where other trail users are not charged to enter the forests.

Meetings have been held with **Planning SA** to gain a more formalised planning recognition for horse activities, including trails and public agistment. Frequent contact is had with all the **major horse keeping council** areas as part of ongoing management of the Kidman Trail & Tom Roberts Horse Trail network. Thank you to local horse riders who are active in their suburb or region on local issues such as illegal road closures, trail maintenance issues and local public consultations & meetings. The Northern & Hills horse owners forums held this year have enabled horse owners to meet directly with local government officials.

A number of substantial **resources for horse owners** were developed this last year, including the *Urban Horse Keeping Guide*, the *Racing Industry Employer's Toolkit*, a *Guide for Horse Organisations on Community Land* and with funding support from the SA Endurance Riders, a *Horse Event Organiser's Toolkit*.

At a **national level**, Horse SA facilitated the writing of the *Australian Horse Welfare Protocol*, a welfare guide for horse organisations and participation in roll out of horse related activities associated with the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy.

All horse organisations are to be congratulated for their involvement in bringing the signing of the **Emergency Animal Disease Response Cost Sharing Agreement** to fruition in Canberra last March, which also saw the launch of the *Horse Venue Biosecurity Workbook*, of which Horse SA was the primary author.

The Australian Horse Industry Research & Development Trust set up by Horse SA encourages and supports investment in equine research - to improve horse health, to underpin the knowledge needed for horse ownership in our demanding and fast moving society, and to meet challenges provided by the increasing critique of animal welfare activists.

During the coming year, a number of **educational workshops, industry promotion & networking events** will be provided for horse owners & organisations. This includes our annual involvement with the Adelaide Show Yellow Brick Road. An increase of 6% in show bag sales in 2011 saw around 13,000 bags of carrots given out – we estimate 30,000 plus people passed through the Horse SA site. The State Horse Centre precinct concept is still alive, and will pick up again following the revamping of cattle facilities at Wayville.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the retiring Committee for their contribution, with particular mention of Graham Evans, Treasurer, Peter Oborn, chair of Finance Subcommittee, Helen Whittle, who looks after marketing, and Executive officer, Julie Fiedler, along with the many other volunteers who attend meetings, get out and do trail maintenance work, write letters or advocate for the broader horse industry & community.

I look forward to 2012 and the challenges and opportunities it presents to us.

Denis Edmonds
Chairperson Horse SA
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