

# THE AUSTRALIAN THOROUGHBRED INDUSTRY



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International ISS Institute/DEEWR Trades Fellowship

Fellowship supported by the Department  
of Education, Employment and Workplace  
Relations, Australian Government

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# Executive Summary

The purpose of this Fellowship was to research access points to achieve the goal of greater internationalisation of employment opportunities for thoroughbred industry support staff and for the Australian Thoroughbred Industry to become more aware of and integrate with the international thoroughbred industry. The Fellow found without exception interest in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry. This led to additional meetings and an expansion of the initial itinerary.

The Fellowship involved a study tour of England and Ireland where meetings were arranged with European Thoroughbred Industry leaders in order to capture solutions for world's 'best practice' in the education streams catering to thoroughbred industry personnel. The European model of training offers accredited courses that are not available through Australian Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education institutions. The areas where we have skills deficiencies, such as skilled trackwork riders are better addressed in the European racing sector. The Fellowship enabled a thorough analysis of the structure implemented by the British Horse Racing Authority and the British Horse Racing Education Standards Trust. This coalition provides a unique introductory course for new entrants to the thoroughbred industry, a model that would offer considerable benefit to the Australian Thoroughbred Industry.

Each year sees more horses bred and raced across many countries around the world. On occasion, it has been found that due to varying statutory requirements, including visa and licensing regulations, handlers have been restricted from traveling with these horses. Such restrictions negate effective and caring horse handling and management. The last decade has profiled thoroughbred racing as an elite sport and all involved are deemed to be professionals. To maintain this level of professionalism, education and training will need to continue as a key role in ensuring that horses are cared for by people who understand their needs and have the skills to meet them.

In 2008 Australia completed three years of consultation, revision and reaccreditation of the National Racing Industry Training Package that has produced the current training package (Australian National Racing Industry Training Package RGR08). In 2010 our European colleagues are conducting a review of their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and as a result of consultation with the Fellow will use the Australian National Racing Industry Training Package RGR08 (RGR08) as a point of reference.

After meeting with key representatives from the European Thoroughbred Industry, it became evident that by establishing an international mapping matrix of respective training programs we can produce mutually recognised qualifications for licensing purposes between countries and establish an international training program agreement to address future needs.

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ARB	Australian Racing Board
BHA	British Horse Racing Authority
BHEST	British Horse Racing Education Standards Trust
BRS	British Racing School
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
EARS	European Association of Racing Schools
EQUES	European Qualification of Employees of Stables
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
GOTAFE	Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE
HEROS	Homing of Ex-Racehorses Organisation Scheme
HRI	Horse Racing Ireland
IEPUK	International Exchange Programs UK
INTSCA	International Skills Competence Program
ISSA	Irish Stable Staff Association
ISS Institute	International Specialised Skills Institute Inc.
LANTRA	UK Sector Skills Council for Land Based Training
NCEE	National Centre for Equine Education
NRC	Northern Racing College
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PCA	Pony Club Australia
PCAV	Pony Club Association of Victoria
RACE	Racing Academy and Centre of Education
RGR08	Australian National Racing Industry Training Package entitled RGR08
ROR	Retraining of Racehorses
RVL	Racing Victoria Limited
TAB	Totalizator Agency Boards
TBA	Thoroughbred Breeders Australia
TBV	Thoroughbred Breeders Victoria
VET	Vocational Education and Training

# Definitions

Innovation	<p>Creating and meeting new needs with new technical and design styles (new realities of lifestyle).</p> <p><i>Reference: 'Sustainable Policies for a Dynamic Future', Carolynne Bourne AM, ISS Institute 2007.</i></p>
Design	<p>Design is problem setting and problem solving.</p> <p>Design is a fundamental economic and business tool. It is embedded in every aspect of commerce and industry and adds high value to any service or product - in business, government, education and training and the community in general.</p> <p><i>Reference: 'Sustainable Policies for a Dynamic Future', Carolynne Bourne AM, ISS Institute 2007.</i></p>
Skills deficiency	<p>A skill deficiency is where a demand for labour has not been recognised and where accredited courses are not available through Australian higher education institutions. This demand is met where skills and knowledge are acquired on-the-job, gleaned from published material, or from working and/or study overseas.</p> <p>There may be individuals or individual firms that have these capabilities. However, individuals in the main do not share their capabilities, but rather keep the IP to themselves; and over time they retire and pass away. Firms likewise come and go.</p> <p><i>Reference: 'Directory of Opportunities. Specialised Courses with Italy. Part 1: Veneto Region', ISS Institute, 1991.</i></p>
Sustainability	<p>The ISS Institute follows the United Nations NGO on Sustainability, "Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"</p> <p><i>Reference: <a href="http://www.unngosustainability.org/CSD_Definitions%20SD.htm">http://www.unngosustainability.org/CSD_Definitions%20SD.htm</a></i></p>
Trainer	<p>A racehorse trainer is a person who is licensed to operate a business that trains horses under racing industry regulated licensing criteria for the purpose of competing in industry-regulated events. The trainer is responsible for the welfare, maintenance and racing performance of the animals. The trainer is responsible for designing training and racing programs for the equine athlete. Trainers are required to act for owners in advising on the purchase of livestock. This requires detailed knowledge of pedigree, conformation and animal physiology.</p>
Stablehand	<p>Also known as a stable employee, a stablehand is a person who is employed in a thoroughbred racing stable and whose prime function is to care for the animals and to meet their individual needs, such as feeding, grooming, exercising and transporting; as well as keeping the environment safe, clean and hygienic. The stablehand works under the direction of a trainer or stable supervisor. The stablehand works as part of a team and in some situations is able to act autonomously in a limited capacity.</p>

## Definitions

Track Rider	A track rider is a person who is employed to exercise thoroughbred horses on the instruction of a trainer. These exercising duties require judgement and the ability to interpret and relay information concerning horse health, performance and temperament accurately to the trainer as well as high-level riding skills.
Jockey	A jockey is an independent professional sportsperson licensed by thoroughbred racing industry authorities to compete in industry-regulated competitions. A jockey must possess the highest level of race riding and horse handling skills, which requires problem solving skills in unpredictable circumstances. The communication of performance and fitness of the horse to trainers and owners at the end of a race is a critical part of the jockey's role. This requires in-depth understanding of anatomy, physiology and health of the horse applied in the context of a competitive environment.
Steward	A Steward ensures that the integrity of racing is upheld. A steward will supervise the conduct of race meetings; investigate incidents and potential non-compliance issues, as well as arbitrating and awarding penalties under the principles of administrative law. An extensive knowledge of the rules of racing; application of appropriate penalties, racing protocols, animal welfare and duty of care requirements are all part of this role.
Breeder/ Stud Manager	A horse breeder requires an extensive knowledge of pedigrees, animal welfare issues, business management and the rules and regulations pertaining to the breeding of thoroughbreds. This role is responsible for the foundation of the thoroughbred industry through pedigree match ups, coverings, foaling down and the development of the foal to produce the 'product' that races for billions worldwide.
Owner	An owner is the client of a trainer or stud manager who pays for the service of having their horse bred or prepared for professional competition. An owner has the responsibility of knowing and understanding not only the welfare needs of the horses that they own but also their obligations to the business of the trainer or stud manager.

# Acknowledgements

Gabrielle Gauci would like to thank the following individuals and organisations who gave generously of their time and their expertise to assist, advise and guide her throughout the Fellowship programme.

## **Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)**

The International Specialised Skills Institute Inc is an independent, national organisation that for over two decades has worked with Australian governments, industry and education institutions to enable individuals to gain enhanced skills and experience in traditional trades, professions and leading-edge technologies.

At the heart of the Institute are our Fellows. Under the **Overseas Applied Research Fellowship Programme** the Fellows travel overseas. Upon their return, they pass on what they have learnt by:

1. Preparing detailed reports to government departments, industry and education institutions.
2. Recommending improvements to accredited educational courses.
3. Offering training activities including workshops, conferences and forums.

Over 180 Australians have received Fellowships, across many industry sectors.

Recognised experts from overseas also conduct training activities and events. To date, 22 leaders in their field have shared their expertise in Australia.

According to Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010':

Australia requires a highly skilled population to maintain and improve our economic position in the face of increasing global competition, and to have the skills to adapt to the introduction of new technology and rapid change.

International and Australian research indicates we need a deeper level of skills than currently exists in the Australian labour market to lift productivity. We need a workforce in which more people have skills, but also multiple and higher level skills and qualifications. Deepening skills across all occupations is crucial to achieving long-term productivity growth. It also reflects the recent trend for jobs to become more complex and the consequent increased demand for higher level skills. This trend is projected to continue regardless of whether we experience strong or weak economic growth in the future. Future environmental challenges will also create demand for more sustainability related skills across a range of industries and occupations.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, the Institute works with Fellows, industry and government to identify specific skills in Australia that require enhancing, where accredited courses are not available through Australian higher education institutions or other Registered Training Organisations. The Fellows' overseas experience sees them broadening and deepening their own professional practice, which they then share with their peers, industry and government upon their return. This is the focus of the Institute's work.

For further information on our Fellows and our work see [www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au).

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<sup>1</sup> Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010', pp. 1-2 [http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs\\_RTFS/WWF\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs_RTFS/WWF_strategy.pdf)

# Acknowledgements

## Fellowship Supporter

This Fellowship has been supported by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Australian Government.

The Australian Government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) implements Government policies and programs to provide education and training opportunities for all Australians, to increase employment participation and to ensure fair and productive workplaces. Education, training and workforce participation are central to our goal of building a productive and socially inclusive nation, one which values diversity and provides opportunities for all Australians to build rewarding social and economic lives. Gauci would like to thank them for providing funding support for this Fellowship.

## Supporters

- AgriFood Skills Australia  
Arthur Blewitt, CEO
- Aquanita Racing Limited  
Peter Oliver, CEO
- Australian Racing Board  
Andrew Harding, CEO
- Primary Industries Curriculum Maintenance Manager  
Kate Bryce, Executive Officer
- Racing Industry Standing Committee  
Rod Thirkell-Johnston, Chairman
- Rural Skills Australia  
Geoff Bloom, Executive Director  
David Forbes, Agri-Food National Industry Career Specialist
- Racing Victoria Limited  
Bernard Saundry, COO
- Racing Victoria Limited  
Michael Duffy, Chairman
- Thoroughbred Breeders Australia  
Peter McGauran, CEO

## Organisations Impacted by the Fellowship

### Government

- AgriFood Skills Australia
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Local Government
- State Offices of Gaming and Racing
- Racing Appeals Tribunal
- Regional Development Victoria
- Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

# Acknowledgements

## Industry

- Australian Jockeys Association
- Australian Racing Board
- Australian Stud Book
- Australian Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Association
- Australian Trainers Association
- Greyhounds Australasia
- Harness Racing Australia
- Racing Information Services Australia
- Tabcorp
- Thoroughbred Breeders Australia

## Professional Organisations

- Animal Health Australia
- Australian Horse Industry Council
- Australian Workers Union
- Equine Veterinarians Australia

## Education and Training

- Equine Training Provider Network
- ISS Institute
- Racing Industry Provider Network
- Registered Training Organisations
- Technical and Further Education
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) in School programs

## Community

- Education and Training
- Local Council
- Local Primary Industry and Business
- Local Racing Clubs
- Local Sports and Recreation Departments

## Other

- Equestrian Federation of Australia
- Pony Club Association of Australia

# About the Fellow



**Name:** Gabrielle Gauci

## **Employment**

- Stable Liaison and Education Officer, Racing Victoria Limited

## **Qualifications**

- Licensed Apprentice Jockey, Victorian Racing Club 1979–1984
- Licensed Racehorse Trainer, Victorian Racing Club 1989–1998,
- Certificate – Initial Teacher Training GOTAFE 1997
- Certificate IV – Workplace Place Assessor GOTAFE 1998
- Licensed Assistant Trainer Singapore Turf Club, 1998–2001
- TAA 40104 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment GOTAFE 2005
- 21593VIC Level II First Aid GOTAFE 2006
- RGR50102 Diploma of Racing University of Ballarat 2006
- BSB41604 Certificate IV Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) GOATFE 2007
- Licensed Racehorse Trainer, Victorian Racing Club 2009–ongoing

## **Memberships**

- Certificate II Equine Industry Reaccreditation Working Party
- Committee for Welfare of Racehorse Trainers and Stable Employees
- Industry Champion for Racing – AgriFood Skills Australia
- Racing Industry Community of Practice – Reframing the Future
- Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Association
- Victoria Racing Industry Training Provider Network
- Wangaratta Racehorse Trainers Association

In a career spanning 36 years in the thoroughbred racing industry Gabrielle Gauci has accumulated a wealth of national and international experience, knowledge, skills and qualifications. Her career path began as a 10-year-old when she transferred her pony club riding skills to ride track work for local trainers in Wangaratta.

In 1979 the Fellow became one of the first professional female apprentice jockeys in Australia, accumulating 86 winning race rides during her apprenticeship. She subsequently took up thoroughbred training and established Forbern Lodge Racing Stables in Wangaratta. Her success in producing 147 winners and two local premierships led to international appointments as an assistant trainer in leading stables in Mauritius and Singapore.

In 1990 the Fellow became a sessional teacher at Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (GOTAFE) and pioneered equine courses at her racing stables. These courses proved to be popular, with over 400 stable employees and trainers achieving formal qualifications under her guidance. The rapid growth of these programs formed the basis of a new business division of GOTAFE. The National Centre for Equine Education (NCEE) offers a suite of formal courses for stable employees, horse breeding and equine vet nursing.

## About the Fellow

In 2005 an Outstanding Achievement Award in Training for their Primary Industries Division was presented to the Fellow by GOTAFE.

The Fellow has been instrumental in developing and driving the National Racing Industry Training Package, ensuring that it meets industry needs and standards. In 2005 AgriFood Skills Australia appointed the Fellow a 'Champion for Racing'. This has provided her a platform to mesh the relevant vocational and training curricula with the practical needs of the racing industry.

In the 2006 the Fellow established the inaugural 'Victorian Thoroughbred Employee of the Year Awards.' As a result of the Fellow's advocacy regarding the importance of, and the need for a skilled workforce in order to meet future needs, the Australian Racing Board, as a matter of policy, called on each peak industry body to explore skills benchmarking for the licensing of various racing industry roles. Between 2006 and 2009 the Fellow was employed by Racing Victoria Limited as Stable Liaison/Education Officer.

# Aims of the Fellowship Programme

The Fellowship had four objectives:

1. Inspire innovation in relation to the development of a unique international partnership for racing industry workers.
2. Determine current 'best practice' maintenance techniques used in the management of linking compulsory qualifications to the licensing or registration of stable employees within the thoroughbred horse racing industry.
3. Become skilled in constructing a suitable foundation and bridging course for new and existing workers that meets the specific standards of the thoroughbred industry and that is both nationally and internationally recognised.
4. Become skilled in identifying the requirements of establishing a successful stable employee association for workers of the thoroughbred industry.

# The Australian Context

Thoroughbred racing involves horses ridden by jockeys on racetracks primarily over distances from 800 to 3,200 metres. Most races are conducted over flat courses but there are also a number of hurdle and steeplechase races, and these normally range from 2,800 to 5,500 metres.

The term 'thoroughbred' comes from the strict control of the breeding of the horses. Thoroughbred racing is the second most popular spectator sport in Australia (second to Australian Rules Football or AFL) with the Melbourne Cup being the most widely known event.<sup>2</sup>

The Australian Thoroughbred Industry employs over 240,000 people, 77,000 of whom are full-time employees. Thoroughbred horse racing injects over \$7.7 billion dollars into the Australian economy annually.

Australia has more racecourses than any other country and has the second largest number of starters behind the USA. The Australian Racing Industry offers the third largest prize money in the world. In the 2007–08 season horses competed for a share of \$375,512,579 million dollars.

The size and reach of the Australian Racing Industry is verified in the following statistics.<sup>3</sup>

## **Racing**

- 8 principal racing authorities
- 339 race clubs
- 330 racetracks
- 2,302 meetings annually
- 17,211 individual races
- 29,972 horses raced
- 4,782 trainers
- 1,065 jockeys
- 15,121 stablehands
- \$12,642,540,000 wagered on thoroughbred racing alone.

## **Breeding**

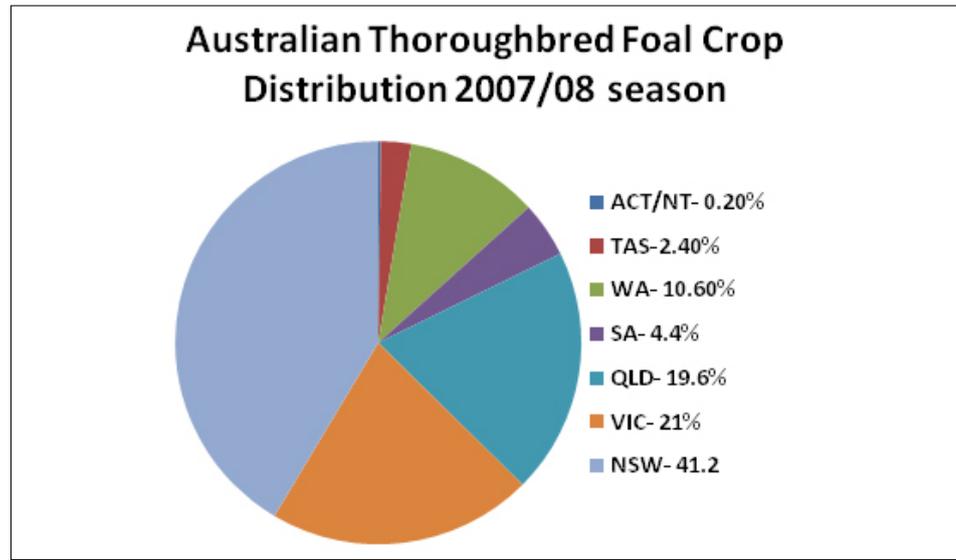
- 819 registered stallions stood for stud fees ranging from \$5,000–\$350,000 per service
- 29,075 broodmares were covered
- 17,818 live foals were born
- 1,223 weanlings sold
- 4,903 yearlings sold (\$2,700,000 top price paid for an Encosta De Lago colt)

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<sup>2</sup> Inquiry into the Viability of the Victorian Thoroughbred/Standardbred Breeding Industries (2003–2006)

<sup>3</sup> Australian Racing Fact Book 2007/08, Australian Racing Board

## The Australian Context



*Australian Thoroughbred Foal Crop Distribution 2007–08<sup>4</sup>*

The Australian Racing Board (ARB) is the only authority empowered to mandate practices, conditions and integrity standards for racing throughout Australia. Regulation of racing is the responsibility of racing bodies in each state and territory to ensure that racing is conducted at all levels with the utmost integrity.

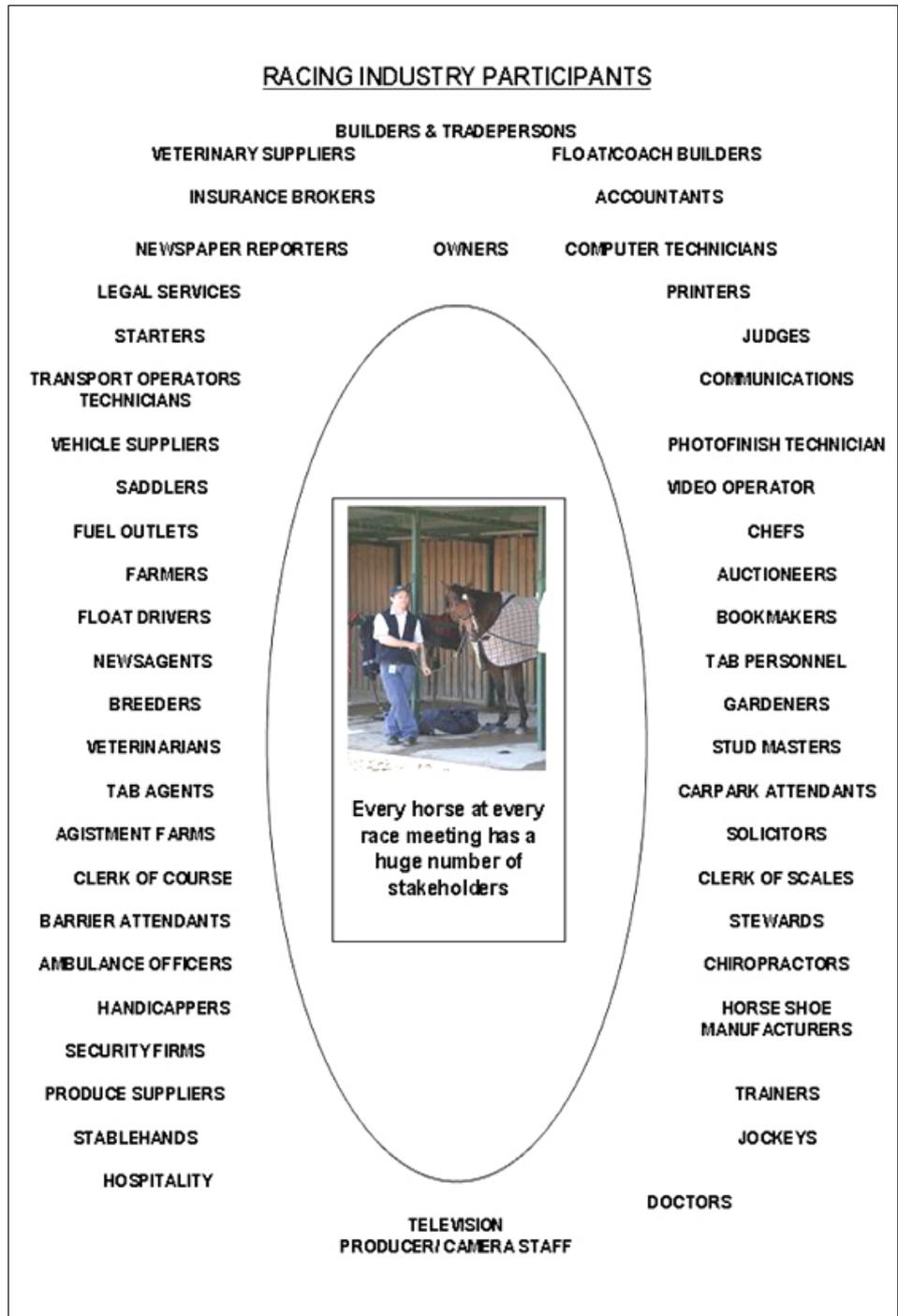
Racing industry occupations include owners, trainers, breeders, stewards, farriers, stable employees, jockeys and track riders. The racing industry Supply Chain also extends to farmers who grow and supply the feed, racing equipment manufacturers and retailers, as well as race club staff, caterers, cooks, waiters and bar attendants who work at racing venues, bookmakers, professional punters, veterinarians, manufacturers of therapeutic substances, analytical laboratories and scientists who conduct equine research from funds provided by the racing industry. State and Territory Governments have a direct interest in the health and further development of the Australian Racing Industry. This is acknowledged through the appointment of State and Territory Government ministers with specific portfolio responsibilities for the racing and gaming industry. Significant State and Territory Government revenue is generated through the operation of Totalizator Agency Boards (TABs).

Industry consultation undertaken in the mid 1980s by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) identified the need to improve the education and skill level of industry participants working at grass roots level. The research highlighted an extremely high accident rate among employees who worked hands-on with horses. Insurance premiums continued to rise as accident claims were made. Contributing to this consultation were members of Thoroughbred Breeders Australia (TBA) who oversee and regulate the breeding sector of the industry, they provided information on job roles in their sector.

The Australian Racing Board (ARB) provided information on the roles within the racing industry. There was a clear overlap in many roles, and even now, over 25 years later, no attempt has been undertaken to merge those roles and encourage cross-skilling.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Racing Fact Book 2007/08, Australian Racing Board

# The Australian Context



## The Australian Context

ANTA subsequently worked with the industry to develop a set of accredited courses for the racing industry to provide clear career paths and formal qualification recognition for industry workers. This was the genesis of the first National Racing Industry Training Package: RGR98. The initial package offered nationally recognised certificates for stablehands, track riders, jockeys and trainers. However, as industry participants had little understanding of the TAFE system or the importance of qualifications, the rate of uptake was disappointing. Nevertheless, it was an important turning point.

As the industry came to better understand and appreciate the benefits of formal training and qualifications, it was decided that the best way these could be delivered was by skilling experienced industry participants to deliver flexible training programs in the workplace. The larger stables in particular realised the benefits of professional development courses for their staff. The outcome was the beginning of a cultural change within the industry that steadily embraced formal staff training and qualifications.

In 2001 Racing Victoria Limited (RVL) became the first racing authority to implement compulsory qualifications (using the Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications from the National Racing Industry Training Package) for the licensing of trainers and the RVL Apprentice Jockey Schools began delivering Certificate IV Jockey for their students.

Due to the range and complexity of the breeding sector, courses relating to breeding are made up of units from the Rural Production Training Package RTE03 and the state accredited curriculum. These courses are expensive to deliver because practical lessons require a simulated stud environment. Consequently, they can only be offered in a few geographical areas. Students who complete breeding-related courses are well regarded and sought after by breeders.

An upgrade of the Racing Training Package took place after stakeholder consultation in late 2001 with regard to make training more relevant to contemporary industry requirements, resulting in the RGR02 package. The most recent review conducted by AgriFood Skills Australia resulted in the Australian National Racing Industry Training Package entitled RGR08 (RGR08) training package. Endorsed in July 2008, The RGR08 package caters for the industry as a whole, inclusive of harness and greyhound racing. It also covers racing administration, track management and industry/professional integrity.

The RGR08 package will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure continuous improvement to reflect the ever-changing industry needs and standards. RVL are currently preparing to link compulsory qualifications from RGR08 as a requirement for the registration of stable employees and track riders by August 2011. To ensure people are provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to do their job to the highest standards of professionalism and safety, RVL is establishing standards that will lift the profile of career paths and professional advancement throughout the industry.

Further linking between formal qualifications and registration for other sectors of the industry is on the RVL agenda. In this regard, the establishment of appropriate national skill and knowledge benchmarks for licensing of stable employees should be given priority. Those involved in the daily care of horses should be provided with appropriate formal training to ensure consistent high standards. No other Australian state or territory, other than Victoria, has yet set stable employee qualification benchmarks for licensing purposes.

# The Australian Context

Throughout Australia, most qualifications from the National Racing Industry Training Package are delivered through the TAFE system or the peak industry body, if they are registered as a private training provider. For example, in preparation for the impending mandatory training link to registration and licensing of industry roles in Victoria, RVL has partnered with selected TAFE providers to strengthen the delivery of education and training in the Victorian thoroughbred racing industry. East Gippsland TAFE, National Centre of Equine Education, Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE, South West TAFE and University of Ballarat have all been recognised as preferred providers.

Training courses currently offered in Australia are as follows:

## **Racing**

Through TAFE and Approved Registered Training Organisations:

- Certificate II – Stablehand
- Certificate III – Advanced Stablehand
- Certificate III – Track Rider
- Certificate IV – Jockey
- Certificate IV – Owner/Trainer
- Diploma of Racing – Permit Trainer

## **Breeding**

Through TAFE:

- Diploma of Equine Stud Management
- Bachelor of Equine Studies

## **Equestrian**

Through TAFE:

- Certificate II – Equine Industry
- Diploma of Equine Performance Management
- Diploma of Horse Business Management

Through Private Providers:

- Equestrian Federation of Australia Horse Management Certificate

Through Pony Club Australia (non-accredited):

- A,B,C,C star, D, D star, E, H and K certificates

## **Equine Health**

Through TAFE:

- Certificate Equine Vet Nursing
- Certificate III – Farrier

Through Private Providers:

- Equine Acupuncture
- Equine Dentistry
- Equine Chiropractor

# Identifying the Skill Deficiencies

There are in excess of 15,000 registered stable employees working in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry; the vast majority of whom have not undertaken training, or have not been formally inducted into their role or offered training in order to meet current industry needs.

At present no Australian state or territory in Australia requires new or existing stable employees to have any type of training or qualification in order to be registered to perform their job. Racing Victoria Limited (RVL) are currently working towards compulsory training requirements for registration of all stable employees to be implemented as of August 2011.

The lack of formally qualified staff working within the stable environment is of great concern to employers and the industry as a whole. The new generation of worker is seeking training and professional development opportunities as part of their employment and career journey.

In October 2006 the Australian Racing Board (ARB) adopted a policy position that all principle racing authorities in Australia should make plans to apply qualification requirements to the licensing of stable employees. In November 2007, Dr Harriet Speed, Principal Research Investigator for Victoria University, published *The Study into the Health and Welfare of Racehorse Trainers and Stable Employees*.<sup>5</sup> Recommendation 6 in this report addressed the need for more formal education and training of stable employees:

*Set compulsory minimum standards of basic horsemanship for all stable employee positions and explore options for appropriate training and assessment of those standards.*

More than any other industry stakeholder, stable employees spend the most time caring for and overseeing each individual thoroughbred throughout their entire racing career. Establishing and implementing an internationally recognised benchmark of skills and knowledge would cement a stronger foundation for an industry that in the past has been looked upon as offering unstable and unskilled careers. The internationalisation of the industry has opened up opportunities for stable employees to travel.

One of the skill deficiencies identified was the absence of appropriate educational and industry methodologies. To address this deficiency it is essential that effective linkages between formal stable employee training and appropriate licensing be established within the Australian Thoroughbred Industry. In order to make a clear recommendation of how to address this deficiency it is necessary to conduct an investigation of what other countries have in place.

Another deficiency identified with some new entrants to the Australian Thoroughbred Industry was the lack of knowledge and skills required for employment in racing and other equine disciplines. The absence of appropriate educational methodologies for the 'holistic' equine industry leaves Australia with a fractured system for young horse lovers to find their vocation within the industries. This often leaves the participant with few known options if the role they have commenced in is not suitable. A new foundation course would allow participants to have experience and investigate various roles and disciplines prior to entry. With these generic skills they could be given direct credits and opportunity for higher qualifications in the various disciplines offered.

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<sup>5</sup> The Study into the Health and Welfare of Racehorse Trainers and Stable Employees. [http://eprints.vu.edu.au/749/1/trainer\\_book\\_2008.pdf](http://eprints.vu.edu.au/749/1/trainer_book_2008.pdf)

## Identifying the Skill Deficiencies

In order to address these identified skill deficiencies, the Fellow arranged a comprehensive schedule of meetings and discussions in England and Ireland. The overseas component of the Fellowship had the following specific objectives:

- Conduct analysis and record information sourced via visitations.
- Observe and conduct an interviews with industry leaders to gain an appreciation of strategies and techniques that have determined the successful linking of qualifications to the registration/licensing of all stable employees throughout England and Ireland. These techniques have successfully provided clear pathways from Certificate I to Diploma and cross-skilling opportunities for new and existing workers within the industry.
- Review monitoring and evaluation processes carried out since the development of the European foundation course, to determine what amendments have been necessary over time. Establish if there are other components in this course that may have been omitted.
- Analyse the structure implemented by the British Horse Racing Authority (BHA) British Horse Racing Education Standards Trust and the British Horse Racing Education Standards Trust (BHEST), who provide a successful nine-week introductory course for new entrants to the thoroughbred industry. This course provides participants with the key skills and knowledge required for licensing and registration standards.
- Determine European system of successful recruitment through affiliations with the wider equine industries.
- Distinguish certificates and courses available to the wider equine industry in Europe that act as 'feeder' courses into higher equine qualifications.
- Determine the possibility of establishing an international agreement to formulate a process of mutual recognition between countries for licensing of stable employees in order to address future needs.
- Conduct interviews with successful industry employee associations in England and Ireland to identify a viable model for the Australian Thoroughbred Industry.
- Determine opportunities to share associations' constitutional rights between countries to enable members to be represented when working internationally.
- Analyse successful methods of protecting, advising, educating and promoting the basic rights of all stable staff within the thoroughbred industry. Identify factors related to building a sustainable, 'best practice' thoroughbred employee support service, which is financially viable for an industry worker.
- Determine infrastructure required for establishing an affiliation for cross-skilling scholarships within the thoroughbred industry between countries.

# Identifying the Skill Deficiencies

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Strong provider network with the ability to communicate well with all stakeholders
- Support from Vocational and Educational Training system
- Support from Government – AgriFood Skills Australia,
- State Racing Minister, Skills Victoria
- Flexible workforce
- Existing knowledge base
- Global networks with key players
- Excellent job swap and scholarship opportunities
- Addressing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) issues

### Weaknesses

- Industry reluctance to change
- Lack of local research and development
- Labour intensive with few opportunities to streamline with new technology

### Opportunities

- New national/international program
- World's 'best practice'
- Ability to build on established projects and outcomes
- Career development
- Promotes sustainability
- Transferable skills
- Ability to expand networks and support services
- Define roles and pathways
- Encourage other equine industry participants to consider racing as a career of choice and cross skill
- Recruitment and retention opportunities
- Educating participants about industry opportunities

### Threats

- Continued funding availability
- Registered Training Organisation (RTO) fees
- Industry reluctance to embrace change
- Bio-security (Regulation and governance requirements)

# The International Experience

## Overview – English Racing

The thoroughbred industry in England employs 88,000 people both directly and indirectly, and is one of Britain's largest sporting employers. The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) is the single governing body for British horseracing. The role of the BHA is to regulate, promote and represent the sport. The industry in Britain is complex, highly professional and multi-skilled with its component parts entirely interdependent. All new stable employees are given compulsory training prior to being registered with the BHA. The British Horseracing Education and Standards Trust (BHEST) is the awarding body for the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in the thoroughbred industry. Registered stable employees in Britain are entitled to a 4.85 per cent of the overall prize money earned by horses racing from their employer's yard.

British racing is steeped in tradition and can trace its historical involvement in the industry back many centuries. 'The General Stud Book', which holds breeding records, was first printed in England in 1793 and from this publication we can now trace all modern thoroughbreds back to three stallions imported into England from the Middle East in the late 17th and early 18th centuries: the Byerley Turk (1680s), the Darley Arabian (1704) and the Godolphin Arabian (1729).

The British Racing Industry is enjoying substantial growth both locally and in the international market place.

The 2008 Annual Report of the BHA highlights the size of the industry.<sup>6</sup>

### Racing

- 1 Principal Racing Authority(BHA)
- 61 racetracks
- 1,424 meetings annually
- Prize money: £106.2 million
- 9,494 individual races
- 15,154 horses in training
- 756 trainers
- 421 jockeys
- 7,948 stable employees

### Breeding

- 345 registered stallions stood for stud fees
- 10,740 broodmares reported to be at stud
- 5,920 live foals were born in 2008

Ireland is the third largest producer of thoroughbreds worldwide and hosts some of the biggest and most prestigious breeding operations to be found in the equine world. The world's largest thoroughbred stud, Coolmore, has its main base in Ireland.

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<sup>6</sup> British Horseracing Authority 2008 Annual Report

# The International Experience

## Overview – Irish Racing

Horse racing and breeding supports 16,500 jobs, mainly in rural Ireland. Ireland is recognised as the ‘Harvard University’ of all equine training and education. People from far away countries such as China, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, America, Brazil, Arabia, Russia and the Ukraine flock to the prestigious training centers of education that are based in Ireland. The Racing Academy and Centre of Education (RACE) established in 1973 and the Irish National Stud Thoroughbred Breeding course established in 1971, are the most respected educational centers in Ireland.

All stable staff are registered with the Turf Club and become automatic members of the Irish Stable Staff Association (ISSA). A percentage of the betting turnover profits from Betfair are put into a stable staff pool. This is a bonus that is paid to all registered stable employees four times a year.

In 2008, Ireland exported in excess of 5,000 horses to more than 30 countries worldwide worth €180 million.

The 2008 ‘Horse Racing Ireland Fact Book’ provides the following industry statistics:<sup>7</sup>

### Racing

- Racing in Ireland is governed by Horse Racing Ireland (HRI) and regulated by The Turf Club
- 26 racetracks
- 342 meetings annually
- Prize money: €60,401,250
- 2,454 individual races
- 12,119 horses in training
- 778 trainers
- 261 jockeys
- 3,535 stable employees

### Breeding

- 312 registered stallions stood for stud fees
- 20,038 broodmares reported to be at stud
- 12,419 live foals were born in 2008
- 9,530 registered breeders

The Fellow explored possible development over time of standardised curricula and appropriate protocols that would provide for a mutual recognition of industry workforce qualifications. The achievement of such an objective would enhance the skill base of the industry in each of these racing markets. It would also enhance possible career path opportunities for industry workforces by enabling people to have qualifications recognised on an international basis. To this end the Fellow visited the following organisations in England and Ireland.

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<sup>7</sup> Horse Racing Ireland Fact Book 2008

# The International Experience

## England: The British Horseracing Authority (BHA)<sup>8</sup>



**Contact:** Sarah Hay-Jahans, Head of Industry Recruitment and Training

BHA is the peak industry body for thoroughbred racing in Great Britain. The Recruitment and Training department play an active role in the training of participants entering the industry. The recruitment team works closely with the British Racing School (BRS) and Northern Racing College (NRC) to deliver programs for stable employees as part of the licensing requirements.

### Objective

- Determine the BHA model of mandatory training for new employees and their requirements for licensing of stable employees and industry participants.
- Access the BHA's experience and specific skills in order to contribute to developing internationally recognised foundation and bridging courses for new and existing workers in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry.

### Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The BHA contributes to the funding of a vocational course offered to new stable employees aged 16–22 years. This is a full-time 9-week live-in course delivered through the BRS at Newmarket and the NRC in Doncaster. Both colleges issue the BHA licensing department with a list of students who complete each course. This allows the student to be registered once they have graduated and are available for employment.

The BHA has compulsory training modules attached to the licensing of trainers and jockeys. Stable employees who are registering as new employees are required to complete the NVQ Level 1 – Introduction to Racehorse Care, or the vocational course if eligible. Registered stable employees are automatic members of the National Association for Stable Staff (NASS) free of charge.

The BHA funds welfare programs for re-education for jockeys, stablehands and trainers. It also engages with the wider equine community through associations with pony race meetings and pony clubs that are involved with programs, such as Retraining of Racehorses (ROR)<sup>9</sup> and the Homing of Ex-Racehorses Organisation Scheme (HEROS).<sup>10</sup>

### Outcome

The BHA is keen to work closely with the Fellow and other interested parties to develop mutual recognition of qualifications. Sarah Hay-Jahans advised the Fellow of BHA's willingness to participate and indicated that mutual recognition of accredited qualifications for stable employees, jockeys, trainers and stewards would be extremely beneficial to both countries' thoroughbred industries.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.britishhorseracing.com](http://www.britishhorseracing.com)

<sup>9</sup> [www.ror.org.uk](http://www.ror.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> [www.heroscharity.org](http://www.heroscharity.org)

# The International Experience

## England: British Racing School (BRS)<sup>11</sup>

**Contact:** Rory MacDonald, Chief Executive Officer



BRS, in Newmarket, is acknowledged as one of the world's leading providers of track rider training. BRS is one of the two British Horseracing Authority's preferred training providers.<sup>12</sup> The original aim of the school was to provide purpose-built facilities to promote and encourage young people with potential to become professional jockeys. The school has subsequently developed as a centre of excellence for the racing industry.

Rory MacDonald, the CEO, is an active member of the BHEST and is involved extensively in curriculum management. MacDonald is the current president of the European Association of Racing Schools (EARS).<sup>13</sup>

### Objective

- Analyse the BRS course delivery methods, with particular focus on the nine-week NVQ foundation course.
- Explore partnership possibilities between the BRS and Australian racing RTOs.
- Access BRS experience and specific skills in order to contribute to developing internationally recognised foundation and bridging courses for new and existing workers in the Australian Thoroughbred Industry.

### Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The BRS training program commences with basic horse skills. Each student is allocated a horse to care for throughout the duration of the course. The school uses experienced, industry-based staff to deliver all courses and provides mentors for each student. The key to the success of this foundation course is the quality of the facilities and instructors. All students are taught to ride using simulators initially, then on horses. Communication is maintained with riders at all times using headsets.

The BRS is funded by the government, the racing industry and through charitable donations. The facilities are available to local communities and organisations for functions. The nine-week live-in vocational course is delivered in a 'working stable' environment. On completion of the course all students are provided work placement with registered trainers. The BRS has ten course intakes each year. The employment rate for BRS graduates is 95 per cent.

### Outcome

MacDonald was impressed with Australia's RGR08 package and indicated interest in the BRS working with the Fellow and other organisations to look at developing an appropriate course for an International Thoroughbred Industry qualification. MacDonald also indicated the school would be interested in offering work placement opportunities to Australian graduates for short-term periods.

<sup>11</sup> [www.brs.org.uk](http://www.brs.org.uk)

<sup>12</sup> The other BHA preferred training provider is the Northern Racing College.

<sup>13</sup> [www.europeanracingschools.eu](http://www.europeanracingschools.eu)

# The International Experience

## England: Northern Racing College (NRC)<sup>14</sup>

**Contacts:** Dawn Goodfellow, Chief Executive Officer; Joanne Ellis, Quality Manager; Malcolm Bygrave, Training Manager



The NRC, in Doncaster, is a BHA preferred training provider. The college provides academy-style racing industry training. Course content is similar to that offered by the BRS, although with different delivery modes. NRC offers workplace-based training and flexible delivery options.

### Objective

- Examine and assess variations in foundation course training methodologies and how mandatory training within the industry has impacted on student contact hours and industry acceptance.
- Seek partnership possibilities for NRC and Australian racing RTOs

### Skills, Knowledge and Insights

NRC provides industry training for racing workers including stable employees, trainers and amateur jockeys. The College has developed a more flexible model to deliver workplace-based training for existing stable employee roles and the NRC are looking to expand short courses to include racing operations and administration. The nine-week NVQ foundation course is delivered as a full-time live-in course, where riding is the main focus, followed by a further nine-week workplace assessment.

Dawn Goodfellow, CEO of the NRC, is also chair of the European Association of Racing Schools (EARS).<sup>15</sup> This Association represents training providers from England, Ireland, France, Italy and Germany and has been involved in discussions regarding establishing a set of standard qualifications for its membership countries. Goodfellow expressed interest in expanding the scope of EARS deliberations on mutual recognition of accredited qualifications to include the Australian Racing Industry.

### Outcome

Goodfellow expressed interest in NRS and EARS working with the Fellow and the Australian Thoroughbred Industry to develop an appropriate course for an International Thoroughbred Industry qualification. Goodfellow is willing to assist, on behalf of Germany and Italy, in communications with industry stakeholders. The first step would involve mapping equine qualifications, namely the; National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), Further Education and Training Awards Council certificates (FETAC), European Qualification of Employees of Stables (EQUES) and RGR08. Goodfellow also indicated that NRC would like to find an Australian racing provider to partner with to offer international placement for their students.

## England: British Horse Racing Education and Standards Trust (BHEST)

**Contacts:** Judith Allen, Executive Director; Gill Greeves, Director of Qualifications

The BHEST<sup>16</sup> is a government-recognised body that awards qualifications in the racing, breeding, equine and farrier industries.

<sup>14</sup> [www.northernracingcollege.co.uk](http://www.northernracingcollege.co.uk)

<sup>15</sup> [www.europeanracingschools.eu](http://www.europeanracingschools.eu)

<sup>16</sup> [www.bhest.co.uk](http://www.bhest.co.uk)



# The International Experience

BHEST manages the racing industry's education program, a scheme developed to open horse racing to a new, young audience through the use of exciting and informative educational activities based on national equine courses offered through vocational programs.

## Objective

- To discuss the development of future NVQ requirements.
- To present RGR08 as a guide to future training partnership possibilities and identify common goals in future qualification requirements.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Gill Greeves demonstrated to the Fellow how the original NVQ structure for equine courses was developed and explained that in 2010 all qualifications are to be reviewed to incorporate employability skills. Regular stakeholder communication together with visits to training providers and employers ensures BHEST qualifications remain current and continue to meet industry standards.

## Outcome

BHEST were open to innovative ideas to enhance the prospects of learners by building qualifications that can be transferable to other countries. BHEST could see the benefits of aligning with many aspects of the RGR08 in the future. Greeves indicated that with the forthcoming re-writing of NVQ, BHEST would be willing to participate in any development of an international alliance of qualifications for the thoroughbred industry to identify common units between countries.

## England: National Association of Stable Staff (NASS)<sup>17</sup> nass

**Contact:** Jim Cornelius, Chief Executive Officer

NASS represents the interests of stable employees. This was the first registered stable employee association in the world. NASS is committed to improving pay, conditions of service and the overall employment position of stable staff. It was previously called the Stable Lads Association.

## Objective

- Explore the requirements of setting up a successful association to protect the welfare of stable employees, and to discuss a future alliance between stable employee association members in Australia and Britain.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The original Stable Lads Association ceased to exist early in 2009. A new committee was appointed and re-branded as NASS. There is no charge to be a member as it is automatic on registration as a stable employee. The funding for this association is from the Levy board and comes from a small percentage of prize money. Full membership is established by signing a membership form and this entitles the member to legal representation at no fee, these are deemed financial members. Signed memberships attract a subsidy from the government to cover the extra entitlements.

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<sup>17</sup> [www.naoss.co.uk](http://www.naoss.co.uk)

# The International Experience

NASS meets monthly with the National Trainers Federation (see below) and distributes a monthly newsletter to all members, keeping them up to date with any rule changes, education opportunities, job vacancies and industry news. NASS supports the costs of any development training that a member takes on and ensures they have support through the process. In the near future the NASS hope to link qualifications to pay rates.

## Outcome

Jim Cornelius discussed at length their constitution and offered his services to be a point of contact for any members of an association formed in Australia in the near future. NASS is willing to consider a reciprocal agreement between English and Australian members of stable staff associations once a proposal is drafted. Cornelius is keen on the idea of reciprocal membership services offered to members who are working or studying between countries. NASS would like an overview of employee training in Australia to highlight that education and training can be taken up in other countries when traveling with horses.

## England: IEPUK and LANTRA IEPUK

**International Exchange Programs UK (IEPUK)<sup>18</sup> and UK Sector Skills Council for Land Based Training (LANTRA)<sup>19</sup>**

**Contacts:** Vanessa Peach, Manager International Exchange Programs, IEPUK; George Peach, Project Manager, IEPUK; Steven Zaparaniuk, Project Development Manager, LANTRA

IEPUK have a long history in equine and agriculture skills exchange programs and have developed a web-based International Skills Competence Program.<sup>20</sup> (INTSCA). LANTRA is the Sector Skills Council for the UK environmental and land-based sector.

## Objective

- To seek advice on the possibility of establishing student exchanges through IEPUK and the linking of racing qualifications to their scope and INTSCA program.
- To discuss with LANTRA the objectives of the Fellowship. Determine how best AgriFood Skills Australia and LANTRA could liaise on the possibility of sharing qualifications for the thoroughbred industry.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Vanessa Peach has a long solid background in international exchange programs. IEPUK is not just another staff agency. They recruit worldwide and provide permanent, seasonal and trainee workers for all types of rural environments. IEPUK has developed a unique web-based international skills competence program that would fit well with the international thoroughbred qualification we are keen to develop. Vanessa Peach is also a migration agent and expressed interest in assisting with the development of a pilot program of job swaps for people working on thoroughbred studs in North East Victoria to swap with people working on studs in England and Ireland.

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<sup>18</sup> [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk)

<sup>19</sup> [www.iepuk.com](http://www.iepuk.com)

<sup>20</sup> [www.intsca.com](http://www.intsca.com)

# The International Experience

Steven Zaporaniuk, LANTRA, explained how their training was rolled out for the environmental and land-based sector. They have a similar system to Australia and are very interested in working closely with AgriFood Skills Australia to enhance the training of both parties by sharing 'best practice'.

## Outcome

Both LANTRA and IEPUK would like to form an affiliation with AgriFood Skills Australia and be involved in the development of cross-country qualifications. LANTRA are keen to see what projects will come out of this Fellowship and willing to assist with the government requirements of accrediting an international racing qualification in the future.

## England: Thoroughbred Breeders Association (TBA)<sup>21</sup>



**Contacts:** Kirsten Rausing, Chair; Caroline Turnbull, Training and Recruitment Manager

TBA is the only official body representing thoroughbred breeders in Great Britain. The TBA has always been actively involved in the broad range of issues affecting its members, all of which have a critical bearing on the health and wealth of British thoroughbred breeding. In 2008 TBA UK developed a web-based portal for breeders to display information on staff membership in order to have documented statistics of numbers of people working within the breeding sector. Most countries do not register stud staff, which gives a false employment head count for government issues, such as funding for educational programs in that sector. By gathering this information and registering stud staff, TBA gets a clearer picture of what will be required for future workforce development.

Kirsten Rausing is one of the most influential people in British horse racing and sits on most committees associated with education and training for the industry. She is also the Owner/Manager of Lanwades Stud<sup>22</sup> situated in Newmarket, England, where thoroughbred racehorses have been bred for more than 300 years; Lanwades is one of the very few stallion studs in England.

Lanwades Stud extends to over 515 acres and comprises 155 boxes, together with 8 isolation yards. During the season some 30 people ensure the smooth daily running of this prestigious stud. For a number of years Lanwades Stud has offered employment for Australian breeding scholarship winners. Kirsten Rausing's passion for thoroughbred breeding has been a driving force in the establishment of high quality education programs throughout the UK.

## Objective

- To seek support in the formation of an international standardised qualification for the thoroughbred industry.
- To discuss UK initiative of databases for stud staff and linking of qualifications to stud staff roles.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Rausing was most informative in explaining the Breeding Industry throughout the UK. The economic climate has seen a huge change in breeding operations in the UK as most operations are now owned in large partnerships rather than by independent breeders.

<sup>21</sup> [www.thetba.co.uk](http://www.thetba.co.uk)

<sup>22</sup> [www.lanwades.com](http://www.lanwades.com)

# The International Experience

Rausing is only one of two independent breeders remaining in Newmarket; where there were previously up to 35 independent stud farms. Her incisive views on the benefits of professionally developing staff within an organisation supported the views expressed by the Fellow. Rausing emphasised the importance of knowledge of horse pedigrees as an important factor in the training of breeding staff.

By offering a foundation course that covered the generic skills and knowledge of the thoroughbred industry as a whole, this would enable staff to commute freely between the breeding and racing sectors adding multiskilling to the industry.

## Outcome

Rausing advised that Lanwades Stud would be delighted to work with the Fellow and be involved in a pilot program of staff swaps between countries to rekindle the breeding industry dreams of young staff looking to work, learn and travel.

Caroline Turnbull allowed temporary database access to the Fellow in order to share knowledge for development of a similar program to be set up within Australia. A similar database in Australia would enable both countries to share information and align training requirements for future needs. Australia has no documented statistics of staff numbers working within the breeding sector in order to attract funding for staff training.

## England: National Trainers Federation (NTF)<sup>23</sup>



**Contact:** Chris Wall,<sup>24</sup> President

Chris Wall is a leading UK trainer based in Newmarket. Wall is also the Chairman of the East Anglia region of the National Trainers Federation (NTF) and in 2008 was elected President.

The NTF represents the interests of racehorse trainers. It negotiates with other industry bodies and relevant national agencies and organisations to provide up-to-date information to members about any matters affecting their business. The NTF offers access to a wide range of professional advisers including in-house legal advice.

## Objective

- To discuss, from a racehorse trainers point of view, the results of current qualification requirements and their relevance to the stable.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Wall was most supportive of the current structure, but would like to see more workplace delivery of training and was enthusiastic about the prospect of an international qualification.

Wall has seen the advantages of the track riding unit being a compulsory requirement of the NVQ within his own stable environment.

## Outcome

Wall expressed that the NTF are very proactive in encouraging staff training and believe a standard international program would benefit the industry as a whole.

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<sup>23</sup> [www.racehorsetrainers.org](http://www.racehorsetrainers.org)

<sup>24</sup> [www.chriswallracing.co.uk](http://www.chriswallracing.co.uk)

# The International Experience

## Ireland: Irish National Stud<sup>25</sup>

**Contact:** Sally Carroll, Qualification Manager



The original Irish National Stud based in County Kildare, was established in 1946. The first thoroughbred breeding course was held at the Irish National Stud in 1971 and it remains the best-known, world respected equine training program to this day. The stud accepts breeding course scholarship winners from around the world. The stud also features the world famous Japanese Gardens that attract tourists all throughout the year. It is the peaceful retirement place of champion racehorse, Vintage Crop, which became the first international raider in 1993 to win the Melbourne Cup.

### Objective

- To discuss the requirements for developing a suitable foundation and bridging course for new and existing workers that meet the specific standards of both Irish and Australian breeding industry requirements.

### Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Sally Carroll believes that pedigree knowledge and analysis are paramount in the development of any student studying the aspects of breeding. Due to the amount of international students that attend the scholarships, Carroll identified a distinct difference between student's knowledge base depending on their country of origin. The variations found were knowledge of pedigrees, foaling down experience, and equine nutrition. All students are taken back through the basic steps of their introduction to breeding program on commencement, regarding their industry experience, to bridge the skill and knowledge gap. Carroll has had a long association with the Irish National Stud, heavily involved in mentoring international students, her opinion regarding an international foundation course was that it would be of huge benefit to the industry and would set a base for courses such as the Irish National Stud course.

### Outcome

Carroll suggested that one generic qualification delivered internationally and modified to each country's needs would give much more consistency and work opportunities in the future. Carroll expressed interest in personally being included in any development to pursue a more consistent education model.

## Ireland: Racing Academy and Centre of Education (RACE)<sup>26</sup>

**Contacts:** Keith Rowe, Director; Helen O'Sullivan, Education Coordinator



The Racing Academy and Centre of Education (RACE) is Ireland's academy for the horse racing industry and an international centre of excellence.

### Objective

- To explore the courses delivered through the RACE using the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and European Qualification of Employees of Stables (EQUES) qualification models and how this course compares to the NVQ and RGR08

<sup>25</sup> [www.irish-national-stud.ie](http://www.irish-national-stud.ie)

<sup>26</sup> [www.racingacademy.ie](http://www.racingacademy.ie)

# The International Experience

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The RACE delivers the Trainee Jockey course. Established in 1977, the Trainee Jockey course is a 42-week residential program comprising three terms. The course is sponsored by Ireland's National Training and Employment Authority (FÁS) and is free of charge to all EU citizens. All meals and accommodations are provided by the RACE, and trainees return home each weekend.

The RACE also delivers the EQUES – a program of study undertaken by students of the various EARS schools. It provides candidates who successfully complete language, riding and stable management modules with a passport, which will enable them to work in the racing industry in other European countries. The RACE also delivers training programs for HRI and the Turf Club for the licensing of jockeys, assistant trainers, trainers, farriers and stable employees.

The RACE prides itself on providing the most comprehensive jockey program in the world. The RACE graduates include most of the current leading European riders.

## Outcome

Keith Rowe and Helen O'Sullivan both expressed their support for the program outlined by the Fellow and willingly offered their services and expertise to further develop an international mapping template of thoroughbred industry qualifications. The RACE has many international students who study their short course jockey program. They have offered to design a short program to accommodate Australian apprentice jockeys enabling them to obtain international experience at their academy. The program would consist of five weeks live-in tuition and riding out for local trainers on The Curragh, which is one of the world's most prestigious racetracks. There is also an opportunity for RACE graduates to do work placement in Australia for short periods of time in order to build their skill base and network.

## Ireland: Irish Racehorse Trainers Association (IRTA)<sup>27</sup>

**Contact:** Jim Kavanagh, CEO



The Irish Racehorse Trainers Association (IRTA) is the representative body of licensed trainers in Ireland.

The IRTA works closely with The RACE and the ISSA in placing staff with trainers and encouraging career pathways through the industry. There are approximately 420 members of the IRTA, and when a trainer receives a license they automatically become a member. It is an all-Ireland body with members based in both the Republic and in Northern Ireland.

## Objective

- To discuss, from a racehorse trainers point of view, the results of current qualification requirements and their relevance to the stable.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

Participation in staff training in Ireland is relatively new as it is not a licensing requirement. However, the association encourages trainers to professionally develop their staff where possible.

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<sup>27</sup> [www.irta.ie](http://www.irta.ie)

# The International Experience

## Outcome

Jim Kavanagh was impressed with the quality of RGR08 as it offered structured training to extended industry roles such as stewards, barrier attendants and racing administration. He immediately organised for the Fellow to meet with Horse Racing Ireland's human resources and licensing departments.

## Ireland: Horse Racing Ireland (HRI)<sup>28</sup> and The Turf Club<sup>29</sup>



HORSE RACING  
IRELAND

**Horse Racing Ireland Contact:** David Wright, Manager – Human Resources

**The Turf Club Contact:** Seamus Gibson, Licensing Manager

Horse Racing Ireland (HRI) is the overall administrator of Irish horseracing, and represents the racing industry in international forums. The Turf Club is the regulatory body for horseracing in Ireland.

## Objective

- To discuss the training requirements of additional roles such as stewards, barrier attendants and racing administrative roles.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The Irish Racing Industry is in the process of linking accredited training to various roles. At present the only resources available for workers is the FETAC training which currently does not include roles for stewards, barrier attendants and racing administrative roles. The Turf Club licensing manager works closely with the RACE in the training of stablehands, track riders, jockeys and trainers.

## Outcome

Seamus Gibson expressed interest in the different roles offered throughout RGR08 package. The main roles they were most excited about were stewards training and barrier attendant training. Gibson advised that the Turf Club would be interested in adopting the training outlined in RGR08 for these roles. The Fellow will keep both Gibson and David Wright up to date with any development on an international qualification for the thoroughbred industry to ensure Ireland is part of the proposed program.

## Ireland: Aga Khan Studs<sup>30</sup>

**Contact:** Pat Downes, Director

The Aga Khan Irish studs cover four properties: Gilltown, Sallymount, Sheshoon and Ballyfair (formerly known as Brownstown). Gilltown is the Aga Khan's public stud, currently home to sires, Azamour and Dalakhani. Sallymount joins Gilltown and houses the Aga Khan's post-foaling mares. The Aga Khan recognises that top trainers, jockeys, and stud managers are all of equal importance. Employees of the Aga Khan Studs are offered professional development opportunities including working at the owner's other properties in Ireland and France.

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<sup>28</sup> [www.goracing.ie](http://www.goracing.ie)

<sup>29</sup> [www.turfclub.ie](http://www.turfclub.ie)

<sup>30</sup> [www.agakhanstuds.com](http://www.agakhanstuds.com)

# The International Experience



## Objective

- To discuss the prospect of a future partnership between Aga Khan Stud's Gilltown Stud and Thoroughbred Breeders Victoria in order to establish a pilot staff swap program.

## Skills, Knowledge and Insights

The majority of staff employed on Aga Khan Studs have some level of formal training. Therefore, the possibility of offering international job swaps for staff who have completed their training proved most attractive as a rewards program. Pat Downes spent his learning years under Victorian-based Mike Becker, manager of Independent Stallions, and understands the value of gaining skills and knowledge in the thoroughbred industry while working in different countries.

## Outcome

Downes advised that Gilltown Stud would be interested in participating in a pilot program in order to develop the process of staff swaps between countries. It was decided that the initial swaps could be offered to long-term employees who had undertaken training. These swaps would be set up between Gilltown Stud and Victorian Thoroughbred Breeders Association and affiliated members.

# Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

The Fellow has arranged a series of forums and workshops for the Australian Thoroughbred Racing Industry in order to:

- Determine and codify current 'best practice' in linking compulsory qualifications to the licensing or registration of stable employees
- Construct a suitable foundation and bridging course for new and existing workers
- Develop an international matrix of racing qualifications that meet the specific standards of the thoroughbred industry both nationally and international
- Identify the requirements of establishing a successful stable employee association for workers within sectors of the thoroughbred industry.

<b>Type of Activity: Forum</b>	
Role of the Fellow	<i>Facilitator: Presentation of Fellowship outcomes</i>
Aim of activity	<i>Develop a communication strategy to ensure consistency for mandatory training for stable employees.</i>
Target industry sectors and occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Racing Industry Standing Committee</i></li> <li>• <i>Representatives from each state for industry training providers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Representatives of Australian Racing Board (ARB)</i></li> <li>• <i>AgriFood Skills Australia</i></li> </ul>
When	<i>26th February 2010</i>
Location	<i>Melbourne</i>

<b>Type of Activity: Workshop</b>	
Role of the Fellow	<i>Facilitator: International Relationships</i>
Aim of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fellowship outcomes</i></li> <li>• <i>Implementation of mandatory training for stable employees</i></li> <li>• <i>Establish members to form a steering committee to develop a mapping matrix for international thoroughbred qualifications</i></li> </ul>
Target industry sectors and occupations	<i>National Racing Training Providers Conference</i> <i>Providers of training to industry participants</i>
When	<i>July 2010</i>
Location	<i>South Australia</i>

## Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

<b>Type of Activity: Forum</b>	
Role of the Fellow	<i>Project Manager</i>
Aim of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Galvanise industry stakeholders to be key enablers for developing a network of 'industry champions' to bridge the gap in equine industries. Develop a holistic foundation course encompassing careers in the equine sector that offer direct credits to preferred career destinations</i></li> <li>• <i>AgriFood Skills Australia to support the development of an international matrix of racing qualifications</i></li> <li>• <i>Seek support for a pilot program of job swaps between thoroughbred studs in Australia, England and Ireland</i></li> </ul>
Target industry sectors and occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>AgriFood Skills Australia Board</i></li> <li>• <i>Thoroughbred Breeders Australia</i></li> </ul>
When	<i>2010 Prior to Asian Racing Conference</i>
Location	<i>Canberra</i>

<b>Type of Activity: Forum – Asian Racing Conference</b>	
Role of the Fellow	<i>Request the Australian Racing Board (ARB) to include a session in the education section of the conference to enable the Fellow to communicate her Fellowship findings.</i>
Aim of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fellowship outcomes</i></li> <li>• <i>Highlight the benefits of Asian Racing authorities in building strong relationships with Europe to mutually recognise qualifications</i></li> </ul>
Target industry sectors and occupations	<i>CEOs of global racing bodies</i>
When	<i>April 2010</i>
Location	<i>Sydney</i>

# Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

<b>Type of Activity: Workshop</b>	
Role of the Fellow	<i>Facilitator</i>
Aim of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure stable employees are recognised for the skills they already have and additional skills required</i></li> <li>• <i>Establish new avenues for career guidance and training</i></li> <li>• <i>Promote the formation of a National Stable Employee of the Year Award</i></li> <li>• <i>Identify 'industry champions' as key points of contact for all stable employees &amp; targeted industry stakeholders</i></li> </ul>
Target industry sectors and occupations	<i>ARB</i>
When	<i>Ongoing throughout 2010 and beyond</i>
Location	<i>Sydney</i>

# Recommendations

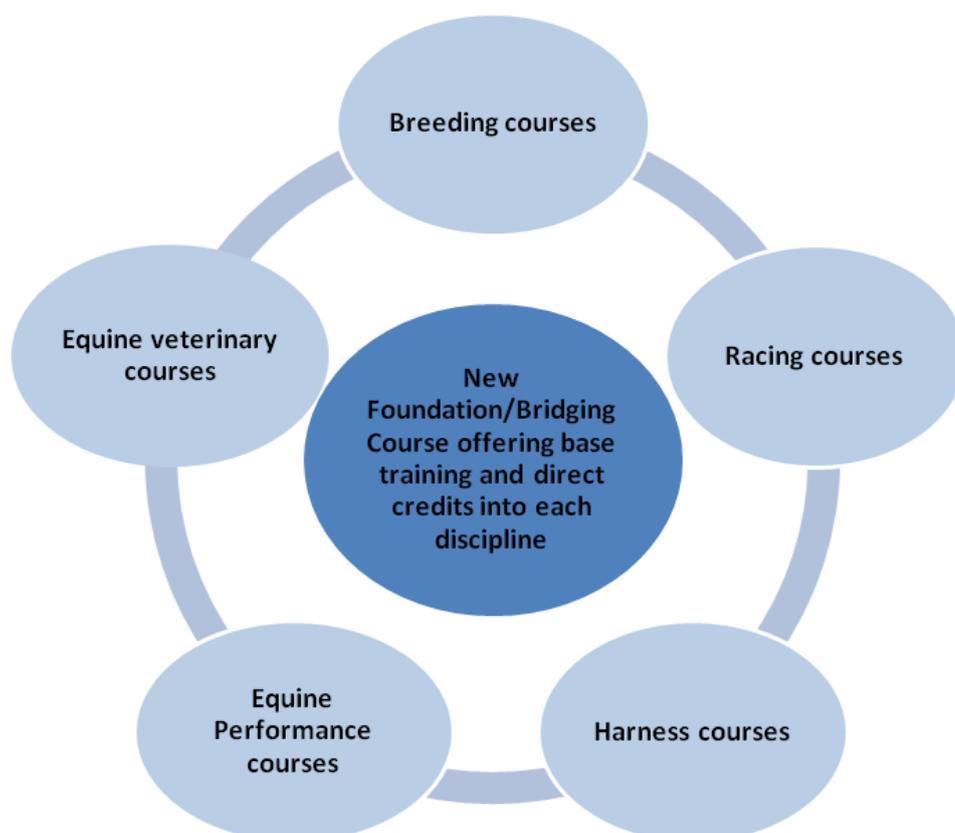
## Government

Recommendations:

- That the Australian Government assist the Australian Racing Industry in establishing formal bilateral and multilateral international agreements that provide for mutual recognition of formal equine educational qualifications.
- That Federal and State Governments work to redress administrative duplication in current education and training programs to ensure clearer educational and career pathways for future equine workers.
- That State and Territory Governments support the establishment of academy-style track riding training opportunities within their jurisdiction.

## Education and Training

There is no Equine Training Package in Australia that covers all equine disciplines. The equine courses available range from pony club certificates to accredited qualifications that are components of rural-related training packages.



# Recommendations

## Recommendations:

- That AgriFood Skills Australia establish an industry steering group to develop an international set of criteria to enable mutual recognition of thoroughbred industry qualifications internationally. The outcome would produce an International Thoroughbred Industry Skills Passport.
- Develop a foundation equine course for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools that prepares participants to be 'job ready' on completion and offers direct credits into higher qualifications.
- Ensure the VET curriculum for equine courses is more aligned to erase duplication and define clearer pathways between disciplines.

The chart on the previous page illustrates how a new foundation course would join all current equine courses in Australia together offering participants a clear choice on completion and direct credits into further study to continue their career journey. A new accredited foundation course threading pony club certificates into higher school-based courses would act as a feeder program into all equine qualifications and provide participants with basic skills and knowledge across a diverse array of equine roles and careers. The foundation course would be made up of core units that are generic in all equine courses.

## Industry

### Recommendations:

- That Thoroughbred Breeders Australia establish a staffing database incorporating roles and responsibilities of all persons employed in the thoroughbred breeding sector.
- That the Australian Racing Board work with the Australian Government to establish a satisfactory agreement between Australia, the UK and Ireland that will facilitate the BRS, NRC and RACE track riding graduates to access a four-month work placement program with Australian racing stables. This would help address the current shortage of track riders in Australia while a more streamlined program of training track riders was established.
- That the Australian Racing Board establish minimum standards of compulsory training to be linked to the registration of all stable employee positions at a National level using units of competency and qualifications from the Australian National Racing Industry Training Package RGR08.
- Ensure every person taking up a stable employee role is provided with formal training and an induction linked to registration that provides a base step to a higher qualification.
- That all peak industry bodies seek the cooperation of large racing stables and studs to include a school holiday work placement program in their business plan.
- Encourage existing stable employees to up-skill and mentor new workers in the workplace by offering industry funded training opportunities.

# Recommendations

## Community

Pony club is established in all states and territories and is a flourishing organisation, with 980 active clubs and significant numbers of very keen riders making it the largest equestrian organisation in Australia. Pony Club Australia (PCA) is the national governing body of pony clubs in Australia. PCA comprises representatives from the state and territory pony club associations.

The pony club structure encourages members to prepare for and take tests that enable them to learn progressively about horse and pony care (horsemastership) and riding (horsemanship). The tests are designed for members to progress from one standard of learning to the next with certain objectives in mind. Although some requirements of each test may vary slightly from country to country because of geographical location, local activities or climatic conditions, the tests are based on a worldwide policy<sup>31</sup>. Participants can commence these certificates from seven years of age beginning with 'D' certificate through to 'A' certificate.

Recommendations:

- Explore the potential of local accreditation of all pony club certificates offered throughout Australia. These certificates could form part of a national equine foundation course.
- Establish a national equine industry worker association or support service for all grooms and riders that provides guidance on careers, education and employment enquiries.

## ISS Institute

Recommendations:

- That the ISS Institute assist the Fellow in identifying further knowledge transfer opportunities, including the facilitation of presentations to relevant government departments and agencies, training institutes and industry associations.
- That the ISS Institute utilise its extensive government and educational institution networks to promote the goal of fully internationalising thoroughbred racing skills and competencies accreditation.

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<sup>31</sup> [www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au](http://www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au)