

SUBMISSION TO THE

**Senate Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

***INTERACTIVE GAMBLING AMENDMENT
BILL 2016***

SUBMISSION OF
HARNESS RACING AUSTRALIA
21 NOVEMBER 2016



Thank you for the opportunity for Harness Racing Australia (HRA) to provide a submission in response to the *Interactive Gambling Amendment Bill 2016*.

HRA represents more than 48,400 individuals who are involved in the process of producing and preparing standardbreds for racing in Australia. Of these, there are 24,000 owners of standardbred racehorses who provide significant capital investment into the industry, over 5,900 trainers and drivers and more than 5,500 breeders. The process of producing and preparing standardbred racehorses to compete in the industry is worth more than half a billion dollars in direct expenditure alone to the Australian economy. The majority of this is spent in regional Australia.¹

The racing industry's unique relationship with wagering means that the views of HRA with regards this Amendment are predicated on ensuring our business is sustainable and continues to provide meaningful employment for the tens of thousands of Australians who depend on the industry for their livelihoods. This is achieved by devoting substantial resources to integrity and by providing broad powers to Stewards.

However, to be truly effective in underpinning the industry's revenue base, effective legislation and regulation is also required, including those proposed via the *Interactive Gambling Amendment Bill 2016* – and as such HRA supports the proposed amendments in *the Bill*.

In supporting *the Bill*, HRA regards this is a first step and reasonable start toward effective legislative reform to curb illegal wagering and minimise harm - but hopes that greater emphasis will be placed on disruption strategies such as recommendations 18 & 19 made by the Hon Barry O'Farrell in the *Review of the Impact of Illegal Offshore Wagering*.

With an ever changing wagering landscape, HRA looks forward to further engagement and focus to “reduce the scope of illegal offshore gambling activity.....through a range of disruptive and deterrent measures and strong enforcement of regulation”².

¹ Size & Scope of the Harness Racing Industry in Australia, IER Pty Ltd, May 2013.

² Interactive Gambling Act Amendment Bill 2016, Outline, Pg. 1, Nov. 2016.