



QUEENSLAND RACING
INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Regulatory Performance Report

2024-2025

Introduction

This report has been prepared to meet the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission's ("QRIC") reporting obligations under the Queensland Government's Regulator Performance Framework, which is a key element of the Better Regulation Strategy.

QRIC is an independent statutory body established under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* (Qld) which oversees the integrity of racing in Queensland and safeguards the welfare of racing animals.

The purposes of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016* are to:

- maintain public confidence in the racing of animals in Queensland for which betting is lawful; and
- ensure the integrity of all persons involved with racing or betting under this Act or the *Racing Act 2002*; and
- safeguard the welfare of all animals involved in racing under this Act or the *Racing Act 2002*.

Model practice1:

Ensure Regulatory Activity is Proportionate to Risk and Minimises Unnecessary Burden

Supporting principles:

- a proportionate approach is applied to compliance activities, engagement and regulatory enforcement actions.
- regulations do not unnecessarily impose on regulated entities.
- regulatory approaches are updated and informed by intelligence gathering so that effort is focused towards risk.

Evidence to support alignment with regulator model practices

In the 2024-25 reporting period, the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC) continued to ensure that its regulatory activities were proportionate to risk and minimised unnecessary burden. This commitment was reflected in QRIC's targeted compliance activities, streamlined processes, and intelligence-led decision making, all of which were designed to uphold the integrity of the racing industry while supporting participants to meet their obligations.

Throughout 2024-25, of the 2,942 stable and kennel inspections conducted, 99% resulted in no further action, demonstrating QRIC's focus on supporting participants to achieve compliance without unnecessary enforcement. This reflects QRIC's commitment to applying enforcement actions that are appropriate to the level of risk and harm associated with each case. QRIC's Appropriate and Proportionate Enforcement Policy guides staff in determining how and when enforcement action is utilised, and the most appropriate enforcement action to be taken in any given circumstances when voluntary compliance fails. Any enforcement action taken by QRIC will be based on the level of harm presented by the breach and the culpability level of the participant.

QRIC's commitment to proportionate and risk-based regulation was further demonstrated through its targeted sampling program for prohibited substances. In 2024-25, this program focused on high-risk events and participants, resulting in a 31% increase in detections compared to the previous year.

QRIC also prioritised minimising unnecessary regulatory burden on participants. In 2024-25 QRIC implemented a streamlined online licensing system. This initiative simplifies the application process for participants, making it easier and more efficient for them to meet their regulatory obligations.

QRIC has standards in place for racing bookmakers and licensees of each code of racing. The standards explain how QRIC assesses applications from persons seeking to participate in the Queensland racing industry and how QRIC audits the ongoing suitability of licensed/registered animals and participants.

In addition to its work with industry participants, QRIC continued to prioritise the welfare of racing animals through its enforcement of the Equine Traceability Enforcement Standard. This Standard ensures the effective enforcement of the traceability rules so that QRIC can safeguard the welfare of horses that are of have been involved in racing under the *Racing Integrity Act 2016*.

Model practice 2:

Consult and Engage Meaningfully with Stakeholders

Supporting principles:

- formal and informal consultation and engagement mechanisms are in place to allow for the full range of stakeholder input and Government decision making circumstances.
- engagement is undertaken in ways that assist regulators develop a genuine understanding of the operating environment of regulated entities.
- cooperative and collaborative relationships are established with stakeholders, including other regulators, to promote trust and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory framework.

Evidence to support alignment with regulator model practices

During 2024-25 QRIC demonstrated the commitment to working collaboratively to engage and educate as an organisation by communicating and sharing information to strengthen the racing industry. QRIC has established clear channels of communications across the breadth of the industry; ensuring the highest level of animal care; sound integrity, safety, strong industry growth, and sustainability.

In September 2024, QRIC's new leadership team was appointed to reset and refocus QRIC. The Commissioners immediate priorities were connecting with the racing community to establish great working relationships and to listen to their views and what is required to support stronger integrity performance. This included site visits to Longreach, Townsville, Cairns, Toowoomba and Rockhampton, in addition to metropolitan racetracks across all three codes.

The anonymous Report Something portal was created in early 2024 to serve as QRIC's centralised platform or the racing industry to submit complaints and share intelligence. The information provided by the racing community through Report Something supports QRIC in safeguarding the welfare of racing animals and ensuring the integrity of Queensland racing.

Report Something plays a crucial role in enabling QRIC to fulfill its statutory responsibilities, including investigating complaints relevant to the three racing codes, such as those involving license holders. In the 2024-25 period, QRIC received 678 intelligence reports from the industry, as defined by section 10(1)(d) of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016 (Qld)*, with an average report turnaround time of 45.6 business days. In addition to intelligence gathering, Report Something also received 828 reports.

In 2024-25, QRIC engaged with stakeholders through the publication of various proactive media releases and media responses, released campaign emails to industry regarding industry related topics, published information in Race, Pace and Chase (which are monthly Thoroughbred, Harness and Greyhound industry magazines), as well as the hosting of a series of greyhound adoption events in southeast Queensland.

In 2024-25, QRIC proactively released a number of media releases, detailing positive activity to ensure animal welfare and the integrity of the racing industry.

The positive impacts of QRIC's compliance activities and efforts to educate the broader community are seen in the QRIC 2024-25 Community Perceptions Survey, in which 2,000 Queenslanders were polled on racing integrity, with the following results:

1. Across the Queensland population, 30% believe the integrity of Queensland racing has improved in the past 12 months. This is a significant improvement compared to 2024.
2. Community confidence that racing is run with integrity in Queensland has slipped slightly in 2025 to 59%, from 63% in 2024. It remains higher compared to 2023.
2. Four out of ten (39%) are satisfied with QRIC's activities around education, engagement and compliance and 31% are satisfied that QRIC has tools and resources to protect racing integrity and animal welfare.

Model practice 3:

Provide Appropriate Information and Support to Assist Compliance

Supporting principles:

- clear and timely guidance and support is accessible to stakeholders and tailored to meet the needs of the target audience.
- advice is consistent and, where appropriate, decisions are communicated in a manner that clearly articulates what is required to achieve compliance.
- where appropriate, regulatory approaches are tailored to ensure compliance activities do not proportionately burden particular stakeholders (e.g. small business) or require specialist advice.

Evidence to support alignment with regulator model practices

QRIC continues to deliver educational materials to support and promote the integrity of racing by ensuring consistent and fair administration of the Rules of Racing, and to promote best practice in safeguarding animal welfare. The use of education and awareness nurtures voluntary compliance and allows QRIC to make best use of its enforcement resources. This approach also aims to enhance public confidence in the Queensland racing industry.

QRIC's Compliance Assurance Team (CAT) are a team of Stewards tasked with investigating allegations of misconduct including animal welfare concerns and non-compliance of the *Racing Integrity Act 2016*, *Racing Integrity Amendment Act 2002* and the Rules of Racing. The number of investigations underway and completed for the 2024-25 period increased by 177% compared with 2022-23.

QRIC continues to expand its oversight of the racing industry, adjudicating on approximately 30 race meetings every week, with almost 50,000 participants across the state, and 23,460 calls received and responded to by the Licensing and Registration team throughout the year. Through ongoing improvements, QRIC is working to raise the standard of animal welfare, participant safety and integrity in Queensland racing. In the 2024-25 financial year, QRIC processed 17,658 animal registration and 4,465 licence applications.

Through a calendar of formal education campaigns, industry notices and the already established professional associations our staff have with industry participants and groups representing industry participants, QRIC ensures participants remain informed about regulatory updates, compliance requirements, and best practice.

Existing education and awareness materials published on QRIC's website includes, but is not limited to, content on:

- Licensing Standards for each code of racing
- Rules of Racing for each code of racing (national and local)
- Biosecurity requirements
- Prohibited substances
- Greyhound socialisation and rehoming
- Identifying and treating heat stress

Model practice 4:

Commit to Continuous Improvement

Supporting principles:

- regular review of the approach to regulatory activities, collaboration with stakeholders and other regulators to ensure it is appropriately risk-based, leverages technological innovation and remains the best approach to achieving policy outcomes.
- to the extent possible, reform of regulatory activities is prioritised on the basis of impact on stakeholders and the community.
- staff have the necessary training and support to effectively, efficiently and consistently perform their duties.

Evidence to support alignment with regulator model practices

QRIC remains committed to continuous improvement in its regulatory activities, ensuring that its approach is risk-based, innovate, and aligned with best practices to achieve outcomes. Through regular reviews, collaboration with stakeholders, and investment in staff training and development, QRIC continues to refine its processes and enhance its capability to deliver effective and efficient regulatory oversight.

QRIC continues to employ a full-time Internal Auditor, who provides independent and objective assurance to QRIC, QRIC's Executives and the Audit and Risk Committee on risk management, control, and governance processes. The Internal Auditor conducts reviews of QRIC's regulatory activities in collaboration with stakeholders to ensure compliance with regulatory obligations and implement best practice processes.

In conjunction with Racing Queensland, QRIC's Cadet Stewards program offers a Certificate III qualification for those seeking on-the-job training in a dynamic and rewarding industry. The program is growing rapidly, welcoming 3 new cadets in 2024-25. The program provides competencies in communication, disciplinary decisions, procedural fairness, workplace health and safety and investigations, inquiries and appeals.

QRIC also collaborates with the Australian Industry Trade College to educate high school students interested in vocational study on career and training pathways within the racing industry, with a view to future-proof the state's integrity operations.

QRIC has conducted its annual review of its Legislative Compliance Framework, Legislative Compliance Policy and Procedure, and Legislative Register and made necessary amendments to ensure accuracy and currency. The updated documents have been loaded to QRIC's intranet.

Through its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, QRIC has demonstrated its dedication to maintaining a risk-based, innovate, and stakeholder-focused approach to regulation. By investing in staff development, leveraging technology, and collaborating with stakeholders, QRIC continues to enhance its capacity to deliver effective and efficient regulatory oversight, ensuring integrity and sustainability of Queensland's racing industry.

Model practice 5:

Be Transparent and Accountable in Actions

Supporting principles:

- where appropriate, regulatory frameworks and timeframes for making regulatory decisions are published to provide certainty to stakeholders.
- decisions are provided in a timely manner, clearly articulating expectations and the underlying reasons for decisions.
- indicators of regulatory performance are publicly available.

Evidence to support alignment with regulator model practices

QRIC remains committed to transparency and accountability in its regulatory activities, ensuring that stakeholders have access to clear information about regulatory activities and decision-making processes, by publishing key documents, providing timely decisions. QRIC continues to uphold its commitment to integrity and accountability.

QRIC's website continues to serve as a central platform for transparency, outlining the organisations priorities and publishing key documents such as the Strategic Plan 2024-2028 and the Annual Report.

To ensure transparency in enforcement activities, QRIC publishes Stewards' Reports and Internal Review outcomes on its website. These reports provide detailed information on compliance actions, including the rationale behind decisions and the expectations for achieving compliance.

QRIC also publishes a range of key documents on its website to keep stakeholders informed. These include:

- proactive industry announcements and media releases, providing detail of significant policy decisions and enforcement outcomes for the industry.
- Directions from Chief Stewards as to the interpretation and application of Rules of Racing and regulations/policies.
- Elevated TCO2 levels detected in equine racing animals.
- Greyhound breeding, race injury and retirement reports.
- Thoroughbred and Standardbred Race Related Injuries.

QRIC's licensing decisions are communicated clearly and in a timely manner, with written explanations provided to the relevant parties. These decisions articulate the expectations for compliance and the underlying reasons for the outcomes. Stakeholders are also informed of their rights to internal and external review, ensuring accountability and fairness in the decision-making process.

QRIC continues to provide transparency into its performance through the publication of its Annual Report, which includes specific data on QRIC's Service Delivery Statement and effectiveness and efficiency measures.