

LARK HILL RACING COMPLEX

301. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

Further to my previous question, and noting the minister's support for the Lark Hill racing complex, will he also answer the other part of the question about the implications that complex may have for other racing clubs in the vicinity, particularly those in Northam, Pinjarra and Bunbury?

Will the minister also indicate to the House whether he supports the Western Australian Turf Club ultimately operating three major racing complexes at Ascot, Belmont and Lark Hill, or does he support the rationalisation that in the future one of those complexes may be sold; for example, the one at Ascot?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

I thought I made it clear in my previous answer that the Government is supportive of the racing industry. We want it to prosper and for it to do so wherever that can take place. That most certainly includes the Avon Valley to which the honourable member seems to be directing my attention.

What the Western Australian Turf Club proposes to do is a matter for that club. However, the honourable member is well aware that the Government is proposing to change the way the codes operate in Western Australia, by legislation that will establish a new body to be known as Racing and Wagering Western Australia. I trust that legislation will be passed with the support of members opposite, and it will provide an appropriate environment in which all three codes can grow. That body will also be in a position to make the appropriate strategic assessments and decisions.